

# NEWSLETTER

*Issue 24 February 2006*

## IHBC

### WEST MIDLANDS BRANCH

### INSTITUTE OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS CONSERVATION

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#### DIARY DATES

##### NEXT BRANCH MEETING & AGM

- ❖ *Friday 3rd March 2006.* To be hosted by Ian Kilby at Shrewsbury and Atcham BC and will feature the Ditherington Flax Mill and the current project to build a theatre in Shrewsbury.

##### BRANCH MEETINGS 2006

- ❖ *Tuesday 6th June 2006.* To be hosted by Roger Cullimore at Leamington BC. To include consideration of a local CABE award.
- ❖ *Wednesday 20th September 2006.* At a location in Staffordshire. Date, venue and theme to be confirmed.
- ❖ *Thursday 14th December 2006.* Perhaps central Birmingham. Date, venue and theme to be confirmed.
- ❖ *Tuesday 13th March 2007.* At Ludlow, to be hosted by Colin Richards. To feature Green Conservation and technical developments in practice as deployed at Ludlow Castle.

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#### PEOPLE

**Colin Richards OBE.** Congratulations to Colin, whose award of the OBE "for services to Conservation" appeared in the New Year Honours List.

**Vicci Cox,** Branch Secretary, will be standing down at AGM 2006. Thank you, Vicci, for your contribution to the work of the Branch over the past few years. She now needs a successor.

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#### CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Ian Kilby

##### SOUNDS FAMILIAR

Finding new uses for historic buildings is very much part the conservation officers remit. Whether it be a pro-active attempt to deal with entries on the register of buildings at risk, a grant supported regeneration/enhancement initiative, or simply responding to an owners desire to make better use of their assets.

Rising house prices and a duty to make the best use of previously developed land or buildings has on one hand helped to bring underused historic buildings back into use. On the other it brings new pressures as developers seek to maximise returns

and meet market demand. In particular pressure has increased to subdivide larger buildings to provide apartments (not flats of course).

It reminds me of the development boom in the late 1980's where it seemed that rising prices forced consumers to accept ever meaner standards of accommodation. I am not referring to the specification of the schemes we are faced with, each has a contemporary kitchen and bathroom and are well appointed with carpets, blinds or curtains and wardrobes. They are mean in terms of their size. It seems that with the first step of the property ladder being so high, first time buyers will accept extremely modest and oppressive conditions simply to become home owners. Never mind a room with a view, recently I have dealt with schemes where the developers have suggested that it doesn't matter if the whole apartment is below street level in a dimly lit basement, or that it isn't necessary to have natural daylight in a bedroom! All right, so may be that isn't so unusual but it is of interest to the conservation sector where for example a large town house is being subdivided and each of the original reception rooms is to be converted to a single flat.... I mean apartment.

The case I had recently was an older application, granted several years ago and only now being implemented by a respected local developer. Taking one apartment as an example, imagine a ground floor reception room in a large detached early 19th century house. This was to be converted to a one bedroom apartment. Further apartments were to be provided in rooms above, to the side and below, in the basement. The room is approximately 8m long by 5m wide and 4m high. There is no chimney piece but the room retains deep sash windows on three sides, deep skirting boards, moulded architraves and an elaborate and attractive moulded plaster cornice.

My gripe is not with the subdivision of this space, this is to be handled by a series of low screens dividing the sleeping area from the living area. No my concern is with the issue of sound. The fashion for laminate floors in apartment schemes has caused problems for apartment residents and developers alike. Whilst it may not be an issue with a robust industrial construction a lighter domestic building is less able to absorb sound. Having had to deal with claims in respect of other schemes, the developer in this case is now sound averse. No laminate floors allowed but of more concern, a desire to acoustically isolate each unit by dry lining every

wall, constructing a floating floor and under drawing ceiling. Consequently every original feature would be concealed and it is not I should say, a requirement of the building regulations. The steps proposed exceed the requirements of the building regulations, so this is simply a desire to protect the developer's integrity.

Moral : beware horizontal and vertical subdivisions.

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## EDITORIAL

Your Branch Officers met on 12th January to review Branch affairs and to outline a programme for 2006. The following matters were considered:

- ❖ *Money.* Would be in short supply during 2006. As many events as possible should be capable of producing income.
- ❖ *Feedback.* Branch officers needed to know why a significant proportion of membership never came to Branch events. This was important for all aspects of forward planning. It was also desirable to know what members thought about meeting locations, newsletter presentation and content, meetings programme and meeting format.
- ❖ *Liability.* For the purposes of liability, it was essential that members told their employers that they were making site visits as part of IHBC meetings. This simple precaution ensured that insurance cover was available if anything went wrong.
- ❖ *Newsletter.* There was potential for posting it on the IHBC website for downloading and printing as members desired. The cost of stationery, printing and postage was rising and the 'envelope stuffing' routine was onerous.
- ❖ *Office Tenure.* It was desirable that posts were not held for more than three years at a time. It would be useful if the Vice Chairman would automatically progress to the Chairmanship. Job descriptions needed to be made available as part of the process of filling Officer vacancies.

If this Newsletter comes to you in 'hard copy' (ie paper) form you will see a different typeface, chosen with the intention of putting more words in the same amount of space, without significant loss of readability.

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## JOB DESCRIPTION

### Consultations Secretary

E-mail: [consultations@ihbc.org.uk](mailto:consultations@ihbc.org.uk)

- ❖ To keep a check on issues and consultations from Government Departments and other national or regional bodies relevant to the aims and aspirations of the IHBC and to keep such bodies aware of the need to consult the IHBC.
- ❖ To receive and distribute copies of consultations to all members of the Consultations Committee and other relevant members.
- ❖ To co-ordinate consultation responses for the IHBC, ensuring the views of the membership are represented.
- ❖ To provide consultation responses to the originating bodies within the specified time periods.

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## BRANCH MEETING

6th December 2005

Took place at Holy Trinity Parish Centre, Priory Row, Coventry. The Centre was previously known as the

Old Bluecoat School, having been built for that purpose in 1856-57. Our host for the day was George Demidovicz, Conservation Officer at Coventry City. Special thanks to George for making the day's arrangements.

In one way, the day was a hideous reminder of our civilization's over-dependence on the motor car. The M6 was nose-to-tail for most of the distance between the Black Country and Coventry. Once arrived in Coventry, it proved desperately difficult to find anywhere to park, with stationary queues leading into most car parks.. Once a parking place had been located, it proved expensive for some. Those who travelled to the Branch meeting by train had the best of it.

6th December was the second of the Branch's meetings at this particular venue - the Old Bluecoat School - and the second to have as its special theme the Phoenix Project. The first meeting took place on 21st February 2002, and was covered in Newsletter 8.

Before lunch we received a self-introductory presentation from Dr Sean O'Reilly, the IHBC's Director, followed by an update from George Demidovicz on progress with the Phoenix Project (see below).

For lunch we went to the fascinating Brown's contemporary-style pub-restaurant for what proved a substantial feed. This building stands two-storey, with a curving sheet metal roof atop a pink sandstone plinth a storey high. Inside, the first floor acts as an internal balcony with cross views exploiting the space.

The afternoon involved a walkabout around, through and into the various elements of the Phoenix Project, now very substantially complete.

For details of the Old Bluecoat School, the meeting venue, please see NEWSLETTER 8.

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## VIEW OUT OF THE WINDOW

6th December 2005



*Looking out of the Old Bluecoat School window. To the left, the school itself. In the centre, the St Mary's Cathedral Interpretation Centre. Above centre, Youell House and Priory Place. Above right, the present Cathedral.*

The Branch meeting was in the first floor schoolroom of the Old Bluecoat School. The windows gave an almost 180-degree prospect looking east towards the modern Cathedral. To the south was the large, cruciform medieval Holy Trinity Church, with its large central tower and spire. Large yes, but decidedly smaller than the west tower and spire of St Michael's Parish Church Cathedral next door again to the south east. Thomas Rickman had re-clad portions of Holy Trinity in smooth Bath stone ashlar - apparently a widespread early C19 fashion.

Looking north-east was much of the new

construction resulting from the Phoenix Project. Low down in the foreground the Interpretation Centre was astride the north wall of St Mary's Cathedral. Immediately beyond it and at least a story higher the brand-new Cathedral and Diocesan offices in Youell House. Beyond and above them again the crisp rectilinear outlines of the commercial flats built to the design of MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard.

A touch of wildlife was visible in the twitching shape of a pied wagtail!

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## PHOENIX PROJECT, COVENTRY - update

The Project comprises a large town centre site immediately abutting the Old Bluecoat School. It was conceived by Coventry City Council in 1996 and was awarded funding of the order of £50m with a major Millennium Commission contribution. It went on site in 1999 and was substantially complete by 2003. It involved a comprehensive examination and redevelopment of a run-down segment of central Coventry running NNE from the Old Bluecoat School.

One of the major ingredients was an archaeological exploration of the nave of the medieval St Mary's Cathedral. This was complemented by archaeological work on the site of the proposed new offices of Coventry Diocese, which led to a second major archaeological excavation (described elsewhere in this Newsletter). Both excavations furnished the content of a new Cathedral Interpretation Centre (designed by MacCormac Jamieson & Pritchard).

The project also comprised:

- ❖ A 'priory cloister' garden adjoining the Cathedral Interpretation Centre, with a 'Priory Place' public open space with a water feature adjoining at a lower level;
- ❖ Consolidation and public presentation of the newly-discovered 'Priory Undercroft';
- ❖ Construction of Youell House, the new Coventry Diocese Office building, atop the Undercroft;
- ❖ the repair and conversion to new use of a Grade II Listed ribbon factory of 1850;
- ❖ Commercial residential and retail redevelopment of the site of an under-used multi-storey car park;
- ❖ Repair and conversion to a new use of the disused Old Fire Station (a large and handsome Edwardian public building);
- ❖ Formation of a visual and pedestrian link to the existing museum of British Road Transport (including a pair of giant boomerang-shaped semi-translucent arches bridging Hales Street, now called the "Whittle Arches");
- ❖ New main frontage and forecourt to the Museum of British Road Transport (giving it a public presence for the first time);
- ❖ New footbridge link from the Museum forecourt through to a refurbished Lady Herbert's Garden (a small public park flanking the surviving section of the medieval City Wall); and
- ❖ A "Garden of International Fellowship" adjoining Lady Herbert's Garden.

MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard were consultant architects for the greater part of this scheme.

A significant element in the project was media exposure. The archaeological work generated two separate "Time Team" episodes on TV, accompanied by one "Discover Your Ancestors" session.

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## ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL PRIORY, COVENTRY

6th December 2005

St Mary's Coventry is the only medieval English Cathedral to be lost at the Reformation. The Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield had two cathedrals - the other being at Lichfield. In Henry VIII's judgement, one cathedral was enough, releasing St Mary's Cathedral Priory, Coventry, for dissolution and re-sale. The Cathedral did not disappear overnight. The battered hulk of the central tower survived well into the C17, accommodating a large water tank to provide a head of water for the surrounding houses of rich merchants. The site of the nave was acquired as a graveyard extension by Holy Trinity Church (next door) in the C18. Intensive grave-digging over 150 years destroyed most of the nave structure right down to pavement level. One sexton even hacked out a grave into the massive masonry of the south-west tower.



*Centre foreground. Nave of the Cathedral Priory laid out as a lawn, with planting boxes in the positions of the nave arcade piers.*

The north-west tower was never demolished. A substantial part of its stair turret survived two stories high and was incorporated into the Blue Coat School of 1856-57, its residential block for orphans being built on the tower remains. During the building of the School the lower courses and respond piers of the cathedral west front were discovered. They were preserved as a feature in a ditch flanking the School.

During the construction of the third Coventry Cathedral, to the design of Sir Basil Spence, part of the east end of St Mary's was discovered. It proved to be of 'chevet' form - three chapels radiating from a terminating apse - unusual for an English cathedral.

Analysis of surviving masonry has indicated that the nave arcades were an asymmetrical mix of Romanesque and Gothic. Being built on a terrace, the cathedral was a narrow building. It is possibly for this reason that the two massive west towers were built outside the line of the aisles to give the fabric more visual bulk.

The extent of preservation of the transepts, crossing and chancel is unknown. Large C18 houses have been built over the site, and the archaeology is inaccessible.

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## THE PRIORY UNDERCROFTS George Demidowicz

Viewed on 6th December 2005. What follows is an edited version of the text of the descriptive leaflet provided for visitors. *Reproduced by courtesy of George Demidowicz, Coventry City Council.*

### **How Were They Found?**

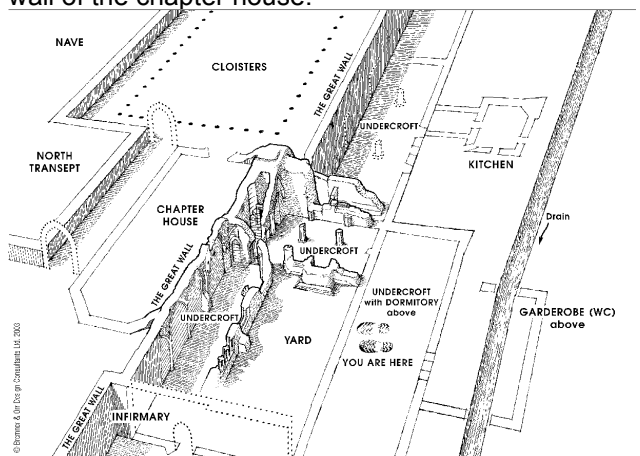
The undercrofts were discovered and restored as part of Coventry City Council's Millennium Scheme

(Phoenix Initiative). Early in the project it was agreed that the youth hostel belonging to Coventry Cathedral situated behind 7 Priory Row should be demolished and a new building erected at the lower end of the garden. It was known that this site had been part of the Benedictine priory of St Mary. As a normal condition of obtaining planning permission, excavations took place to check what remains had survived. This was in order to preserve as much as possible through careful design of foundations.

The Phoenix Archaeological Team under the direction of Margaret Rylatt began work in 2000. Almost immediately a spiral staircase emerged descending into the rubble of the broken priory. Intriguing though the possibilities were, no-one at the time could have guessed that these stairs would eventually lead into what are now known to be the best preserved remains of the medieval priory. Work was finally completed in 2002, by which time the decision had already been made to have the undercrofts left uncovered and prepared for public display. This required a complete re-design of the new building so that it rested on a massive steel 'bridge' with the fewest supports possible to interrupt the view into the undercrofts. In effect the medieval undercrofts can now be found in a massive new undercroft to Youell House, the new Cathedral and Diocesan offices constructed in 2002-3 to a design by MacCormac Jamieson and Pritchard.

### Location

The cathedral and priory were built on the slope of a low hill about 15m in height, but sufficiently steep to require three main levels or terraces to accommodate their buildings. The highest level was constructed for the cathedral, the floor of which was about 1.2m above the cloister. In turn the cloister was situated above the lowest terrace, which contained a variety of service buildings. A 6m high wall (the 'great wall') separated these two levels. It was here immediately against the 'great wall' that a series of undercrofts was constructed. The 'great wall' turned the north-east corner of the cloister in a dog-leg to continue eastwards as the base of the north wall of the chapter house. This main feature can be seen at the back of the undercrofts. In the medieval period this wall soared upwards through the floor above to contain the windows in the north wall of the chapter house.



Layout drawing of the undercrofts as excavated. Reproduced by courtesy of Bremner and Orr for Coventry City Council.

### Function

Monastery undercrofts were normally used for storage and this may have been the original purpose of those in the priory. The introduction of fine windows as early as the 13th century (to the east of the walkway) and the four later windows, two in each

of the undercrofts, suggest other functions, such as living accommodation. The peculiar structure of the undercrofts, blind on one side, but at ground level on the other, meant that they were more adaptable than a buried or half-buried cellar. The fireplace in the north-south undercroft would not have been necessary in a storage area and it is possible that it served the monks' warming room. This was often situated in this corner of the cloister, but here we are on a lower level, reached from the cloister via the spiral stairs. Another possibility is that the undercrofts were the living quarters of 'corrodians.' These were either the kings' relatives or protégés, foisted upon the monks, or rich lay people, who paid a 'corrody' or annuity so they could spend their old age in the care of the monastery. It may be no coincidence that the infirmary was situated on the east side of the yard in the area of the present Hill Top and the Cathedral car park.

### Destruction

It is not known how long it took to demolish this part of the priory after the Dissolution in 1539. It is fortunate, however, that the 'great wall' was such a significant feature of the monastery, for in its shadow remains were well preserved. The undercrofts also served as a convenient 'skip' for the rubble derived from the buildings above such as the chapter house. It is for this reason that two fine pieces of the Apocalypse frieze that decorated the chapter house were found in the undercroft below. One of these painted fragments is on display in the Visitor Centre. The sloping pile of rubble which formed against the 'great wall,' protected what had been buried beneath from being further demolished. This slope can be detected in the progressive fall in height of the ruins from the 'great wall' northwards. In the area of the new stone store the walk barely rose above the ground.

### Restoration

Considerable resources were needed to restore the undercrofts and redesign the foundations of Youell House. The project was successful in obtaining a generous Heritage Lottery grant, which was devoted to the repair and consolidation of the historic fabric, interpretation and public access. Youell House (contractor Try-Galliford) was raised over the ruins with the minimum of damage and the restoration of the undercrofts began in September 2003 and was completed in March 2004 (architects Brownhill Hayward Brown; main contractor - John Harris and Sons; display and interpretation - Bremner and Orr). It was also decided to build a new 'undercroft' below the link from Hill Top to Priory Place to house a large proportion of the architectural stone found during the excavations over the whole site. The stones, recorded and catalogued by Dr Richard Morris and his assistants, can only be seen from within the undercrofts.

The undercrofts and many other areas of the priory were found to have been limewashed and new coats have been applied to protect these old layers and create an authentic medieval look. Only walls on the inside of the undercrofts have been treated as there was little evidence of limewash on the outside. This has also helped provide a contrast between the external yard and the interior spaces. During the restoration an unexpectedly fine triple lancet window of 13th century date was discovered in the remaining bank of material. As much of this window as possible has been exposed, aided by the construction of a new retaining wall, using material found in the excavations. The opportunity was also taken to create a lapidarium, a display of worked stone in a wall. A film using footage from the two Time Team

programmes is projected on to a wall and on two small floor-mounted screens.

A lift has been provided for wheelchair users, allowing access to the yard and one of the undercrofts.

### **A Tour**

The undercrofts are entered via an elevated walkway connected to an internal lift. To the right a display board shows a reconstruction of the area on the eve of the dissolution. To the left - the 13th century lancet window and lapidarium. The stairs descend into the east-west undercroft, the earliest to be constructed. The wall, on to which the film is now projected, was thickened during the monastic period to strengthen it, partly burying the piers that supported the stone vault. A buttress was also added, now much damaged. The exit arch is a later insertion; to the left - an earlier blocked door from the spiral stairs beyond; drain in the floor leading from the north-south undercroft with new connecting steps alongside.

The spiral staircase was, built into part of the original east-west undercroft and a new broader undercroft was added on a north-south line; two piers were required in the centre to support the vaulted roof. The pattern of roof ribs has been reproduced in the floor paving. A fireplace in the external wall heated this undercroft and figures placed here and enjoying the fire show its interpretation as a warming room. On the opposite wall are two blocked doors in use before the vaulted roof was inserted. Beyond were stairs rising to the cloister and further westwards behind the concrete wall was a long undercroft that supported the refectory.

The stone store (about 800 items) is not accessible to tours for health and safety reasons. It forms one of the most important collections of worked medieval stone in the country and lies within the former undercroft that once supported the monks' dormitory above.

A passage leads to the outside courtyard, which would have been surrounded by two storey buildings on all four sides. A pointed-arch recess in the passage contained the door leaf. Note the glazing slots in the undercroft windows. A large piece of masonry has been left in the centre of the yard where it fell during the demolition. The lapidarium and lancet window are at the east (Infirmary) end of the yard.

The modern ceiling high above corresponds with the original level of the cathedral garden, originally retained by a high wall on the line of the plate glass window. The whole of the air space was once soil and rubble.

## **COMMENT**

### **The Editor**

The Priory Undercroft is accessed from a pedestrian passage leading east out of Priory Square. To the right is the shapely sharp-edged confection of Youell House, standing on two stories above. There is an extraordinary acute-angle triangular oriel window jutting out. Nevertheless, it forms part and parcel of an architecturally accomplished building, skinned in good quality orange brick. Below Youell House is what looks like an enormous, elongated glazed letterbox, with its sill at paving level. Architecturally, it looks all wrong, because the glazed void does not - visually - support Youell House above.

Functionally, however, this huge long picture window is superb. Public access into the undercroft isn't essential. All the features within are spotlight and can be clearly seen by the public using the

footway. Three fibreglass figures of monks give - as George Demidowicz remarked on site - a "scale" to the remains. One of the monks, seated at the hearth, looks upwards and towards the viewers outside the window. There is an apparent (intended?) expression of horror on his face!

Inside, the experience is different again. There is a distinct smell of slightly damp old stone - a similar smell to that experienced in some old churches. There is a whirr and hiss of climate control at work. Above is an 'abstract-sculpture' network of ducts and hugely massive structural steelwork, the latter painted matt black. Three steel stanchions succeed in carrying the overhead load of Youell House visually as well as structurally. The presentation philosophy is 'look and touch'. Nothing, except the stone store, is roped off.

The stone store cannot be seen from outside because, as the viewer looks through the great window, he or she is standing directly above the store, which occupies a kind of cellar below the public footway. All these stones have been studied, drawn and analysed. They probably form the largest single collection of medieval masonry (from one site) in the UK today. Storage is on racking based on a precedent from Pompeii. It is constructed of scaffolding planks and poles and is strong and durable, as well as being simple and cheap.

The undercroft was open to the elements for two seasons, leading to some erosion, particularly of the medieval limewash coating applied to all interior surfaces. The modern limewash coating serves to protect what survives of the original medieval coatings, still several layers thick. It also works extremely well as an interpretative aid. Even indicating areas of disturbance inflicted during stripping of fixtures and fittings.

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## **NEW CONSTRUCTION, COVENTRY**

6th December 2005

The Phoenix Project has effectively provided a three-D showcase for the architectural skills of MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard ("MJP" for short). Moreover, not a series of one-offs but as an integrated sequence calculated to make a positive contribution to the City Centre townscape.

### **Cathedral Priory Interpretation Centre**

A description appears in NEWSLETTER 8. This was the first MJP building to arrive. A particular feature is the new walling executed in pink Hollington ashlar with narrow joints.



*Youell House, seen from Priory Place. 'Letter box' window overlooking Cathedral Undercroft to the bottom left. Centre, acute-angled triangular oriel window.*

### **Youell House**

A partial description appears above in the comments appended to the account of the Undercrofts. This building has what might be called an 'aerofoil' roof - very shallow pitch, slight convex curve, and rounded projecting eaves.



*Ribbon factory. Original, centre left. Upper right, service turret. Below, 'glass box' restaurant.*

### **Ribbon Factory (extensions)**

There are two significant extensions. The first is a full height 'service turret' clad in natural finish timber - planking laid horizontally. The second is a ground floor projection providing the necessary floor area for a restaurant. It is a rectangular flat-roofed tinted-glass 'box' erected around an internal steel frame, with the service ducts operating decoratively as well as functionally at ceiling level.

### **Priory Place (Residential and Retail Development)**

The first visual impression is of the rendered finish to the three residential upper stories. One can hear it saying, "Economy". But this complex group repays further consideration.



*Priory Place. General view from Cathedral Priory Interpretation Centre. Stylish rectilinearity*

First, the plan. It is an irregular lozenge, broken at north and south. To the south, the break is wide and provides a broad 'window' looking up to the Interpretation Centre and its adjoining Cloister Garden, with views of Youell House and, further away, the steeples of Holy Trinity and St Michael's. To the north, the east and west sections of the

lozenge taper down to one-bay thickness, with quite a narrow slot between them. But this slot draws the eye through to what is beyond.

Then the detailing. The vocabulary is restricted, with most of the dressings being executed in natural-finish timber, the planking laid horizontally. The buildings are modelled through the use of balconies that both project from, and are recessed into, the main structure. Further detailing is executed in filigree metalwork. One flank wall is covered in a series of small triangular oriels, all framed in wood. There is a heavy, shadowing cornice over the ground floor shops, whose windows are recessed on a plane well behind.



*Priory Place. Detail showing timber-framed triangular oriels.*

The 'lozenge' plan encloses a pedestrian square. Not a dark gloomy space. Again, the layout provides the south-facing 'window' through which light streams. Nevertheless, there is enclosure, with the south side of the square being formed by a single-storey terrace wall with a water feature.

As a whole, this development emerges as an attractive ensemble designed with wit and accomplishment, and making a very positive contribution to the city-scape, especially when viewed from the north. Would it that many more developers were minded to patronise MJP or their compeers.

Back to that render. I hope it is body-coloured. Otherwise, it will be necessary to re-decorate, incurring cost (if it is done) or detriment to the city-scape (if it is not done).

### **Whittle Arches**

Two huge semi-translucent 'boomerang'-shaped arches link the northern extremity of the Priory Place development with the new forecourt of the Museum of British Road Transport. They bridge Hales Street. Underneath, a roadway is being reinstated to allow busses to circulate. The soffit skin is transparent and

reveals a network of small-scale structural members.

To your Editor's mind, these arches are a gesture that does not come off. They look flimsy and emptily histrionic, being purely ornamental. It would have been better to install a pedestrian footbridge providing grade separation from the new busway.



*Whittle Arches against the sunset. Spires of St Michael's and Holy Trinity to centre left. Priory Place to left. Transport Museum forecourt to bottom right.*

### **Museum of British Road Transport (frontage and forecourt)**

The old museum occupied a series of sheds lurking furtively and un-noticeably behind other buildings, to the detriment of its visitor numbers and the status of its important collections - Coventry was 'home town' to much of the British bicycle and motor-car industry.

The sheds are still there, but the Museum now has an imposing public facade - a big, long concave sweep of pale cream terracotta panneling with a single huge portal-framed window/entrance set asymmetrically. To the east climbs the plinth of a pedestrian ramp that emerges as a footbridge link to the neighbouring public gardens. This stylish frontage looks over a wide, open forecourt.



*Transport Museum. Ramp with 'measle rash' of red plaques is at centre right.*

### **Footbridge (linking Museum to Garden of International Friendship).**

This is a slender and extraordinary curvilinear feature executed in steel. It is heavily ornamented with perspex 'ribs' alternately frosted off-white and pale blue. It terminates at a handsome Hollington stone plinth in the new Garden of International Friendship. This plinth was designed by the landscape architects working with MJP. They made one significant and basic error - failing to incorporate a 'drip' detail. As a consequence, water has flooded the stonework face and given rise to algae and moss.

The pale blue perspex used on the bridge may have been an aesthetic mistake. It is a kind of constructional polychromy that does not work well in England.

### **Public Art**

Public art is a significant element in the Phoenix Project. And, on the whole, the least satisfactory.

One of its oddest manifestations is in the new Cloister Garden adjoining the Interpretation Centre. Movement triggers high-level speakers adjacent to the crowns of newly-planted pleached limes. Unintelligible voices speak. It is an unsettling experience. Is it art? Probably not. Another histrionic gesture that does not come off.



*View of Transport Museum and forecourt, showing ramp and part of the footbridge.*

The footbridge plinth against the Road Transport Museum facade is studded by a dense, irregular pattern of rectangular red plaques. These bear names (donors? Historical personages?). Paler patches show where many have come adrift. These red patches look gimcrack and detract from the elegance and suavity of the Museum frontage. To quote the Red Queen from Alice through the Looking Glass, "Off with their heads!"

The surfacing of the Museum forecourt is patterned with wiggly lines of slightly raised concrete. A centre channel in each wiggly line contains a thin pale blue translucent tube that lights up at night. Why such an effete colour as pale blue if there has to be colour at all? The wiggly lines represent the world's time zones. Dull round plaques spattered round them are inscribed with the names of the world's cities. A nice idea, but an apparently inconsequential one. And, despite the prevalent 'liability culture', a potential hazard to pedestrians. Not many marks out of ten.

### **Conclusions**

Even let down by its public art element, the Phoenix Initiative has resulted in a remarkable improvement of the architectural quality of the city-scape through four significant new buildings designed by MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard. Archaeological work on the site of St Mary's Cathedral Priory has led to a series of major discoveries that have been attractively conserved, presented and interpreted. Coventry City Council, as prime movers, are to be congratulated.

## **LETTER**

### **Irish Antiquities**

I can answer your queries in Newsletter 23 about antiquities marked on the Ordnance Survey of Ireland maps.

(1) *fulachtai fia* (literally "deer cooking places") are very numerous in Ireland and consist of mounds of heat-shattered stones and charcoal usually accompanied by a stone or timber-lined trough or pit. They date mainly from the Bronze Age but there are earlier and later examples. In Britain these sites are known as "burnt mounds" and also occur in large numbers: over 40 have been recorded in the Birmingham area and several of these have been radiocarbon-dated to between 1700-1000 BC. Although *fulachtai fia*/burnt mounds are traditionally interpreted as places where meat was cooked in

water boiled with hot stones, an alternative interpretation is that they are the debris from sauna-type bathing using steam produced by pouring water over hot stones.

(1) *cillins* are ecclesiastical enclosures of the early medieval period. They often consist of a small oratory, cell and graveyard. Many of them have been used in more recent times for the burial of unbaptised children.

*Dr Mike Hodder  
Archaeologist, Birmingham CC*

## **IHBC West Midlands GREEN CONSERVATION AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE**

*7th April 2005 at the Bishopwood Centre, Nr  
Stourport, Worcestershire*

### **PART II**

*As recorded by Vicci Cox, Branch Secretary*

#### ***Natural Building Technologies: Green Conservation; is it possible?***

*Neil May*

Internal dry lining is good for insulating buildings as long as it is well ventilated. Conventionally, dry lining is achieved by applying a vapour barrier to the plasterboard. This relies on ventilation being available behind the vapour barrier so that the moisture does not cause problems at ceiling or floor level. This can cause joist ends to rot and lead to a much bigger cold bridge in that particular area. National Building Technologies (NBT), Neil's company resolve this problem by using wood fibre board which is breathable. This is finished with a clay or lime plaster which allows the system to deal with half a litre of water in per square metre over a period of 60 days. This is ten times the normal hygroscopic capacity of conventional dry lining systems.

This simple system is warmer and helps disperse water from problem areas better than conventional systems. Only around 30% of a room's vapour is lost through its walls because there are usually lots of hygroscopic materials in the room. The system is around 20% cheaper than a conventional system. It is vital to reduce air changes if a building is going to be insulated at all.

#### ***Endomology and Micrology***

*Graham Baker, Peter Cox Property Services*

Peter Cox Property Services use resin and reinforcing sections to repair timber frame structures.

All buildings are surrounded by moisture. Dry rot and fungus does not respect any particular timber or age of timber and will take on anything in the right conditions. Dry rot can cause concealed decay (e.g. in the heart of the timber).

Death Watch Beetle, is thought to be dying out but it still continues to attack partially decayed hardwoods. They have a seven to ten year lifecycle and can cause significant problems in old buildings.

Historically, resins were difficult to use because they took a long time to go off. Now, the decayed timber can be removed by drilling into the timber from the end, steel strips are inserted and resin mixed with sawdust is put into the timber to hold the steel in place. This makes the joint stronger and heavier than the host timber. The steel is often prepared in their factory and then slotted down into the host timber. The major benefit of this system is

that timbers can be repaired in situ with very limited disturbance to the rest of the building, therefore decorative ceilings can remain etc. It also avoids the need for flitch plates. It is important that the 'donor timber' (providing the sawdust for the resin) is a good match for the timber on site so that an invisible repair can be carried out.

#### ***Why repair shakes, cracks and splits?***

Repairing problem shakes, cracks and splits can restrengthen timbers and help allay fears about the appearance of the timber (the timber often retains its strength but cracks, shakes and splits as it dries). Repairs can also improve fire resistance and reduce the risk of fungal attack. Repairs are carried out by nailing aluminium caps onto the side of the timber, and applying resin using a high pressure gun to fill cracks in the timber or using dowels to stitch the crack, shake or split together across the timber. This is a slow setting material, and care has to be taken to ensure that it does not run out or set too quickly. Excess resin is ground off. This resin is UV resistant so the system could be used externally. It is also used to hold glass rods which can be used in tight corners and are bendable.

Timber can often lead to undue caution in structural engineering reports because structural engineers are more familiar with more predictable materials such as steel.

Resin can help retain the maximum original fabric, but it is important to question whether historic fabric is being preserved if by doing so you change its makeup.

Resin is a product of the Petrochemical industry. Epoxies have no smell. There are limited concerns about the production and use of epoxies. However, Peter Cox's methods mean that mainly steel rather than resin is being inserted into the timbers.

Peter Cox was co-founded using Freddie Charles' principles of repair, but with resin it is unnecessary to damage the building in order to carry out a repair. A 'Freddie Charles repair' would repair the timber at the expense of much of the built fabric.

#### ***COMMENTS :***

*Robert Demas* – there is a reluctance to use these systems for conservation work because it is not reversible. However, the 'conventional' method of inserting new or replacement timber is equally irreversible and often more destructive as part of the original fabric is actually removed. It's not always necessary to use timber when laying timber onto a wallplate. This area is not usually visible so steel framing could be used. The benefit of this is that steel is a known quantity. There is still a threat that even treated timbers can still rot after they have been inserted.

*Noel Knight* – is it possible to adapt the resin so that it is the same grade or strength as the host timber? This will allow the resin insert to move with the timber to some extent. Resin does not move with moisture but will move because of thermal changes, as will timber but at a different rate.

#### ***Building Regulations and Historic Buildings***

*Ian Maddox, Building Control Manager,  
South Shropshire District Council*

The definition of conservation is "to keep safe or free from harm or decay and to keep alive in name and memory or to maintain the existing state".

#### ***Building Control; friend or foe?***

Building Control regulations aim to protect the health and safety and welfare of building users and to make

buildings convenient to use and fuel and power efficient. They only apply to building works, not repairs. Therefore, they are required when a material alteration is made to the structure of a building e.g. extend, change the layout in a way which affects the means of escape, alterations to ceilings (because of the threat of fire), providing disabled access, boilers, glazing etc if these items are made worse by work carried out. (although there is some provision for leniency on listed buildings).

#### *Interpreting requirements*

A 'reasonable' level of health and safety is required under parts K and M of the Building Regulations. Parts L and M look at the conservation of fuel and power and at accessibility.

The regulations have common words in them including 'reasonable', 'satisfactory', 'appropriate', 'sufficient', 'suitable' and 'adequate'. These can cause problems with interpretation across different councils and from different sections of the building trade. Unsatisfactory or non-compliant works can lead to enforcement action - this commonly occurs on escape issues. Variance is difficult here because failure to follow the regulations can lead to irreversible damage to historic fabric or at worst the loss of human life.

It is sensible to discuss projects with Building Control Officers to work out the ground rules. This may involve educating the officers to achieve greater flexibility with aspects of the regulations for listed buildings. The officers will often have a broad but shallow knowledge of issues affecting historic buildings. Providing written reports, design briefs, and other supporting information is very important to help them understand the significance of historic buildings. All parties need to approach the discussions with objectivity.

The documents below can all be contentious with historic building repair projects:

Approved document B = fire

Approved document E = sound

Approved document L = fuel and power

Approved document M = disabled access  
conservation

Approved documents are generic statements. It should be possible to conserve the special characteristics of a building without increasing the risk of deterioration to the fabrics or fittings of the building under these documents.

#### *Fire (Part B)*

Some variation is permitted when dealing with buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Need to consider a range of options to enhance the fire safety measure. Regulations should be applied in context, with flexibility. Fire detection systems can be fitted which reduce the need to upgrade historic fabric. Aspirating systems (which tests the air in the room for smoke particles) can work with radio detectors and the detectors often only need a 5mm hole in the ceiling. They have seen major developments in the last five years. They are non destructive and require limited wiring (only to the main control panel). They are easy to move and readily available from Vesda.

Intumescent (for treating floors, ceilings, doors etc) are invisible but improve fire resistance. Existing doors can be upgraded to meet fire standards (see the English Heritage advice document on this). Fire safety needs to be considered as an integrated system, not just the bare minimum. Hidden voids need to be thought about etc. Vertical fire boundaries in roof spaces can be

provided using lightweight materials but may prevent the spread of fire across large buildings or terraces.

#### *Sound (part E)*

May not be practical to achieve the sound levels advised in the document in historic buildings. The Conservation Officer should give guidance on sound levels. It is possible to attach information to sales documents on residential properties to make buyers aware of reduced sound insulation before they commit to the purchase of the property.

Airborne and impact signs hanging off shops below houses are a common source of noise complaints. Floors should ideally be insulated to reduce sound travel but this could be problematic especially in a property with low ceilings (especially if suspended ceilings are also being inserted). Most problems come from flying freeholds where one property 'flies' over another so sound is easily transmitted between the two properties.

Chimneys are also classic paths for sound as are steel or ironwork, hidden voids, panelling, sub-walls, straight joints, lack of vertical separation between buildings in the roof-space and flexing of structural members. Wherever there works are carried out to a building, it is necessary to carry out pre-completion sound testing. Testing should ideally also be done prior to the commencement of works so that problem areas can be targeted and resolved in a non-destructive manner. There are companies that can do this, but they should be accredited. See [www.noise.co.uk](http://www.noise.co.uk) for more information.

#### *Access for the disabled (part M)*

Section 0.18 notes that historic buildings are a finite resource with cultural importance. The Act does not expect that every building will be capable of meeting the regulations but there is an anticipation that the needs of proposed users will be considered. Procedural or service methods can overcome issues of compliance (eg a bell is fitted at the front of the building so that a member of staff will come out to assist the user). Compensatory measures should be considered (eg provide level access at the rear of the building if it is impossible at the front). An access statement should be prepared so that the physical constraints of the building are identified and if the method of dealing with them is assessed. This can be given to potential users in advance of their visit (eg on website for a museum)

#### *Conservation of fuel and power (part L)*

These requirements only apply to new works but it is anticipated that buildings will be upgraded if possible. When dealing with existing elements, anything showing an improvement on the existing situation will meet the requirements. It is anticipated that works will embrace the spirit of the Act where feasible but without compromising the integrity of the building. A written statement outlining the effects of the long term impact on the fabric should be provided.

From 1st April 2005, all newly installed boilers need to be condensing units unless it is very difficult to install them. Should be able to avoid this requirement if necessary by providing a written statement. Oil fired boilers will also have to be condensing by 2007.

#### QUESTIONS :

Are building regs required for replacement windows even if they are like-for-like? Yes  
In the context of the regs, what is a 'historic building'? Goes beyond listed building, advice of

conservation officer on significance should be sufficient to allow flexibility of regulations.

It is sensible to encourage repair, not replacement so that the regulations do not need to be met.

Use energy calculations to assess the holistic performance of the building.

(Robert Demaus): note that fungal attack is common in converted buildings especially where sound insulation quilts have been laid. This is a good reason for not laying quilts. The problem with putting 'buyer beware' notes on buildings is that developers need to be able to sell with confidence.

### **General discussion about the whole day**

Re. Peter Cox presentation: minimum intervention technique. For people who have not dealt with dry rot or timber repair companies, bear in mind that they can cause a lot of damage.

Be wary of inserting damp proof membranes because waterproof plaster is applied inside which can cause major problems. Damp proof membranes for timber framed buildings are at best useless and at worst damaging.

Rising damp is fairly rare, most damp comes from leaking rainwater goods, concrete paths around the building and high ground levels.

Do we want to fill houses with toxins? This is an environmental and human issue. Our nerve endings are very similar to those of insects. Allergies etc can be linked between us, so it is quite possible that humans can be affected by toxins designed for insects. It is now difficult to dispose of treated timber because disposal sites won't accept it.

Patrick Borer: Borax is used in green building. It has low remaining toxicity but unsure how effective it is.

Robert Demaus: Timber quality is also a major factor, larch is better than standard timber. Must ensure the heartwood is in the timber. Fastgrowing timber (mostly grown for paper) is almost completely softwood. This causes problems.

Colin Richards: Peter Cox defended retaining the historic floor of a building (which Colin was not involved with) when they were asked to replace it.

PG: there's a place for resin repairs and other places where he wouldn't use it. SPAB against this treatment as they prefer to expose the repair.

Noel Knight: Cracks should be able to breathe for their full depth.

Noel Knight: differing strength between kiln dried and naturally dried timbers. Oak continues to change over 500 years. Furniture makers find that kiln dried timbers tend to behave differently in their machines. British Standards do not distinguish between strengths of timbers. They can be more stable if there is some air drying but oak becomes more difficult to work as it ages. The same is true with Douglas Fir (very hard)

John Yates: the performance of historic buildings in should be considered in energy terms. If all the historic plaster is stripped off to upgrade the building ecologically, the embodied energy of the plaster will be lost. It would be preferable to retain the historic plaster and upgrade over it.

John Yates: Part L does not seem to account for embodied energy. Other codes such as the Building Research Establishment Ecohomes paper do make these considerations. If a wall was very thin, would Neil May's system still work? Would the dewpoint change? (His system relied on condensation not forming on the insulation but in wicking it away)

Concern about people using historic buildings as a reason to over-ride building regulations. They already have existing embodied energy so it is a

nonsense to replace original fabric for the sake of a small fuel saving, just turn the heating down.

Ventilation is a major issue because too little can lead to mould, dust mites, etc. There is a conflict between healthy levels of ventilation and heat loss. There is always inevitable heat loss. The ideal is to recycle air and extract the heat which would effectively air condition buildings.

New buildings have passive ventilation by design but can we do this on historic buildings? Possibly use old chimneys etc. Can the ducts etc be lost within the historic building? Building Regulations require a provision for energy conservation to be made but do not stipulate how. New buildings are constructed airtight and then ventilated where required so in poor weather they can be sealed off and in good weather they can be opened up and ventilated.

There are now great concerns about mould so it's necessary to continuously ventilate buildings. The next set of building regulations will include a requirement to test air changes. This is a subjective science. Achieving this in a relatively small part of the building stock with cultural significance (at most, 10%) is difficult. Is it so necessary to get so hung up on it?

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## **INFORMING THE PUBLIC**

### **The Editor**

On 12th November 2005 the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust held a seminar, title SAVING OUR BUILT HERITAGE, for over 30 delegates representing a number of local history societies and kindred organisations. The object of the Seminar was 'empowerment' - giving local enthusiasts the information they needed to take a more positive role in the preservation, enhancement and interpretation of the local built heritage.

Accordingly, the event was built around three presentations by experts - all of whom had close connections with WMHBT.

Your Editor was there as one of WMHBT's volunteers.

### **Statutory Protection**

Presentation 1 was given by Jayne Pilkington, a Conservation Officer at Dudley MBC (and an IHBC Branch member). She explained the Listing process, describing the criteria that needed to be met, and stating the form that a request for Listing should take. She also drew attention to some potentially alarming aspects of the process. The basic Listing criteria had remained virtually the same for 50 years. Far too many Local Authorities were working on the basis of Statutory Lists dating from the 1970s or 1980s, meaning that they were at least 20 or 30 years out of date. And the 'cut off' date of 1840 meant that many buildings of considerable industrial history significance did not have a good chance of Statutory protection.

She also described what was possible for 'Local Listing'. This did not involve formal statutory protection but was operated by many Local Authorities who had included appropriate policies in their Development Plans. The policies meant that buildings selected for Local Listing could be safeguarded to a degree by the refusal of Planning Permission for schemes that damaged or destroyed such buildings. Local history societies should tell their Local Authority about buildings they believed to merit Local Listing.

### **Finding the Money**

Presentation 2 was given by David Trevis-Smith, WHMBT's consultant Project Director. He outlined

the potential sources of grant aid and other finance for projects involving physical preservation and interpretation. The major player was the Heritage Lottery Fund ("HLF") which had a range of one-step small grants available that were well within the reach of organisations like local history societies. Despite being labelled "small" these grants could nevertheless produce 5-figure sums. Other sources included English Heritage and the regional development agency (Advantage West Midlands locally) as well as the Local Authorities. There were also a number of private grant-making charities who should not be forgotten.

One thing that organisations should never forget was logging all volunteer time put in. This had a monetary value assigned to it and could be used as 'match funding' in connection with (say) grant applications to HLF. Volunteer time included meetings and work done at home as well as time spent by working parties on site. For organisations with charitable status another major player was Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) which offered a series of grants as well as substantial loans providing project working capital. For organisations such as WMHBT it was desirable to make use of both HLF and AHF grant, as one often covered aspects that the other didn't. It should be understood that it was the funding availability that that determined the project timetable.

### **The Physically Possible**

Presentation 3 was by Derek Clarke, Architect, of S T Walker and Duckham, Architects. He had been involved in WMHBT's recently-completed Harris & Pearson project in Brierley Hill, Dudley. He described the processes that needed to be adopted if repair and conversion schemes were to retain the maximum amount of genuine historic fabric.

A first essential was a detailed close-up inspection of the whole building fabric. In the case of the celebrated Grade I Listed Greenwich Hospital (architect Christopher Wren) the inspection necessitated the hire of a very tall telescopic mast. Such close inspection with careful record-taking identified the actual repair needs, which then had to be tackled in a detailed architect's specification. This involved a precise visualisation of the tools, materials and actual processes needed. The specification was not a final end product, either, for it needed to be the subject of discussion with the craftsmen assigned by the contractor to the job, to ensure that they understood what was needed and had the opportunity to contribute to the final solution from their considerable experience.

Skilled repair in accordance with specification gave a building a new lease of life with the minimum loss of authenticity. What was done was usually difficult to detect - unlike a local case in which an early C18 brick building had been so crudely re-pointed as to have its character seriously damaged. There was scope for using modern materials matching the original - geologist advice was essential for procuring stone of identical properties - or going for creative use of 'spare parts' from the same building or elsewhere.

### **Local Case Studies**

The Seminar lunch break was not an opportunity for relaxation. Delegates, exhibitors, sponsors and Trust volunteers had the option of making two local site visits to view - and consider - two heritage preservation problems.

*Stourbridge Football Club* occupied premises which had been built as a War Memorial in 1928. Society researchers had identified the principal donor, the architect, the contractor and principal off-

site suppliers. This sports ground was terraced above a local main road behind a retaining wall built of local blast-furnace slag, with two pairs of Neo-Classical entrance gates. The main entrance was through a Neo-Classical triumphal arch. The entrances led to purpose-built turnstiles, which retained their original equipment, in one case under a stylish Roman-tile hipped roof. Tucked away between them were the original 1928 lavatories, complete with open courts, glazed bricks and cast-iron 'Ladies' and 'Gents' plaques. Informed opinion by some of the professionals present was that the degree of survival together with full documentation made a good case for Statutory Listing.

An obliging site security man was willing to allow on-site access to the abandoned and derelict *Foster and Rastrick Foundry* building of the early C19, Listed Grade II\*. One of the first commercially-built British steam locomotives - the *Stourbridge Lion* - had been constructed here. It proved to be a very large two-storey brick building under a vast, spreading hipped roof with a louvred ridge. Inside, there were no partitions, just a huge space littered with the remains of machinery under an extraordinary filigree iron and steel roof. WMHBT was in discussion with a consortium of local amenity interests in developing a future for this historically important but seriously threatened structure.

### **Comments**

The three presentations were reinforced by a series of displays - six by local societies and the seventh being WMHBT's own current travelling exhibition. Delegates were able to question the experts informally and to network amongst themselves and with the exhibitors and Trust volunteers.

Feedback at the end of the day was extremely positive. The delegates felt that the three presentations had been very helpful in materially different ways, and they strongly supported a similar follow-up event next year. Several said that they would like to bring other society members back with them.

The West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust will now be looking at a similar event for 2006.

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## **REVIEW**

### **ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE FUND – Annual Review 2004-05**

*Publisher:* Architectural Heritage Fund ("AHF")

*Published:* October 2005

*Availability:* direct from AHF - [www.ahfund.org.uk](http://www.ahfund.org.uk)

The AHF is a QUANGO that provides low-interest loans, grants and advice to registered charities specialising in the preservation of the UK's built heritage. Founded in Architectural Heritage Year 1977 on the basis of a Government grant, it acts as a national 'revolving fund' - making loans and receiving repayments with interest and reinvesting in further loans. The 2004-05 Annual Review is largely devoted to a description of the projects supported by AHF during that time. However, AHF also looks to the Government for continuing top-up funding and as regards the needs of its client charitable trusts in relationship with the UK's 'At Risk' built heritage. The introductory sections refer to a general decline in the national resources made available for continuing preservation work, and to discussions with Government emphasising the 'regeneration' capability of such activity.

On individual projects, the Review gives a lot of pictorial and editorial coverage to the recently-completed Harris & Pearson Building in Brierley Hill,

Dudley, undertaken by the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust with AHF finance. No less than 10 other projects in the West Midlands Region are given coverage. These are either under development or on site.

Under development are :

Perrot's Folly (II\*) Birmingham;  
12 George Street (II) Wolverhampton;  
United Reformed Church (II) Whitchurch, Shropshire;  
Tean Hall (II\*) Upper Tean, Staffordshire;  
Corngreaves Hall (II\*) Cradley Heath, Sandwell;  
Whittington Castle (SAM & I) Nr Oswestry.

On site are:

Friar's Walk Schoolrooms (II) Burton-on-Trent;  
Hermon Chapel (II\*) Oswestry - previously featured in the Branch 'Churches' seminar a year or two ago;  
Jackfield Tile Museum phase III (II\*) Ironbridge Gorge;  
Curzon Street Station (I) Birmingham.

Two of the completed projects described involved LA CPO and 'back-to-back' transfer to a Trust as a necessary action to 'liberate' a building for preservation. Conservation Officers who have active Trusts operating in their area therefore have a valuable facility at their disposal.

*The Editor*

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## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

During 2006-7, the Ironbridge Institute offers the following opportunities, each lasting two days and costing £170. All take place at the Ironbridge Institute, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Salop.

### PRACTICAL WORKSHOPS 2006

7-8 April 1. *The use of lime in historic buildings*. The lime cycle, lime mixes practical hands on sessions pointing, brick laying and plastering.

21-22 April 2. *The conservation and repair of stone*.

12-13 May 3. *Ferrous and non ferrous metals in construction*. Historical background, methods of production, sources of supply and conservation techniques.

26-27 May 4. *The conservation of twentieth century buildings*. The history, use, decay and repair of twentieth century buildings.

9-10 June 5. *Conservation of non structural and structural timber* in historic buildings.

23-24 June 6. *Ceramic building materials*. The production and restoration of brick, terracotta and tiles.

7-8 July 7. *Recording historic buildings*. Practical course in recording techniques led by Ironbridge Archaeology

8-9 Sept 8. *Large object conservation*. Problems of storage, conservation and ongoing use.

20-21 Oct 9. *Introduction to traditional estate management*. History and methods of coppicing, hedge laying and small wood management.

### LECTURE SERIES 2006-7

6-7th Oct Historic Environment Conservation : *Defects and remedial measures*.

13-14 Oct Historic Environment Conservation : *The Historic Environment*. An introduction to Landscape Characterisation, the management of designated natural landscapes, the management of historic parks and gardens.

10-11th Nov Historic Environment Conservation: *Sustainability and adaptation*. Buildings at Risk and reuse, urban regeneration and brownfield development. Integrating Part L, services and DDA requirements into historic buildings .

17-18th Nov Historic Environment Conservation: *Conservation ethics and philosophy*.

1-2nd Dec Historic Environment Conservation: *Conservation legislation*.

8-9th Dec Historic Environment Conservation : *Financing Conservation*.

12-13th Jan 2007 Historic Environment Conservation: *Project and disaster management*.

19-20th Jan 2007 Historic Environment Conservation : *Specifications and Conservation Plans*.

9-10th Feb 2007 Historic Environment Conservation: *Heritage Management*.

16-17th Feb 2007 Historic Environment Conservation : *Understanding British Buildings*

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## EDITOR'S SHOPPING LIST

Your Editor welcomes, for the next Edition of the Newsletter (No 25), to go out in the Spring of 2006, the following:

- ❖ Personal news of moves, retirements, arrivals;
- ❖ Copies of announcements and press releases;
- ❖ Case Studies;
- ❖ Letters;
- ❖ Articles on Law and Techniques;
- ❖ Book Reviews.

Material for inclusion in No 25 should, preferably, arrive not later than the middle of March 2006.

Please contact your *Newsletter Editor* :

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*Creative townscape. Priory Place, Coventry. The eye is led to the steeple of St Michel's, by way of Youell House and the water feature against the terrace wall of the Interpretation Centre garden.*