

FRIENDS OF THE GREAT HALL AND ARCHIVE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL

NEWSLETTER JULY 2012

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Barts Hospital is a remarkable institution with its history dating back to 1123. Longevity alone has led to an outstanding collection of archival material, and continuous usage and adaptation to the preservation of historical architectural gems, notably the church of St. Bartholomew's the Less, and the 18th century James Gibbs hospital buildings with their great works of art. These have all survived as an integral part of a modern hospital providing the highest quality of care with all the latest scientific and medical equipment and technology. Heritage and modern medicine are not always easy bedfellows, and it is no surprise that the provision of healthcare for today's patients is bound to take priority over expenditure and time spent on art and heritage treasures.

It is for this reason that Gerald Libby, Chairman of the Archives Committee and Professor of Anatomy at the Royal Academy of Art, developed the idea of establishing the "Friends of the Great Hall and Archive of St. Bartholomew's Hospital" to act as a focus for the preservation of all that is valuable in our heritage, and to ensure that the North Wing and its Great Hall become more accessible and usable for educational, cultural and celebratory events, whilst promoting friendship, appreciation and enjoyment of these treasures.

He gathered three friends, Dr Heather Hackett, Alison Knapp and myself, who became known as the 'Gang of Four', and with the help of others and a few good dinners, the Friends began and organised some well supported events (see p.3). Realising the need for a more formal structure and organisation, the Gang has expanded to a 'Steering Group' (see p.2) and I am delighted that the additional input of energy and talent has brought momentum and action to the Friends.

I am most grateful and heartened by the enthusiasm shown by the Friends, and especially by the new Steering Group members. Special thanks go to Aneta Saunders from the Barts and The London Charity, without whom we would never have got off the ground.

The effects of three well organised Steering Group meetings are demonstrated by the welcome production of this Newsletter. Details of future events, both ours and other Barts charities, along with news about "The North Wing Project" (see p.2) will feature in the Newsletter. The appointment of a part-time Membership Secretary will enable us to review the Database of potential members and put in place a system for maintaining our records. In addition, a website is under development.

THE SUCCESS OF THE FRIENDS DEPENDS ON NUMBERS SO PLEASE DO COMPLETE THE MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM INCLUDED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER. Please join us and help maintain the momentum-and watch this space!

MARCUS SETCHELL

FUTURE EVENTS

5th Annual Archive Lecture

Thursday 8th November 2012

"Staircase Wit: Hogarth's Paintings at St. Bartholomew's Hospital" by Robin Simon.
Details in September.

Early Spring 2013

Dinner in the Great Hall with entertainment from Edward Fox, Joanna David and Lucy Parham.



MESSAGE
FROM THE
CHAIRMAN

THE
STEERING
GROUP

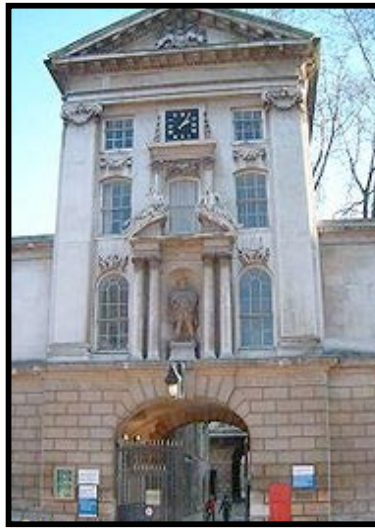
MEMBERSHIP

EVENTS

HERITAGE

The North Wing Heritage Project

This project is at the heart of the establishment of "The Friends" which exists to support, protect and nurture the architectural and cultural heritage of a world famous medical institution. It is heartening to report the agreement and progress in developing long-term plans to separate the North Wing and other heritage buildings of Barts from being a burden to NHS resources, and transfer their management to some form of Heritage Trust. All are agreed that the heritage buildings, contents and archives should remain firmly related to the care of the sick in the unique historical and cultural context of Barts. The process and detail will take time to complete, but there is an absolute commitment by all parties to see this through.



STEERING GROUP

Dr Julian Axe

(Honorary Treasurer) Former Secretary of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College.

Dr Julius Bourke

Barts and the London graduate (2001). Clinical Lecturer and Honorary Consultant Liaison Psychiatrist at Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry.

Mr Andrew Douglas

Chief Executive, Barts and the London Charity

Dr Heather Hackett

Barts Graduate (1973). Former Consultant Anaesthetist at St. Bartholomew's. Founder member of the Friends.

Miss Alison Knapp

Barts trained nurse. Has held senior Nursing position at Barts. Founder member of the Friends.

Professor Gerald Libby

(Vice-Chairman) Barts. (Qualified 1967). Professor of Gastrointestinal Psychiatry at Barts and Professor of Anatomy at the Royal Academy of Arts. Founder member of the Friends.

Miss Mary Morgan

(Convenor) Former Director of Public Information, House of Lords and previously Head of the Parliamentary Office of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the UK.

Mr Marcus Setchell

(Chairman) Cambridge and Barts graduate (1967). Currently Surgeon-Gynaecologist to HM The Queen. Former consultant Obstetrician/Gynaecologist at St. Bartholomew's and Homerton Hospitals and the Whittington NHS trust. Chairman of the Voluntary Board of Governors, St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Founder member of the Friends.

Mr Jeeves Wijesuriya

Student Association Representative.

Lady (Vera) Wright

Former Nurse specialising in Nurse Education and event-led charitable fundraising.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS.

It was recognised at the beginning that it would be some time before the Friends would be ready to become a body to raise sufficient funds for substantial restoration and preservation work. Our modest aim was to demonstrate that there are significant numbers of people who really care about the treasures of Barts and what they represent. The strength of Friendship has already helped to prevent the break-up of our heritage and secure its future. In return the Friends organisation was committed to providing interesting and enjoyable cultural events in an environment that would encourage personal friendships and support for the aims and objectives of The Friends.

We are now in a position to formalise membership arrangements. We can no longer rely on free postage, printing and administration, to run our growing organisation and develop its aims.

Along with this Newsletter there is a Membership Registration Form, and Subscription Payment Slip. Please do fill this in and return it as soon as possible, as well as forwarding it to your friends and anyone with an interest in architectural and medical heritage to encourage them to become Friends.

FRIENDS' EVENTS IN 2011

In April 2011, the 'Friends of the Great Hall and Archive' was inaugurated at a unique evening entertainment in the Great Hall, when Edward Fox (pictured right with Alison Knapp) performed excerpts from his one-man show, "**Trollope in Barsetshire**". It was a magnificent performance, and even those who are not aficionados of Trollope were spellbound. He also gave us some delightful poetry and prose readings, some with a medical bias, from Betjeman, Keats and others. The conviviality and warmth of the buffet supper afterwards demonstrated that "The Friends" know what friendship means.



Our second event incorporated the 4th Annual Archive Lecture and a Celebratory Dinner. Peter Schmitt (see right picture), Surveyor of the Fabric of the Royal Academy, gave a brilliant lecture, entitled "**The Rebuilding of St. Bartholomew's Hospital by James Gibbs**". The 19th century **Pathology Museum** (bottom right) provided a fitting setting for this academic, but highly entertaining lecture. The medieval and Tudor buildings of Barts had been largely destroyed in the Great Fire, but it was not until the early 18th century that the vision to create buildings worthy of the Hospital led to commissioning Gibbs to design first the North Wing and then the remainder of the buildings around the Square. Peter opened our eyes to many fascinating details of Gibbs' architecture, and his prolific contributions in London and the country at large.



A celebratory dinner followed in the Great Hall; during which, Edward Fox and Joanna David gave a delicious 'Interlude of Poetry'. We are so fortunate that Edward and Joanna have fallen in love with the Great Hall, as have the Friends with them and that they are prepared to continue to support us in our drive to preserve and nurture our heritage treasures. We are hugely grateful.



Portrait of Professor Dame Lesley Rees

In case anyone doesn't know, a young medical student called Lesley Davis-Dawson arrived at Barts in 1960. In 1989, now Professor Lesley Rees, she was the first (and only) woman to become Dean of Barts Medical College.

In May 2012, a portrait of Dame Lesley by Theo Ramos, was unveiled by her uncle, the conductor Sir Colin Davis, watched by 100 friends and former colleagues. It was a wonderful party, and a moving occasion to celebrate her achievements and dedication to Barts. The striking portrait hangs in the Treasurer's Room, adjacent to the Great Hall.

Many of her friends donated towards the 'Portrait Fund', which is still open. Should this be over-subscribed, the fund will be used to commission paintings of other distinguished Barts women and men, who have made outstanding contributions, so continuing a long-established tradition.

The Fountain

Much energy and hard work has gone into raising funds and getting commitment to rescuing the Fountain from an architectural graveyard. Over the summer, the Fountain will be cleaned and restored. It is due to be returned in September, when the first refreshing fountain tinkles should be celebrated by the popping of champagne. Much of the funding for this work has been donated by the Fountain Club, with some matching funding from the NHS Trust, Barts and the London Charity and the PFI for the new buildings.



Barts the Less

Our much-loved 12th century church of St. Bartholomew's the Less, has been a place of great solace to patients, staff and visitors for centuries, as well as carrying memories of baptism, marriage, funerals and memorials for many. Recently it has been going through hard times, as a result of withdrawal of funding of the Rector's salary, and the shrinking of the parish population. The Bishop of London has made temporary arrangements for the church to come under the wing of Barts the Great, but in the long term its relationship with the Hospital and the Hospitaller (Chaplain to the Hospital, and traditionally custodian of Barts the Less) will need to be protected.



NEWS FROM other BARTS CHARITIES

The Guild of St. Bartholomew's Hospital (League of Friends) is 100 years old this year. Amongst other celebrations they are holding a Centenary Concert in the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct on Thursday 4th October at 7 pm. The Barts Chamber Choir and Trafalgar Sinfonia Orchestra will perform works by Handel. Details about the concert and ticket sales can be found online:

<https://barts.tsd-aff.com/>

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