



The Friends exist to ensure that Shakespeare's Church is preserved for future generations. It also provides an opportunity for individuals to offer their support by joining us as custodians of this rich heritage.



Contacting The Friends

The office continues to be based in the Parish Centre of Holy Trinity Church. It is normally open from 9.00am to 1.00pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and from 9.00am until 4.30pm on Thursday. At other times messages may be left either on the answer phone or by email. We will respond to any messages as soon as possible. Normally this is by the next working day. Please do keep those messages coming. It is always good to hear from members or those wishing to become new Friends.

"I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul remembering my good friends"

Richard II, William Shakespeare

Will's Quill

ISSUE FOUR

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE FRIENDS OF SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCH

We need to raise in excess of £2.5 million

A message from the Chairman

In 2005 we are celebrating our third birthday. During our first three years we have spent nearly £200,000 on supporting restoration work in Shakespeare's Church; most notably in the chancel. What is clear is that we would not have been able to do this without your help, and I hope you will continue to support us in the years to come as we strive to raise the funds required to fully refurbish Shakespeare's Church and to make it a building fit for its heritage and for the twenty-first century.

Besides celebrating our third birthday and the success of the first stage of the development we shall be taking a look forward to establish a carefully planned funding programme to meet the future needs of Holy Trinity Church. Current projections suggest figures beyond initial estimates and now close to a total of £2.5m. Present indications are that a phased programme is the wisest way forward. We are working on it and I hope to be able to give you more detailed information in our next newsletter.

We are planning to continue to build on our successes in a variety of ways, which you can read about in the rest of this newsletter. We also enclose some leaflets - one about our activities, one about our American links (please pass it to an American friend) and another about legacies. In our first three years, we have been fortunate to receive support

from members through legacies. These welcome gifts have been used directly and immediately to support restoration. It is perhaps worth emphasising that giving a legacy to the Friends of Shakespeare's Church is a tax-efficient way of restoring and enhancing the church and Shakespeare's heritage for future generations to enjoy. If you are planning your will, do please consider including a bequest for Shakespeare's Church.

During these few years that I have been associated with the Friends of Shakespeare's Church, I have seen our organisation grow from a gleam in the eye of a group of keen volunteers to an efficient, professional organisation. True, there remains much still to do but increasingly we are moving into a strong position to continue supporting the restoration and survival of Shakespeare's Church and raise even more, much-needed money. None of this would have been possible without the help and support of our members, donors, wonderful office staff and hard-working volunteers.

Thank you for being a part of our success and I look forward to seeing you at one of our events this year.

With every good wish,

Philip Cheshire
Chairman

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A word from the Vicar

Being President of the Friends is always a privilege and brings many different experiences.

One day it might be sharing a meal with Lord Hurd and hearing his fascinating first-hand reminiscences of some of the great figures of recent world history.

Another day I might be precariously picking my way up rickety ladders through piles of brick dust into the heart of our spire with a CNN film crew, or with some equally intrepid Trustees of Stratford Town Trust, to inspect at first hand the urgent work that needs doing on our wonderful tower and spire. Luckily I have quite a good head for heights, but even I get a strange feeling inside as I look up at the steeplejack's ladders going right up to the top of the spire from the inside, leaning back as they climb hundreds of feet into that space. The CNN report was seen all over the world and is already bringing in some new international friends.

Our challenge is to conserve and improve this wonderful building for present and future generations to enjoy. It is our privilege together to be part of that great task.

With every good wish and blessing.

Martin Gorick

Vicar of Holy Trinity
and President of the Friends

Trustees

President – Revd. Martin Gorick

Chairman – Dr Philip Cheshire

Vice-Chairman – Vince Seaman

Treasurer – Brian Vince

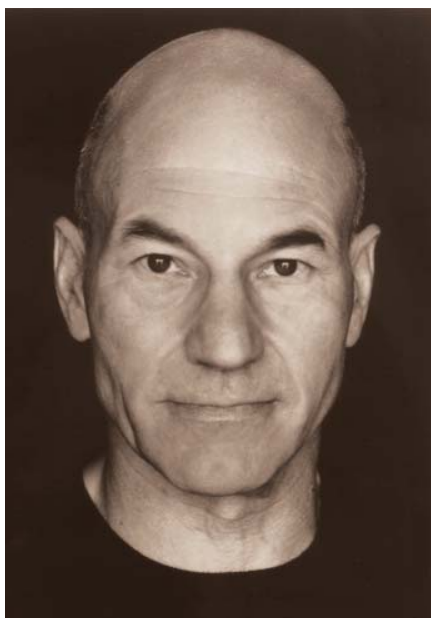
Trustee – Tony Bird

Trustee – Jane Hornby

Trustee – Catherine Penn

Trustee – Tim Raistrick

Clerk to the Trustees – Josephine Walker



Welcome To Our Newest Patron ...

boldly going where no patron has gone before

Our newest Patron, Mr Patrick Stewart, OBE, is well known on both sides of the Atlantic. Stratfordians remember his many performances here with the Royal Shakespeare Company from 1966 onwards, memorable for a steely Oberon and a seedy Shylock among a host of fine performances. Then, following a spell with the Royal National Theatre in the mid 80s, he went to Los Angeles where his role as Captain Jean-Luc Picard in the Star Trek series brought him international fame. He has appeared in a number of blockbuster films and is currently appearing at the Apollo Theatre in London in an acclaimed production of *A Life in the Theatre*.

He has apparently expressed a wish to return to Shakespeare: there are several of the great roles as yet unperformed. So, we very much hope to see him performing in Stratford again soon.

Patrons

Lord Alexander of Weedon QC

Sir Eric Anderson

The Right Reverend Colin Bennetts,
Bishop of Coventry

Mr Jasper Britton

Dame Judi Dench

Mr Martin Dunne,

Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire

Mr Patrick Stewart OBE

Funds raised so far by this year's events:

Matthew Penn

... £2750

Douglas Hurd

... £517

Spring in Your Step

... £192

Rioja Evening

... £535

Supper Party

... £222

If you would like to host an event on behalf of the Friends, please call Josephine Walker on 01789 290128

Future Events

Over the weekend of 5-7 August Holy Trinity Church will be a mass of flowers! The Avon Evening Flower Club is holding a festival of Music and Floral Art, with displays from flower clubs from all over the area. The theme will be the 'The Proms' and the festival will conclude with a 'Songs of Praise' service of thanksgiving at 6pm on Sunday 7th.

The organisers are very generously donating their proceeds to the Friends, so it would be splendid if as many of you as possible could come at some moment over that weekend to enjoy the sights, sounds and fragrances, and support what promises to be a stunning occasion.

Why more than £2.5 million?

... and that's only a conservative estimate

- Over a century of under-investment in basic maintenance
- Environmental damage to stonework
- Insect infestation
- Inappropriate repair work in the past

The most urgent areas for repair and renovation are:

- The tower and spire
- The north nave clerestory windows
- The north chancel roof
- The pointing of external stonework

Quiz! Quiz! Quiz! Your Friends Need You!

The three Stratford FRIENDS groups, (Friends of Shakespeare's Church, Friends of the RSC and Friends of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust) are holding a joint QUIZ evening on Thursday 15th September 2005, in the Queen Elizabeth Hall at the Shakespeare Centre in Henley Street at 7.30p.m.

Each group of FRIENDS will be providing a team of four to represent them, and the questions are being set partly on general knowledge and partly on the specialist subjects of the three organisations (the Church, the Theatre and the Shakespeare Houses). The Friends of Shakespeare's Church have two team members so far, but need two more. Please, will anyone who would be prepared to join in this light-hearted evening get in touch with the Friends office on 01789 290128.

We also need an audience to cheer on our respective teams. I expect many of you will be members of more than one group - that's fine. Come and cheer them all on!

Tickets will be on sale from the Church Shop from 8 August: £7 (adult) and £4 (under 16) to Friends in advance and £8 / £5 to non-Friends.

And finally, we need tombola prizes. Do you have anything to spare? Please bring it to the Parish Office - it will be gratefully received.

E-Bay

Here is a way to raise funds for the Friends and de-clutter your house at the same time!

We know that Stratford people always respond generously to appeals for unwanted items. In recent years Harvest appeals at Holy Trinity for clocks raised over £1000 and unwanted jewellery over £2000. E-Bay is a well-established international internet-based auction site with well over one million users in the UK alone. We are planning to set up a system whereby Stratford people can pledge a gift of any unwanted item that might have some value. A detailed description and photo of an item to be sold are put onto the auction site, and funds raised will be deposited in a special Friends account.

We will let you know when we have made all the arrangements, and will give full details of how to proceed. In the meantime, please look out some of those things that you no longer want, but cannot quite bring yourself to throw away. They might raise money for the Friends!

Legacies

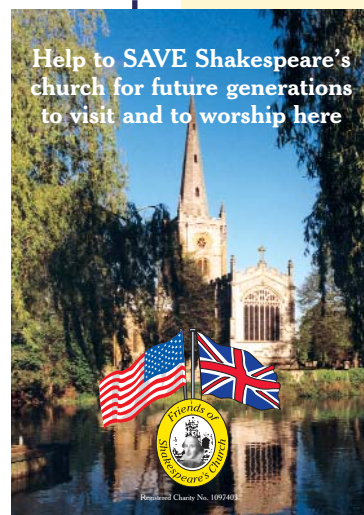
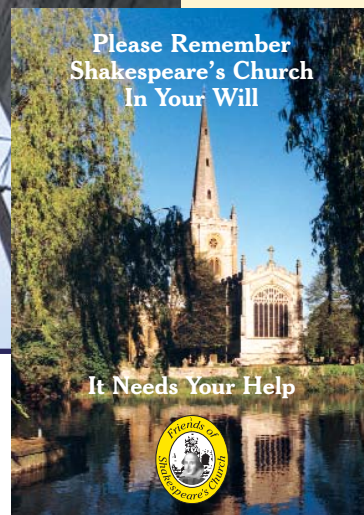
Wouldn't it be nice to think that you could give further support to the work of the Friends? You could do this by remembering the Friends of Shakespeare's Church in your will. Leaving us a legacy is simple to do and ensures that you will be giving additional help towards the restoration and long-term maintenance of Holy Trinity Church.

Family and friends obviously come first when making your will but if in addition you could leave a final gift to the Friends you would enable us to continue our urgent restoration work into the future. We should be extremely grateful to be remembered in your will, whatever the sum of money bequeathed.

A legacy leaflet is enclosed with this newsletter, or can be provided by the Friends' office if desired.

America

We have just devised a promotional leaflet for potential American supporters. If you have contacts, family, friends to whom you might send a leaflet, or ideas for promotion of the Friends in the United States, do please get in touch.



Events Diary

We are currently organising a range of events to help raise funds for The Friends.

Details will be available on our website: www.shakespeareschurch.org

If you have any suggestions for future events or wish to advertise your fundraising event, please contact the Office on 01789 290128 or email: friends@shakespeareschurch.org

Reviews of Events, happenings, performances, activities ...

Yes, we are a fund-raising body. But that doesn't make us too earnest, we hope. Lots of good events this year, brought about by YOUR involvement. Here are some of the highlights. But we need more ideas, contributions, suggestions. Please come up with some!

Matthew Penn *organ supremo*

At 7pm on the 1st April Matthew Penn regained his world record for non-stop playing of the organ. In the end he played the Holy Trinity organ continuously for 33 hours and 1 minute. The supervising authorities allowed him a fifteen-minute break every eight hours, and he had to play specific items of written music: he wasn't allowed to improvise or doodle.

His stamina was amazing, and his friends, colleagues and fellow parishioners, as well as passing visitors, kept him going with enthusiastic support and encouragement. By the last half hour the considerable number of supporters sang along with every hymn he played, and cheered his final achievement.

Matthew was generous enough to donate the proceeds of his marathon to the Friends. We feel a mixture of gratitude and awe at his feat, but we hope for his sake that he will not need to defend his title again too soon!

Douglas Hurd: *Thoughts for Today's Troubled World*

Lord Hurd of Westwell gave a reflective and considered appraisal of the worlds of diplomacy and politics to an enthralled audience on 20 May in Holy Trinity Church. His talk ranged over the contrasting needs of morality and 'real politick' in international relations and domestic politics, and he urged the need for sensitivity rather than knee-jerk reaction to the burning issues of today. He took a wide-ranging collection of questions from the audience, and ended with an amusing but enlightening résumé of his own relations with the three prime ministers under whom he had served in major cabinet positions.

This was the very successful inaugural event of what we



hope will turn into an annual lecture series for the Friends. If you have any suggestions for a future speaker - a major figure who would be generous enough to forego a fee in order to support the aims of the Friends - please let us know.

Spring in your Step

A May Day entertainment, arranged and produced by Ronnie Mulryne, offered words, music and tea to an enthusiastic group of Friends.

The words were an eclectic range of verse and prose, from the splendour of Milton's *Paradise Lost* to the wit of Tom Lehrer's *Pigeons in the Park*, the romance of the Omar Khayyam and the humour of Wilde and Wodehouse. The actors, David Biddle, Ruth Copeman, Ronnie Mulryne, Dorothy Raistrick and Tim Raistrick brought a suitably spring-like verve and energy to their splendid performances and the programme was cleverly devised by Ronnie Mulryne. The music was presented by Lydia Rothwell (cello) and Debbie Rothwell (violin), accompanied by Nicola Rothwell on the piano, who played works by Senaille, Sarasate and Elgar with astonishing maturity and sensitivity.

And the tea, a groaning tableful of delights, was produced by Hazel Mellor and Eithne Mulryne.

How better to spend a Sunday afternoon, and raise funds for the Friends at the same time? We are grateful to all of them.

Supper Party

Jan and Rob Craven hosted a supper party in April from which the proceeds were generously given to the Friends. We had a most convivial evening at their house, the guests thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and the Friends profited. We thank them all, and wonder if there are others who might do something similar?

Full reviews of the events are available at www.shakespeareschurch.org



The Friends of Shakespeare's Church gratefully acknowledge the generous support given by
Stratford-upon-Avon Town Trust

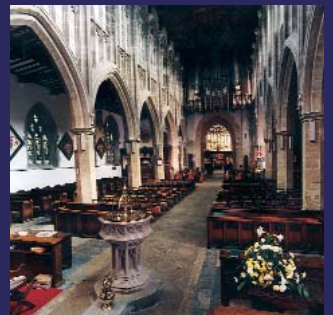
Rioja



Josephine Walker, Catherine Penn, Jon Omerod and Chris Kennedy raise a glass with wine educator Hazel Tattersall. Photo: N Collins, Observer

Hazel Tattersall offered a sparkling evening of tutored wine-tasting to a packed house at Hall's Croft on 10 June, and some of the wine sparkled too! We were amazed at the range of Rioja wines that we tried out, urged on by Hazel's witty and informative coaching to find taste-buds some of us didn't know we possessed.

Make sure you book early next time - we could have sold out twice over.



Friends of Shakespeare's Church

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