‘History lives in the present and waits in the future’ – Britain and India, a special relationship.

WMF is 40 years old
Lions and Unicorns return to Bloomsbury
Can architecture make you happy?
The constantly changing political landscape — especially since the end of the Cold War — has been a big factor in setting our global agenda. We have often found ourselves in the aftermath of war and political isolation. We were among the first international organisations to be invited into Cambodia to help with the conservation of Angkor. Since 1989, we have been working at this extraordinary monumental complex to train a new generation of Cambodian conservators and architects. Eastern and Central Europe have also been a focal point of our work in the past 15 years. In these countries, preservation can have an enormous impact on the economic life of local communities. You can even say that our work is a diplomatic gesture without the political baggage.

Shortly after the Iraq war broke out, we joined forces with the Getty Conservation Institute and Iraq’s State Board of Antiquities and Heritage to launch the Iraq Cultural Heritage Initiative. The first objective of this joint initiative — to develop a management tool, in the form of a database, that will allow Iraq to monitor the condition of its heritage sites — is almost complete. We are training Iraqis in rapid site assessment so that priority conservation projects can be identified. But we are still very worried about how long it will be before work starts on the ground — and how much more damage will occur in the meantime.

What is WMF doing today that is different from past years?

BB: The opening up of China in recent years has presented us with opportunities unimaginable a decade ago. We have embarked on the restoration of the 18th century emperor Qianlong’s Lodge of Retirement and gardens in the Forbidden City, which is bringing about a revival of the artisanal skills needed to carry out the work, and is also giving our Chinese partners their first opportunity to work with Western partners. This is a very exciting and unprecedented undertaking.

How is WMF able to work on so many projects in so many places with such a limited budget?

BB: To stimulate local investment in projects, WMF’s trustee Robert W Wilson offered us a challenge five years ago. He would be willing to personally commit up to $10 million a year to support projects around the world, if we could find equal funding from partners abroad, as well as donor support in America to match his funds. Since then, our Wilson challenge funds, matched with partner commitments, have channeled about $100 million into conservation projects everywhere. The scale of our involvement has also increased — we can mobilise huge projects that would have been beyond our reach in the past. Last autumn, Wilson doubled his challenge.

How have world events influenced the selection of projects in WMF’s portfolio?

BB: The constantly changing political landscape — especially since the end of the Cold War — has been a big factor in setting our global agenda. We have often found ourselves in the aftermath of war and political isolation. We were among the first international organisations to be invited into Cambodia to help with the conservation of Angkor. Since 1989, we have been working at this extraordinary monumental complex to train a new generation of Cambodian conservators and architects. Eastern and Central Europe have also been a focal point of our work in the past 15 years. In these countries, preservation can have an enormous impact on the economic life of local communities. You can even say that our work is a diplomatic gesture without the political baggage.

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Unicorns sighted in London

On March 22nd, WMF in Britain’s Patron HRH Prince Michael of Kent installed the final piece of the unicorn, the golden horn, following a procession of Camden schoolchildren round the church.

It is not often that a conservation organisation radically alters the London skyline but this is what WMF in Britain has just done. Of course this is a re-installation of an original feature rather than a new government-backed skyscraper. These are the ‘lions and unicorns’ on the spire of St George’s, which were part of Hawksmoor’s original design, but removed in the 19th century. It was Tim Crawley of Fairhaven of Anglesey Abbey Ltd, sculptor of the acclaimed Modern Martyrs on the West Front of Westminster Abbey, who won a limited competition for the re-creation of these massive heraldic beasts.

Four years ago he started work on four giant lions and unicorns in his Cambridge studio and they were installed on the spire in March this year. The animals, supposedly fighting for the crown of the United Kingdom, are below the city’s only statue of George I, making this one of the most original spires in London. The sculptures cost in the region of £820,000.
How the beasts returned to Bloomsbury

The restoration of the ‘lions and unicorns’ sculptures, at St George’s Bloomsbury as told by the man who brought them back to life, Tim Crawley.
For many years the architect Nicholas Hawksmoor was forgotten and neglected, as the refined Palladian classical style succeeded his vigorous, monumental, idiosyncratic and very English Baroque style. For the majority of the 20th century his London churches decayed. St George in the East was bombed and the interior was gutted. Christ Church Spitalfields came close to demolition, but has recently been gloriously restored. It is now the turn of St George’s Bloomsbury to be brought back from the brink. Selected by the World Monuments Fund as one of the world’s 100 Most Endangered Sites in 2002, money has been raised for its restoration, principally as a result of a generous initial donation by the Paul Mellon Fund for the Protection of Architectural Heritage. This has funded the essential structural repairs one might expect. But perhaps the most remarkable and unusual aspect of the restoration is the replacement of the four monumental sculptures that originally clustered around the base of the spire. The spire is believed to be inspired by the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, one of the seven wonders of the Ancient World.

Hawksmoor is known never to have visited the great classical sites, but he was a keen antiquarian and his work is peppered with references to famous Greek and Roman monuments. At St George’s, for instance, the imposing hexastyle portico derives from the Roman temple at Baalbeck. The basic form of this monument, a stepped pyramidal structure surrounded and crowned by sculpture, fascinated Hawksmoor, as several surviving sketches from his office prove. At St George’s he was able to realise these fantasies, although records show that the church commissioners of the time did not approve.

The apex of the stepped spire has a statue of George I in the guise of an emperor, standing on a Roman altar. At the base of the spire on each corner are sculptures of lions and unicorns, in reference to the supporters of the arms of England. These were not conventional heraldic beasts. All the evidence that remains indicate that they were dynamically posed, the lions descending the spire and the unicorns ascending. A clue to the significance of this is in the well-known nursery rhyme, *The Lion and the Unicorn were fighting for the crown*, just a fragment of a popular song of the early 18th century referring to the competing interests struggling for the crown of the United Kingdom at the time of the Jacobite rebellion and the Hanoverian succession. These extraordinary sculptures were removed in the restoration of the church by George Edmund Street in 1870, supposedly because they had become unsafe, so they disappeared. It was therefore a bold decision to replace the sculptures as part of the current restoration, and presented considerable challenges as such.

The overall height of the beasts is recorded in the surviving building accounts: 10’ 3”. Given their scale, how could their considerable bulk be safely returned to the building? Would the added weight create structural problems? How were the sculptures designed originally? In all probability the carvings were executed in situ, as the stone was built into the spire, so what techniques could be used to replace them? All these questions needed answers.

The spire is believed to be inspired by the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, one of the seven wonders of the Ancient World.

The first enquiry for this commission was sent out to potential candidates in October 2002. The design process was necessarily painstaking and meticulous, going through many stages before the stone carving could actually commence a year ago. An initial measured survey was taken from a temporary access scaffold and from this data working drawings were produced from which the accurate working models could be completed.

The accuracy of this survey was critical, given that the sculptures had had to be ‘pre-fabricated’ in the workshop. One of the biggest challenges has been to confidently produce all the work in advance, so that when the fixing finally commenced, the sculpture would accurately fit into the deeply weathered structure of the spire.

The difficulties and challenges of realising this project have been many. To begin with, the sheer scale of the sculptures necessitated enlargements to the studio to allow all four to be carved simultaneously. A large scaffolding structure was erected, complete with tin roof and sheeted in against the weather, doubling the floor space available.

Each animal consists of around 15 separate stones, some in their rough state weighing up to 2 tons. Just moving around such large stones is a skill in itself if damage is not to occur, for although stone is very strong in compression, exposed corners and details are vulnerable to damage during handling.

The volume of stone that needed to be removed was substantial, and the conventional and traditional techniques of masonry and carving using mallet and chisel needed to be supplemented by modern techniques. Before coming into the carving shop the most basic planes were cut into the block with a 2 metre circular saw, and the architectural faces destined to marry up with the existing features of the stepped spire were cut in by masons using electric cutters.

The inexorable demands of the competitive building restoration scene mean that the timeless rhythmic tapping of the traditional mason’s lodge has been replaced by the ear-piercing scream of diamond against limestone and choking clouds of dust. The leather apron has been replaced by a plethora of ‘PPE’ (Personal Protective Equipment) regulations to allow the modern mason to pursue his craft: ear protectors, masks and safety specs are de rigueur in these times of health and safety. New tools may radically cut production times, but the skill required to produce accurate work is no less than before.

The basic waste having been removed, the stones were moved into the sculpture studio and into the hands of the carvers. In carving too, the traditional techniques are supplemented by modern methods. Cutting with a disc allows rapid roughing out and chisel work is aided with the use of pneumatic hammers.

During the fixing stage of the project, massive scaffolding necessitated by the heavy stonework was built. The monumental jigsaw of the sculpture, consisting of 57 stones, some weighing up to 1½ tons, made the journey from the Cambridge workshops down to London and up the 120 foot tower. This year, Hawksmoor’s fantastic beasts will have returned to Bloomsbury’s skyline after an absence of nearly 140 years. The final act of completion took place on March 22nd when HRH Prince Michael of Kent placed the metre-long beaten copper and gilded unicorn’s horn onto the sculpture, a distinctive and exciting landmark for London.

Tim Crawley Architectural Sculptor and Director of Fairhaven, of Anglesey Abbey Ltd

*Further details of the project may be viewed online at www.thebeasts.info, courtesy of John Harris.*
If you smile at someone in a London street it is more than likely you will be thought of as slightly mad, if not mildly dangerous. When you smile at someone in India the smile is instantly and charmingly returned.

This was certainly my experience in New Delhi, Rajasthan and Hyderabad in February this year. Is it just that the sun shines more often or is it a reflection of the growing prosperity of the sub-continent and the surge of development? Smiles are only a part of it. Transformations and renewal are visible everywhere alongside a real concern for the built heritage that India has inherited from the Mughals, the British and the country’s myriad religious traditions.

In New Delhi there has been some alarm about the effect of new developments on the Lutyens’ Bungalow Zone and the condition of the Rashtrapati Bhavan (formerly Viceroy’s House). ‘Bungalow Zone’ is something of a misleading name used to describe the whole of the planned seat of government designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker which was dedicated in 1931. At the apex of the plan stands the palace designed for the Viceroy, now the home of the President of the Republic of India. The scale and confidence of the great public buildings designed by Lutyens and Baker impose an order on the city which accommodates the increase in traffic and the occasional glimpse of a high-rise hotel. I was reassured by Professor Rana (formerly architect to the President) that protection for the planned city was working reasonably well. Officials enjoy living in bungalows with large gardens but they are likely to be increasingly vulnerable to more high-density development. A tour of the former Viceroyal residence once again revealed the power and majesty of Lutyens’ architecture and the ingenious union of eastern and western styles that only he could have pulled off in the early 20th century. My companion Isabel King, who is a great gardener, was worried about the triumph of the dahlia in the very elaborate planting schemes in the Lutyens-designed Mughal garden, but no one could question the impeccable standards of maintenance. There is an inevitability about the public rooms becoming institutional, and the present bachelor President of India certainly rattles around in the giant house. One day perhaps a President will live there who has an enthusiasm to display the best of India’s art and craft in the great rooms and could give the house the visual vibrancy it lacks today.

Visiting William Dalrymple and his wife Olivia on their farm near Delhi gave an insight into the ways of writers and artists who love India. William works on his roof terrace in the shade and by night we sat up there by a roaring log fire under the stars. His forthcoming Last Mahal will undoubtedly be a brilliant account of the sad and decadent end of a great Indian empire. Olivia has taken the opportunity to completely transform her painting style by studying the techniques of Indian miniature painting. It was partly because of William’s last book, The White Mughals, that WMF in Britain is taking such an interest in the restoration of the Residency in Hyderabad, built by James Achilles Kirkpatrick, the British Resident who in 1798 chose as his future wife Khair-un-Nisa and became a convert to Islam.

It is that love of the mutual heritage of India that inspires so many travellers today and creates an international constituency of support for cultural projects.

One of the leaders of this network of international friends of India is Elbrun Kimmelman (wife of New York’s WMF Trustee Peter Kimmelman) and she was a brilliant cicerone on this trip.

Elbrun introduced me to the outstanding pair of cultural entrepreneurs Aman Nath and Francis Wacziarg, who have created the hotel company Neemrana Hotels – also known as ‘non-hotels’ – sensitive conversions of historic buildings ranging in date from the 15th to the 20th centuries. Staying at the Neemrana Fort on the Delhi–Jaipur route in Rajasthan is a revelation and a lesson in how to re-use historic buildings. The 15th-century fort has been so well adapted to its new life as a hotel that it is both beautiful and inspiring. Walking its stone terraces and enjoying its gardens demonstrate perfectly the idea behind this company – that history lives in the present and waits in the future. This sentiment is also true in the great city of Hyderabad, where we started our visit by paying homage to Krishna at a village festival. As the deity swayed past us in the darkness on his juggernaut I asked our host who all the worshippers were. ‘Probably half of them are computer programmers…’ was his reply, perfectly summing up the new India. Ancient Hyderabad is now neighbour to the booming IT area of Secunderabad – informally known as ‘Cyberabad’. The Nizams (rulers) of Hyderabad have gone but some of the family are now restoring the town palace of Chowmahalla and arranging there impeccable and beautiful exhibitions of costume and textiles. The spectacular Nizam’s jewels were on view at the museum and the Hyderabad jewellers’ craft and skill are still to be seen throughout the city.

A Nizam may have paid for the Residency which is now the heart of the Osmania Women’s College, but he didn’t leave any funds to endow its future. It is an evocative and beautiful building that WMF is helping to restore. It has a unique atmosphere, with its gaut rooms and grand staircase, papier mâché ceilings and sagging plasterwork. The principal says how much she wants to rescue it and the Vice-Chancellor supports the plans, as enthusiastic for the building as he is in his love of cricket. It is as much a part of the fabric of India as any Mughal legacy and its own special story of harmony between East and West makes it a real example of mutual heritage. The sadness of its present condition didn’t stop the smiles from the architects because we could all see around us the evidence that India has the skill and energy to look after and enjoy its past. The restoration of the Residency may ‘wait in the future’, but it must not wait too long.

Colin Amery

Right

The Charminar Mosque, gateway into the heart of old Hyderabad

India photography by Elbrun Kimmelman
Osmania Women’s College, Hyderabad, India

In 2002 the former British Residency in Hyderabad was placed on the World Monuments Fund Watch List of the world’s 100 Most Endangered Sites and was subsequently awarded US $100,000 by the American Express Company. This was to fund some emergency works and to develop a conservation management plan dealing with the long-term conservation and services upgrade of this highly significant site.

Hyderabad, today a thriving city of 11 million people in south-central India, is part of a landscape rich in minerals and gems. The British never gained total control of the area but posted a ‘Resident’ here in an effort to influence local politics, with limited success. The former British Residency, now the home of the Osmania University Women’s College, is an imposing building set in about 70 acres of gardens close to the north banks of the river Musi in central Hyderabad. The structure looks very European but the interior decorations are strongly influenced by Mughal forms. The site represents a blending of east and west, a picture of colonialism that is rarely alluded to.

WMF in Britain’s project is concerned with the main Residency building, its two flanking wings and the ‘Empress’ gateway to the south. One day, funding permitting, we hope to include the entire 70-acre site. This includes Mughal gardens, remnants of the original castellated walls, fountains and a significant British cemetery now overgrown with vegetation. Unfortunately the site has already been encroached upon by other university buildings but we hope that by establishing a shared understanding of significance the remaining vistas can be protected.

Positioned at the base of a gentle hill near to the river, the site is poorly drained and the heavy monsoon rains saturate the foundations of the building for many months of the year. A huge amount of damage has been done to the building by rising damp. Therefore, one of the first tasks of this project has been for the University and municipal authorities to inspect, repair and renew the rainwater goods and site drainage. Over the years many people have tried to solve the damp problems but these solutions have often involved the use of unsympathetic materials, such as reinforced concrete. When introduced to a structure constructed from lighter, less rigid materials, this can have a terrible effect: rising damp only progresses further, walls cannot bear the increased loading placed upon them and structural movement is accelerated. In other areas large unsightly extensions to the original structure have compromised the architectural form.

Another problem is lack of resources. The Osmania Women’s College represents one college out of a thousand that make up the Osmania University – which has over 250,000 students. In the past a general lack of funding and experience of appropriate methods of maintaining historic buildings has meant that smaller problems have been exacerbated. Yet it is inspirational when you see the dedication of students working in a place which has puddles of water on the floor, where minor collapses occur and where some services cannot be used because of fear for their safety.

After the management plan has been published early next year we will begin the long-term conservation of the site. WMF in Britain recognises that this project has a huge need, featuring a feasible and sustainable use by the community and offering a unique opportunity to highlight the strong historical links between Britain and India. More information is available from our office.

David Gundry
UK Projects Director
Why did you want to join WMF?
WMF is a leader in the rescue and preservation of imperiled works of art and architecture around the world. I share a passion for these important places, their history and their future and want to work for an organisation that is making a tangible, lasting difference.

What do you enjoy most about the UK?
The variety that the UK offers gives me energy – its landscapes and wildlife, its historic and new architecture, and its people, their dialects and cuisine. Here, I am always eager to experience and learn more.

What is your favourite place in London?
The Royal Observatory in Greenwich is among my favourite places. I love its sweeping view of the Thames and this amazing city, coupled with Greenwich Park that has some of the most magnificent horse chestnut trees I’ve ever walked among.

If you could change one thing about London what would it be?
Soon London will be nearly smoke-free so I can check that off my list. Next I’d like to see London hold on to the integrity and character of its neighbourhoods. I’m moving to London to live in London, not Seattle, Chicago or even the Continent. I am hopeful that London will balance its regeneration better with respect for and continuity with the past.

What is your favourite world monument site?
I look forward to learning about all of them. Yet one, Sir Ernest Shackleton’s Expedition Hut in Antarctica, holds a special place in my imagination, having visited his grave in South Georgia.

Giles Worsley was only 44 when sadly he died earlier this year from cancer. He was a friend of all that WMF in Britain stands for and a member of our Architectural Advisory Committee. He was an upholder and practitioner of the highest scholarly standards in architectural history and in his far too short a life wrote several major books. His Classical Architecture in Britain: The Heroic Age (1995) was a book in the manner of John Summerson – both erudite and provocative. More recently his Lost Houses of Britain was an illustrated elegy of lost masterpieces. Just before he passed away he finished a work on the English Baroque and a manuscript is waiting to be published on Inigo Jones. Giles was a lover of all things traditionally English and his love of architecture was inspired by his family home at Hovingham in Yorkshire. At his memorial service in St George’s Hanover Square in London, there was a brass ensemble and readings from P.G. Wodehouse, as well as the poignant sadness of his young daughter, Alice, leading the large congregation of his friends in the ‘Our Father’. His architectural enthusiasms were widespread and in his column in the Daily Telegraph and his editorship of the magazine Perspectives on Architecture he spread a message of enlightened stylistic pluralism. His quiet wisdom will be sorely missed by everyone concerned with conservation and architecture and all our sympathy goes out to his wife Joanna and their three young daughters.

Colin Amery

Lynette Brooks joins WMF in Britain as Director of Development. Previously she has worked for the Nature Conservancy in the US.
Global projects update

1 | The Wonderful Barn, Kildare, Ireland
Southwest of Dublin, the Wonderful Barn is an integral part of the Castletown estate, one of the most significant in Ireland. Yet, it is threatened by encroaching development and lack of use. Having placed the site on the WMF Watch List, we have entered into a partnership with the Irish Landmark Trust and the Irish Georgian Society to restore the Wonderful Barn and surrounding historic buildings so that it can be used by the community again. Initially, we need £20,000 to complete preliminary studies into the architectural history of the buildings.

2 | St. George’s, Bloomsbury
The interior of the church is nearing completion ahead of the grand opening ceremony on October 5th.

3 | Headfort, Near Dublin, Ireland
We are now approximately halfway through our intervention to save Headfort House and its beautiful Robert Adam interiors. The project is being supported by a US $300,000 donation from the Robert W Wilson Challenge to Conserve our Heritage which in turn has successfully leveraged another US $300,000 of matching funding from the Irish government and other sources. The building was suffering from a lack of maintenance, poorly designed rainwater goods and damage to the roof structure, jeopardising the historic interiors. Approximately £233,333 (US $420,000) has been spent on rectifying the structural issues and in commissioning Richard Ireland, a specialist plaster conservator, to research and analyse the Adam interiors and ceilings. This work has highlighted the extremely high-quality work of Robert Adam and his craftsmen and has begun the process of identifying the original colour treatments of the rooms. The second phase of this project will see approximately £100,000 spent on conserving the ceilings and restoring the original colour schemes. At the moment what one sees at Headfort is a great misrepresentation of Adam’s intentions. Funds will also be used to educate local craftsmen and to improve public access and interpretation. Conservation and fundraising continues.

4 | Browne Clayton Column, Co. Wexford, Ireland
The completed WMF, funded Browne Clayton Column has won two architecture awards so far: The RIAI Irish Architecture Awards 2005 – SPECIAL AWARD WINNER for best practice in conservation and the Opus Architecture and Construction Awards 2005 HERITAGE AWARD.

5 | St Vincent Street Church, Glasgow
Alexander Greek Thompson’s masterpiece, his church on St Vincent Street in central Glasgow, was placed for a third time on WMF’s 2006 Watch List in order to help generate an advocacy campaign and funds to continue the stalled restoration. In 2000-1 funds from Robert Wilson and American Express Company were matched in the UK to enable the magnificent tower to be restored. Now a recently announced grant from the Scottish Executive (for the 2006-8 Glasgow City Growth Fund) of £1 million needs to be matched to enable work to start on the rescue of the main church. Glasgow’s efforts to secure UNESCO recognition for its city centre as a World Heritage Site add urgency to the need to restore this unique building. WMF in Britain’s involvement continues and the climate seems more positive for raising funds.
6| Queluz, near Lisbon, Portugal

The second pair of John Cheere sculptures to be restored by the metal conservator Rupert Harris, Vertumnus & Pomona and Diana & Endymion, are nearing completion and was returned to Portugal at end of April. (Pomona was a wood nymph who was such a keen gardener she would allow no-one into her garden. Vertumnus only gained access to Pomona and the garden by disguising himself as an old woman and advised Pomona to fall in love with him. The other group shows Diana with Adonis.) We are currently raising funds to continue the conservation work in Portugal. The project is being jointly run by WMF in Britain and WMF in Portugal. In October a studio will be established at Queluz where Rupert will advise and train local craftspeople how to continue the project themselves. It is planned that every year two-month long workshops will take place in Portugal and that one or two of the 16 remaining statues and fountains will be conserved.

7| St Mary’s Church, Stow, Lincolnshire

The church was placed on the WMF Watch List for 2006 to draw attention to the needs of rural parish churches throughout the UK. They are the endangered buildings of our time and their loss as part of the fabric of this country would be tragic. New management methods and sustainable uses for the whole community are needed to bring life back to parish churches. Dating from the 10th century, St Mary’s needs approximately £1 million to repair the poorly constructed Victorian roof.

8| Chinese Palace, St Petersburg, Russia

Two major phases of work were completed to Catherine the Great’s Chinese Palace at Oranienbaum, St Petersburg by the end of 2005. The foundations were strengthened at a cost of US $220,264 with additional funds coming from the North-West Directorate, effectively state funds matching WMF’s contribution. The defective roof covering has also now been replaced at a cost of US $181,325. The timber beams were in worse condition than anticipated, but the work is now complete. WMF in Britain has been invited to participate in the works to the façades this year. The museum is also expecting to do some work inside the Glass Bead Salon, which WMF will assist with. A Wilson grant of US $500,000 has been secured for 2005/6 structural works and for the Glass Bead Salon.

9| Melnikov House, Moscow

The ongoing dispute over ownership appears to have been resolved in March with one half in the hands of the Russian state and the other in the hands of a private developer who has promised to turn the building into a state-run house museum. The architect Konstantin Melnikov’s son Viktor, an artist who looked after the house, died on February 4th aged 91.

10| Shackleton’s Hut, Antarctica

Following a second Watch Listing for 2006, WMF in Britain participated in Frozen History, an exhibition by Josef Hoflehner of photographs of the contents of the huts at the Atlas Gallery, London W1. Frozen History documented the structure and contents of the historic base-huts of Antarctica, as a study into the presence and power of disowned objects and spaces. Held in conjunction with Ultimate Travel and the Antarctic Heritage Trust.

For further information see: www.atlasgallery.com/gex/imgPage1.htm

To contribute to any of these projects contact Lynette Brooks on 020 7730 5344.
A true passion for churches
It takes guts and serious marketing skills to rescue a giant Victorian monastery church in a declining area of Manchester at a cost of £8 million. Elaine Griffiths has both and her journey as project director of the Monastery of St Francis and Gorton Trust to rescue this dilapidated Edward Pugin Gothic masterpiece was vividly described in a new BBC2 programme. It started ten years ago from first sight of the Monastery through knockbacks from the HLF, to the eventual approval of plans and commencement of restoration work. With her husband Paul, Elaine has managed so far to raise £5 million out of the £6 million needed for the restoration. They persevered when many would have quite sensibly given up.

In the programme Elaine made several references to WMF Watch Listing of the site in 1998 and in 2000 as a major boost, generating publicity and the nickname of ‘Manchester’s Taj Mahal’ for the site. WMF also contributed US $500,000 in grant funding. Directed by Gillian Bancroft, A Passion for Churches captured the haunting dilapidation of the Monastery in time-lapse photography and is highly recommended, not just as a conservation story, but also as a motivational tool.

Can architecture make you happy?
In his new book The Architecture of Happiness, Alain de Botton tackles a relationship central to our lives. Our buildings – and the objects we fill them with – affect us more profoundly than we might think. To take architecture seriously is to accept that we are, for better or for worse, different people in different places. De Botton suggests that it is architecture’s task to render vivid to us who we might ideally be. Turning the spotlight from the humble terraced house to some of the world’s most renowned buildings, de Botton considers how our private homes and public edifices – from those of Christopher Wren to those of Le Corbusier and Norman Foster – influence how we feel, as well as how we could learn to build in ways that would increase our chances of happiness. Alain de Botton will give a special talk for WMF in December 2000.

Swinging from the chandelier
Mention the renowned company ‘Swarovski’ and crystal-studded gowns, jewellery and accessories dance before your eyes. Swarovski are also well-known for their dazzling chandeliers which grace some of the world’s most famous spaces, including the Palace of Versailles outside Paris.

Thanks to WMF in Britain’s Patron, HRH Prince Michael of Kent, Swarovski have also played a significant role in transforming a lesser-known Liverpool landmark. Following a visit with the Prince a few years ago, Nadja Swarovski, Vice President of Swarovski, made a donation of £10,000 towards the restoration of the grand chandelier in the restored Small Concert Room in St George’s Hall. The grand chandelier – here pictured in the workshop – has been restored by Wilkinson’s Plc of London. Weighing in at three-quarters of a ton and adorned with 2,824 crystal pieces, 1,656 metal components, 96 low-voltage lamps and 4,648 brass pins, it was a remarkable undertaking. And when Liverpool celebrates its position as the European Capital of Culture in 2008, it will shine again.

The chandelier aside, the project to restore the Small Concert Room in St George’s Hall nears completion. All of the structural work to the building has been completed and the finishing touches to the decorative scheme are being applied. Much of the initial work was concerned with making the Small Concert Room accessible to the disabled: the outside approach to the area has been completely remodelled and a new lift has been installed to give access to all areas. The fire safety issues that had led to the closure of the venue for public use have also been resolved with the restoration of a fine cantilevered staircase and renewal of the alarm system.

The Small Concert Hall is due to be finished by the end of May 2006 and already the venue is taking bookings for concerts and other events.

The World Monuments Fund Robert W Wilson Challenge to Conserve our Heritage awarded this project US $500,000 and WMF in Britain secured a further £150,000 through a successful application to The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. These pledges were instrumental in helping the City of Liverpool secure a £10 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund in December 2000.

UK round-up

Swinging from the chandelier

A true passion for churches

Can architecture make you happy?
Pedestrians passing by on the road outside have no idea what treasures lie beyond the dilapidated walls. Monica Burns, a care worker, thought it must be a school. Dale Wainwright, who works in computers, pronounced it closed. Craig Hill, a bus conductor, thought that it used to be a monastery.

With a little bit of luck and about £5 million from the Heritage Fund, Strawberry Hill will be renovated and opened to the public by 2010. None of them will have ever seen anything like it before. Nothing like it exists.

Walpole wanted to create a house which, in a word — not of his invention as some claim — was sharywaggy. By that, he meant lacking in all symmetry. In fact, most of the rooms have perfectly balanced designs.

Every room is a riot of extravagant gothic arches and almost every feature of the house is based on something that Walpole’s Committee of Taste guaranteed was medieval.

In the Library there is a gothic arch in front of every bookcase. These have to be swung back before the books on the top shelves can be handed down. Their design is based on a side door in Old St Paul’s — the cathedral destroyed in the Great Fire of London and replaced by the design of Sir Christopher Wren. In the Long Gallery, the wall that faces the window has tall alcoves. Each one has a canopy made up of three gothic arches. The Long Gallery’s fan-vaulted ceiling is copied from the ceiling in the Henry VII chapel in Westminster Abbey.

The Tribune, in which Walpole kept his most valuable items, is named after the room in the Uffizi Palace in Florence — where the most valuable coins, miniatures, medals and medallions were kept.

And most extraordinary — and some would say most sacrilegious — of all, many of the fireplaces are copies of tombs in the great cathedrals of Europe.

The armoury was decorated with shields and breast plates ‘taken in the holy wars’. They are still there. Raymond Davies, my guide, suggested they had been bought in the 18th century equivalent of Portobello Road.

Davies — a writer, researcher and actor — is an enthusiast for both Walpole and Strawberry Hill. It is easy to understand why. Everything about the house, from the windows to the wallpaper, is irresistibly ridiculous.

Walpole himself saw the joke. He thought that the pinnacle on the top of one of his towers looked like a candle-snuffer.

He failed to realise one of his hopes: he wanted to fill the house with ‘gloomth,’ a word of his invention meant to describe the combination of the warmth and gloom that he thought suffused the great cathedrals.

But, sadly for him, despite the ancient stained glass that remains in some of the windows, Strawberry Hill is light and airy. It seems astonishing that so much stone masonry could be sculpted with such delicate precision.

The astonishment is based on a misapprehension. Apart from the outer walls, there is barely an ounce of stone in Strawberry Hill.

The gothic arches are made of painted wood, the interior walls are thin board and the vaulted ceilings are papier mâché.

It has survived more than time. In 1810, Strawberry Hill passed to the much-married Lady Waldegrave, granddaughter of Horace’s brother. All her husbands were libertines. The contents of the house were sold to keep them out of a debtors’ jail.

During the war it was bombed and since then moths and dust have begun to corrupt it and mice have made their homes in the fabric papier mâché ceiling. Yet most of the fabric remains extravagant, complicated and slightly absurd.

Strawberry Hill is a peculiarly English folly. Count the days until the English, at a small fee, can enjoy its absurdity once more.

Reproduced by kind permission of Lord Hattersley

Strawberry Hill gets a boost from eBay in June

Ebay has more than 6,600 charities registered worldwide to receive donations from auctions, and now WMF is set to play a part. WMF is now a registered charity on eBay which means anyone selling an item can appoint a percentage of the proceeds from the sale to go directly to WMF and its work. For example, if you wish to sell (or buy) an item to benefit WMF, just go to the eBay homepage (www.ebay.co.uk) and click on the ‘All Charity Auctions’ line on the bottom left column. Once on the charity page, there is an alphabetical listing of all charities and just click on ‘W’ to find WMF to see what is for sale or how to add your sales item. Charity items are easily identified by a small yellow and blue ribbon by the item’s title. A description of the benefiting charity is also displayed along with the percentage to be donated. A seller can donate all or a minimum of 10% of the final sales price of an item to the charity of choice, hopefully us! So, time to look through the attic and do a little fundraising for heritage in cyberspace.

The Strawberry Hill rose will be launched by the grower, David Austin, at Hampton Court Flower Show on 3rd July 2006. A limited number of rose plants will be available through the World Monuments Fund in aid of the Strawberry Hill restoration. Further information from Emily Lohnann on 020 7730 5344
Jung Chang
(Photos 1-4)
Discusses the legacy of chairman Mao at the RGS on 11th January.

Moscow Lecture
(Photos 5-8)
Clive Cecil and Alexei Leporc alert us to Moscow’s disappearing heritage on 23rd February.
**Lectures**

All lectures commence at 7pm
£15/£10 WMF members
Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore SW7 2AR

Save the dates!

**William Dalrymple**  
*The Last Mughal: The Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and The Fall of Delhi, 1857*  
Wednesday 11th October

William Dalrymple will discuss his latest book on his return from living in India for the past three years. Sponsered by Ultimate Travel.

**Alain de Botton**  
*Can Architecture make you happy?*  
Wednesday 15th November

Alain de Botton, famous for *How Proust Can Change Your Life*, will talk about his forthcoming book on the philosophy of architecture.

Our Lecture Card with booking form will be posted to you in August

Two forthcoming WMF publications

Scala publishes a book on the restoration of St George’s, while Frances Lincoln will publish Colin Amery’s book on St Petersburg.

**Events**

**Evening at Queen’s Gallery**  
Thursday 1st June, 6pm – 8pm
Private talk and view of Queen Mother’s pictures of contemporary artists from 1930s onwards.

**Summer Party at Bonhams**  
Tuesday 6th July, 6.30pm – 8.30pm
By invitation only, champagne and strawberries at Bonhams, New Bond Street. Sponsored by Ultimate Travel.

**Concert at St George’s Church**  
Bloomsbury, WC1  
Friday 6th October, 8pm
The internationally acclaimed Orchestra of the Age of the Enlightenment will give a concert to celebrate the restoration of St George’s Bloomsbury. The programme will include English and Italian baroque music contemporary with the consecration of the church.  
Tickets: £30/£25 WMF members

**And finally:**

We are delighted to announce that the first re-designed *Monumentum* was ‘magazine winner’ at the McNaughton Design & Paper Review 2005, Venice. Designed by Inaria, the newsletter was considered ‘Mature and well put together. Considered typography and layout’.

**Travel**

**Corsham Court, Wiltshire**  
Thursday 25th May  
Talk and tour of the House in conjunction with Sotheby’s Institute of Art – Lunch at Lacock with visit to Abbey.

**Future trips**  
WMF members only

**India**  
Early Spring 2007  
To coincide with New York’s trip, and include a visit to Hyderabad and the Deccan.  
Following the 2006 Hadrian Award to the Maharaja of Jodhpur, WMF in Britain will join this high profile trip.

**Cuba**  
January 2008  

For trips please register interest with Emily Luhmann at WMF in Britain.

Give a gift membership to friends and family

Gift membership packages are available for birthdays, anniversaries etc. The package will include a copy of the new 2006 Watch List of the world’s 100 Most Endangered Sites, plus a free ticket to William Dalrymple’s lecture on October 11th at the RGS. For more information or to purchase a gift membership, please contact Membership Officer Emily Luhmann on 020 7730 5344 or by email: emily@wmf.org.uk

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World Monuments Fund in Britain:
Chairman – The Viscount Norwich
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Mrs. Rupert Hambro, The Lady King, The Baroness Rawlings,
Mrs. Mortimer Sackler, Mr. James Sherwood, Sir Angus Stirling,
Mr. Peter Stormont Darling, Dr. Christopher Tadgell,
Mr. Max Ulfane, Mr Pierre Valentin

Charity number: 1043907

Cover image:
The six-pointed star of India rises out of the Jaipur Column,
part of the residence of the President of India.
Built by Sir Edwin Lutyens and dedicated in 1931

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