



PRESENT STATE

the news sheet of the Pugin Society

January 2004 Number Two

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HAPPY NEW YEAR and welcome to the second *Present State*. Those of you who are new to the Society may like to know that this title is a reference to Pugin's *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, of 1843, and that the monogram 'AWP' is taken from the title page designed by him for his *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, first edition 1841. *Present State* brings you recent brief items of Society news and will be followed in July by our Journal, *True Principles*, to be edited by Timothy Brittain-Catlin.

****THE GRANGE: WORK TO BEGIN SHORTLY**** 'After several years of fundraising and research of the building, the Landmark Trust will begin work at The Grange at the end of January. Thanks to revised permissions from Thanet District Council and English Heritage, Landmark will return the house to its appearance when newly built by Augustus, although certain areas (notably the north courtyard) will remain as altered by Edward Pugin. The restoration is expected to take 18-24 months. Once completed, the house will be available for holidays. Key rooms will also be open to the public on a regular basis and there will be an interpretation centre in the Cartoon Room.' (L.T. press release). Thanet District Council has earmarked £100,000 for this project, surely the most high-profile restoration yet undertaken in Ramsgate. The funding target for the structural work on The Grange has now been met, but at a later stage Landmark will be looking for further funding for the interior and furnishings, etc. The level of progress reached is a mighty step forward, and will surely encourage further contributions. *Laus Deo*, as Pugin would have said.

SOCIETY ON LINE The Society website, designed by Michael Pennamacoor, is now up and running. The purpose of the site is primarily to make as many people as possible aware of the Pugin Society and its aims. The Society hopes that members will contribute to the site, and that their expertise and enthusiasm will all help to make it something rather special – a third arm, even, of our publishing endeavours. This is a medium that provides wonderful opportunities, in particular, for Pugin images and graphics. We extend a warm welcome to Peter Blacklock, who has agreed to become contents editor, and anticipate with interest your comments and contributions. Look at www.pugin-society.org and let us know what you think. Comments – and, importantly, contributions – can be sent to Peter through e-mail on: pblacklock@btopenworld. His address is: 19 Burford Ave, Salisbury, Wilts, SP2 8AG, tel: 01722 333387.

REQUEST FROM THE HON. SECRETARY To avoid confusion, or possible technological problems, Pam Cole would like to remind everybody who uses e-mail that her correct address is: Apamakapam@aol.com, **not** pamakapam@aol.com, as it was in the past.

FROM THE PRINTING PRESS Winter 2003 saw the publication of Volume Two of *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin 1843-1845* (to be reviewed in the forthcoming *True Principles*), edited by Margaret Belcher and published by Oxford University Press. Nothing can bring us closer to Pugin than these wonderful letters, upon which Dr Belcher has worked with such dedication; they provide endless insights and treasures. Spire Books, in association with our Society, has recently brought out a handsome facsimile edition of *Contrasts* and *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, which many of you will have already acquired. To possess these two seminal texts in one volume is something of inestimable value to all Pugin scholars, students and enthusiasts. As you will see from the enclosed flyer, Spire will also soon be publishing '*Dearest Augustus and I: the Journal of Jane Pugin* – surely something that few of us will want to miss – this time in association with The Landmark Trust. The Pugin Society will be reprinting Rosemary Hill's delightful *Pugin and Ramsgate* later in the spring; all in all Pugin publications are in a healthy state.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to: Mr W. P. Anelay, Miss V. Bates, Ciaran Brady, The Revd John Brennan, Mrs Caroline Cleveland, Mr Les Davies, The Revd A.R. Edwards, Mr Richard Elson, Mr and Mrs Frankham, Mr Vincent Lennon, Mr John Nolan, Mr Ian Pettman, Mr Barry Pointon, Mr D. Purnell, Dr Sarah Rutherford, Mary Smallwood, Dr Dan Terkla, Mr Michael Tooley, Mr Marc Ward, Mr and Mrs D. Woodward, The Victorian Society.

DON'T MISS An exciting exhibition, 'A.W. Pugin and the Hardman Family Firm', is to be held from Thurs 29th-April to Sat 1st May 10-4, admission £3 (conc. £1) in the crypt of St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, in conjunction with the John Hardman Studios. Also, on Wednesday 28th April the Midland Catholic History Society and the English Catholic Association are holding a day conference at the cathedral on 'A.W. Pugin and the Hardman Family and Firm'. The speakers will be the Revd Michael Fisher and the Revd Brian Doolan, Dean of St Chad's. The exhibition will also be open on the 28th for those attending the conference. The cost will be £15 members, £16.00 non-members and will include coffee, lunch and tea. Enquiries and bookings to: Vincent Burke, 16 Brandhall Court, Wolverhampton Road, Warley, W. Midlands B68 8DE, tel. 0121-422 1573. The enterprising Father Doolan and his staff are very busy working on plans for the restoration and redevelopment of the splendid crypt at St Chad's, and will be launching a funding campaign very shortly. Father Doolan's *The Pugins and the Hardmans*, published by the Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission, will be out in time for the exhibition and conference.

CONGRATULATIONS to Brian Andrews, our man in Tasmania/Australia. We are delighted to announce that through the auspices of the *British Art Journal* Brian has been awarded the William M. B. Berger prize for 2003. This award is made for the most outstanding catalogue or book of the preceding year concerned with British art, and anyone who has been fortunate enough to read *Creating a Gothic Paradise; Pugin at the Antipodes*, the catalogue created by Brian for the exhibition (which he curated) of that name in Tasmania in 2002, will know why he won this award. *Gothic Paradise* is meticulous in its content and sumptuous and elegant in its design; museum and gallery publications in the old country must look to their laurels.

BUILDINGS AT RISK

Mount St Mary's, Leeds The situation here continues to be unresolved. Sanctuary Housing still own the site, and although the church has not sustained damage or vandalism over the winter, and the fabric is basically robust, nothing positive has occurred, although outside interest in acquiring the church has been shown. Flats nearby are being renovated, and it is to be hoped that regeneration generally in the area will encourage a purchaser with vision and drive to attract funding and make Mount St Mary's some sort of major focal point in the community, as it once was. Mount St Mary's Trust does all it can, but progress on the building is becoming essential.

St Francis Gorton, Manchester, church and monastery Despite massive funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, work on E.W. Pugin's masterpiece has been somewhat frustratingly delayed as the European (ERDF) matched funding is not yet in place. It is hoped that this £1.8 million will be forthcoming almost immediately. Work on the site should then start later this year. The proposals for Gorton are exciting and imaginative, and when implemented will not only save an exceptional complex of E.W.P. buildings but also give a massive boost to regeneration schemes in the area.

TRUE PRINCIPLES All copy for the summer issue should be sent to editor Timothy Brittain-Catlin by 29th February, preferably on disk, or as an attachment, but hard copy will also be accepted. He can be written to at: The Millennium Villa, 47 Grange Road, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 3ER, or contacted on 07855005942 (mobile), or by e-mail: brittaincatlin@aaschool.ac.uk. Contributions for consideration in forthcoming issues welcomed.

OPEN DAYS AT ST AUGUSTINE'S During the last year local members of the Society initiated regular opening times at St Augustine's, Ramsgate, and will be continuing this scheme during 2004. The church can be visited on the first Sunday of every month, between two and four, when members are on hand to answer questions, etc. The response to the openings so far has been immensely worthwhile, both in terms of those who come from afar, and those who live round the corner but have never been in before, and are bowled over by what they find. If you have not seen St Augustine's before, come and visit us.

PUGIN DISCOVERY In addition to his other achievements, Brian Andrews has also found time recently to identify a fine sculpture in Tasmania of the Virgin and Child as being designed by A.W.N. Pugin. Originally in Bishop Willson's own house in Hobart, it found a new home in 1868 on the entrance porch of the Convent of the Presentation Sisters in the same town, and has been there ever since. This sculpture has now been carefully restored so that soon the Pugin detail will be able to be seen again in all its original delicacy. It is likely to be placed ultimately in St Mary's RC Cathedral, Hobart.

KINDRED SPIRITS? A Mrs Ellen Burton has written to us, saying that her great-grandfather, John Clay, was a marine artist who lived in Ramsgate and exhibited at the Royal Academy and elsewhere from 1837-1856, and that there is a tradition in her family that he assisted with some interior painting in St Augustine's. Could Pugin have known this John Clay, given that they both clearly had a great love of the sea? Interestingly, in Pugin's diary for 25th March 1845, a 'Miss Clay' – E. Clay – is mentioned by him as receiving a quarter's salary of £7.10s. Was she a daughter, or sister, of John Clay? In a letter to his eldest daughter, Anne, Pugin writes from London in December 1844: 'I hope I shall hear a good account of you all for I cannot give pretty things to any but good children. I shall ask Miss Greaves and Miss Clay [sic] as soon as I get home.' (See Vol. Two, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin*, referred to on page one)

HORRORS FROM THE PAST New member Barry Pointon reports that from 1961-4 he had lodgings at Ackworth Grange, near Pontefract. His description of the ongoing demolition of Pugin's Jesus chapel there, built for Mrs Elizabeth Tempest in 1841/2, makes grim reading. In 1961, according to Barry, 'The remains of Pugin's construct looked like a building that had been bombed – the roof and its supporting beams entirely gone, the walls half smashed away – the central nave or aisle a tip of broken masonry ...' The owners of Ackworth Grange at the time, decent though simple people in themselves, and who did not initiate the demolition, had, he says, absolutely no idea of the importance of the chapel, and thought of it as 'a pile of meaningless stones'. The chapel was fully described by Pugin in his *On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England* (1843), and fortunately various fittings were at least saved. A good website, www.ackworth.w-yorks.sch.uk/ackgrange.html exists, for those who have access to a computer, which is most informative about the history of this chapel and the present whereabouts of some of its contents. The whole episode only goes to show how vitally necessary a Society like ours is, both for helping to change attitudes and for the further prevention of such crimes.

SUBSCRIPTIONS Please remember that these are due on **1st July** each year – could you have forgotten your cheque for last year, and will you remember to send one on the forthcoming renewal date? Contact Hon. Membership Jack Kleinot, if you have any doubts on the matter, on: 020 7515 9474 or: Apamakapam@aol.com, or write to him at: c/o 33 Montcalm House, Westferry Road, London E14 3SD Our membership form is currently being redesigned, with a view to full colour, and its content somewhat revised.

IRISH DISCOVERY Members Pat Medus and Peter Hulcoop, enjoying a New Year break at the lodge of Mooresfort House, near Tipperary, had the good fortune to be shown round this imposing Georgian mansion and to see, quite by chance, designs by the Irish Gothic Revival architect George Coppinger Ashlin (1836-1921), Edward Pugin's brother-in-law and sometime partner, for a proposed chapel there. They noted similarities between the suggested connecting link with the house and the covered way at The Grange, Ramsgate, with which of course Ashlin would have been familiar, having married A.W.N.P.'s daughter Mary (Polly) in 1868 at the adjacent St Augustine's, and being much influenced by the style of E.W.P.

EVENTS FOR SPRING AND SUMMER 2004

(Many more splendid outings overleaf)

Friday 23 April: Private Visit to Textile Collections, V&A

A return visit to the V&A led by **Dr Linda Parry**, curator of textiles. We will see examples of the work of Augustus Pugin and related designers held in the collection. The visit starts at 2.30 and costs £10. As numbers are limited, it is restricted to members of the Pugin Society. Priority will be given to those who were unable to come on the earlier trip. Please indicate if this is the case and send SAE (stamped addressed envelope) and cheque. **N.B. Contact address for all events (unless otherwise stated) is overleaf.**

Saturday 15 May: Cambridge in the era of the Gothic Revival

A day in Cambridge, looking at the impact on the city and the university of the Gothic Revival. Cambridge was the birthplace of the Cambridge Camden Society, and we will explore its legacy, together with that of other strands of thinking and design. The day will be led by **Tim Brittain-Catlin**, architect and author and an expert on Pugin's domestic buildings. Send SAE for further details.

EVENTS FOR SPRING AND SUMMER 2004 (continued)

Friday 28 May: Afternoon visit to the Houses of Parliament

A return visit, led by **Rosemary Hill**, the biographer of Pugin, to this, his most splendid interior. Send £10 and SAE.

Thurs-Sun 22-25 July: The Romance of Facts: Pugin, Scott and the Gothic in Scotland

The Waverley novels by Walter Scott appeared almost annually throughout Pugin's childhood and they sank deep into his imagination; indeed they influenced the mind of a whole generation, creating a myth of Scotland as a land of Gothic romance, a myth still powerful today. Scotland was the place where Pugin first decided to become an architect. In Edinburgh we shall see some of his earliest work, when he was assisting Gillespie Graham, and we shall visit Holyrood, for which Pugin planned a restoration. In Perthshire we plan to see the rooms at Taymouth Castle, including the splendid banner hall, created by Graham and Pugin for Lord Breadalbane. It was here that Victoria and Albert were entertained on the visit that inspired their own passion for the Highlands. At Abbotsford we shall see Scott's own house, with its great Georgian antiquarian interior, from which the torrent of romantic fact and fiction poured forth. We will also visit Rosslyn Chapel, one of the most curious and elaborate of medieval Gothic buildings. It puzzled Pugin and continues to puzzle historians today. The trip will be led by **Rosemary Hill**, the biographer of Pugin. Send SAE for further details.

Fri/Sat 1-2 October: Pugin and Hardman in the Midlands

A two-day event, based at the handsome Victorian North Staffordshire Hotel, Stoke, and visiting Birmingham to see the Hardman design studios there that contain a wealth of drawings, objects and memorabilia, as well as the current glass and metal workshops. We also plan to see A.W.N. Pugin's House of Mercy, Handsworth, the Birmingham Central Museum and other churches and houses in Staffordshire. The trip will be led by **Fr Michael Fisher**. Cost: £140 per person, two nights, meals and coach. SAE to Julia Twigg.

Additional treats

Saturday 17 July: The delights of Westgate, bungalows, the sea and much more

The Victorian Society is organising a visit to Westgate-on-Sea, led by our chairman, **Nick Dermott**. We will trace the development of Westgate as an elite seaside resort in the late nineteenth century, visiting surviving houses by Peto and a remarkable estate carpenter's yard. In the afternoon we will see Rossetti's grave and Quex Park. Send SAE to Jane Wainwright, The Victorian Society, Priory Gardens, London W4 1TT, marked 'Westgate'.

Wednesday 4 August: Religious Ramsgate

The Friends of Kent Churches are visiting Ramsgate to see three very different religious buildings: A.W.N. Pugin's church of St Augustine, in which he is buried; the Synagogue built by Sir Moses Montefiore and his adjacent beehive tomb; and St George's parish church, where the lantern has recently been restored, followed by tea. Men will need a head covering to enter the synagogue. Own transport or walking required. Send SAE and £5 per head, payable to Friends of Kent Churches, to Julia Twigg, as above.

CONTACT

Please make cheques payable to The Pugin Society and send to **Julia Twigg, 9 Nunnery Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3LS**. Please assume that you have a place unless you hear to the contrary. If you would like confirmation of your booking, or want to make further enquiries, please enclose a SAE or ring **01227 766879**, or e-mail **j.m.twigg@ukc.ac.uk**.

Disclaimer: Neither the Pugin Society, or any person leading an event on its behalf, shall be held liable for death, injury, accident, or damage to any person or property of any member of the society, or guest, occurring as a result of participation in any event organised by the Society.