



Julia Abel Smith

NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

One of the pleasures of becoming Chairman has been the opportunity to look at the FECT archives and to compare what the Trust was doing in the past with what is happening now. I learnt that Essex formed the second county churches preservation trust and beat the National Churches Trust (previously the HCPT) by one year. The energy of early committee members was impressive: they held meetings every month rather than every quarter and there always seemed to be an ambitious exhibition to stage, lecture to organise, or celebrity to cajole. However, ultimately what they were trying to do is exactly the same as us, which is 'to assist in the maintenance of the fabric of our Christian churches and chapels'. Naturally, the challenges were different. In 1951, when the Friends of Essex Church was mooted, many Essex Churches were war-damaged or neglected. Today diminishing congregations have difficulty raising funds for vast repair bills, but the *raison d'être* of the FECT is the same, we are here to help Christian churches and chapels in Essex and East London by grant aiding repair and restoration.

The minutes of the September, 1952 meeting tell us that *after a lively discussion it was agreed that small grants should be made as soon as possible: four of £25*. At the next meeting Chadwell, St Mary was one of the first churches to receive a grant from the Friends.

Unsurprisingly, the sort of amount that we now give away has risen sharply. This year at our February Grants Committee meeting, chaired by David Lodge, we gave Chadwell, St. Mary £8,500 for plaster repairs and repointing. All Saints, Little Totham received £12,000 and Walton le Soken, All Saints, £20,000 for work to rectify the results of subsidence.



Supporting Churches in Essex & East London

ANNUAL REVIEW & ACCOUNTS 2007

Thank-you letters are always heart-warming and we receive some especially rewarding ones, such as this from the Roman Catholic parish priest of St Dominic, Harold Hill:

At present between 200 and 300 people attend Mass each weekend, so your generosity has benefited a considerable number of people ... your help has been great fillip to me personally, in trying to meet the costs of running a parish.

and this from the Rector of Barston, St Andrew:

I told the PCC members of your grant of £4,000 last Monday evening. The delight on their faces and in their voices was a joy to behold. For the first time in a long time, there was a sense of hope that this work will actually get done.

We have money to give away in grants and we would love to see more non-conformist churches applying to us. In connection with spreading the word, we now have a first class website: www.foect.org.uk, and I am delighted to say that Ralph Meloy has joined us as press and publicity officer.

One of the objectives of the Trust is 'to stimulate interest in the history of our religious buildings' and on 21st November 1955 Dr Nikolaus Pevsner was approached to give a talk in the Shire Hall in Chelmsford in October, 1956. The minutes record that 'owing to Dr Pevsner being a very busy man, he had been unable to give us a date in October and had arranged to give a lecture in June.' It was

reported later that the lecture had been successful 'with a good attendance'. Today we are fortunate to have Dr Pevsner's Essex successor, Dr James Bettley, to run our Study Days. Last year, as well as producing the new edition of *The Buildings of England: Essex*, James guided us round five churches in May and October, greatly to our pleasure. Don Woracker also does a fine job organising church tours for the Southend Branch, when I gather there is seldom a spare seat.

From the archive, we learn that on 26th May, 1952 'Mrs Round was warmly welcomed to the committee'. In 1957, Mrs Round held a plant sale in the Castle Gardens at Colchester on 5th April and the next month she reported that the sale had been very successful and that she had banked £60. Her granddaughter, Claire Cottrell, is now the Vice-Chairman of the Trust and Chairman of the Events Committee, which goes from strength to strength. This year we are holding our Christmas Fair on Wednesday 15th October at Hylands House, Chelmsford, a marvellous venue which we hope will be a big draw.

In 1956 the Friends held an exhibition, where 'Mr Humphry Spender designed a beautiful four-fold screen, and Mr Richard Bawden did all the scenery', at Ingatestone Hall by kind permission of Lord Petre. The trust is extremely lucky to have the present Lord Petre as one of our patrons as well as the Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops, and George Courtauld, as our very supportive President. This May we shall be very sorry to say good-bye

to Mary Blaxall, our long standing and hard working Secretary, who is retiring in May. I have really enjoyed working with her and shall miss her calm guidance; her experience and legal training have been invaluable. I am most grateful to Keith Gardner, our Membership Secretary, who has offered to fill Mary's role and retain his own.

As I write, the next FECT event is an Easter Concert by the Kelvedon Singers to be held on Sunday, 16th March and I see that the choir of St John's College, Cambridge held a recital at Great Dunmow, St Mary in September 1958. I also notice that our stylish logo, designed by the late Stuart Rose, Design Adviser to the Post Office, is now twenty years old. As we work towards our 60th anniversary, I would like to think that we have retained the best of our traditions, whilst keeping in touch with the requirements of the present.

Fiona Nelmes has made an excellent start as our Ride & Stride Organiser and I have no doubt that she will efficiently raise substantial funds for us again this year. I am proud to report that our 2008 grant budget is £200,000, with the addition of £18,000 left over from WREN. Ian Dudley our Treasurer, works tirelessly and supportively making sure that the money all adds up, and to him and my colleagues on every committee, I would like to say thank you for enabling the Trust to continue to help Christian churches and chapels in Essex and East London so effectively.

Julia Abel Smith

SOUTHEND BRANCH

For many years we have had a thriving branch at Southend. they have several outings during the year to churches in this region and sometimes beyond. We would like to see similar groups in other areas of the county - perhaps Colchester for a start. If there is anyone who would like to start such a branch do get in touch! Don Woracker organises the Southend branch, and he reports as follows:

"We are able to report another successful year both for the donation made to central funds and membership, which is still well over 80 and from which so much friendly support is received.

2007 saw outings in good weather, which is always a bonus, to churches in the Ongar area, Hadleigh in Suffolk, Helions and Steeple Bumpstead, and of course the AGM at Terling. All were followed by a splendid, essential and much valued TEA!

As always, our special thanks must go to Ministers, Churchwardens and others who greeted our party at each venue, making our visits so interesting and worthwhile.

Please contact Betty Garrod on 01702 557466 if you would like more details about booking arrangements"

All news about FECT events and any other matters of interest to our members is posted on our website so do consult it from time to time

www.foect.org.uk

RE:FRESH

Chelmsford Christian Festival 2008

Saturday 12 to Sunday 20 July

An Ecumenical Festival will be held in Central Park, with Evening Concerts and day time activities

For more information go to the website

www.refresh08.com

Friends of Essex Churches Trust



2007 Ride & Stride Annual Review Report

In 2007 the annual Ride & Stride raised **£105,371.05**. This figure is up on last year and is the sixth year in a row where the total amount raised has been above £100,000. Many thanks to all who took part and, in particular, to John Hoskins, the 2007 Ride & Stride County Organiser.

The 2007 Ride & Stride was blessed with “perfect conditions (not too windy or hot, just the right amount of cloud cover”.) In Chelmsford, participants reported that “it was good to see more walkers this year and more young cyclists” and in Hatfield Broad Oak, “the final visitor of the day was dressed as a fairy.” Some areas reported “on how few churches were manned and how disappointing it was to arrive at church after church and have no-one to greet you”; but “those that were open made us, as always, very, very welcome”. Pebmarsh St John had about 100 people visit the church; in Goldhanger, St Peter and Stansted, St Mary visitor numbers were down; but “those who did visit were very chatty and the conversations kept us occupied and helped pass the time enjoyably”.



Song Cycle at the 2007 launch at St Edmund & St Mary, Ingatestone

Sadly, John Hoskins has had to stand down as County Organiser due to health reasons but he is replaced by Fiona Nelmes. Fiona is a mother of three girls, a solicitor by profession and a part-time volunteer adviser at the Maldon Citizens Advice Bureau. She has lived in Hatfield Peverel since July 2000. Fiona’s action points for the 2008 Ride & Stride are to try and encourage more churches to open on the day and to increase the number of active local representatives and, in particular, to identify Area Organisers for Barking, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Brentwood, Hinckford and Braintree. Any volunteers?



Fiona Nelmes on her bike!



Nigel Townsend cycling for Holy Trinity, Southchurch, made a round trip of 70 miles from Southend to Bradwell. Here he is at Bradwell.

Ride & Stride 2008 ~ Saturday 13th September

GRANTS 2007

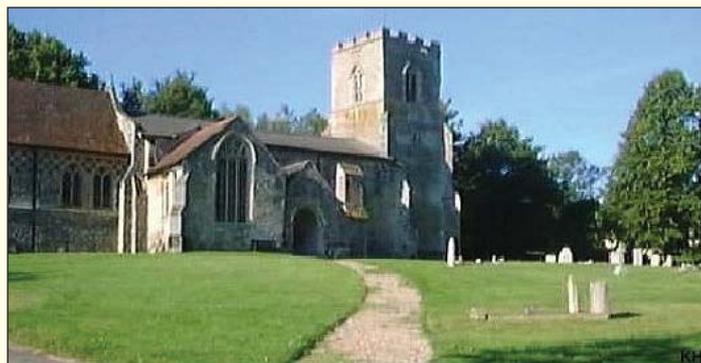
Barking St Patrick	Repairs	£ 10000
Barnston St Andrew	Gallery and staircase	4000
Bocking St Peter in the Fields	Roof	8000
Chelmsford Cathedral	Drainage	7000
Colchester St James the Great	Re-plating South Aisle wall	3000
Faulkbourne St Germanus	General repairs	5000
Fingringhoe St Andrew	General repairs	7000
Great Sampford St Michael the Archangel		
	Roof repairs	1000
Great Ilford St Mary the Virgin	Tower and St Francis Chapel	10000
Hadstock St Botolph	Roof and stonework	3000
Harlow Methodist St Andrew	Drainage	5000
Harold Hill St Dominic	Roofing	5000
Ilford St Luke	External repairs	10000
Kirby le Soken St Michael	Underpinning	10000
Langley St John the Evangelist	Roof Retiling	5000
Lawford St Mary the Birgin	General repairs	4000
Leytonstone St Margaret	Re-roofing	5000
Littl (Bardfield) Saling SS. Peter and Paul		
	Electrical work	2000
Little Burstead St Mary	Spire and belfry repairs	3000
Little Clacton St James	Render repairs	2500
Littlw Waltham URC	General repairs	7000
Plaistow Memorial Baptist Church	Brickwork & terracotta	10000
Stapleford Abbots St Mary	Roof repairs	5000
Terling All Saints	Drainage	5000
Upshire St Thomas	Spire shingles	2000
Widford St Mary	Masonry	8500
Wix st Mary	General repairs	2000
		<hr/>
		149,000

WREN 2007

Leytonstone St Margaret	Re-roofing	10000
		<hr/>
		£159,000



St Germans, Faulkbourne received £5000 for general repairs. Photo by Ian Hunter



St Botolph, Hadstock received £3000 for roof & stonework repairs. Photo by Ken Rose



St James, Little Clacton received £2,500 for render repair. Photo by Ian Rose

St Andrew, Fingringhoe received £7000 for general repairs. Photo by Philip Brown



All the above photos & many more can be found on www.essexchurches.com

Copped Hall

In June the Friends had the chance to visit Copped Hall, which is not open all the time. The Hall is owned by a Trust that is gradually restoring the house and gardens. Their task is daunting, but much work has been done. The history of this long neglected property is rather sad. The house, which replaced an Elizabethan building, was built in 1750-1757. From 1869-1952 it belonged to the Wythes family. In 1917 the house was extensively damaged by fire; the family went to live in one of their other houses and did not rebuild the Hall.

The first priority of the Trust was to stabilise and re-roof the house. This has partially been done and a start made on restoring the interior. It is a long term project. The Trust intend the estate to be for the benefit of the local community.

The gardens are a joy, and there is evidence of loving work having been done and continuing.

We were very pleased this event attracted a good crowd of over 80 people, including some first timers.

To find out more about this property visit their website www.coppedhalltrust.org.uk



Visit to Beeleigh

What do Berden, Bicknacre, Blackmore and Beeleigh have in common? They are all monastic foundations in Essex and members of the FECT were lucky enough to visit the latter on a sunny Saturday morning in February. It was the home of Christina Foyle and is now lived in by her nephew, Christopher, and his family, who have recently done much restoration work.

Beeleigh is beautifully situated in the country-side to the north-west of Maldon, close to the River Chelmer. It was built for the Premonstratensian canons, who moved there from Great Parndon about 1180. The Order was founded by St Norbert with the approval of Pope Calixtus II in 1119 at Rheims. It was similar to the Augustian Order but the canons wore white, becoming known as White Canons. Their first house was built in the forest of St Gobain, known afterwards at Prémontré.

Christopher Foyle welcomed us in the Calefactory where the canons were able to warm themselves in the only room with a fireplace. There is a row of Purbeck marble columns down the middle and he explained that the marble and Reigate stone in the ceiling ribs would have been transported by water up the river. We moved on to the Chapter House, again divided by a row of Purbeck marble piers. Much of the floor above had collapsed before Basil Ionides restored the Abbey in 1912-1913.

The Dorter or dormitory, above the Calefactory was fascinating. It is now used as the library and the walls are cased with the magnificent book collection of Christopher Foyle's grandfather, founder of the famous book shop in London. We finished the tour in the James Bedroom, with a bed built for King James I. We are most grateful to Mr Foyle for giving up his morning to show us round, and Beeleigh Abbey is just another example of why people who denigrate Essex, do so at their peril. Afterwards Anthea Speakman, a previous Chairman of the FECT who lives close by, kindly invited us all to lunch.

Julia Abel Smith

2008 Calendar and Forthcoming Events

Sunday 16th March

EASTER CONCERT by 'The Kelvedon Singers'. Sacred Music by Rossini, Lauridsen & Bruckner, St Mary's Church, Kelvedon 6.30pm
 Tickets £15.00 to include wine & refreshments from Sarah Phillips 01376 561719



Friends in the Walled Garden at Copped Hall

Wednesday 7th May

SPRING STUDY DAY:
 10.30am St Andrew, Wormingford followed by St John the Baptist, Mount Bures (crossing tower). *Own arrangements for lunch*
 Holy Innocents, Lamash (round tower), St Barnabas, Alphamstone, St John the Evangelist, Twinstead.
 Tickets £7.50 (members) £10.00 (non-members) from Mrs H Scantlebury 01279 731228



Claire Cottrel (left) at Copped Hall

Wednesday 14th May

FAITH IN MAINTENANCE TRAINING DAY
 All Saints Church, Terling, near Witham, Essex

Tuesday 20th May

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and tea. St Andrews Church, Sandon near Chelmsford 3.00pm

Sunday 6th July

CREAM TEA PARTY PLUS 'Fitzwalters' near Mountnessing. Details to be announced

Saturday 13th September

RIDE & STRIDE
 To raise funds for Trust and participating churches. 10.00am to 6.00pm. Everyone can ride, stride or sponsor!



Some of the stalls at 2007 Fair at Reid Rooms...

Saturday 4th October

AUTUMN STUDY DAY:
 Will include visits to Ashdon & Hadstock

Wednesday 15th October

GRAND GIFT FAIR
 This year the Gift Fair will be at HYLANDS HOUSE where you will find easy parking and will be able to admire the house that has been so splendidly restored. The gardens and park are very beautiful, so come and enjoy a wonderful day out whilst doing some early Christmas shopping



...and some of the many customers

TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

2007 saw a significant rise in our income from unrestricted sources. Subscriptions and Donations were up by 12.5% to £46,180 and with gift aid this rose to a total of £50,466. The Ride and Stride produced £60,219, an increase of almost 8%, with the Events Team adding an extremely valuable £13,621. Our fundraisers and events volunteers are to be congratulated on a magnificent effort. In addition investment income rose by 10% to £22,358 whilst we saw a somewhat unexpected rise of £6,099 in the value of our investments.

I should also like to acknowledge the legacies of £2,500 from our old friend and former trustee Frank McGown plus a further £6,000 from the AJ Heapy estate. Grants allocated from unrestricted funds amounted to a net £144,000, which was somewhat lower than anticipated, and a further £10,000 was allocated from the WREN fund.

Fundraising/publicity costs include the expense of upgrading our website but overall our expenditure remains very modest indeed.

Following the closure of the Waste Recycling landfill sites we no longer have the benefit of income from this source. As a result our grant giving, compared with previous levels, is likely to reduce. However, during 2008 we hope to offset the effects of this by drawing on our reserves. In addition we will continue our strong relationship with the Essex Environment Trust and other landfill operators in the County who do so much to assist with church repairs and restoration. For the coming year the Trustees have decided to set aside a total of £200,000 for grants, added to which there is an outstanding sum of £18,451 left to give in the WREN fund.

Auditors Statement to the Members of The Friends of Essex Churches

We have examined the above summarised financial statements.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Auditors

The trustees are responsible for the preparing the summary financial statements in accordance with the recommendations of the charities SORP.

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full financial statements and Trustees' Annual Report.

Basis of Opinion

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6 'The auditors' statement on the summary financial statement' issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements for the year ended 31st December, 2007.

Edmund Carr

Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors, 146 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 0AW.

10th March, 2008

Summarised accounts for the year ended 31 December 2007

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2007

Total 2006 £'000		2007 Restricted Fund £'000	2007 Un-restricted Fund £'000	2007 Total £'000
19.2	Landfill tax credits	0.0	0.0	0.0
17.6	Subscriptions	0.0	21.1	21.1
26.6	Donations	0.0	29.4	29.4
9.0	Legacies	0.0	8.5	8.5
55.9	Fund Raising - Ride & Stride	0.0	60.2	60.2
14.9	Fund Raising - Other events	0.0	13.6	13.6
20.4	Interest and dividends	1.4	21.0	22.4
0.2	Gazetteers sold	0.0	0.0	0.0
163.8	Total income	1.4	153.8	155.2
(0.9)	Support costs	0.0	(1.0)	(1.0)
(1.6)	Governance costs	0.0	(1.8)	(1.8)
(4.8)	Fundraising/Publicity Costs	0.0	(3.5)	(3.5)
(6.1)	Fundraising expenses - Ride & Stride	0.0	(3.8)	(3.8)
(1.4)	Fundraising expenses - other events	0.0	(5.2)	(5.2)
(217.5)	Grants payable	(10.0)	(144.0)	(154.0)
(232.3)	Total Expenditure	(10.0)	(159.3)	(169.3)
(68.5)	Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	(8.6)	(5.5)	(14.1)
20.0	Gains/(losses) on investments	0.0	6.1	6.1
(48.5)	Net movement in Funds	(8.6)	0.6	(8.0)

Summary balance sheet as at 31 December 2007

2006 £'000		2007 £'000
265.5	Investments - market value	271.6
369.4	Cash and deposits	329.0
1.3	Sundry debtors	3.7
636.2	Total assets	604.3
(173.0)	Undrawn grants	(149.0)
(1.6)	Creditors	(1.7)
461.6	Net assets	453.6
	Represented by:	
433.1	General fund (unrestricted)	435.1
1.4	Gazetteer fund (unrestricted)	0.0
27.1	Landfill tax credits (restricted)	18.5
461.6		453.6

“WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS”

Indeed no! With a **very great deal of help** from our Friends, the Trust is able from year to year to help so many churches. And as is said, “A Friend in need is a Friend indeed”.

The Trust has over 800 committed Friends; individual member, donors and supportive congregations. Between them they contributed a little over £50,300 in 2007 which is the highest figure for some years. Comparative figures for 2006 & 2007 look like this:

	2007	2006
	£	£
Individual members	21,066	17,581
Donors	13,380	10,566
Congregations	11,733	12,272
Gift Aid	4,135	4,728
Totals	50,314	45,147

The average contribution by our 660 or so individual members come to £32. The equivalent average from supportive congregations was £80. Donations were received from 20 organisations or groups of people,

so it is easy to see that some donations were very substantial. In particular we are indebted to the relations and friends of Pat Fleming, who gave in her memory, to The Augustine Courtauld Trust, to the Dennis Buxton Trust and to Lodge & Sons (Builders).

Our members are the lifeblood of the Trust. We need you to help us grow and prosper. We hope that, through your membership, you have the satisfaction of making a real contribution to the preservation of the heritage of churches and chapels in Essex & East London. We hope you will respond to our invitation to the wide variety of events as detailed elsewhere in this Annual Review. And we hope that you will not only continue to support us through membership or otherwise but also by endeavouring to interest your friends and acquaintances in becoming **Friends of Essex Churches**.

THANK YOU most sincerely for supporting us in 2007. I aim to thank individually everyone who sends money by post but, for those who contribute by Standing Order, this is my one annual opportunity to say a collective “Thank you”.

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Now is the best time to renew your membership subscription for 2008, unless of course you have already done so or if you send your contribution by Standing Order.

There is a separate sheet with this Annual Review to make your renewal quick and easy, by post to the Honorary Membership Secretary. If you would like to renew by way of Standing Order or Gift Aid the amount, there are sections on the Renewal Form.

Thank you very much.

Keith Gardner, Honorary Membership Secretary

2007 PATRONS

The Lord Lieutenant of Essex
The Lord Petre

The Bishop of Chelmsford
The Right Revd. John Gladwin

The Bishop of Brentwood
The Right Revd. Thomas McMahon

President: George Courtauld

Vice-President: Lord Braybrooke

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND TRUSTEES

Chairman: Julia Abel Smith

Vice-Chairman: Claire Cottrell

Hon. Treasurer: Ian Dudley

Hon. Secretary: Mary Blaxall

James Bettley, David Lodge, Don Woracker

ADVISORY COUNCIL

John Bloomfield, Keith Gardner,
Ann Hilder, David Hoppit,
Simon Mynott, Tim Pratt,
Neil Stedman, Alastair Stewart,
Sarah White

Coopted at end of year
Fiona Nelmes and Ralph Meloy