The Great South Window – rebuilding the window is now well under way, with specialist scaffolding in place.

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Updates on our current conservation projects
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The Cathedral’s Annual Open Evening and first Benefactors’ Service
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Update: The Canterbury Journey

It is my pleasure to introduce the Trust’s winter newsletter, and update you on the progress of The Canterbury Journey. I joined the Cathedral in October, and may well have met a number of more local readers on my second day in post – at this year’s Open Evening!

The Canterbury Journey provides a great opportunity to address our most urgent conservation needs, such as the Nave roof and Christ Church Gate, as well as the chance to broaden people’s knowledge and understanding of this magnificent place, ensuring that all enjoy a world-class experience. Since October, key archaeological and structural surveys have continued, allowing us to develop a detailed programme of works with more confidence. We are also recruiting new Project team members, and have met with Hyland Edgar Driver (winners of last year’s Landscape Design Competition), and other architects to begin honing exciting plans for reimagining the South-West Precincts and the new Welcome Centre.

Led by the Trust team and with thanks to your generosity, we are now over halfway to securing the £7.5m necessary to unlock the generous grant of £11.9m from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Keep an eye on our website for more news about The Canterbury Journey’s development, and how you can best get involved. We look forward to discussing the detail of these plans with people as they develop.

Also in this edition, read ahead for details of other Cathedral projects your support is making possible, and some exciting events coming up this year and next.

Mark Hosea, Project Director

The Great South Window - latest news

Project update - stone by stone

Piecemeal repairs throughout the 20th century have necessitated the complete rebuilding of the window, home to part of the internationally irreplaceable “Ancestors of Christ” series of stained glass panels. Significant progress has been made throughout 2014, and with new leadworking methods the window has now grown as far as the second transom, halfway up the window.

The stonemasons are now assessing the original 15th century tracery stones, and are optimistic that more than half can be recycled. Our thanks go to everyone who has supported this ground-breaking conservation project so far.

The Ancestors exhibition 2015

Following successful exhibitions at The J Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 40 panes of medieval stained glass depicting the Ancestors of Christ were safely returned to Canterbury in May. Before they are returned to their homes around the Cathedral next year, they will be shown alongside further glass at ground-level in the Cathedral’s Chapter House. This free exhibition will showcase precious works of art and allow unrivalled, eye-level access. Doors will open on Monday 18th May until Sunday 23rd August (taking a short break 13th-17th July for graduation week). Look out for further information in our 2015 spring newsletter.

Become a Glass Guardian

Stained glass is a wonderful combination of art and science which allowed the early church builders to bring biblical stories to life. Canterbury is at the forefront of glass conservation and research, as well as the creation of new works for the Cathedral and other heritage buildings. The Great South Window is an incredible feat of medieval engineering and its rebuilding has been a challenging and costly project. It is due to be completed in summer 2016.

By becoming a Glass Guardian from £5,000, you can help make this project a reality. Your generosity will ensure this irreplaceable piece of our shared history is safe and available to all for generations to come. To find out more, please get in touch via the attached form.
Protecting the NW Transept

This vital project will make safe and weatherproof one of the Cathedral’s most visited areas. Since our update in August, further scaffolding has been erected, enabling high-level surveys. The turret pinnacle is particularly precarious, and urgent remedial work has begun with specialist masonry cleaning.

Surveys also revealed significant masonry erosion and asbestos in the internal roof space. During the removal of the asbestos from the Cathedral’s oldest roof, significant archaeological discoveries were also made. As this exciting project gathers pace, we are indebted to Viridor Credits, First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund, The Mercer’s Company, Tanner Trust and others who have made this urgent restoration a reality.

“Canterbury Cathedral is a very important part of the nation’s heritage. Having seen first-hand the scale of the works and with strong support from the Kent Steering Group, the Board unanimously and enthusiastically supported this important restoration work.” — John Lockwood, CEO of Viridor Credits

Sponsor our Conservation

Since re-launching the Decorative Stone and Lead Tile sponsorship opportunities earlier this year, many of you have already been in touch to give your support through a one-off gift or regular donation - or to find out more. These two campaigns support urgent fabric conservation at the Cathedral, and are currently contributing to the North West Transept and Great South Window projects.

Sponsoring a Decorative Stone or Lead Tile enables us to continue the world-class conservation being carried out by our on-site Stained Glass studio and Stonemasonry department. Our conservators build on the knowledge handed down by the generations before them, as well as exploring new, energy-efficient technologies to complement more traditional techniques.

To find out more, visit our website or tick the relevant box on the tear-off form overleaf, and return to us in the pre-paid envelope provided. Your support now will make these urgent projects a reality and can be made in your own name, in memory of a loved one, or perhaps as a gift.

An Eventful Autumn

On Saturday 13th September the Cathedral hosted its first Benefactors’ Service, in gratitude to those who have helped us in so many ways.

Two hundred people attended the dedicated evensong in the Nave, and joined us afterwards for tea (and a slice of cake) in the Deanery Garden. We were blessed with fine weather and the Choir sang beautifully - thank you to everyone who was able to join us for such a wonderful occasion.

This service marks the beginning of a new tradition for the Cathedral, with plans to hold a similar event biennially in the future. We very much hope to welcome back familiar faces, and greet many new ones at our next Benefactors’ Service in 2016.

For one night each October, the Cathedral keeps its doors open beyond the daily Evensong service, allowing visitors to find out more about this wonderful building and its community. Each year, a topical theme for the event is chosen, which is reflected in the various stands and exhibitions on display from each department. Visitors can also enjoy private tours of little-seen areas such as the Bell Chamber and Organ Loft.

This year, the centenary of the outbreak of WWI was a timely theme for visitors and staff alike to think about, with special exhibitions of documents and photographs from the Cathedral’s Archives sparking a great deal of conversation.

The Trust stand was situated between the Gardeners (with their indoor “dig for victory” vegetable patch), and Liturgy and Music, manned by David Flood and David Newsholme, masters of the Boys’ and Girls’ Cathedral Choirs respectively. We were pleased to update visitors on the development of The Canterbury Journey project, as well as other urgent works and initiatives.

On a very cold night, the Cathedral welcomed nearly 1,300 people in just a few hours, with this year’s event expanding into the Cathedral Cafe which opened in January. We hope even more people can join us next October for this lively event. The date and theme for next year’s Open Evening will be confirmed in 2015.
Canterbury’s Choristers

As we go to print, the Girls’ Choir are preparing to make their concert debut on Friday 5th December with “Dancing Day: A Christmas Choral Celebration”. The Nave will no doubt be filled with the wonderful sound of this John Rutter suite of well-known, traditional carols arranged for upper voices. Accompaniment is set to be provided by celebrated harpist, Camilla Pay, pianist David Rees-Williams and organist William Wallace. The concert is looking to be very well-attended and we look forward to hearing more from the Girls’ Choir in 2015.

Canterbury Cathedral’s Girls’ Choir is generously supported by The Peter Cundill Foundation, in memory of Peter Cundill - an enthusiast of church choral music and supporter of young people. We are immensely grateful.

On Easter Monday next year, the Cathedral Choir will embark on a two-week tour across the southern United States of America. Working in partnership with Euro Arts Tours, the tour will begin in Houston with a concert at St John the Divine. The Choir will perform eight concerts across six states, ending at St Andrews Church, Orlando, on 19th April.

Led by the Cathedral’s Organist and Master of the Choristers, Dr David Flood, this tour will include a concert sponsored by St Augustine’s Cathedral Basilica, Florida – coinciding with its 450th anniversary. The City of St Augustine was the first parish founded in America in 1565. Canterbury shares a similar role as England’s first Cathedral, making this tour a well-timed opportunity to share in this milestone occasion with our friends in the United States.

The Choir is an essential part of Canterbury Cathedral – singing daily at services and giving inspiration to all who hear them. The music department has a strong record for producing some of the finest performers and musicians, and welcoming visiting choirs from around the world, as well as touring themselves. Ensuring these proud traditions can continue is one of our priorities and we are grateful to all who help make this possible by supporting music at Canterbury Cathedral.

Behind the scenes with the BBC!

The BBC has been busy filming at the Cathedral throughout the past year and we are delighted to announce the completion of a stunning three-part documentary, Canterbury Cathedral. This wonderful behind-the-scenes tour of a year at the Cathedral will be an illuminating addition to the festive television listings, scheduled for 9pm on the 12th, 15th and 19th December 2014, on BBC 2.

Wishing you a peaceful Christmas and New Year from the Trust team.

Cathedral Christmas cards - picture by Alison Gardiner. Why not visit www.cathedral-enterprises.co.uk for any last minute gifts. Worldwide shipping available.

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Please notify us if you have a change in circumstance (e.g. move house) or wish to cancel your declaration.

Tick here to receive more information about:

☐ our sponsor a stone and sponsor a tile campaigns

☐ becoming a Canterbury Cathedral Glass Guardian

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