

# PRESS RELEASE



## **STRAWBERRY HILL RESTORATION HITS HALF-WAY STAGE**

**Thursday September 10, 2009**

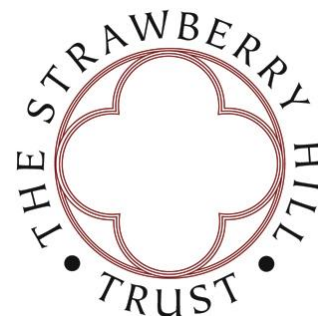
**At Strawberry Hill today a beautifully restored gilded, strawberry leaved, weathervane was re-installed high on the Beauclerk Tower to mark the mid-way point in the restoration of Walpole's gothic castle**

Strawberry Hill was created as a gothic fantasy by influential historian and man of letters, Horace Walpole, between 1747 and 1792. It is Britain's finest example of Georgian Gothic Revival architecture. It has been on English Heritage's *Buildings at Risk Register* since 1991 and featured in *Restoration* on BBC2 in 2004 as a building in need of urgent repair. It is now being restored to its former glory at a cost of £8.2 million and is on schedule to re-open in summer 2010. This will follow an exhibition at the V&A next spring devoted to Horace Walpole and the interiors of Strawberry Hill.

In 2002 the Strawberry Hill Trust was formed with a mission to restore Walpole's villa and to open it to a wider public. Strawberry Hill is one of the best documented houses in the country and conservation architects, Inskip + Jenkins, working with project managers, Fanshawe LLP, has been leading a huge research project which has informed the programme of extensive restoration now being carried out by contractors, E.Bowman and Sons Ltd.

The project is part funded by a £4.6 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Partnership funding includes generous donations by English Heritage, The Architectural Heritage Fund, The World Monuments Fund Britain, and numerous charitable trusts, local societies, patrons and individuals. Restoration of the weathervane was funded by a grant from the Heritage of London Trust.





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Extensive work is now under way at Strawberry Hill. Bowman is carrying out a significant range of structural repairs and skilled reconstruction. Meanwhile, the fine renaissance painted glass has been completely removed for specialist restoration and resetting by Chapel Studio and skilled craftsmen are carving decorative features for the interiors, three metre high pinnacles for the roof and weaving damask wall hangings according to original 18<sup>th</sup> century designs.

The restoration of Strawberry Hill has afforded valuable opportunities for conservation students from City and Guilds who have cleaned the exquisite Robert Adam fire-place in the Round Room and apprentices from the Prince's Foundation who are assisting with the fine joinery repairs in the Library. On completion Strawberry Hill will be opened to the public and become an important heritage attraction and education facility.

**For press information, please contact** Susie Seagrave, Strawberry Hill Trust, on 020 7371 8385 email [susie.seagrave@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:susie.seagrave@hotmail.co.uk) **For further information about the weathervane and the restoration programme please contact** [www.friendsofstrawberryhill.org](http://www.friendsofstrawberryhill.org) and [www.ebowman.co.uk](http://www.ebowman.co.uk) **Free to use media images are available from:** [www.strawberryhilltrust.org/pressreleases/images](http://www.strawberryhilltrust.org/pressreleases/images)

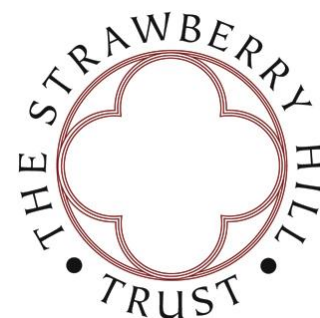
## Notes for Editors:

**Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill** will be at the V&A from 6 March to 4 July 2010. The display will evoke the magnificent interiors of Strawberry Hill by bringing together over 250 works owned by Walpole and not seen together since they left the house in 1842. His extraordinary collections encompassing paintings, ceramics, glass, silverware, sculpture, furniture, portrait miniatures, historical relics, rare books and manuscripts reflected his personal fascination with history. The exhibition is organised by the V&A, the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University and the Yale Center for British Art. Tickets: £6, concessions available. Advance booking online [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk) or phone 0844 209 1770 (booking fees apply) For further press information about the exhibition please contact **Alex Bratt** in the V&A press office on 0207 942 2503 or email [a.bratt@vam.ac.uk](mailto:a.bratt@vam.ac.uk)  
**About E Bowman & Sons Ltd** E Bowman & Sons Ltd ('Bowman') is a nationally renowned builder, specialising in quality conservation and construction, repair and renovation projects. In addition to Strawberry Hill Bowman is involved in renovation building work for Chatsworth House in Derbyshire and recently completed a 2-year, £2.8 million restoration and renovation project at Apethorpe Hall in Northamptonshire for English Heritage.

Based in Stamford, Lincolnshire Bowman employs more than 75 craftsmen – many with traditional and much-prized skills, including slaters, joiners, masons and conservators. The company, which is more than 120 years old, remains privately owned. The site manager for Bowman at Strawberry Hill is Brian Hembrow. [www.ebowman.co.uk](http://www.ebowman.co.uk)

**Heritage Lottery Fund** Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 28,800 projects, allocating over £4.3 billion across the UK. Website: [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). For more information, please contact **Katie Owen**, HLF Press Office on tel: 020 7591 6036 or mob: 07973 613820.





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**About Chapel Studio** Chapel Studio was established in 1973 and the current Managing Director is Mr Robert Holloway ACR. The studio, whilst undertaking new commissions, specialises in the conservation and restoration of stained glass ranging from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The team comprises: Paul San Casciani ACR and Paula San Casciani BA (Hons). The conservation team joining you on site on Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup> of September will be Rachel Helleur, head of conservation, Laura Pes, BTEC.HND and Elise Learner BA (Hons) ACR. All of whom have been involved in the delicate and highly skilled conservation and restoration of the historic glass at Strawberry Hill.

The conservation mainly entailed the dismantling of the predominantly 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century glass from its surrounding panels and the careful cleaning and delicate repair of each individual roundel using techniques and materials in accordance with CVMA guidelines.

The restoration and conservation carried out on the historic glass has varied according to the specific needs of each roundel. The panels we are displaying on Thursday incorporate excellent examples of resin bonding with back plates for extra support. New painted fragments inserted into missing areas to complete the piece of glass and also examples of the reconstitution of missing paint and/or enamel.

**About Fanshawe LLP** Project Managers and Cost Consultants : Formed in 1946 Fanshawe have established and maintained their position as one of the premier practices of their size, with a very wide and varied range of services, clients and projects, doing so without compromising the ethos or quality of the professional services provided. Fanshawe, comprising three Partners, have consistently worked on some of the countries most important buildings and with some of the best known designers and conservation architects. Our depth of knowledge, experience and commitment enables us to very quickly and crucially understand the key requirements of our clients.

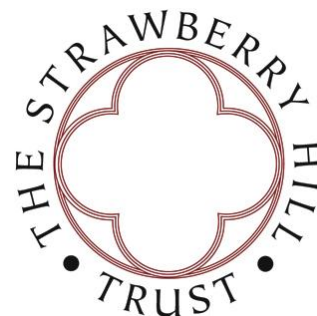
The project manager at Strawberry Hill is Rupert Symmons, a Partner at Fanshawe. In addition to the work being carried out at Strawberry Hill, Fanshawe are also currently managing projects for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; the Chatsworth House Trust and the Sir John Soanes' Museum. [www.fanshawe.co.uk](http://www.fanshawe.co.uk)

**About Anna Benson Context Weavers** Based in Rossendale, Lancashire, Anna Benson set up Context Weavers with Neil Warburton in the early 1980s. They specialise in the research and reproduction of historical fabrics using original looms and methods.

At Strawberry Hill they are creating woven jacquard worsted damask for the wall hangings in the Long Gallery. Woven in the natural ecru colour of the wool, the damask is then dyed crimson. The Long Gallery requires 356 metres of damask and it will take Context Weavers one year to complete the finished product.

*The Strawberry Hill Trust Strawberry Hill, 268 Waldegrave Road, Twickenham, TW1 4ST*

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Anna and Neil are also creating silk and wool braids for this and other rooms at Strawberry Hill as well as fringe and glazed wool tammy lining fabrics.

