



THE FRIENDS OF
ST MARY'S BARNES



ANNUAL REPORT
2023/24

St Mary's is at the heart of the community in Barnes and the Friends of St Mary's Barnes aim to enhance our community role as well as raise funds for the church and for charities. Our events throughout the year bring many people into the church and provide enjoyment and entertainment for people of all ages. They generate funds which are used to maintain our special building as well as support local, national and international charities. This year we have again had a full programme of events all of which have attracted numerous people into the church.



As part of the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Rehallowing of St Mary's Church in 1984, the Friends were pleased to welcome back many of those involved in the rebuilding at a special service with the Bishop of Southwark on 26 February 2024 and the dedication of a plaque for Canon Juergen Simonson (pictured), Rector of Barnes at the time of the rebuilding.

The 40th Anniversary was further marked by two talks. The first in April in conjunction with the Twentieth Century Society was given by Mark Beedle of the original design team at Cullinan Architects on the design and rebuilding of the church. The second in June by Scott McCracken, who led the archaeological investigations after the fire was given on the archaeology of St Mary's (pictured).

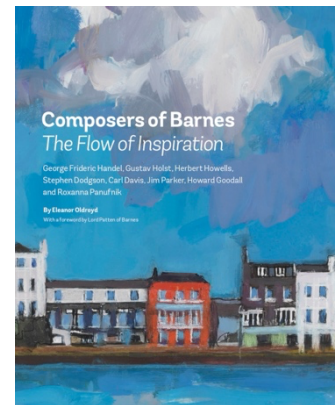




Earlier in the year, the **Barnes Charity Ball** took place in February. The theme of *Midnight in Paris* featured an Eiffel Tower in the middle of the church, Can-Can dancers, French cuisine, music and dancing with silent and open auctions led expertly by Vassos

Alexander which raised £15,000 for the Friends Fund and other charities.

The **Barnes Music Festival** followed in March with the theme of *Legends* and a full programme of 37 events at six venues across Barnes, centred on St Mary's. The festival marked the 150th anniversary of Holst's birth and a new edition of *Composers of Barnes* written by Elly Oldroyd was published. There were outstanding performances from the Kanneh-Mason Trio (pictured on front cover), Dame Imogen Cooper, Pavel Kolesnikov, Holst Singers, Lucy Parham with Patricia Hodge, Mikeleiz-Zucchi Duo, Art Sung, Daniel Moulton, Sacconi Quartet and Nicholas Daniel as well as the finale of the Barnes Young Musician of the Year. The Toddlers Concert returned as did Henry Chandler with JP Ekins, and Tony Palmer with his film on Holst. Taking part were 800 musicians with a total audience of 6000 and main sponsorship from Chestertons and Russell-Cooke.



The **Barnes BookFest** was held for a fourth year in September, organised in conjunction with the Barnes Bookshop and Magic Productions. Authors included Frank Gardner (pictured), Robert



Harris, Miriam Margolyes, Thurston Moore, Chris Patten, Nigel Biggar, Hayley Mills, Gyles Brandreth with Leigh Lawson, Vernon Bogdanor, Sue Prideaux, Abi Daré and David Gower. The total of 20 events drew an audience of over 2000 with sponsorship from Laurent Residential and International Literary Properties.

Our final event of the last year was the **Barnes Charity Fashion Show** in October 2024 with two packed-out performances. The enthusiastic audience enjoyed the latest fashion on the runway from eight Barnes fashion retailers as well as music from Steve Wright and plenty of prosecco and champagne, followed by an Afterparty with PopUp shops in Kitson Hall. The show was sponsored by Move It With Sam and Onside Law and proceeds went to Bowelbabe Fund for Cancer Research and Home-Start as well as the Friends Fund.

At our **Annual Choral Evensong** in October 2023, our visiting preacher was The Right Reverend Dr Martin Gainsborough, Bishop of Kingston.

All these events and activities have not only encouraged greater awareness of St Mary's and brought many people into the church building but they have also raised significant funds both for the church and for nominated charities. Most recently these funds have been used to pay for the audio-visual improvements. The Friends Fund continues also to pay for all utility costs, maintenance, repairs and capital projects for St Mary's.

The Friends Advisory Council, drawn from people connected with St Mary's and the Barnes community, comprises Michael Ross-McCall (Treasurer), Peter Boyling, Charles Haswell, Fouki Heller, Ted Muxworthy, Rachel Skilbeck, Paul Teverson, Isobel Woolf and the Rector and I am grateful to them for their enthusiastic participation in the planning and running of our events and the allocation of grants.

We regard all those who come to our events as the 'Friends of St Mary's Barnes'. Thank you for taking part and for your generous contributions. They make a big difference to the role which St Mary's plays in the community of Barnes and beyond. I hope you will continue to be involved.

Andrew Summers, Chairman, The Friends of St Mary's Barnes Oct 2024

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