



From the heart

Alumnae News



SPECIAL GARDEN PARTY EDITION, JULY 2023

What a truly joyful event this was, with well over 900 parents and alumnae. Our staff were thrilled to be able to catch up with so many past students and the feedback has been wonderful. We are particularly honoured to have welcomed at least two alumnae from the 1940s and 1950s. Thank you to everyone who attended for contributing to such a memorable event.

Visitors were able to review a display of the history of this site since the 1600s, and a range of historical artefacts including old photographic plates with images of student sin the chapel in veils; newsletters from the 1930s and 1940s, old photographs and information relating to our founding Sisters.

Our gift shop 'The Sacred Heart Collection' did well selling a range of items including our new book '*The Nunnery at Hammersmith*', mugs with a drawing of the cloister garden, Sacred Heart Parker Pens and gift cards featuring an image of the restored cloister painting panel –The Nativity. As guests left the event, they each received a Sacred Heart tote bag, containing a Sacred Heart gel pen and bookmark, with a prayer on the reverse.

Visitors also learned about a number of recent and ongoing projects at school including the restoration of our cloister paintings; improvements to our gardens; and plans for the chapel. Information about these for those who couldn't attend, and more pictures from the party are included in this newsletter.











We provided a display of elements from our new book, the Nunnery at Hammersmith. Too many posters to includes here but see below from the display the .



THE CHART FROM DOWNSIDE ABBEY



We found this tantalising reference to nuns from Dunkirk moving to Hammer.....



But we had no idea what the chart was or where to find it the rest of it. In the end with the help of some academics we tracked it to Downside Abbey and were able to obtain the next panel across, which together with other referenced sources confirmed that these nuns did indeed move into the nunnery that existed in our site, before our current building was constructed.

society. These included old photographic plates showing images of the school and students in veils; old newsletters from the 1930s and 40s etc.

The image displays a collection of historical items. In the center, several old photographic plates are laid out on a light-colored surface. These plates show various scenes: a large building, a group of students in veils, a church interior, a street scene, and a group of students. To the right of the plates is a small blue knitted hat with a gold emblem. Below the plates is a blue velvet bag with a gold emblem. The items are arranged on a light-colored surface, possibly a table or floor.



PROJECTS IN THE CHAPEL

We displayed some posters to explain our current projects

CLEANING THE STONEMWORK

Works carried out by B.K.S Stone Ltd, August 2018

BEFORE - The old carpeted floor and dark dirty stone



WORK IN PROGRESS - showing both the dirty and cleaned stone

BEFORE & AFTER CLEANING THE STONE

Works carried out by B.K.S Stone Ltd



INSTALLING THE NEW STONE FLOOR

with under-floor heating for improved environmental efficiency, 2020

FIRST, THE DISMANTLING OF THE OLD FLOOR



UNDER FLOOR HEATING



PROJECTS IN THE CHAPEL

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WHAT COMES NEXT?

New pew benches

We have recently received a quote to replace all our current unmatching plastic chairs, with wooden pews which will incorporate the our Sacred Heart logo. Final discussions are on going but stackable modular options are available, so that matching chairs can attach to the pews providing additional flexibility on layout.

Some possible examples



Lighting

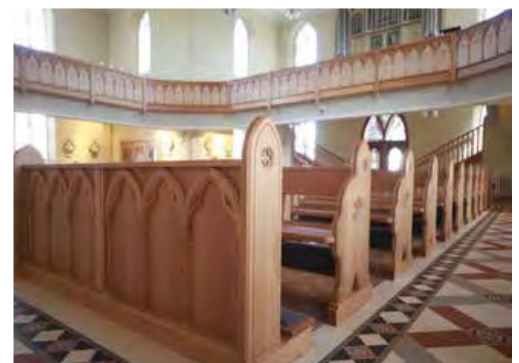
We are also planning for new lighting, getting rid of the old fluorescent lights and upgrading the old theatre lights, many of which no longer work.

Windows

We are investigating improvements to the small prayer room windows and the cleaning of the main stained glass window.

Screen

We are investigating with the Historic Churches Committee the possibility of a hidden screen behind the would lower for presentations.





At the party we sold a number of items from our gift shop named (slightly tongue-in-cheek) The Sacred Heart Collection

The items will be available for our current parents to purchase through our ParentPay portal on the school website at some point next term, and we are currently exploring an add on to this which will allow externals such as alumnae, to also purchase items.

Until that is resolved, if you perhaps could not attend the party but would like one or more of these items please email Alex Dijkhuis using comms@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk or write to Sacred Heart High School 212 Hammersmith Road, London W6 7DG and we will try to make a plan to help you. We may need to add on postage costs.

Remember that school will be closed now until the new term starts in September 2023.

All the items were available in return for a minimum specified **charitable donation** as set out below.

- Our new full colour book, *The Nunnery at Hammersmith*, describing the extraordinary history of our site here in Hammersmith from the 1600's to the present day –minimum donation of £15.00.
- A mug showing a drawing of our cloister garden - minimum donation of £8.00.
- A gift card (blank inside with envelope) featuring our newly restored cloister painting panel –The Nativity. Good for Christmas perhaps! Minimum donation of £2.50.
- A boxed Sacred Heart Parker Pen –minimum donation of £8.00.

We gave everyone who attended a free

- Sacred Heart tote bag
- Sacred Heart gel pen &
- Bookmark

We will now be short of stock on the bags and gel pens. We are exploring a thicker version of the tote bag for our next order, price to be confirmed. Subject to availability the gels pens are likely to be available for a minimum donation of £3.00 each.

GARDEN PROJECTS

We have many plans for specific landscaping improvements to improve our grounds for students and to respect the heritage of our setting for years to come. These works will occur in stages. Stages 1A and 1B have recently been completed.

STAGE 1A: CLOISTER GARDEN

Largely completed June 2023. We sought to improve the cloister garden for the girls and to better respect our historic context. Planting beds round the edges had been covered over with gravel but have now been re-introduced. Prayer benches have been introduced in a circle around the statue of Jesus—one more arrives later this month. Significant re-planting has been undertaken.

The cleaning of the statue and of the crucifix outside Calder forms part of the next phase.

BEFORE

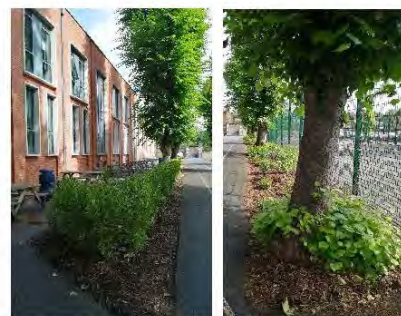
AFTER



STAGE 1B: PLANTING NEAR LAWN & CALDER

BEFORE

AFTER



STAGE 2

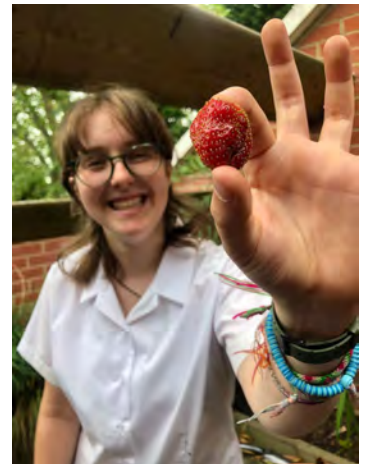
IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CALDER PATIO

Students have recently worked hard to restore the patio garden at the top of the science block. They have planted strawberries, lettuce, radish, tomato, peacock orchids and tritelia as well as trying to restore the plants that were already there like the white Calla Lilies, Cockscomb and fern. Tomatoes are apparently next on the list!

BEFORE



AFTER



POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER WORKS

- Subject to constraints from the trees: a specialist all-weather sports surface across the netball courts (softer and green).
- The introduction of some sail type rail shelters near Calder and Russell
- Repair of front blue gates, historic (needs specialist input).
- Possible relocation of memorial stones, to better commemorate the extraordinary history of this site.



- Improvement to small outside space beyond sixth form basement to enable student to use this area and possible introduction of outdoor patio near dining room for students to sit outside
- **Major project** (would need planning consent & significant funding) to create a dedicated sixth form garden opposite the Russell Building. Parts of this area have been used this year as a builders' store associated with the refurbishment of Bute Hall. Includes historic wall and has great potential with its historical setting, views across the chimneys etc.



PROJECT TO RESTORE THE CLOISTER PAINTINGS



We recognise our responsibility to look after these precious paintings by Mother Mary Maycock.

They were painted in 1906-7 and show figurative scenes from the Life of Jesus (some of which were copied from well-known 15th century paintings by Fra Angelico), within painted frames and architectural detailing. The top and bottom of the wall, and between scenes, is fictive marble decoration.

The paintings cover an area approx. 130m in length x3m high.

As a first step we commissioned a Condition Survey which took place in February 2023.

Overall the condition of the paintings is stable, although their appearance is compromised by yellowed varnish, scuff marks and a spotting phenomenon that may be related to original technology.

Some scenes exhibit flaking which requires consolidation to prevent further loss. There are other less-widespread types of deterioration / damage which need particular attention.



Fig.37
Visible image of are imaged in IR to right

Infra red light has revealed some hidden words on specific panels, see below.



STAGE 1: THE NATIVITY PANEL

COMPLETED JUNE 2023



First the varnish layers were removed (on the right).
Old varnish remains on the left.



Then the stippled dots on the cleaned angels wings
(above) were repaired as can be seen here on the right.

BEFORE



AFTER



Quotes have been requested to extend this work throughout the cloisters, in stages.

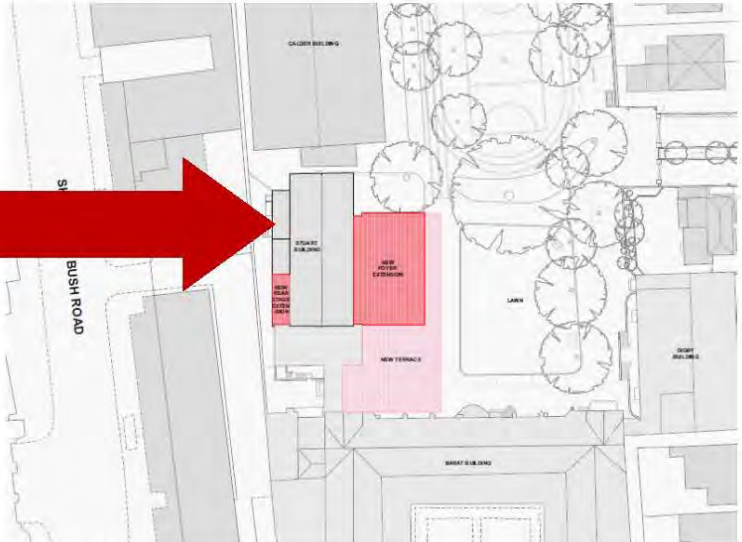
We will need to raise money for this, but the school and governors are committed to seeing the project through. The project will need to include not simply the restoration, but also then a system for protecting further damage.

PROJECT TO BUILD A MULTI-USE THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

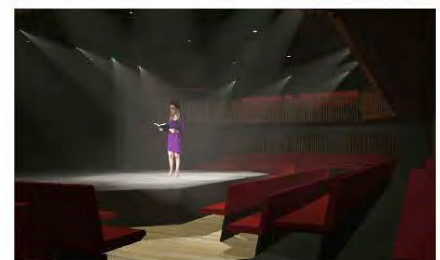
Planning Application Submitted 19 August 2021, decision awaited.



Stuart Building with the old gym, which has no longer been used as a gym since we developed the Calder building with our new expansive sports hall, which you can also visit.



Plan shows the planned extension of the Stuart building and its courtyard



THEATRE PLAN

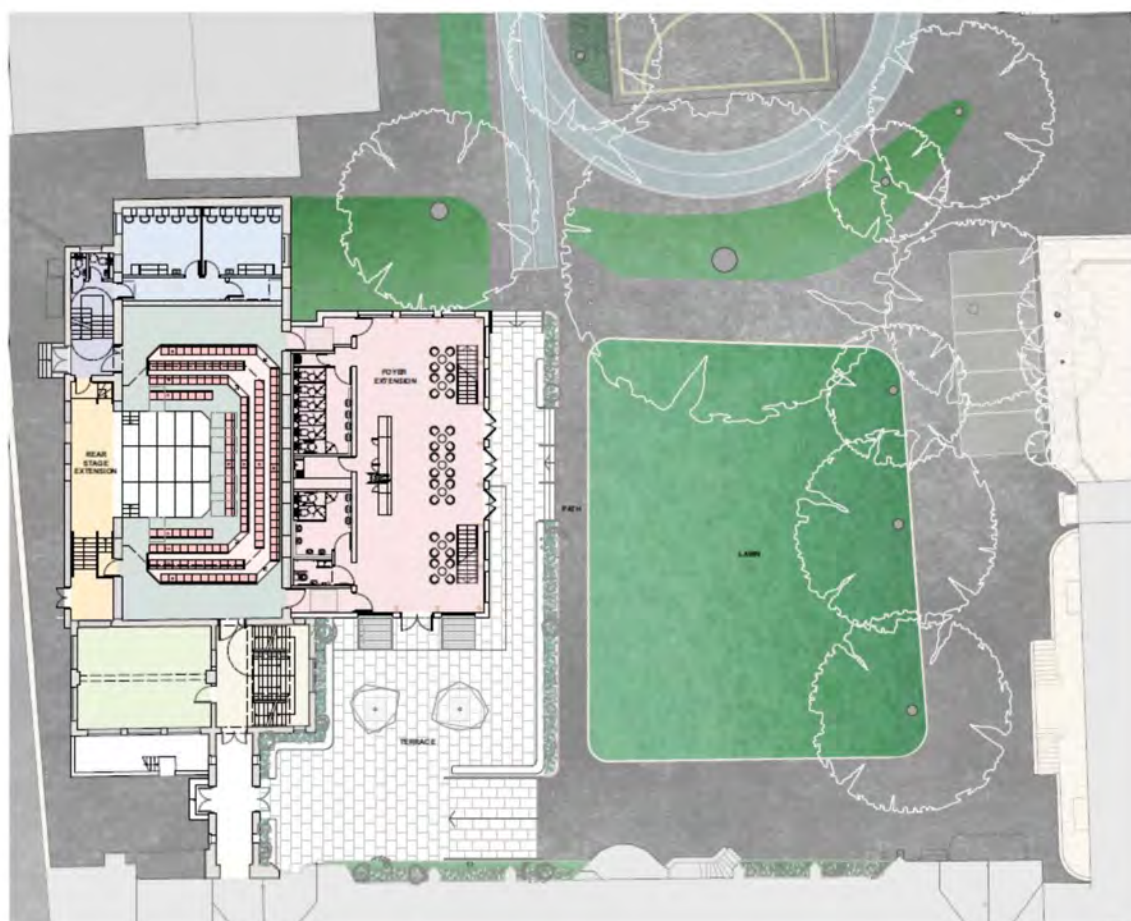
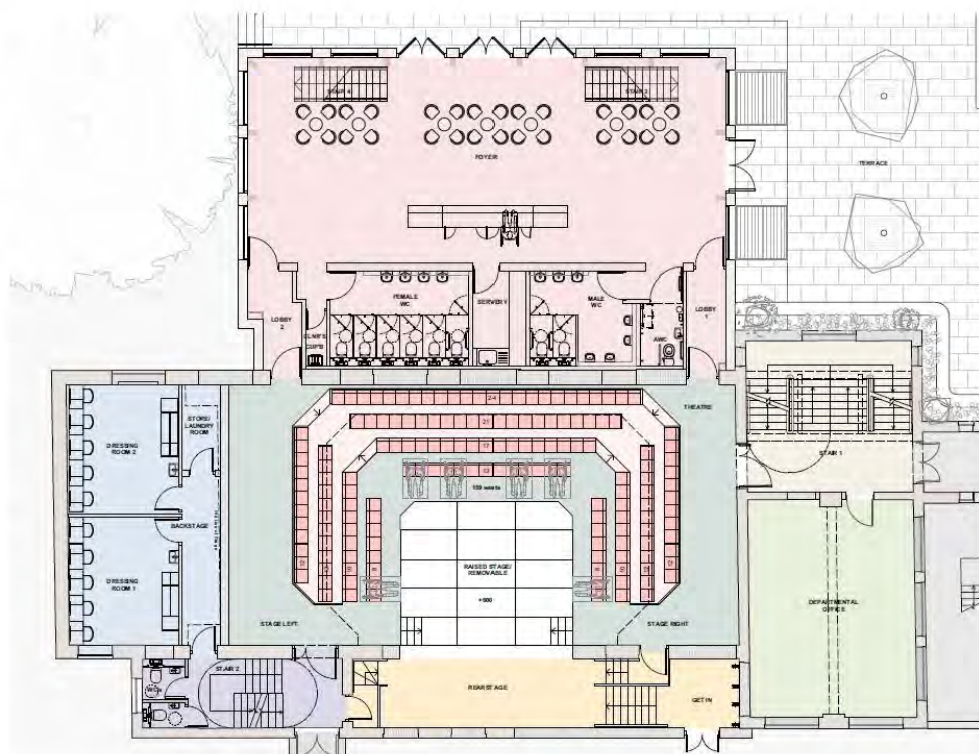
Proposals

The proposed new foyer extension is a simple rectangular space with glazing on three sides, overlooking the Bute Gardens courtyard, with views of the listed Barat building. It contains a set of public toilets and a servery as well as sound lobbies between the foyer and the auditorium.

The new auditorium design provides an open thrust stage at the centre of the room, with seating arranged on three sides at two levels.

A new rear stage extension will allow for curtains and cloths to be hung at the back of the stage and for actors to appear through the opening. It can also be used for the storage of rostra, seats or a piano.

Ground Floor Plan





Sacred Heart High School

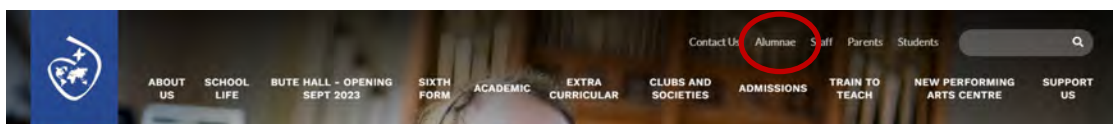
KEEPING IN TOUCH

By receiving this newsletter, we now have your contact details, but please pass on to any fellow alumnae, who may not be aware, that they can sign up with their contact details using the linked form on the alumnae page of the school website (it's a tab top right on the home page).

Do also read that page yourself, as it has more in it than just the form!

School website: sacredhearthigh.org.uk

Home page tabs:



Direct link to Alumnae page: Sacred Heart High School Hammersmith - Alumnae

Alternatively for those who prefer, they can post their contact details to the school:

Alumnae Office

Sacred Heart High School

212 Hammersmith Road

London W6 7DG

or provide them via email to the Head of Communications and Development at Sacred Heart.

Alex Dijkhuis

comms@sacredh.lbhf.sch.uk

0208 7487600 x219

Hopefully together we can continue to spread the word, building our alumnae database even further. We hope to then start inviting back specific year groups for reunions.