

Sts Thomas



**The Church at the
Heart of the Island**

New Year
08
Campaign
Newsletter 6

Next step: the Tower!

a New Year message from Michael Kier, Campaign Chairman



Dear Friends,

The first exciting Campaign news of 2008 is that the most challenging part of the Renewal programme, the conservation of the tower, begins this month!

Sts Thomas' tower is one of the Island's best known landmarks - our first glimpse of Newport from every direction. This year, for most of the spring and summer, the whole of the tower (and the Island's favourite clock!) will disappear behind a vast new tower of scaffolding.



If there are people who still don't know what is happening to Sts Thomas, they very soon will!

Passers-by are already admiring the transformed Princess Elizabeth chapel. Skilled re-tiling and stonemasonry has finally cured the damp that has long been damaging one of the most popular attractions of the Church building. The re-opened chapel is an exciting vision of how, one day, the whole building will be renewed.



Community events of every kind are bringing many more new visitors to the Church, and more Island businesses and organisations are joining together to support the Renewal Appeal and to use the building. We are delighted that the Isle of Wight College will again be holding their Awards ceremony in the church this year.

All this adds up to a very good start in renewing Sts Thomas' 800-year community role at the Heart of the Island, but a lot more, at least £1.5million, still has to be raised.

We have to match substantial English Heritage funding for at least four more phases of external work. While this is happening we want to be able to move faster with the vital programme of interior improvements to create the vibrant and self sufficient centre that Islanders need Sts Thomas to become.

If you, or someone you know, want to help make this happen, a donation of £15 (or £25 for joint membership) will enrol you as a Friend of Sts Thomas for the year. Why not join the growing group of people, on and off the Island, who are coming forward to back this very exciting project.

Happy New Year!

Michael Kier

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St James Palace Concert raises £10,000 for the Appeal



In November, an audience of more than two hundred raised over £10,000 for the Renewal Appeal. By kind permission of our patron The Earl of Wessex, the gifted young soprano Elizabeth Watts gave a memorable performance in the historic picture gallery at St James Palace. This was the birthplace of Princess Elizabeth, and where her father King Charles 1 was held before his execution at Whitehall.

In thanking the soloist and the audience, Canon Stephen Palmer was able announce the good news that the vital first phase of urgent repairs to the Princess Elizabeth chapel, had just been completed. 'On time and on budget'.

Church Middle Schools share Historic Carol Service



Last month saw Sts Thomas packed with children and parents - not unusual. Except that the two schools were Archbishop King, and Trinity : one Church of England and the other Roman Catholic Aided, who now share their excellent Head Teacher Pat Goodhead.

Renewal Campaign supporters can be proud of the way Sts Thomas is now offering the Church building to so many more schools, businesses and local charities. These and other services of carols and candles at Christmas brought many Island families to the Church to celebrate the festival with their work colleagues and friends.

'Turn Up and Sing' The Messiah!



Our good friends at Quay Arts were excited last month to have the space, atmosphere, acoustics and organ accompaniment at Sts Thomas to do justice to this great Handel oratorio.

'Turn Up and Sing' has become such a popular event in the Quay Arts calendar it badly needed more seats for audience singers and musicians. With very little time to rehearse, many came just to experience the excitement of seeing and hearing how music and voices can come together, to celebrate the Christmas story.

Forthcoming Events : 'Turn Up and Sing' The Creation

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| 26/1 | 1830 | for 1900 Burns Night Supper at the Parish Centre |
| 25/2-10/3 | | Pan Community Art Group Exhibition in Church |
| 1/3 | | Start of Phase 2 Renewal Works: |
| | | Stone repair and cleaning of the tower and clock faces |
| 11-14/3 | | Isle of Wight Musical Festival Competition |
| 17/3 | 1100 | Nodehill Middle School Easter Service (also at 1400) |
| 20/3 | 0930 | Newport C of E Primary School Easter Service |
| 24/3 | 1000 | Easter Ramble and Picnic |
| 25/3 | 1930 | Turn up and Sing Haydn's 'Creation' |
| 29/3 | 1930 | IW Youth Concert Band and Adjutant General's Band |
| 30/3 | 1100 | Regimental Service (The Rifles) |

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