

Progress of the Restoration Works at The Elms 2015

May to July 2015

Definite progress has been made on the restoration work on The Elms Tower. The Tower now has a completely new coating of lime render that was skilfully carried out by Chris Allen and his team from Emsworth Plastering. It looks a truly excellent job



*The Tower all prepared for its first new coat of lime render
The Tower is 11 metres high and 2.5 metres wide, plus the smaller adjoining panel to the main
Elms building.
These pictures show the work that has started applying the new coats of lime render by Chris
Allen of Emsworth Plastering.*

**The Tower is part of The Elms, the Grade II 'Star' Listed Building
with 'Strawberry Hill House neo-Gothic elevations.'**

There will be up to 28 days further 'curing' of the render and then the tower will be painted with silicate paints by a special painting process involving four treatment coats. The base wall colour

will be as near a match for the rest of the property as possible, although any new paint colour can never match that which has been applied years ago. The features, the figurehead and the niches will be depicted in contrasting white as before.

Subject to the weather, it is expected that the works will be finished by the second week of September

The works are being carried out in line with the Conservation Authorities requirements using traditional building materials such as Roman cement on the figureheads and mouldings and lime render on the walls. All of the defective rendering will be removed and restored using new lime render. After that a special 'breathable' protective paint has to be applied

The 'French Doors' have also had some rotten wood replaced, a glazier has replaced the cracked ornamental glass and a painter/decorator will finish the job off prettily with new coats of paint.



Alba Plastercraft busy remoulding the lost features of the figureheads on the Waterloo Room Tower before remounting them in their places on the Tower

The long planned conservation work on the mouldings on the exterior of the Tower was started at the beginning of May. The work is being ably done by Mr Alan Bailey of Alba Plastercraft of Lee-on-Solent.

As so often happens when work is started on old properties, additional issues arise and it is so in this case. These things delay the work and add to the expense.

This historic building is very unusual and one of only a few like it for many miles around.

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The work on painting the tower started in September but became very delayed by the frequent rainy days in the first half of the month. The pre-treatment layer and the undercoats went on as expected, and the two top coats were applied only to find that the dried colour was far too pale to

allow progress to the next step of depicting the features in white.

The representatives of the paint company were consulted and the paint used analysed for colour integrity, the outcome of which is that there had to be a delay of work for about 10 days, when, as it happened, the weather was perfect for painting.

Finally, arrangements were agreed for the colour to be corrected by the application of a different paint colour to be supplied.

Restoration of the Waterloo Room Tower at The Elms

The restoration of the tower was finally completed on Saturday 10th October by putting the finishing touches to the painting of the moulds and features in white.



On Friday 23rd October a small celebration of the safe and satisfactory completion of the works was held in the Waterloo Room.

Many supporters of the Trust were present and most notably the owners of the three firms that carried out restoration work were present to be thanked in person by the trustees and Vice-President.

They were:- Alan Bailey of Alba PlasterCraft (Lee-On-Solent) whose highly skilled work brought about the magnificent re-creation of all the mouldings and features in Roman cement; Chris Allen of Emsworth Plastering whose ample experience in working on restoration projects working with lime render was able to rebuild the walls with their bandings and niches to restore the damage done over the many years since the tower was constructed 200 years ago; Guy Richardson of Richardson Contract Decorators who had the challenging task of applying the special conservation silicate paint made in Germany by Beeck. This involved four treatment layers, an acid etching treatment, then an undercoat called 'fixative,' and usually two but in this case four top coats (four because an additional two had to be applied to get the base wall colour right to be able highlight the features in white).

We were fortunate also to be able to thank Mr Martin Babbidge proprietor of M Babbidge Property Maintenance and Repairs for his prompt work repairing a leak in the roof and replacing some rotting wood caused by the leak both identified by the restorations.

Principally present to witness this occasion were HBC Councillor Jackie Branson, Mr Peter Fellows HBC Planning and Conservation Officer, and also present were two trustees and a past trustee, Mr Mike Sellis, some residents of the Elms and Trust supporters Mr and Mrs Grasmeder. Coffee, tea, biscuits and a glass of wine were served by the members of the [Bedhampton Historical Collection](#), who very kindly offered to host the occasion.

The restoration project manager Richard Pratt addressed the gathering briefly to express his and the trustees thanks to the four firms concerned in the work so well done and to the supporters who had so generously given towards the costs of the restorations. He also said his grateful thanks go to Nigel Gossop for his help, support and advice from time to time during the project starting way back at the outset of initial planning in 2013.

The total costs amounted to £27,500, which even allowing for the donations have been a heavy burden for this small charity to bear. The Founding Trustee Mr Bernard Stanley spoke next to give the thanks of the trustees and supporters to Richard Pratt for all his work over many months managing the restoration project. This produced a generous round of applause.

The trustees wish to acknowledge and thank the donors who were: - The [Secret Bookshop](#) (Props. Nigel and Wendy Gossop), Mrs Julie Cahill, Mr and Mrs Grasmeder, a donor who wishes to remain anonymous and various small cash donors into a collection tin.

A representative from The News, Sarah, came and took photographs and interviewed the Project Manager, also taking a video of him explaining the project to her.

If you wish to make a donation now please [click here](#) which will take you direct to the Charity Aid Foundation's facility for giving direct to the Manor Trust. Please say your gift is for the Tower Appeal.

Alternatively you can send a cheque made payable to the 'Manor Trust Bedhampton' and send it to the Administrator at The Elms, 2 Lower Road Old Bedhampton PO9 3LH.

When giving, please say your gift is for the Tower Appeal and we thank you sincerely for your help.