

HISTORIC CHURCHES PRESERVATION TRUST

Renown 3054

FULHAM PALACE, LONDON, S.W.6

Press Notice No. 44 (30/4/55)

Save Our Churches Week

Historic Churches Trust's Special Effort

Save Our Churches Week opens on Monday (May 2). This is a special Week promoted by the Historic Churches Preservation Trust to draw attention to the need of funds for the repair of ancient and beautiful parish churches throughout the land.

It is estimated that there are about 2,000 such churches in need of repair, and that £4,000,000 is needed to supplement what the parishioners can raise themselves. Towards this the Trust has so far raised £500,000 in gifts and promises.

The Week will open at St. Martin-in-the-Fields at 9.30 a.m. on Monday (May 2) when Miss Peggy Ashcroft will lay the first coin on the Silver Steps. An area of the steps is being roped off and passers-by will be invited to cover it with silver coins daily. They will be encouraged by posters exhibiting such slogans as: "To Pay is to Pray", "Sixpence a day Keeps dry rot at bay", "A shilling a day Keeps the death-watch away", "A half-crown a day Saves the stones from decay".

On Monday evening at 6.30 p.m. there will be a Service of Renewal at St. Martin-in-the-Fields. The Lord Chancellor (Viscount Kilmuir) will read the Lesson and an address will be given by the Bishop of Durham (Dr. Michael Ramsay).

On Wednesday famous athletes will run through the streets of London bearing grants from the Trust to churches in need of repair.

The first three runners are Roger Bannister, Christopher Chataway and Christopher Brasher. They will be dispatched from Buckingham Palace by the Duke of Edinburgh and will each carry an envelope containing a cheque for £250 from the Trust. It will recall the race in which, paced by Chataway and Brasher, Bannister first ran the Mile under four minutes. On this occasion, however, no records are anticipated.

At the Duke of York's steps the Olympic runners will hand over to three Parliamentarians who used to be Oxford or Cambridge "Blues". They are drawn from three different parties - Hamilton Kerr, M.P. for Cambridge (Con.), Geoffrey de Freitas, M.P. for Lincoln (Lab.) and Frank Byers (formerly Chief Liberal Whip).

The Parliamentarians are being given a fairly short stage - to St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Their other Olympic runners will carry the cheques forward until eventually, at the door of his own parish church of St. Stephen Walbrook, the Lord Mayor of London (Sir Seymour Howard) will accept the envelope from the last runner - Bombardier Brian Hewson, who recently made an unofficial world record for the

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Three-Quarter Mile.

Among other famous athletes taking part are Gordon Pirie, John Disley, G. Nankeville, Vernon Morgan, Nicolas Stacey and Philip Ll. Morgan. Stacey is now a priest in Portsmouth and Philip Ll. Morgan hopes to be ordained this summer.

After the Lord Mayor has received the grant from Baronadier Hanson, he will enter the church of St. Stephen Walbrook for a short service at which an address on the work of the Trust will be given by the Bishop of London (Dr. J. W. C. Wand).

There will be musical recitals at St. Martin-in-the-Fields throughout the week in aid of the Trust. The works of famous composers will be given by the St. Michael's Singers on Tuesday evening, the choir of St. Bartholomew the Great on Wednesday evening, and by Joan Houghton (Soprano) and Iris Payne (Pianoforte) on Friday evening.

The Week will conclude, on Friday and Saturday, with a conference at Church House. It will be opened by Lord De Lisle and Dudley, V.C., Secretary of State for Air, who is President of the Friends of Kent Churches. Experts will discuss problems in the preservation of churches. Among them will be a distinguished Danish expert, Konservator Egmont Lind, who has been brought to this country to advise on the treatment of mural paintings.

Other events throughout the country will be held by county trusts affiliated to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust. The offices of the Trust are themselves in a historic building - Fulham Palace, London, S.W.6.

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11.54 AM. RUNNERS LEAVE THE PALACE

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH STARTED THREE FAMOUS ATHLETES OFF FROM THE GRAVELLED FORECOURT OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE THIS MORNING. THEY WERE ROGER BANNISTER - FIRST MAN TO RUN THE MILE IN UNDER FOUR MINUTES, - CHRIS CHATAWAY, AND CHRIS BRASHER.

EACH RUNNER WAS CARRYING A CHEQUE FOR £250 FROM THE HISTORIC CHURCHES PRESERVATION TRUST IN GRANTS TO FAMOUS LONDON CHURCHES NEEDING REPAIRS.

THE THREE OLYMPIC RUNNERS WERE COVERING THE FIRST STAGE OF THE RUNS, FROM BUCKINGHAM PALACE TO THE DUKE OF YORK'S STEPS IN PALL MALL.

HATLESS AND WEARING A DARK BLUE SUIT, THE DUKE WATCHED BY A CROWD OF ABOUT 2,000 OUTSIDE THE PALACE AND CAME OUT INTO THE FORECOURT TO SHAKE HANDS WITH THE RUNNERS, WHO WERE INTRODUCED BY R. IVOR BULMER THOMAS, CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE TRUST.

READ RUN THE MILE IN UNDER FOUR MINUTES

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ALSO MR. IVOR BULMER THOMAS