



The Minerva Newsletter

Autumn 2008

Its been a busy summer season for us, with interesting projects and exotic travel. This autumn we will be just as active. We continue to support our 2 apprentices with another one working with us already in advance of starting next years scheme.



We have just started an extensive programme of works at Newbridge, Oxon, this is the oldest significant bridge left on the River Thames (C1380). And requires rebuilding of the ribs to the second arch which was hit by river traffic, below you can see the pontoon system being towed into position by Admiral Sharland. We are currently undertaking a full archaeological assessment and measured survey, done by hand by our in-house draughtsman.

The entire bridge will be repointed using aggregates sourced from a quarry a few hundred yards down the road, so it's nice to keep the ecomiles or whatever they are called down. We will use a Lincolnshire NHL5 Hydraulic lime.



No sign of credit crunch yet however when contrasted with the wider world I suspect that our industry may be subject to some lag as funding is generally assigned 6 months or so before projects begin. What do you think?

The Minerva Workshop (looking back)



St Margaret of Antioch, Leigh Delamere, Wiltshire.

A Rood conserved by us several years ago at Leigh Delamere church in Wiltshire. The remarkable fifteenth century rood was hidden for many years under the pews. The word rood is derived from the Saxon word rood or rode, meaning "cross". At St Margaret's the rood screen has disappeared but this valuable object gives us a glimpse as to the quality of what once was there. The limestone rood was highly decorated, so after it was recorded and gently cleaned the polychrome decorative scheme was conserved. The rood was then placed in a specially made lead case to protect it from any water ingress and fixed into its new position adjacent to the Chancel.



Pugin Hall, Rampisham Dorset



Grade 1 listed Pugin hall in Dorset was designed and built by Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin in 1844, It was nice to have the opportunity to work on a building designed and built by such a genius, as the parish church at Cheadle with its extraordinary scheme of internal decoration is one of my favorite churches, it's a pity that he didn't apply the same intellectual rigor to understanding the building materials of mid Dorset. The outer rubble skin had become completely detached (it was poorly tied in anyway) and had to accommodate over 400 new Cintec ties, the walls and gables were held together by corroding ironwork and some of the Hamstone chimneys had reached the end of their life.



(Above, newly worked Ham and Doultong chimney elements craned into position and nearly finished).

Russian Churches

Andrew Z has just returned from Russia from where he was asked to be part of a team of British experts assisting in the condition survey of a series of redundant and derelict Russian country churches, one of which will be selected for repair as part of a training program for local craftsmen and women. As the use of lime mortar is relatively unknown in Russia and not used in the repair process, we hope, next year, to be part of an exchange programme between British and Russian church repairers.

(Below Zamite Church, with friendly cow).



(Below) Yeski Church with the team.



Completed Rose Window

Here at St Andrew's Methodist church in Devizes we have finished rebuilding a rose window that blew out during a ferocious storm two years ago. It looks fantastic!



Stonemasonry & Carving

Stone Façade Cleaning & Repair

Lime Pointing & Traditional Plastering

Traditional Building, Roofing & leadwork

Conservation.

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