



A RICH LEGACY - COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE IN INDIA

ANTHONY PEERS

The Arts Society Fylde
Lowther Pavilion Theatre
1 March at 2.00pm

All being well, we will be able this month to welcome our lecturer in person; Anthony Peers is in fact making his first visit to The Arts Society Fylde. His lecture will revolve around his experience, as he says, “of having masterminded a British Government-backed project to restore the magnificent George Gilbert Scott designed university buildings in Mumbai (Bombay), India”. This surely gives Mr Peers a unique position from which to outline its design (in England), construction, history and, of course, its restoration, which provides the perfect platform from which to consider the broader historical, cultural and architectural context. We are promised an introduction to Bombay’s economic boom of the 1860s, which coincided with the high point of the Gothic Revival; nowhere else in the world can claim to have as magnificent an assemblage of Gothic Revival buildings.

The story of the award winning project to restore the University of Mumbai’s Gothic Revival buildings provides an opportunity to touch upon philosophical approaches to conservation as well as traditional repair techniques.

To complete this feast, our lecturer aims to give an account of the work undertaken by those who took time away from their respective Cathedral workshops in the UK to transfer knowledge and skills to their Indian counterparts. Venturing beyond Mumbai to consider key colonial buildings in Delhi, Kolkata (Calcutta) and Yangon (Rangoon), we are promised a chance to examine evolving attitudes to the British empire, in the UK, India and beyond.

ANTHONY PEERS

Anthony is a freelance historic buildings' consultant, educated as an Architectural Historian at Manchester University and trained in building conservation at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies, York. After two years with SAVE Britain's Heritage, where he wrote *Deserted Bastions*, he worked with the English Heritage Listing Division on the review of military buildings. In the mid 1990s Anthony was employed by the UK Government in Bombay to set up and run a project to repair George Gilbert Scott's university buildings and to train local architects and craftsmen in conservation techniques and philosophy. Anthony published a history of Birmingham Town Hall in 2012, to critical acclaim. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and Deputy Chairman of the Ancient Monuments Society.



FURTHER STUDY

GA Bremner: *Imperial Gothic*, (Yale), 2013

Philip Davies : *Splendours of the Raj*, (Penguin), 1987

Gillian Tindall: *City of Gold - The Biography of Bombay*, (Temple Smith), 1982

Robert Grant Irving : *Indian Summer - Lutyens, Baker and Imperial Delhi* (OUP) 1981

Christopher London: *Bombay Gothic* (India House Books) 2002

Kartar Lalvani: *The Making of India - The Untold Story of British Enterprise* (Bloomsbury) 2016

Preeti Chopra: *A Joint Enterprise - Indian Elites and the Making of British Bombay* (UMP) 2011

Jan Morris & Simon Winchester : *Stones of Empire* (OUP) 1983

Image: University of Mumbai Hall and Rajabai Tower, c.1905, (public domain)

www.theartssocietyfylde.org.uk—Supporting the Arts in Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre