

The SCHOLARSHIP

APPLICATION INFORMATION

The following information should help you decide whether the nine month travelling Scholarship programme is for you. Please read in conjunction with our Scholarship webpage and if you have any further questions you would like to ask before applying, like to speak to the Scholarship Officer or a past Scholar, please contact Catharine Bull: catharine.bull@spab.org.uk.

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BACKGROUND

Amongst the SPAB founders and early members was a group of architects who worked on buildings with their own hands, travelling from site to site. Inspired by the teachings of John Ruskin, that building and design should be brought together under the control of one mind and ideally, as in medieval times, under the control of one hand.

Instrumental amongst these was Philip Webb, a founding member of the SPAB (link to SPAB Manifesto), who would base his young colleagues on a site to help with the work and learn from the craftsmen. Webb went out of his way to ensure that young architects associated with the SPAB along with knowledge of how to deal with the repair of ancient buildings had a true understanding of the craft and spirit that created these buildings in the first place.

It was the absence in professional training of any direct practical experience or real understanding of traditional materials and techniques that prompted the SPAB committee to award its first Scholarship in 1930. Initially for a single architect to be based on site to “take the opportunity to see and understand the organisation necessary for the successful repair of an ancient building and the methods best employed to that end”.

To this day this ethos remains; teaching young professionals the SPAB’s philosophy of sympathetic repair of old buildings; recognising the need to educate them in the merits of understanding a building before they commence work on it; to appreciate the accretions of time and the additions of their forebears as a part of the building’s history not to be torn apart for modern convenience, nor dragged back to a point in history thought desirable for the time being.

Initially the Scholarship was awarded to architects but over the years has broadened to encompass building surveyors and structural engineers. Recognising the burgeoning roles in the care and repair of old buildings, it is open to those who seek to be the decision-makers who shape the repairs and interventions to historic buildings, set specifications and oversees their implementation.

The majority of the programme is undertaken through visits to buildings across the country, either in the planning phase or as working sites, guided by experts. There are no formal lectures or submissions apart from a selection of pages from sketchbooks at the end of the programme.

KEY SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Key dates

14 October 2021	SPAB Scholarship Application deadline
7 th December 2021	Pre-interview drinks (selected candidates are welcome to be joined by a person significant to them) to meet this year's Scholars, the interview panel and other candidates at the SPAB office
8 th December 2021	Scholarship interviews
17 th December 2021	All candidates know the outcome of the interviews
potentially at the SPAB offices	mid March 2022 Fellowship & Scholarship programmes start,
May 2022	SPAB Spring Repair Course (subject to being in-person course)
July 2022	Working Party week
September 2022	Dance Scholarship Trust AGM (partners invited)
mid December 2022	Programme ends with final presentation to SPAB Guardians and candidates for
2023 at pre-interview drinks	

Course fees

There is no course fee; the SPAB receives a huge amount of support from people working in the building conservation sector as well funders and its own fund to run the Fellowship and Scholarship training programmes

Bursary

Scholars get receive a non taxable award in the region of £9,400 paid in monthly payments from March to November inclusive around 21st of each month (approx £1,000/month). The final payment is made in November less £200 which is held back until receipt of copy of pages of notebooks.

Typical programme content

The programme each year is bespoke to take advantage of current projects people are working, whether in the planning phase or works are on site. The structure of the Scholarship calls for learning from the opportunities made available to the Scholars by the site visits. The topics you will see below in the programme section are indicative of the subjects covered and will reflect the opportunities available on site in any given year.

Two elements will recur throughout the programme:

- the philosophy of repair, and
- appreciation of craftspersonship

Essential to the SPAB's Approach is the retention and care of historic fabric. Scholars are exposed to the crucial issues relating to the retention of maximum amount of historic fabric and its careful repair. Meet people who are constantly facing the dilemma of promoting repair over restoration and the constant question on when to keep and repair what survives, and when to renew it.

"A building's fabric is the primary source from which knowledge and meaning can be drawn." SPAB Approach

Scholars will be exposed to the philosophical decisions involved with the repair of historic buildings as they spend time with repair designers and craftspeople known to advocate a repair approach. No single solution is offered nor are Scholars shielded from different viewpoints; this is the start of Scholars' career in the repair of historic buildings and only through such exposure and the course of their own work do Scholars develop their own opinions.

Traditional building skills are seldom passed from generation to generation now, as they used to be. This gap in the sector's awareness has caused the inappropriate treatment of many historic buildings. Through exposure to craft skills in a variety of disciplines, the Scholars will witness people working with materials and tools. The aim is to show them the skills involved, the characteristics of the materials and begin to hone their critical faculties to differentiate between the good, the bad and the indifferent work.

SCHOLARSHIP COURSE

The Course:

The Scholarship is a nine month, continuous training programme running from mid March to mid December. It is split into two parts.

The first six months (the Lethaby phase) is spent travelling from one site to another witnessing repair techniques across a wide variety of trades and learning the SPAB's philosophy of conservative repair (see SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME below for further detail). Named after W.R. Lethaby, Surveyor to the fabric of Westminster Abbey, Professor of Design and founder of the Art Worker's Guild who was closely involved with the work of the SPAB and one of the most inspiring teachers of his time.

The final three months of the Scholarship is spent visiting a small number of country houses selected with the Scholar. The aim being to allow for a period of absorption of the art and culture of the country house, to further the Scholars' appreciation and understanding of the crafts that brought these pieces about and to train the eye through periods of sketching, painting, reading & observation etc.

This extension of the Scholarship, devoted to a study of the art and culture of the country house, results from a generous endowment received from the Patrick Plunket Memorial Trust and in recognition of the interests of the late Patrick Plunket, Deputy Master of the Queen's Household.

Eligibility:

The Scholarship programme gives a practical basis to the education of designers and specifiers of building repair. It is aimed at architects, building surveyors and structural engineers who have completed the academic based part of their courses. Applications are also welcome from those

seeking to be decision-makers in the shaping of repairs and interventions to historic buildings, setting specifications and overseeing their implementation. Applicants should have some practical experience and though near the start of their careers, they should be aiming towards, if not completed, their full professional qualification. For further guidance on eligibility please contact the Scholarship organiser.

Funding:

No course fees and Scholars receive a bursary in the region of £9,400 paid monthly during the course.

As Scholars are expected to travel together as far as possible it is recommended that a joint car is purchased between them at the outset. Funds may be advanced for this purpose and the monthly payments reduced accordingly.

Candidates should note that the grant is a contribution towards Scholars' living and travelling expenses, it will not cover full expenses of the nine-month Scholarship and most Scholars need access to extra funds.

To find out more about the financial implications of the course it is essential to speak with the programme co-ordinator who will put you in touch with recent past Scholars.

Application:

Scholars are selected by interview. Eight or so candidates will be selected for interview following submission of the application form either as handwritten document or the online version (available on the [SPAB website](#)) by 14th October 2021.

The candidates selected for interview will be given the names of one or two recent past Scholars to contact. It is important that applicants contact and ideally meet, at least one past Scholar to gain an accurate impression of the Scholarship and what it entails personally, professionally and financially, and the impact it has on your other relationships.

Interview:

Interviews are being held at Spital Square on 8th December 2021 with an informal evening beforehand to meet this year's Scholars, the interview panel and a few SPAB staff members. The interview panel consists of six or so people, drawn from the SPAB's committees and staff. It always includes past Scholars.

Applicants are asked to bring along besides a small selection of their academic and work in a portfolio evidence of other interests, particularly of a practical or artistic nature.

Selection:

Principally the panel look for candidates who:

- satisfy the eligibility criteria
- are enthusiastic about old buildings
- are observant (and preferably have some ability to draw accurately)
- are willing to learn (or reflect on and question what they have been taught at university), ask questions, and argue through difficult ideas
- are practically minded (and preferably used to working with their hands)
- have the ability to get on with other Scholars for the full duration of the programme. The

personal interaction of the Scholars makes all the difference to the success of the programme in any given year

- have good social skills (they visit a large number of people who have often gone to considerable trouble to prepare for them, and who are giving their time voluntarily)
- preferably have previous experience of working with old buildings
- are reasonably fit, the programme is demanding both physically and mentally
- have a permanent UK base for the duration of the programme and
- are prepared to contribute to the SPAB and spread its principles after their Scholarship

Above all the panel look for Scholars who will take the very fullest advantage of the unique opportunity offered by the programme and will commit themselves 100% to it for the whole period.

Three, occasionally four, Scholars are chosen and candidates are generally notified within a week after interview whether they have been successful or not.

Reference Material:

Scholars are provided with a copy of A.R. Powys 'Repair of Ancient Buildings' and a list of relevant books for reference during the course to supplement their site based learning.

Throughout the Scholarship and afterwards, Scholars have access to the reference library and archival material at the SPAB. Hosts are always ready to recommend further reading in their specialist areas.

Accommodation:

The Scholarship organiser will often be able to help arrange accommodation for Scholars with local contacts of the Society (who may often be previous Scholars). Otherwise Scholars make their own arrangements with friends & family. Scholars are provided with contact details of past Scholars and Fellows who will generally be willing to help wherever they can.

Sketchbook:

Recording of site visits in sketchbooks is the constant thread of Scholars' studies. Each Scholars' own personal record of their studies, developing their own style of sketching and recording what they see on visits examples, including details of repairs, materials, tools, vernacular styles, etc encountered. After the Scholarship, these sketchbooks remain important reference documents.

Supervision:

The day to day running of the programme is the responsibility of the Scholarship Officer with whom Scholars have regular contact in order to provide feedback and discussion over past and potential visits. Scholars might hear of useful visits from hosts while they are on site and this can often feed into the planned programme.

Scholars also have contact with a volunteer tutor (usually a past Scholar) whose role in broad terms is to enable them to get the most out of the Scholarship experience. Such contact will vary from year to year depending on the needs of the individuals. Many individual hosts also provide useful support and feedback along the way.

Overall control of the Scholarship lies with the Education and Training Committee (E&TC).

Scholars present and critically analyse one or two of their visits at E&TC meetings, where their progress is discussed and their notebooks reviewed.

PROGRAMME

The aim of the SPAB Scholarship is to provide the knowledge and skill often missing from architectural, surveying and engineering training in the UK and enable Scholars to “take the opportunity to see and understand the organisation necessary for the successful repair of an ancient building and the methods best employed to that end” (documented in the SPAB 1930 Committee Report). We also aim to improve Scholars’ communication primarily with craftspeople on site, but with clients and funders too.

We expose Scholars to the widest possible range of conservative repair methods and craft skills via site visits rather than through classroom lectures.

For the first six months (Lethaby stage) of their study Scholars travel together to meet a range of the country’s leading professionals - architects, surveyors, engineers, conservators, analysts and craftspeople. They will visit building sites and offices, workshops and yards, quarries and foundries and see repair techniques at first hand. Wherever sites permit and expert guidance is available Scholars gain hands on experience.

Scholars are expected to discuss general philosophy and principles of building conservation with those they encounter. It is hoped that through discussion, direct experience and analysis, they should develop and carry into their future careers; sympathy for the SPAB’s philosophy of repair, a feeling for materials and a discerning mind in the choice of sympathetic repairs and design criteria.

Scholars are expected to record details of these visits in their notebooks. They are encouraged to adopt a primarily graphic style to record details but also notes of technical discussions and personal thoughts on the issues met onsite; a bound selection of which must be submitted to the SPAB at the end of the course.

The Scholarship is run as a series of opportunities based on the projects and venues made available for the year. An informed host will guide them through the topics demonstrated by the site in question and there is ample opportunity to discuss the issues and ask questions. Subjects are not studied in a predetermined sequence; the programme content will depend largely upon access granted to projects being undertaken in the UK at the time, as well as the Scholars’ own needs and interests. Tuition is personal and directed to each Scholar.

It is essential that the Scholars are sufficiently excited or disturbed by what they see to argue through the issues among themselves. Much of the learning takes place informally. If Scholars are given accommodation by the days’ host or other interested parties, evening sessions (sometimes long into the night) can provide helpful periods for more relaxed debate.

The following notes about the programme content are for guidance only. Inevitably chance meetings and site visits will occur and these are often as beneficial as those organised many weeks in advance. In order to accommodate interesting work occurring at short notice and to take into account the developing interests of each year’s group of Scholars, the programme is maintained with a degree of flexibility. There is ample scope for the Scholars to show their own initiative in using their time in the

best way possible, by visiting interesting buildings and workshops.

Stage I – The Lethaby Scholarship (6 Months)

During the first six months the following subjects are normally covered:

1 The Philosophy of Repair and Conservation

The central theme of the entire Scholarship is the understanding and application of the Society's philosophy on building conservation – that of honest and skilful repair. Scholars will encounter the dilemmas which abound in conservation work. Through practical application, discussion and debate, with leading exponents in the field, they will be encouraged to develop a sound practical and philosophical basis for all future conservation work they undertake.

2 The History of Architecture and Vernacular Construction in the UK

An introduction to the historic framework within which old buildings have their place demonstrated through visits to buildings, town walks and guided observation.

3 Materials of Building

Visits to places of extraction and production to develop an understanding of how materials central to traditional buildings and their repair are won and prepared such as :

Stone and Slate - characteristics of different stones and methods of quarrying and dressing

Timber - growth in managed woodland, methods of drying and conversion

Brick and Tile - characteristics of various clays, their preparation and manufacture

Mortars - properties of different mortars, their constituent materials, preparation and use

Various - bell foundry, lead casting shops, glassworks, plaster workshops etc.

4 The Building Craft Skills in the United Kingdom

An appreciation of the skills and techniques required in the field of building repair and conservation will be nurtured by discussion with experienced exponents of trades such as:

Stone and masonry carving

Carpentry and carving

Plumbing

Roofing

Joinery

Glazing

Iron and other metalwork

Rendering

Internal and decorative plasterwork

Painting and decorating

5 Structural Analysis of Historic Buildings and Analysis of Construction

Structural engineer hosts introduce the structural principles and the methods employed in the construction of historic buildings - essential to an understanding of their present condition and the diagnosis of defects.

6 Decay Mechanisms in Historic Buildings

Site visits demonstrate the various problems of decay in historic building fabric, supplemented by lectures and visits to research laboratories where possible.

7 Methods of Repair, Analysis and Selection of Repair Techniques

Consideration of commonly used methods of repair, their longevity and the financial, practical and aesthetic considerations in final selection.

8 Conservation Techniques

Conservation techniques of a variety of materials and their practical application to buildings, e.g. stone; timber; plasterwork; lead; cast and wrought iron; painted decoration (including wall paintings); wallpaper, and mosaics.

9 Alteration, Conservation and the Design of New Construction in Historic Settings

An introduction to solutions for new design in the alteration, or sensitive conversion, of redundant buildings to new uses and to new construction in historic settings.

10. Energy conservation and retrofit in historic buildings

An introduction to the use of green technologies, retrofit and the contribution of traditional materials to energy conservation.

11 The Design and installation of Building Services

Principles involved in the introduction of building services into historic building fabric.

Fire Protection and the Provision of Security Installations. The conflicting demands of these related issues may be discussed on site, at research labs or with those pioneering new approaches.

12 Professional Skills Related to Historic Buildings

The programme aims to bridge the gap left by professional training in the UK to deal sensitively with the conservation of historic buildings. To adapt that training and provide the skills needed for the analysis of historic buildings, the preparation of proposals, and running jobs onsite.

13 Conservation Law and Finance in the UK

A basic grounding will be gained in the respective roles of Central and local Government, Voluntary Societies, the Church, Grants, Listing and Legal Controls.

14 Continued Care and the Preparation of Maintenance Programmes

A thorough understanding of the maintenance requirements - the importance of planned maintenance and the need for continued and regular care of historic buildings.

15 Course on the Repair of Old Buildings

Scholars attend the five-day repair course, run by the Society, for architects and other professionals and builders. It is intended as an introduction to the complex issues affecting the conservation of historic buildings and a broad view of the philosophy and practical problems involved.

Stage II – The Plunket Scholarship (3 Months)

The second stage of the Scholarship was introduced in 1980 to reflect the interests of the late Patrick Plunket and provides a complete contrast to the highly practical first six months. It allows the Scholar to “widen their interest in the allied arts, and take every opportunity to develop to the full their sensibility and taste” in the context of the Country House. In view of the diversity of arts and craftsmanship that contribute to the finest historic buildings, these three months are spent based at a small number of country houses sketching, painting, reading and otherwise absorbing the atmosphere of these homes. A topic of study is chosen by each Scholar with the guidance of ETAC and the Plunket

tutors, for them to pursue at various houses they visit.

TERMS OF ACCEPTANCE

Before accepting an invitation for interview candidates should be aware of the following requirements and confirm that they would be prepared to comply with them all upon accepting a Scholarship offer.

ATTENDANCE

Scholars are encouraged to travel together where possible and expected to attend all programmed visits unless unforeseen circumstances dictate otherwise. In these instances you must notify the SPAB & the planned host at the earliest possible opportunity and request permission for absence. Failure to notify or turn up at visits may result in a written warning and the pro rata forfeiture of the Scholarship bursary (in the region of £35/day).

The SPAB must be notified, prior to your acceptance of the Scholarship offer, of all known commitments during the Scholarship period (mid March – mid December).

Pre-existing commitments may incur the bursary forfeiture above.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The SPAB Misconduct Guidelines are available on request. Whilst Scholars are not staff members they will be expected to abide by the spirit of these guidelines. Should behaviour, for example: lateness or poor timekeeping / swearing or abusive language / lack of application, be exhibited such that; after a written warning; further consultation is needed, then the Scholar will be in jeopardy of losing his/her place on the programme.

WORKING

Scholars - No paid work whatsoever may be undertaken during the Scholarship period.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Scholars are deemed to be competent professionals who are conversant with health & safety issues on building sites. Most importantly they are expected to act professionally and remain attentive at all times. They should feel under no obligation to enter a site or climb a scaffold which they consider to be dangerous. They will receive a health & safety briefing during their first week, and may consult the programme organiser or any member of staff in instances of uncertainty at any point in the programme. Accidents should be recorded onsite and reported to the programme organiser. A great deal of driving will be undertaken over the course of the programmes and it is the obligation of the car owner(s) to ensure that their vehicle(s) is (are) road worthy and legal. It is the obligation of every Scholar/Fellow not to undertake a journey unless they feel entirely fit to do so within the allotted time. The SPAB Driving on Business Policy is available on request. Difficulties experienced on site or en route to site should be reported to the SPAB as soon as possible.

INSURANCE:

The SPAB carries limited personal injury insurance which extends to Scholars & Fellows. This provides cover for the Society in the case of a severe incident, such as loss of life or limb. It should not be assumed that a payment will be made in the case of an accident on a visit. Nor does this insurance cover loss of earnings resulting from an accident. Candidates may wish to take out additional personal injury cover or ensure that their current employers' insurance provisions will continue to cover them for the duration of the programme.

FURTHER OBLIGATIONS:

Over the course of the Scholarship, Scholars are encouraged to take an increasing role in the work of the SPAB: they attend the annual summer Working Party as part of their programme and may be asked to lecture on their experiences, undertake casework (reporting on applications for listed building consent), or investigate technical issues. It is an expectation of the SPAB that Scholars will continue their involvement with the Society after completion of the Scholarship and it is a requirement that Scholars submit a bound extract of their notebook for retention in the SPAB archives.

In addition to the above terms, by accepting a Scholarship offer candidates agree to the following obligations:

- to act politely and in a manner befitting a Scholar at all times and to write thanks to each of their hosts,
- to keep a sketch book journal of their visits, a selection of which you will copy and bind for the SPAB by the January following their Scholarship. A retention of £200 from the Scholarship bursary is made until this is received,
- periodic contribution to a Scholars' & Fellows' Blog for the SPAB website,
- attendance at the Dance Scholarship Trust's AGM (September time),
- a two page report on your Cathedral Week and miscellaneous casework or other reports requested by hosts
- presentation to next year's applicants (January time) and
- giving time, during and after the Scholarship, to promoting the SPAB and the Dance Scholarship Trust

FUNDERS

In 1988 a group of Scholars combined to raise money to endow a Scholarship to honour Monica and Harry Dance, Mrs. Dance was Secretary of the SPAB for many years and guided dozens of young architects through the Scholarship. Each Scholar that completes the programme becomes a member of the Dance Scholarship Trust and the first Dance Scholarship was awarded in 1990.

The SPAB Scholarship would not be possible without financial assistance from:

Alan Baxter Foundation
Drake Trust
Dance Scholarship Trust
Historic England
The Patrick Plunket Memorial Fund

The Wheler Foundation

Since the early 1950's the following have made donations and bequests towards Scholarship funds

Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation

Sir Banister Fletcher

The Pilgrim Trust

Mrs Heelis (Beatrix Potter)

Jack Heinz II of Pittsburgh

The Grocer's Company

The Ernest Cook Trust

The Getty Grant Programme

Jonathan Vickers Charitable Settlement

Norman and Underwood

Cathedral Architect's Association

Dame Gillian Brown in memory of her brother-in-law Raven Frankland