

The interior of the Mausoleum can be viewed through a small window which replaced the original stained glass.



Richard Burton's coffin



Camel bells and a fresco of an angel



Altar and tabernacle

RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE

Whilst repairs were carried out to the Mausoleum in the 1970s, (the exterior of the mausoleum was restored by Margaret Ann Lee in 1974), the monument is once again in need of repair, restoration and re-presentation. Listed Grade II*, at present the Mausoleum is included on English Heritage's Register of Buildings of Risk.

Tasks to be addressed include:

- Repair and pointing of the stonework and limewashing
- Resolving problems of dampness at low level
- Reinstatement and re-gilding of the decorative Christian and Islamic features
- Restoration of the painted decorative scheme of the interior
- Conservation of many of the other features and items within the tent

ORGANISATION OF THE BURTON MAUSOLEUM RESTORATION APPEAL

The project for the restoration of the Burton Mausoleum is directed by a local group, The Friends of Burton, working in collaboration with the Environment Trust for Richmond, a well-established building preservation trust with charitable status.

Technical advice is provided by the Conservation Architect, Helen Molton, AABC, of the renowned international London based architects HOK. Additional support is provided by Paul Velluet, RIBA IHBC.

The Conservator carrying out the restoration of the Mausoleum is Holden Conservation Limited.

The estimated cost of the restoration is £50,000.

Local and broader communities have embraced the project, and financial contributions have been secured from English Heritage and the Heritage of London Trust with some individual donations already pledged.

The project's patron is John Arundell, Lord Talbot of Malahide.

Sir David Attenborough, Sir Christopher Ondaatje and Mary S. Lovell have added their names to our growing list of supporters.

Please join them to help us to preserve this priceless monument, to dignify the memory of this most prominent Victorian, Sir Richard Burton and his wife, Isabel.



The Friends of Burton

www.environmenttrust.co.uk
6 Phoenix Wharf
Eel Pie Island, TW1 3DY
Telephone: 020 8891 5455
Registered Charity Number: 295 869.

THE BURTON MAUSOLEUM RESTORATION APPEAL

A fund for the conservation and maintenance of the Mausoleum of the legendary Victorian explorer Sir Richard Burton



Sir Richard Burton by Frederick Leighton. © National Portrait Gallery, London

All other life is living death,
A world where none but phantoms dwell.
A breath, a wind, a sound,
A voice, a tinkling of the camel bell.

The Kasidah

Getting Involved...



Courtesy of Sir Christopher Ondaatje

SIR RICHARD BURTON KCMG

(1821 – 1890)

Sir Richard Burton, legendary Victorian, would have been an extraordinary man in any era. Few have been able to match the width of his talent and the range of his accomplishments.

A peripatetic childhood on the Continent spawned a life of nomadic wanderings, a love of other cultures and a genius for languages; he mastered over twenty and numerous dialects.

Soldier, scholar, poet, cynic, geographer, magnificent swordsman, fearless traveller and a pioneer of successful exploration in Africa; he reached the forbidden, sacred city of Harar in Somalia and he headed the expedition which led to the discovery of the Holy Grail of Victorian exploration: the source of the Nile.

The Royal Geographical Society's obituary said of him: "His permanent fame as an explorer will rest on his journey to Lake Tanganyika, which ranks among the greatest deeds in the history of African discovery. He pioneered the way into the heart of Africa."

He wrote numerous ethnological, anthropological, sexological, archaeological monographs and travel books. He translated the Kama Sutra, The Perfumed Garden and produced the first unexpurgated translation of The Thousand Nights and a Night.

Burton revelled in disguise. He loved the austerity of the desert, male camaraderie and warrior pride. He soaked up the lore and life of Islam and learned to recite the Qu'ran.

The apogee of Burton's adventures was his Hajj pilgrimage in 1853, as a Pathan pilgrim. He crossed the 'Empty Quarter' of the Arabian Desert to Medina and on to Mecca, entering the Kaaba, at the heart of the Great Mosque.

Burton's approach to life was non-conformist, heterodox and confrontational; he was too much of an 'outsider' for staid Victorians, although held in high regard by his friends. Intense rivalries, aggressive bravura and a contempt for authority meant that he did not receive the recognition he deserved. Nevertheless, he believed deeply in firm British rule in its burgeoning Empire.

He was co-founder of the Anthropological Society of London in 1863 and was a Fellow and Gold Medal winner of the Royal Geographical Society.

Burton was a romantic, agnostic and mystic, he shocked and informed the world. He roared at the frustrations of life and trumpeted the recondite joys of the oriental arts of love.

The East proved to be his epiphany.

Jean Hall



Courtesy of Lord Talbot of Malbaird



THE MAUSOLEUM

'Oh, last and noblest of the errant knights...'

After Burton died in 1890, his devoted wife, Isabel (née Arundell), had the Mausoleum built to represent an Arab tent; a rippling canvas set in stone from the Forest of Dean. The cost of the structure was mostly paid for by public subscription.

The Mausoleum is of great cultural importance for its fusion of Christian and Muslim symbols. These include the crucifix above the door, Stars of Bethlehem on its roof and, within the tomb, an altar with a tabernacle, a text from St Luke's Gospel, wall paintings of seraphim and cherubim and other artifacts. Muslim symbols are found in the frieze of crescent moons and several stars around the pelmet of the structure. Inside there are a number of oriental lamps from Burton's happiest posting to Damascus and strings of camel bells.

The Mausoleum of Sir Richard and Lady Burton is to be found at: St Mary Magdalen's RC Church, 61 North Worple Way, Mortlake, London SW14 8PR. (09.30am – 3.30pm)