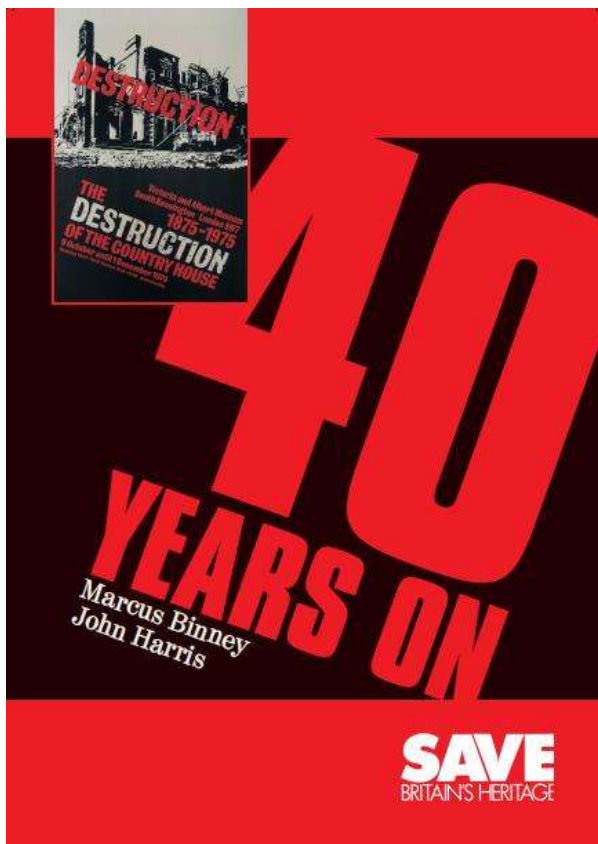


A forty year fight to save great historic country houses from decay and demolition is celebrated in SAVE's latest publication *The Destruction of the Country House: Forty Years On*.

This new book records the enormous impact of the V&A's landmark exhibition in 1974 and includes illustrations of over 120 major houses lost between 1875 and 1974.

The main purpose of the book is to tell the story of SAVE's many campaigns to restore, revive and reuse endangered country houses. The plight of these houses has been illustrated in successive SAVE reports since 1978, starting with *Tomorrow's Ruins?*, a catalogue of some 60 endangered houses.



The front cover, and inside front cover of *The Destruction of the Country House: Forty Years On*, showing the staircase at Eaton Hall, Cheshire, demolished in 1961.

Very soon after its foundation in 1975 SAVE began to come forward with practical solutions for individual historic houses, working with entrepreneurs and architects to create solutions, including Kit Martin, who has rescued a series of major country houses, including Gunton Hall, Hazells Hall, Cullen House and Burley-on-the-Hill.

Memorably in 1981 SAVE bought the derelict Barlaston Hall for £1. It was no bargain as rain was pouring through the roof, bringing down the ceilings and floors and the house was suffering from severe mining subsidence. It took a major fight with the National Coal Board to secure compensation, but SAVE carried out the structural repairs and found a purchaser willing to complete the restoration, including all the wonderful Rococo plasterwork.

The book tells the story of SAVE's campaigns to save major houses with their contents, starting with the great campaign over Mentmore Towers ('A Battle Lost, a War Won') Calke Abbey, Tyntesfield and Dumfries House.



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in Wales by publishing Thomas Lloyd's remarkable documentary *The Lost Houses of Wales* a survey of country houses in Wales demolished since 1700, one of SAVE's best-selling publications. This appeared in 1986 supported by the Lords Trust, the Henry Cecil Trust and The Prince of Wales' Committee.

Tom Lloyd wrote: "The most telling criticism: 'The Destruction of the Country House' - showed us with the dreadful loss of hundreds of two-hundred-year-old houses and the great estates... In fact the cause in Wales has been an iron grip, and not just among the richer houses. The big houses have suffered greatly. In proportion to income."



The House of Commons... SAVE also played a key role in lengthening sentences of the challenge...

Wales has lost a far higher number of fine rural sites in other England or Scotland. Many of these were not mentioned in the 1974 exhibition, which is no criticism of the compiler: lack of available resources puts these 'out of the picture'.



...the great houses owned by local authorities from a fourth century, a manuscript to study houses still in local ownership. In the 1000 houses listed after by the National Trust and to mention such as *Andrey Hall* and *Brooklands* in the care of English Heritage.

These 'rescue' houses include prize examples of English architecture, notably *Woburn Hall* for the great Elizabethan architect Robert Smythson as well as *Yardley's King's Weston* near Bristol, James Wyatt's *Thomas Hall*, north of Manchester, and William Duguid's masterpiece *Castell Gwynn*. *Lytham Tarnock* is unique amongst of Pembrokeshire. *Hill (The Wood)* in Black and white as its most outstanding.

For years many of these local authority houses, with one or two exceptions, such as *Woburn* and *Thomas Hall* - or indeed *Temple Newhall* and *Castell Gwynn* still are. But with recent budgets added (based just in year three) is a worrying rate: the surviving the survival of these houses as places to visit.

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Many of these houses have been rescued by individuals and entrepreneurs who first saw them in SAVE's reports, and these successes are celebrated with a large series of before and after pictures.

The book has a contribution on lost houses by John Harris, who with Marcus Binney was joint organiser of the 1974 exhibition, commissioned by Sir Roy Strong, and the book documents the original 1974 exhibition and its impact. It is lavishly illustrated with numerous colour photographs throughout.



The Hall of Destruction in the 1974 exhibition

Marcus Binney, author of the new publication and Executive President of SAVE said: “this is the vivid story of years of campaigning, the romance of visiting hundreds of beautiful decaying country houses and the often furious battle to save them, with a surprise round every corner.”

For more information and pictures contact Mike Fox, SAVE caseworker, on 0207 253 3500/ mike.fox@savebritainsheritage.org, or Marcus Binney on 07973 802 648.

The book can be purchased direct from SAVE and is priced at £20 (£18 for SAVE friends) plus £2.50 postage.

Purchases can be made over the phone (0207 253 3500), through SAVE’s website, (<http://www.savebritainsheritage.org/publications/>), or by sending a cheque to SAVE Britain’s Heritage, 70 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EJ

Notes to Editors:

SAVE Britain’s Heritage has been campaigning for historic buildings since its formation in 1975 by a group of architects, journalists and planners. It is a strong, independent voice in conservation, free to respond rapidly to emergencies and to speak out loud for the historic built environment.

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