

The 'Save the Tower' Campaign

The Old Tower of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, the so-called 'Hollow Tooth', must be saved from decay. Berlin's most famous landmark is in acute danger. It is vital to save this universally renowned ruin that warns of the horrors of war and is visited daily by visitors from all over the world.

The complete stonework facade of the tower and the exposed brickwork must be restored. Water is penetrating through cracks which must be scraped out and refilled with special mortar.

Restoration work can only begin when the necessary funds are available - a total of 3.5 million euros. Complete scaffolding for the 68-metre tower must be erected both inside and out, costing alone an estimated 800,000 euros. The facade has a total surface area of 5,300 square metres - about two-thirds of the area of a football-pitch.

But how are the 3.5 million euros to be raised? From funding by the Berlin and federal governments, grants from foundations and business sponsoring, but in particular donations are necessary from individuals eager to rescue the tower.

The Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church Foundation is appealing to the community spirit of the city and beyond. When 1.5 million euros have been raised, it will be possible to receive the remaining two million from public funds. The senator for town planning is prepared to allocate 1.5 million euros in the city budget.

With proceeds from the church-tax the parish just manages to finance running repairs on other church buildings in its care. No financial aid can be expected from the Landeskirche as funds are required to support the many village churches that are not in the public limelight.

How much has been received so far?

Three months after the start of the campaign the first quarter of a million has been donated, almost 2,000 individual donations of 10, 20, 100 euros or even more. Berlin firms are supporting the campaign as much as possible, while numerous organisations are planning their own activities. One school-class is selling home-made cakes; well-known public figures are going about with collecting-boxes; one businessman has asked his birthday-guests to give donations instead of presents. Pictures of the tower, painted by artists from 12 different countries, are to be auctioned on behalf of this good cause.

And now it is possible to sponsor a crack! For a donation of 100 euros or more, sponsors will receive a certificate showing exactly which crack in the facade could be repaired with their gift.

All these activities have one common aim: the Old Tower of the Memorial Church must not fall into decay, but be preserved for everyone.

Berliner Bank (bank code 100 200 00 account no. 22222), amount payable to 'Stiftung Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche