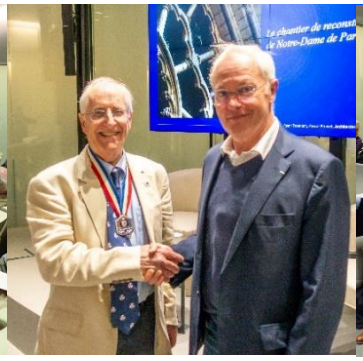
53 members and partners from IESF British Section arrived in Paris on Thursday 23rd May for a 4 day Spring Voyage to France in the company of their 2024 President Chris Foster, a forensic fire investigation engineer specialising in their causes & effects. The theme for the trip was the "Restoration of Notre Dame Cathedral" following the devastating fire of April 2019.

The keynote speaker at the conference on Friday morning 24th May at *La Maison des Travaux Publics* was Philippe Villeneuve, Chief Architect of Historic Monuments and lead architect for the Notre Dame restoration team who spoke of the various specialist tasks involved in this high profile project.

Topics covered included clean-up by robots, securing the structure after fire and water damage caused during its extinction, temporary works supports for flying buttresses & damaged vaults, new timber roof & spire design to match the original destroyed roof structure, repair & cleaning plus replacement of stonework, stained glass and roof vaults, restoring statues, decorative painting, roof cladding and large scaffold towers to access both inside and outside up to the peak of the spire nearly 100m above ground level.

La Maison des Travaux Publics



Chris Foster & Philippe Villeneuve

La Maison des Travaux Publics

Other conference presentations: (Please click link to scroll the presentation)

- construction of "EOLE mega station" below the CNIT at *Paris La Défense* for RER E east-west high speed suburban railway by Michel Pré, tunnelling expert at SETEC TPI engineering consultancy *Link*
- special structures "Flying Whales" at Bordeaux and "Luma Cultural Centre" at Arles by Peter Terrell, President of structural consultant Terrell Group *Link*
- assembly line floating offshore wind turbines (ALFowT) by Elchanan Safier, President of structural & naval architecture international engineering consultancy Safier Ingénierie (SIsas)
- "Mont Saint Michel Maritime Restoration Project" by William Powles *Link*

The conference was mentored by Scott Ruby, Chief Operations Officer at the British Embassy's Commercial Section, who gave the opening remarks. He was accompanied by his colleague, Braedon Sides, Senior Trade & Investment Advisor. Other guests included Jean-François Coste, IESF Civil Engineering & Building Committee Member, & Jean Dambreville, IESF *Délégué Général*.

Scott Ruby & Chris Foster

William Powles, Chris Foster & Jean-François Coste

Chris Foster & Jean Dambreville

Peter Terrell, Michel Pré & Chris Foster

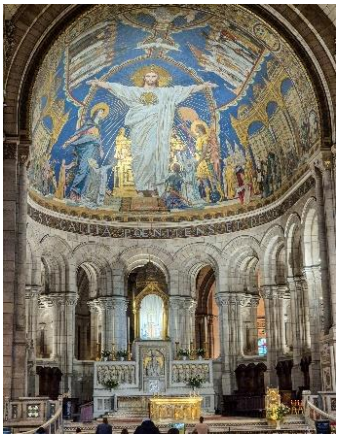
On Friday afternoon, the group visited Notre Dame Parvis & Exhibition Centre and witnessed placing of the cross above the east end choir roof before visiting *Sainte Chapelle* & *La Grande Canopée* at *Les Halles*.

Notre Dame west facade

Notre Dame east cross

Notre Dame south gable with spire & rooster

Earlier on Thursday evening, the group went to Montmartre and visited the *Basilica Sacré Cœur*.



Sacré Cœur

Basilica Sacré Cœur - Montmartre

Sainte Chapelle

La Grande Canopée - Les Halles

On Saturday 25th May the group visited *Château de Chantilly*. A tour of the remarkable library with its precious manuscripts and art galleries hung with exceptional collections of paintings by masters was followed in the prestigious stables by a dressage and visit to the horse museum before a tourist train ride around the park.

Château de Chantilly

Château de Chantilly - Stables

IESF British Section Group at the Entrance of Château de Chantilly

IESF British Section Group in the Gardens of Château de Chantilly

On Sunday 26th May the group completed their full weekend with a cruise along the Seine with *Bateaux Mouches* before returning to London on a late afternoon Eurostar.

The delights of Parisian culinary excellence were enjoyed during dinners at *La Mère Catherine* near *Sacré Cœur*, *Terminus Nord* at *Gare du Nord*, *Brasserie Mollard* at *Saint Lazare* and a farewell lunch on Sunday at *Brasserie L'Alsace* on *Champs Elysées*, exceptionally pedestrianised for a public picnic.