

The Virger

www.cofegv.org.uk

hic et in frequentibus talibus figuris figuratur per istum sollemis in qua pontifex maximus ex ipso
monasterio cenobitino in quo per noctem mansit superius et in civitate Constanti ductus fuit Anno
millesimo quingentesimo quarto etc.



From the Publications Team

Marek's Carrot & Ginger Cake

INGREDIENTS

175g Dark Muscovado Sugar
175ml Sunflower Oil
3 Large Eggs, lightly beaten
140g Grated Carrots
100g Sultanas
100g of Stem Ginger in Syrup (Pureed)
Grated Zest of 1 Large Orange
175g Self Raising Flour
1 tsp Bicarbonate of Soda
1 tsp Ground Cinnamon
½ tsp Nutmeg



FOR THE FROSTING

175g Icing Sugar
1½ - 2 tbsp Orange Juice

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan /Gas Mark 4. Oil and line the base and sides of an 18cm square cake tin with baking parchment, with a double layer in the base.

Tip the sugar into a large mixing bowl, pour in the oil and add the eggs. Lightly mix with a wooden spoon. Stir in the grated carrots, sultanas, pureed stem ginger and orange rind.

Mix the flour, bicarbonate of soda and spices, then sift into the bowl. Lightly mix all the ingredients until everything is evenly mixed. The mixture will be fairly soft and almost runny.

Pour the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 40 - 45 minutes, until it feels firm and springy when you press it in the centre. Cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then turn it out, peel off the paper and cool on a wire rack. (You can freeze the cake at this point.)

Beat together the frosting ingredients in a small bowl until smooth - you want the icing to be about as runny as single cream. Set the cake on a serving plate and boldly drizzle the icing back and forth in diagonal lines over the top, letting it drip down the sides.



The Website has a members only section, with extra information, pictures and soon past issues of the Virger magazine, just for you. To access this area send an email to the communications officer with your name and Branch and you will be sent your log-in and password details and information on how to set up your own space on the Guild Forum.



Welcome to the Summer 2011 issue of the Guild of Vergers Magazine. Please let Marek or myself know what you think and of any ideas you might have for the next issue.

If you have any articles for the magazine or would like to become a member of the publications team please contact the Communications Officer for more details.

Communication Officer and Chairman of the Publications Team - Amanda Berry

Magazine Editor: Amanda Berry

Sub-Editor: Marek Barden

If you would like to include Branch news, articles, book reviews or any other information you feel our readers would find of interest please send to the editor.

Deadline for the Autumn issue: Friday 26th August

Amanda Berry
70b The Close
Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP1 2EN

berryberry50@hotmail.com
the_virger_magazine@yahoo.co.uk

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Front Cover: A procession of clergymen attending the Council of Constance (1414-1417).

From the Chronicle of the Council of Constance by Ulrich von Riechental. Courtesy of James Armstrong of Carlisle Cathedral.

Chairman's Letter—June 2011



I write to you as I sit in great comfort on the East Coast express from Leeds back home to Canterbury at the end of a wonderful York Province Festival in the church of *St Peter at Leeds* (Leeds Parish Church) and *Holy Trinity, Leeds*. Those involved had worked hard to make our day very enjoyable, and our thanks go to the Branch Officers and Members, and the vergers, clergy, musicians and other staff at both churches for all their time and effort on our behalf.

The most unique part of the day was saved until the end, when – during the last hymn at evensong – we all solemnly processed around the outside of the parish church to the Western Precinct and gathered around a small grave that had been carefully prepared near the west wall of the church to receive the ashes of Victor Buck, one-time Senior Verger and Registrar of Leeds Parish Church, a church he loved dearly. What was unique about this was not just that we were interring ashes during a Guild Festival (surely a first) but that the gentleman concerned was one of the vergers generally accepted as “founders” of the Guild, following a meeting in Mr Buck’s house in the grounds of Leeds Parish Church on 22nd February, 1932. The story of how Victor Buck, Laurence Farrington - Head Verger of Bradford Cathedral, Stephen Pentecost of Sheffield Cathedral, Mr Thompson of Newcastle Cathedral, Mr Hopkins of Manchester Cathedral, and Mr Pattinson of Lancaster Priory met is well documented, and through various vicissitudes over many years, we their successors carry on today the good work of The Guild which they began nearly 80 years ago. Vic Buck died many years ago but his ashes were never buried by his family, and were eventually handed over to Leeds Parish Church in 2010. No living relatives could be traced, but we were delighted that the parish authorities agreed to bury his ashes in our presence at the Leeds Festival, where we became - for a few minutes - his adopted family, where he was amongst kindred spirits. If you’d like to know more about the history of the Guild, John Campbell’s book “Seventy Five Years leading the way” is available via the Guild shop. When those six chaps met in those inter-war years, one of the things they quickly realised was that there was no national organisation for vergers to which they could belong for mutual support and fellowship, so that they could discuss common problems and share ideas (although unbeknown to them there had been local organisations for vergers in the London area since 1909). They clearly became firm friends, and good companions in their chosen vocation. A *companion* is “one who eats bread with one another” (*panis* = Latin *bread*) and in the Guild we very often share bread when we meet for Branch or National events and take communion together; or we may share bread with each other when we enjoy a meal together as part of a “Vergers’ Do”. Sometimes whilst we share that bread, we share one another’s burdens, and receive that fellowship which is at the heart of what the Guild is all about. It was a great delight at my local Branch’s AGM to be present at the Admission of four new members to The Guild, and again in Leeds to applaud heartily at the admission of five more new members from Leeds, and Ripon Cathedral. We hope they will enjoy our fellowship and share with us the bread of companionship on their journey of faith.

On a personal note I’d like to thank all those members who were kind enough to send cards and messages of condolence on the death of my father recently. Amongst other things he had been a Reader in the church, and an Industrial Missioner with the Industrial Christian Fellowship, influenced by characters such as The Reverend Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy – “Woodbine Willy”- whom, I learned today, had been a curate at Leeds Parish Church) and Tubby Clayton, of the Toc H movement. My father was from a long line of laymen in the church, one having been a Parish Clerk in South Otterington in North Yorkshire from the 1830s to 1867. It must be in my blood! This is my last message to you as National Chairman (hurrah – I hear you cry !!) and I’d like to thank all those who have been my companions on this part of my journey; all those with whom I have happily shared bread (and much wine, and not a little Gin !) over these past seven years; you know who you all are ! It’s been great fun, hard work, immensely rewarding, and I have been hugely privileged to have taken part in so many different and varied national and branch events and services all over the country – literally from Truro to Carlisle, from Liverpool to the Suffolk coast; from glorious Festivals in some of our major cathedrals to very moving funerals in tiny country churches. I’ve usually come away from the events having made new friends, renewed old friendships, and usually with a list of things I’ve promised to do for people that was far too ambitious ! Thank you for making it all such a memorable time, and my best wishes to you all, and The Guild, for the future.

You won’t – however – be getting rid of me completely, as I will still continue to support the Guild as often as I can, my work with the Archdeacon of Canterbury of enthroning Diocesan Bishops of the Southern Province will continue, so I will meet some of you at these special services, and there is the small matter of the 80th Anniversary Festival in Canterbury Cathedral to organise for September next year – put the date in your diary now – 25th September, 2012. See you there !

Chris Crooks, Canterbury - May 2011

Congratulations to Canon Peter Hardman, former Chaplain of the Salisbury Branch, on being a recipient of the Royal Maundy in Westminster Abbey in April.



Forthcoming Events

2011

Tuesday 18th October — St. John’s College, Cambridge (Ipswich Branch)

Thursday September 29th through Sunday October 2nd— The 23rd National Eucharist and Conference of the Vergers’ Guild of the Episcopal Church at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland, OH, USA



2012

Tuesday 8th May—York Province Festival— St. Nicholas’ Cathedral, Newcastle
25th September —Canterbury Province Festival—Canterbury Cathedral (80th Anniversary of the Guild)

2013

September 2013—St. Albans

Chaplain's Page

"LOVE IS....."

"And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three, but the greatest of these is love."

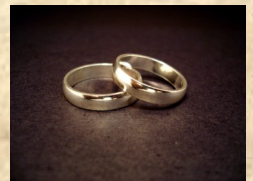


I want for a moment to describe a society to you: it is thrusting, ambitious and competitive – success in trade, social status and economic power is hugely important; self-sufficiency, local autonomy and freedom are highly valued along with a knowledge of how to exist in the rough and tumble of trade and business. Along with a concern for status and recognition goes a high regard for the gift of public speaking that gets plaudits from the public for its style before its content.

I could be describing quite a number of places in the First World today, but actually this description came from a commentary I read on the First Letter to the Corinthians. In some ways the basic drives in some societies have not changed much in 2000 years and so what St Paul has to say is as important as it ever was.

If there's ever a purple passage in the New Testament this is it. It is read at more weddings I expect than any other; "love is patient, love is kind, love is not envious or boastful", it makes the toughest prospective mother-in-law go weak at the knees.

This great passage is no anodyne "ode to love", but rather it's the sharpest of criticisms of the values current among the Corinthians – and since not much has changed in 2000 years, perhaps of ourselves too. In the early chapters of Corinthians we read of a Christian community that is highly conflicted – bickering about status, disagreeing over who one can and can't eat with; they are caught up in a distorted spirituality that's getting its emphases in all the wrong places and arguing about the relative importance of various gifts; they are involved in bitter power struggles that completely fail to see the value of every member to the whole.



Paul isn't saying that all these wonderful gifts aren't needed, he's not saying that spiritual gifts are useless, or that sacrifice should be disdained – but rather the exercise of these things does nothing for the doer – it is love that makes them meaningful. The troubles of the Corinthians – the overflow of the bad side of contemporary values into their congregational life are caused by a loveless spirituality.

Paul has been talking about a massive range of gifts – but this gift of love is the greatest gift of all. It's also something that's grown into "I will know fully even as I have been fully known" St Paul said. Earlier in the letter he has spoken of a childish spirituality that showed its childishness by self-absorption and jealousy and arguing

The competitiveness, self-promotion, self-achievement and all the other self-driven aspects of this life will wear out; our arguments within the church about sexuality at all sorts of levels will, thank God come to an end; – these and many, many other things even now count as nothing compared with this great gift of love that "does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth".

But we live in the here and now, in the mess of the present and the tensions that all of that involves, and the conflictedness of so much of what we do and who we are.

Through all of that may we always remember that this love is pure gift – pure gift. We approach the altar with empty hands outstretched to receive him who above all showed us what this love is all about – we are given the gift of love – the fragile gift of love that comes beneath the forms of broken bread and wine outpoured, and which is the love of the one and only living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

**A sermon preached in Salisbury Cathedral
by Canon Mark Bonney, Treasurer on Sunday 31 January 2010**

Four new vergers

Four new members were admitted to the Guild at Guildford Cathedral at the end of May.

From left to right they are Rita Hendy of Christ the King, Salfords, Redhill. Paul Williamson, Guildford Cathedral. Gillian Wintle, St Mary the Virgin Clymping and Andrew Howat, Lancing College.

Father Chris Vallins who officiated was away with the fairies!!

**Elaine King.
Vice Chair.**



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R.I.P.

Brian Carpenter—A Personal Reflection

by Colin Wilkes, Brian's nephew

Uncle B, as we affectionately called Brian was an enigma—on the outside a truly gentle man, intelligent, shy, a lover of music, a committed Christian and yet on the inside a complex and complicated individual, who was often misunderstood by those met him for the first time, but whose disposition was such that the more you got to know him the more you would catch that little twinkle in his eye and a little bit of mischief in his heart.

Brian's early years were spent as a boarder at Mowden Hall School near Hexham and then Eastbourne Boys College on the south coast, before returning to Durham to help his father in his solicitor's practice, during which time he became a well known character around the City as he delivered messages to the numerous other legal practices, banks and accountants.

During those years he became the President of the Durham Chamber of Trade, a position of which he was rightly proud.

Throughout his life Brian nurtured a love of music, cricket and football. Musically he was fond of all types of classical music, was an avid member of the gramophone society, and he particularly enjoyed Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, he could recite the words to most of them quite accurately. Indeed some of our fondest memories of Brian will be of him singing along and thumping his hand on his knee in time with the music of the Pirates of Penzance or the Mikado, which outings he always used to look forward to.

Fond of cricket, he was an avid supporter of Durham County Cricket Club and would often visit the Riverside Ground and indeed when he was somewhat younger he even followed the England Cricket Team on their tour of New Zealand. Again, some of our fondest memories will be of Brian at his beloved Scarborough.

One of his greatest fears, and indeed source of his greatest pride, was that since the war he had only missed one year at the Scarborough Cricket Festival, and that was for a year at Eastbourne which he said with relish had been a complete disaster and which he vowed he would never repeat. When he went into Kimblesworth Care Home he feared he might lose this enviable record, but I am pleased to say we managed to take him each subsequent year to the Festival so he maintained his record, although I am not sure whether he enjoyed the cricket or the Whitby fish and chips more.

Brian was also a committed Christian. He spent many years as the honorary vergers at St Cuthbert's Church in Durham and in his later years worshipped at Kimblesworth Church. A member of the Guild of Vergers, he attended their National Conferences at Birmingham and also attended as many meetings as he could of the local branch, our thanks go to Peter Welby for transporting him to so many of those meetings.

He moved into Kimblesworth Care Home several years ago when he could no longer fully look after himself and he spent a happy time in that safe environment. It was only in the last nine months of his life that Brian was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome, something which he had never heard of when he was young and which even today is not fully understood. However, even towards the end, when he was clearly very ill in hospital, he was still enjoying listening to his music, conducting his imaginary orchestra, and chuckling away with a quite infectious laugh and a real glint in his eye.

These are just some of the memories of Uncle B which we will cherish. I would like to conclude by thanking everyone who came to this celebration of Brian's life — representatives from all aspects of his life and loves - I know he would have been quite embarrassed yet secretly chuffed at the turn out, so on behalf of the family, thank you all.



Prayer Requests

If you know of someone for whom prayers would be of benefit or someone who has been prayed for and has recovered/ shown improvement, please inform the National Welfare Officer or National Chaplain.

Devon & Cornwall: Alyn Heath.

Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester: Jim Wooldridge, Fred Austin, Paul Birkin

Guildford & Portsmouth: David Lee.

Oxford: Don Mitchener, John Bayliss, Margaret Morris, Jean Ebdon.

Rochester: Victor Warren.

Salisbury: Babs Taylor.

Somerset & Avon: Peter Martin, Ian Millard.

And everyone not specifically mentioned who needs love, counseling and the grace of Our Lord.

SAVE ALL SAINTS PASTORAL CENTRE

As you may or may not know, our beloved conference Centre is facing the prospect of closure in the New Year. All Saints was built in 1901 as an Anglican convent and acquired by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster in 1973. The building has been carefully adapted to modern day requirements while retaining its beauty and tranquillity. Yet it is still in need of much modernisation to meet today's health and safety requirements.



A spokesman for All Saints said: *"St Albans Pastoral Centre is a thriving place of evolving spirituality which has become a cornerstone of diverse communities and which people are passionate about. This is a place where the Holy Spirit is Alive... and Thrives... You cannot dismiss and abandon It Let us work in partnership with you to forge a new vision for ASPC"*.



There is an on-line petition available for friends of All Saints to sign-up and help save this much loved and used centre. The Guild's Training Officer urges all computer literate members of the Guild to sign-up: *"I really think this is an important cause, and I'd like to encourage you to add your signature, too. It's free and takes just a few seconds of your time."*

www.ipetitions.com/petition/saveallsaints/

A VISIT TO RUSSIA

Our son James is working towards a B.A. in Russian and Music at Sheffield University, and as part of his four year course he spends the third year in Russia.

In late March, my wife and I went to St Petersburg to visit James. After a three hour flight from Heathrow we arrived in the city to find it still extremely cold. The snow ploughs were out in force and snow was piled up at the side of most of the roads.

St Petersburg is a very attractive city with many of the main buildings painted in pastel colours. Most impressive to me were the churches and cathedrals which were closed during the Stalin era and used as warehouses. Since the end of Communism the churches have been opened up again to the Russian Orthodox Church. They were absolutely beautiful inside. We were amazed to see the number of people, both young and old who frequented them. There are no pews or seats so everybody stands around the priests who were conducting the services. The Russians take their religion very seriously and go from religious painting to painting, kissing it and crossing themselves. We entered a Monastery at 10 o'clock on Saturday morning to find it full of worshippers.



The city is well worth a visit and has an abundance of museums. Our son speaks fluent Russian and on Saturdays and Sundays he works as a volunteer at the State Hermitage Museum which is one of the great art museums of the world. To spend just one minute looking at each exhibit would take over 12 years. We visited just part of the art collection where we saw the paintings of Rembrandt, Monet and Picasso, a truly fascinating museum.

A fascinating week in St Petersburg, to see our son, to see an eastern European city and to see it in the winter time.

Alan Taylor (Branch correspondent for London, Southwark and Chelmsford Branch)



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Salisbury Branch

Congratulations to Doris Whiting OBE

Having been Verger at her church, St James in Trowbridge, for the last sixteen years Doris has decided to hang up her gown and pass on the Virge to another. Doris did not really want to retire but at the age of ninety she felt it was just time!



The Salisbury Branch of the Guild of Vergers were invited to attend the farewell service on Sunday 15th May at St James' church along with the Mayor and representatives from the Council, and were honoured to take pride of place in the front pews while the Mayor took a back seat on the second row.

Our thanks go out to the Rector of St James Church, Reverend Robert Thomas for his invitation and letting the Guild gate-crash this very intimate parish event, which showed how much Doris was loved by the entire congregation as the church was packed full.

Speeches from a variety of friends and members of the congregation, as well as the Mayor and Area Leader of the Salisbury Branch, and an exchange of gifts ended the service and we were welcomed to adjourn to the back of the church for tea and yet another surprise for Doris, a special cake with a model of Doris dressed as a Verger made out of icing sugar on the top.



The speeches I must say were an eye-opener, hearing all the achievements Doris has clocked up over the years, working within her church and her charity work in the local community, being honoured by both the Council and the Queen, receiving her OBE for services to the community in 2009.

Even though Doris has not retired from the Guild of Vergers she has decided to take a step down from her involvement with the Branch and at meetings (this woman can sell a raffle ticket to anyone!) It is an honour to know Doris she is an inspiration to anyone who meets her and is a true example of the vocation of the Verger.

Amanda Berry
Area Leader

Somerset & Avon Branch

A warm sunny afternoon, Monday 11th April, saw members of The Somerset & Avon Branch visit St John's Hospital, Bath for the first of our visits of the year. Mr Tim Egan, the Verger, welcomed us very warmly to St Johns. The Chaplain conducted the Evening Prayer Service and at the end of the Service Tim was admitted into the Guild of Vergers by our Branch Chaplain, Colin Maggs. I always think that it is something very special to be admitted into the Guild at your own place of worship.

A little bit of history on St John's:

St John's Hospital was founded in 1174 by Bishop Reginald Fitzjocelyn, as a refuge for the poor and needy of Bath. It still occupies the original site. Over the past 800 years, St John's has changed, evolved and developed. It is now one of the UK's leading Alms-houses charities, providing accommodation, care and support for disadvantaged elderly people, and distributing grants to organisations and individuals in and around the city. It was truly a lovely building to visit and to see all the ongoing work to improve more of the site. The evening, as usual, ended with a light supper and a good cup of tea.

Our next visit, Monday 23rd April, was at St Mary's Church, Lower Almondsbury. We were again very warmly welcomed by the Verger, Mr Trevor Llewellyn. The evening commenced with a short talk on the history of St Mary's by Dr Tony Warner, who gave a very informative talk. (All of our churches have such a wealth of history and tradition attached to them but it is so nice to hear the history of our fellow members churches when we make our visits). The evening continued with Choral Holy Communion led by the Reverend Philip Rowe, the Epistle was read by our Branch Chaplain, Colin Maggs, who also lead the prayers, the choir were just magnificent, and it was equally nice that members of the congregation of St Marys joined us for the evening. At this point I must mention that all of the Vergers were robed for the evening. The evening concluded with a Bring & Share Supper of which there was certainly plenty to choose from, nobody went away hungry.

We have another three visits set for the rest of the year, which will give me plenty to write about. But as a branch we value these visits as a time for social gathering and also prayer.

Jean Cobb
Secretary

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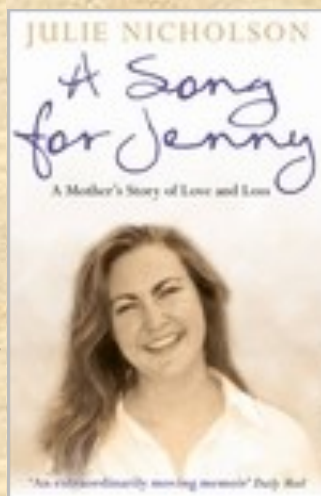
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Book review



A Song For Jenny by Julie Nicholson (Harper Collins, 2010)



There are books and there are books – some lightly touching the surface of consciousness and memory, others leaving a deep and lasting imprint. In the second group for me is Julie Nicholson's moving account of the aftermath of the terrible killing of her 24 year-old daughter Jenny in the 7/7 London bombing deep in the darkness of the Edgware Road underground station. It is one of the most impressive books I have read for many a day, elegantly written and quite un-put-down-able. I would like to think it would be widely read and pondered.

The story stretches from the peace and calm of an Anglesey holiday through days of trauma to Jenny's funeral in Bristol Cathedral. In her coffin was placed a much-loved copy of *Jane Eyre*, with one of many highlighted passages that appealed to this vivacious and spirited young woman: 'I am no bird and no net ensnares me, I am a free human being with an independent will.'

The irony of that is almost intolerable. Featured in the story is the awful uncertainty when it was known that something terrible had happened, but it was unclear what it was – and then confirmation of what it was – and then the numbing news of a change from rescue to recovery, the on-going contact with impressively sensitive police liaison officers, the kindness of an anonymous taxi driver Many episodes are profoundly disturbing, others thankfully reassuring that genuine human goodness is in spite of everything still there to be found.

Julie tells a story with candour and integrity. She does not hide her own and her family's distress, or minimize the major issues that arise from such a tragedy, both public and personal. For Christian people questions about God's providence, about a gospel of forgiveness, about how to speak, what to say and when to keep silent in the face of unbearable grief – all those and many others are there and are not avoided even if they are not all answered.

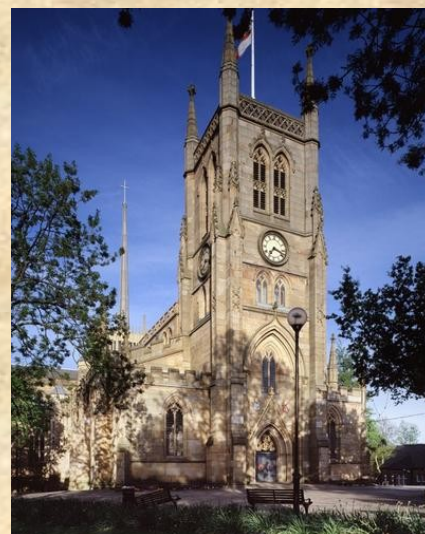
She also does not draw back from indicating who helped and who (with the best of intentions) definitely did not. We owe Julie a debt for opening up her own deeply painful experience to us all.

(Review by Sarum College Bookshop March 2011)

Blackburn, Chester & Manchester Branch

The Blackburn, Chester & Manchester Branch held their AGM on Monday 1st February in the library of Manchester Cathedral, there were 11 members present. After coffee and cake, the meeting was opened with prayers by Margaret Scott.

After the Treasurer had reported that the finances were in good health, the Chairman said that the Branch had had quite an interesting year, with members enjoying the two festivals.



The Branch had enjoyed the planning of the York Province Festival at Manchester Cathedral. The Branch Officers, all having indicated their willingness to stand, were re-elected en bloc. Margaret Scott was elected as Area Leader. The meeting closed with the Vergers Prayer and the Grace.

On Monday 7th March, 16 members of the Branch met at Blackburn Cathedral for a business meeting to decide on the events for 2011.

As usual it started with tea, coffee & chocolate biscuits. It was decided that the following events would take place:

May — Shared Eucharist with the Liverpool Branch at St Thomas the Martyr, Upholland near Wigan.

July — Dunham Hall.

August — St Mary the Virgin, Davy-hulme, for a Eucharist & B-B-Q.

September — St Peter's, Scorton near Lancaster.

November — Joining with the Liverpool Branch for their Christmas Eucharist & Lunch at Liverpool Cathedral.

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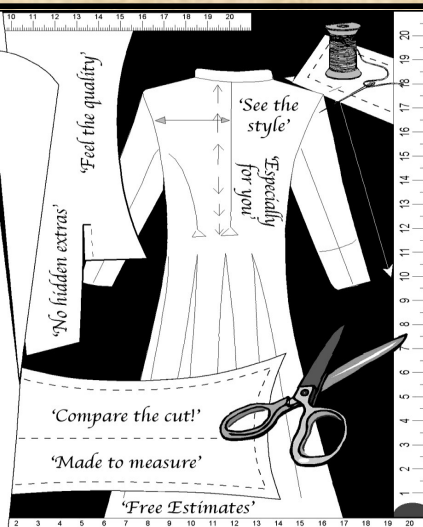
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After the meeting, Canon Michael Taylor celebrated the Eucharist in the Chapel, then gave a talk on "The Work of Vergers and the help they give to the Clergy and others." There then followed a first class lunch in the crypt.

On Monday 16th May, 11 members of the Branch joined the Liverpool Branch for their Easter Lunch and Eucharist. We met in the Holland Hall Hotel, in Upholland, where we had a mouth-watering lunch.



We then proceeded to the Church of St Thomas the Martyr, Upholland, for the Eucharist, celebrated by the Branch Chaplain, Reverend Canon Wolfe, assisted by the Rector, the Venerable Peter Bradley, Archdeacon of Warrington, who gave us a talk about the history of the church.

The building dates back to 1086, but its history really begins in 1307 when Sir Robert de Holland founded a College of Canons. This became a Priory of Benedictine Monks in 1319 — the last foundation of its kind in pre-reformation England. Even before Henry VIII began to close the monasteries, Up-Holland Priory had declined due to inflation, (even in those days there was inflation), and it closed in 1536 three years before the Dissolution. Due to the Civil War it was not established as a Parish Church and was a Chapelry until 1822 when Up-Holland became a Parish. In 1822 the present Chancel was built and the church became the building that you can see today. There are many interesting things to see, including an unusual double Piscina, one side for the wine the other for the water.

Following the Eucharist, we were treated to home made cakes and scones and plenty of tea and coffee to drink. It was a most delightful day and we were pleased to be able to share fellowship with the Liverpool Branch.

Geoffrey Timms
Branch Secretary

Carlisle Branch

Verger plumbs the Depths

At Carlisle Cathedral something out of the normal daily routine is going on. Assistant Verger Andrew Rogers has removed part of the cathedral floor over the site of an old well (with the kind permission of the Dean and Chapter). It all started last winter in 2010 when electricians were putting some new cables under the floor of the south transept towards the well, when they pulled the cable up it was soaking wet.



The first task was removing the heavy flagstones and then to remove two large sandstone blocks that sat underneath. At this point the help of two local Archaeologists was enlisted. The depth was measured to be about 26 ft from the floor level to the bottom with about 16 ft of water. After many attempts at using a net on some drainage rods two cave divers were asked to join the team.

Many questions were beginning to arise such as; how old was the well? Was the well already here when the current Cathedral was built in 1133 or is it part of the Saxon church that once stood here and was visited by St Cuthbert in 685?

We are now 3 dives into this exciting look at the cathedral's social history and many items have been recovered from the bottom including some musket balls, lots of coins ranging from George III to Elizabeth II, pottery from medieval times to early 20th century, Victorian leather shoes and many more.

The work is still ongoing and who knows what the team will uncover next.

Andrew Rogers
Carlisle Cathedral

Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester Branch

On Tuesday March 1st we were invited to St Leonard's Church in Newlands for a tour of this fascinating building and the library by Les Hooper, a fellow member and a resident at the Newland Community. We learned a great deal about the original timber framed church which had been built in 1450 in the Cemetery and parts of which are found in the newer church built in the middle of the nineteenth Century.

The ceiling in the Sacristy is the wooden one from the old Church with beautiful carved bosses. Our tour expert was Father Gordon who also lives



at the Community.

The evening finished in the Boardroom where delicious refreshments were available. These were very kindly provided by Mrs S Mair, another resident. Tuesday April 26th was our annual quiet day at Holland House, Cropthorne. This was lead by Bishop Christopher Mayfield with 14 vergers, and their spouses in attendance.

The day had three short sessions, "God our Father who loves us", "Jesus our Minister who calls us" and "Holy Spirit — our Guide who Leads us" followed by a time of reflection in the grounds. A shared Eucharist and Lunch with a final Summary and Prayers ending a very pleasant day.

Two branch members attended the York Province Festival in Leeds, a city neither had visited before, and report a warm welcome, and two surprises: a camel (Aunt Dot would be proud!), and the internment of Guild founder Vic Buck's ashes.

Our next Branch event is a Barbecue at Tony (Chairman) and Jean's on Wednesday 29th June 2011 at 7 p.m.

Peter Young
Branch Correspondent



Please support Babs Taylor (Salisbury Branch) taking part in Race For Life, raising funds for Cancer Research UK at:
www.raceforlifesponsorme.org/barbarataylor20031

Leicester & Peterborough Branch

Leicester & Peterborough in Springtime

Our spring meetings commenced on Monday 14th March with our Annual Supper at St Crispin's Church Hall, Braunstone. 12 members and friends from that Church attended and enjoyed a good supper. We had a raffle with some very nice prizes and £31 was raised for Branch funds. Flowers for the ladies and wine for the men were presented to the caterers afterwards to thank them for their services. We also thanked our Chairman, Jack Lippitt, for organising the evening.

On Tuesday 12th April 10 members of the Branch set out on a lovely spring evening to the Church of St Dionysius, Market Harborough, where we received a very warm welcome from the Verger, Bruce Leat, who has been encouraged to join the Branch. The spring blossom, pink and white, that was out made the journey there very special.

Our Branch Chaplain celebrated Holy Communion with hymns for Lent. This was followed by light refreshments and a brief history of the church. St Dionysius is not in the Church Calendar so the actual feast day is on 9th October. The building dates mostly from the 14th & 15th centuries and is a good example of a later Mediaeval town church. It is the central feature of the town. Another claim to fame is the excellent Tower and Spire, which are a little earlier than the rest of the building. The Spire is reckoned to be among the most noteworthy in England. The beautiful decorated windows in the Chancel are also very fine. As so often happens with Leicestershire churches, the oldest part of the fabric is to be seen inside. Here it is seen in the lowest part of the Chancel arch, where the mouldings are characteristic of the 13th century.

Thanks were given to our Branch Chaplain and the Associate Priest in the Harborough Team Ministry, also the Deputy Organist and Bruce Leat, the Verger, together with the people who provided refreshments. Altogether it made a lovely evening.

On Monday 9th May 11 members of the Branch went to the Church of the Holy Trinity, Barrow on Soar, for an Evening Service from the Iona Community led by the Reverend Nicky McGinty. We sang hymns and songs with the Choir and Organist who had kindly stayed on after their practice. During the service some of us lit a candle and placed it on a map of the world, thinking about certain people in different parts of a particular country.

The service was different to what we normally have, but enjoyable all the same.

The Verger, Margaret Steadman, verged us in with reverence and dignity, and her assistant, Pauline Haynes, very audibly read the Lesson.

Following the service there were some very tasty refreshments provided by ladies from the Church, and Kate Mobbs, our Secretary, thanked everyone afterwards. On a different note, one of our Associate Members, Jean Wright, has now gone into a care home. We hope she settles in well and we send her our love and best wishes.

Diary Dates for June, July & August:

Monday 12th June — Holy Communion with Hymns at the Church of St Philip & St James, Ratby.

Monday 11th July — Supper at Launde Abbey. 6 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.

Monday 8th August — All Saints Paston, Peterborough, at 7 p.m.

**Marjorie Thomas, DipGV
Branch Correspondent**

The Guild Training Course

At the recommendation of the General Synod, the Central Council of the Guild formulated a course, to cover the work and ministry of the Verger.

The Course is formulated in two stages.

First is the *Foundation Unit*,

this consists of sixteen assignments, covering preparation for worship, care of the building, records and archives, care of the churchyard, and care for the people of God.

The second stage is the remaining three units:

Pastor Unit covering the individual's personal development, their relationship with people and God, care for others and resources.

History Unit covering the history of church building, architecture, the history of worship,.

Administration Unit covering communication, forms & registers, the structures of the Church.

If you are interested in learning more about the Course, please contact the *Training officer*.

London & Southwark Branch

From London to Leeds

On Tuesday 10th May 2011 six members of our Branch went to the northern city of Leeds for the York Province Festival at Leeds Parish



Church.

After some very welcome refreshments a warm welcome was given in the church by the Curate the Reverend David Ford.

The present church was built by the Victorians in 1841 although there was a church on this site before as fragments of a 10th Century cross was found when the old church was demolished. The church can take a congregation of 1260, all seated.

Across the road from the church is a memorial placed by the Police Memorial Trust in memory of Sergeant John Speed who was shot and died on this spot on 31 October 1984.

After the welcome we walked to Holy Trinity Church where the curate took the service of the Holy Eucharist and the address was given by Canon Maureen. The church was consecrated in 1727 by the Most Reverend Lancelot Blackburn, Archbishop of York.

At present the church is being surrounded and dwarfed by a new shopping development called Trinity Leeds. After lunch at a nearby bistro the group had various choices for their free time.



I went on an open top bus tour of this exciting city & saw all the new develop-

as my favourite attraction, The Royal Armouries which is well worth a visit.



Prior to robing for the Choral Evensong a splendid Yorkshire tea was served in the Refectory. We processed into the church singing the Processional Hymn, "O Jesus, I have promised". During the service Canon Maureen admitted four new candidates as full members of the Guild and the Reverend Ford as an Associate Member and Chaplain of the Leeds Branch.



After the service we processed with the choir to the western precinct of the church. A short service by Canon Maureen was followed by the ashes of the late Victor Charles Buck, a former Senior Verger and Registrar of the church being laid to rest.



A very enjoyable day in Leeds was had by us all as we made our way back to Leeds Station for a restful train journey back to Kings Cross. Our thanks go to the South and West Yorkshire Branch of the Guild for all their efforts in making the day so memorable.

Alan Taylor
Branch Correspondent

Norwich & Area Branch

The Norwich & Area Branch held their AGM at their dedicated church of St George, Tombland.



The chair was taken by our Chaplain, the Reverend Canon John Minns. Prior to the AGM, we had a full Holy Communion conducted by the most Reverend Bishop Alan and he was verged by Matthew Kemsley, deputy head verger of Bury St Edmunds Cathedral who is the area rep for the Guild.

We had a full committee and a smattering of members and before the AGM started, Canon John admitted two new members to the Branch, Adrian Wright and Jackie Bush and there is a wonderful photograph of them with the Canon and the Bishop. My memories are of a Box Brownie and these digi things are so cute.



Anyway over the year we had 3 new members, Ang Millar being accepted by Matthew Kemsley in May of 2010 at a special service in Trimmingham, (it is in Norfolk, I assure you) but we lost 5 members so over all, we are hanging on.

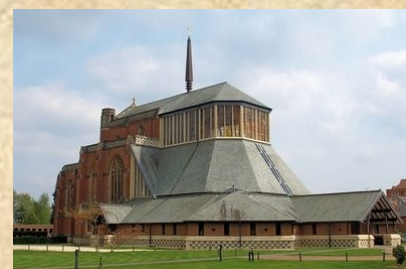
The entire committee was re-elected en masse, where have you heard that before and then we had a tea, supplied by various members and St Georges Church and then we all went home. AGM's are wonderful things really but for the first time we got us a real live Bishop and it was the Saints day of St Joseph, earthly father to our Lord and Saviour and over all we had a wonderful time.

John Barker
Branch Chairman

Oxford Branch

At St Mary the Virgin Church, Witney, Oxon, on Sunday 5 March, a special presentation was made to John Hutt, a (founder) member of this Branch, who was retiring as verger. In recognition of his 30 years service in this role, the title of 'Verger Emeritus' was bestowed upon him, accompanied with a gift of a specially handmade tie showing the spire of this church, a card signed by many of the couples who had been married at this venue at which John verged and a special communication from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, congratulating John on this achievement. A framed certificate recording the event from the Oxford Branch of the Guild of Vergers was presented by the Branch Chairman, Michael Golby and his Wife, Betty. Well done John!

A new venue for the first of this year's Quiet Days saw the Branch visiting Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton (nr. Newbury), Berks, on Tuesday 8 March – a fresh but beautiful day.



A small group met in the refectory for beverages before assembling in the allotted meeting room in the visitors' section of this vast complex, being a Roman Catholic Benedictine Community. A hastily prepared revised programme was led by our Branch Chairman, as the guest Speaker and Celebrant was unable to attend due to family problems. We discussed the history and significance of Shrove Tuesday (as this day was and pancakes were provided for us at lunch time), and of Ash Wednesday and the period of Lent, interspersed with periods of prayer and reflection. We joined the Community at their Midday Prayers in the vast Oratory. Much impressed as we were with this venue, we have arranged for our second Quiet Day, in September, to be here.

Sad note to end with in that one of our long standing members, Don Mitchener, underwent major surgery shortly after our visit to Douai Abbey, from which he is now recovering – our prayers are with you, Don.

John Bayliss and Michael Golby



Did you know?

The saying "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" was first spoken by St. Ambrose. When St. Augustine arrived in Mediolanum (modern-day Milan) in 387 A.D., he noticed that the Church in Milan did not fast on Saturday as did the Church at Rome. He asked Ambrose about this, who replied "When I am at Rome, I fast on a Saturday; when I am at Milan, I do not. Follow the custom of the Church where you are". The comment was changed to "When they are in Rome, they do there as they see done" by Robert Burton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and still later assumed the form we know it in today.

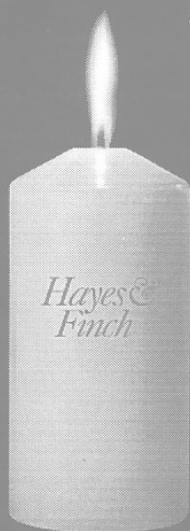
RS M MUSIC SUNDAY
THE 50:50 CAMPAIGN

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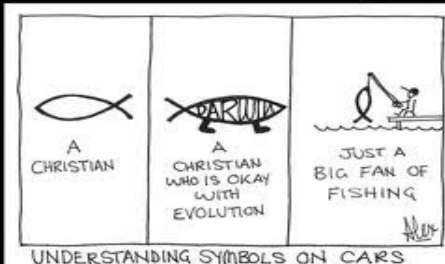
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CAKE OR DEATH

by alex baker



Who'd be a Verger?

We move chairs here
We move chairs there
we Vergers move them everywhere!
They go in rows of twenty eight
or any number that our clergy dictates

You need a mike? no problem there!
just say the word and you're on air
polish the silver, shine the brass
it all helps the day to pass.

Move that table, hump that chair
put it two feet from it's pair
An Altar rail with kneeler before it?
We're the chaps to cater for it!

A weekend off? No - not this week
There's jobs that need to be complete
The Verger's work is never done
but where else would we have such fun!

Move the rubbish, unlock the door
we can do it- and much more!
Work half the night and rest next day
to get sent to the tower to earn our pay!

by Nick Alsop
Past Head Verger
Liverpool Cathedral



Tricks of the Trade

WHY SPEND MONEY USING SILVER POLISH?

Why spend money and lots of effort using silver polish, when soap and water does just as good a job. The problem with silver polish is if you do not keep the cleaning regime up to date, things have a habit of tarnishing. Any household washing up-liquid or detergent will do a good job, and you don't have to spend money on something you only use once a month.



Canterbury Province Festival St John's College – Tuesday 18 October 2011

By kind permission of the Master and Fellows of St John's College the Ipswich Branch of the Church of England Guild of Vergers are hosting the Canterbury Province Festival at St John's College, Cambridge.

An unique opportunity to visit one of Cambridge's finest Colleges, within the University of Cambridge that has recently celebrated its 800th year.

And a chance to be hear the world famous choir of boys and men in the College's 500th year of founding.

PROGRAMME

9.30am <i>onwards</i>	Registration and refreshments
10.15am	Welcome by the Master of College and the Dean of Chapel
10.45am	Robing for Eucharist (Hoods will not be worn)
11.15am	Eucharist
12.15pm	Photograph
12.45pm	3 Course Lunch in the College's Hall
2.30pm	Tour set 1 (duration of 1 hour 15 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">A Cambridge CityB St John's CollegeC St John's College LibraryD PuntingE King's College ChapelF Free Time
4.00pm	Tour set 2 (duration of 1 hour 15 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">A Cambridge CityB St John's CollegeC St John's College LibraryD PuntingE Free Time
5.30pm	Tea
6.00pm	Day officially ends

The option to attend the service of Festal Evensong for the Feast of St Luke sung by the Choir of St John's College is open to all persons. The Service will start at 6.30pm.

This service will not be robed

Travel and accommodation

Cambridge is accessible by train from Birmingham, London and Norfolk. The A14 and M11 provide direct access by car, although parking in the Centre is very restricted there is a very good park and ride system.

There are many B&B's and Hotels in Cambridge, details of which can be found at the Cambridge tourist information which has an extensive listing (www.visitcambridge.org or 0871 226 8006)

If we can be of further assistance please call the Verger at St John's College – Stephen Stokes 01223 338676

Application Page

One per person please (photocopies accepted)

Full day's events **including** lunch £20.00 ☐

Full day's events **excluding** lunch £10.00 ☐

Cheques to be made payable to 'Ipswich Branch Festival 2011' and sent along with this form to:

Mr Laurence Kidman

72 Bartlow Road

Linton

Cambridgeshire

CB21 4LY

A receipt and all relevant information will be issued.

Menu

Starter Minestrone Soup ☒

Main (please indicate) ☐ Roast loin of Norfolk black Pork, with apple sauce and calvados gravy *or*
Green lentil shepherd pie ☒, (green lentils with tomatoes on a cushion of spinach topped with a cheese potato mash and served with a tomato and tarragon sauce)

Dessert White Chocolate and honeycomb mousse, with dried fruit and nuts. ☒

Soft drinks will be on the table, wine may be purchased in Hall.

We aim to cater for all **dietary requirements**, please indicate should you have any and we will contact you to ensure the options are available. _____

Tours

Due to limited space please indicate from 1–3 order of preference (one being preferred) and applications will be allocated upon receipt.

Set 1 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D* ☐ E ☐ F ☐

Set 2 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D* ☐ E ☐

** Due to the nature of the activity if the weather is bad on the day we will move you to your next available choice*

I wish to attend Festal Evensong ☐ (*this is to gauge numbers*)

Name _____

Address _____

Contact telephone _____, email _____

If you are under 18 years of age on the day you will need to be accompanied during the day's events by a named responsible adult, who will be _____

Closing date to **guarantee** inclusion in the Lunch is **30 September 2011**

'I would rather be a door keeper in the house of our Lord,
than to dwell in the tents of the
Ungodly'

Psalm 84

The Guild seeks to make effective the ministry of Vergers through the following key **objectives**, by :

Promoting the spiritual nature of the **Vergers' Vocation** through Christian Fellowship and spiritual guidance for all its Members;

Encouraging the advancement of knowledge by education, through maintaining standards of good practice, and by equipping Members for Ministry as vergers in all its aspects, through the provision of advice, training, resources, and by organizing and promoting training courses and conferences; Providing the means and opportunity for **communication** and discussion of ideas and proposals of common interest to Members;

Providing **support** and encouragement to the Membership in all aspects of their duties whatever they may be and wherever performed;

Advising, upon request, and making recommendations as to terms of employment and welfare of any Member;

Recording the gamut of work undertaken by Vergers; in addition noting each Member's training, experience and qualifications.

The Vergers

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