The Virger







Welcome to the Spring 2019 edition of *The Virger*. Items for inclusion should be sent to the Communications Officer by the Deadline Date below.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY ARTICLES ETC... SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE MAY BE HELD OVER UNTIL THE NEXT EDITION TO AVOID DELAYS IN PRODUCTION! ALL E-MAILED ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT AS MICROSOFT WORD FILES ONLY & ANY PHOTOGRAPHS IN SHOULD BE JPEG FORMAT, TEXT & IMAGE FILES SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO E-MAILS SEPARATELY!

THE MAGAZINE IS UNDERGOING A COMPLETE REVAMP AND RELAUNCH. OVER THE COMING EDITIONS YOU WILL SEE CHANGES IN PRESENTATION AND FORMAT, ALSO IN THE WAY THINGS ARE REPORTED. THESE CHANGES WILL HELP IN PUBLICIZING THE WORK OF THE GUILD TO OUR WIDER AUDIENCE AS WELL AS TO OUR MEMBERSHIP. THIS IS A VERY EXCITING TIME

FOR THE GUILD AS WE LOOK TO OUR FUTURE.

Marek J Barden, OLJ Saint Gregory's Vicarage, Filton Road, Horfield, Bristol BS7 0PD E-mail: CEGVCommsOff@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE

THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS: SUNDAY 26th MAY 2019



Save the Date - Cantuar Province Festival 2019



Leicester and Peterborough with Derby Branch Committee extend a very warm welcome to you all to attend this Festival which is being held on the Thursday 19th of September at the Cathedral Church of Saint Martin, Leicester

A taster of the program includes:

Easy access by Train /Motorway M1 - Junction 21

Accommodation will be available at the New Diocesan Hotel - Saint Martins Lodge, Cathedral Gardens, offering 28 rooms; other Hotels/Lodges within 5 minutes walk of the Cathedral

Visits/Tours to include:

The Richard III Story and Exhibition Centre, the Kings Tomb and stunning windows by Tom Denny in the Cathedral The Church of Saint Mary de Castro, where Geoffrey Chaucer was married The Church of Saint Nicolas, the oldest Church in the City Join us on Wednesday 18th at 7 p.m. Compline in Saint Nicholas Church Stay over on Friday 20th for a tour of Taylors Bell Foundry in Loughborough, if enough people are interested

Picture: © Newenglish Design

The views and opinions expressed in the articles and letters in this edition of The Virger should be taken as those of the author unless it is specifically indicated that the Central Council of the Church of England Guild of Vergers has given its endorsement.

The Central Council of the said Guild accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or otherwise of statements, or for any offence caused by any of the articles or letters published herein.



NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S ROUND-UP



Happy New Year to all fellow vergers across the country. 2019 is set to be a year that will be a memorable one for everyone in the country. It started for me with a trip to see The Kelpies in Falkirk.

These majestic sculptures by Andy Scott, stand next to the Forth & Clyde Canal. One cannot but be amazed at the representation of two of God's bold creatures. The scene that greeted me from the park was one of awe and wonder.

This was the first Christmas that I had not spent in Church doing carol service after carol service, and it felt very strange.

It didn't stop me from sparing a thought for all those who toiled and endured 'Hark! the herald' and 'O come, all ye faithful.'





Lent will soon be upon us and we spend forty days and nights focussing, with Christ, on the testing period which prepares us for the other major festival in the Church's calendar - Holy Week and Easter. As I get older, I find that time appears to move quickly and we all flow from one season to another all too fast. Throughout the country, we need to take time to slow down and focus on what is going on around us in our Churches.

During this time, Brexit will/might come to a conclusion. This subject has focused most of our minds over the past two years since the referendum vote. Perhaps more prayer is needed on the subject by our leaders, but when it is finished another symbol

will be in our minds. This Church in London.

John Kirby-Shearer



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NATIONAL CHAPLAIN'S LETTER



Dear Friends

We are almost on the pilgrimage through Lent when we prepare for times of change. I don't think any of us really enjoy change but unless we change we die!

During Lent it is the change within our own lives that concerns us most. The *metanoia* – turning round to face in the opposite direction: what we usually refer to as repentance. Lent is opportunity, the opportunity to 'fall in love with God' all over again.

When we accept the Christian faith, we are usually excited by this concept of 'falling in love'; of becoming closer to God through our prayers, but as our lives trundle on, it becomes less of a challenge and perhaps less of a reality.

Augustine wrote: 'True, whole prayer is nothing but love.' During this season of Lent perhaps we could resolve to search for an enhanced relationship with God through our prayers. Of course, God knows all the secrets of our hearts, but like a parent, even if God knows everything about us, he still wants us to come to him to try to articulate our innermost desires and concerns.

Prayer is an adventure which leads us to the living God, not in that vague place we call 'heaven' but in the middle of our messy lives, in the here and now. The culmination of this adventure is to know God and to know our own needs and desires. As we enter Holy Week try to make some time for meditating on the suffering and the death of our Lord Jesus. Try to enter into it as though you were standing there before him. You might like to use the appended picture to aid your meditation. The picture is by Geertgen tot Sant Jans [1465 – 1495] and is entitled 'Man of Sorrows'.



Jesus, bleeding and exhausted carries his cross watched by his Mother and Mary Magdalene. The cross seems almost too heavy for him. He is supported by angels bearing the instruments of his passion.

'Behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow.'

Look into the eyes of Jesus and bear the suffering with him. Look into your own life and give to him your suffering and pain for he will bear it for you.

During Lent is not only our life of prayer that sometimes needs to move forward but other aspects of our lives as well. It is time for the Guild to move forward, retaining the things that are wonderful: our fellowship with each other, the activities we take part in within our Branches, but it is time to change some of the ways we ran the Guild when life was different.

We now have fewer Branches and so there is a plan to rationalize how the Guild is organized, so you will have seen from the Paper sent round that the proposal is to have larger areas each containing four/five Branches. We hope that this will give us greater flexibility in choosing representatives and Guild officers. As some Branches have closed, we do not want to lose members so there will be a central membership so that they may be included. Please do read the paper carefully and prayerfully and let your Area Leader know your own thoughts.

I wish you all a very blessed and holy Lent and a joyous Easter. With every blessing and my love. *Canon Maureen*



PRAYER REQUESTS



If you know of someone for whom prayers would be of benefit or someone who has been prayed for and has recovered or shown improvement, please inform the <u>NATIONAL CHAPLAIN</u> or the <u>NATIONAL WELFARE OFFICER</u>.

Our prayers are asked for:

Blackburn, Chester & Manchester: Tony Hales, Freda Murphy, Patricia Platt & Margaret Scott

Chichester, Guildford & Portsmouth: Marilyn Lee Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester: Joy Birkin Ipswich: Marjorie Wakeling & Val Pizzey Oxford: Gerry Knight & Molly Payne

Saint Albans: Peter Hudson

Somerset & Avon: Pat Dawes, Lionel & Mary Holway, & Trevor Llewellyn

York: George & Doreen Cook

And everyone not specifically mentioned who need love, counsel and the grace of our Lord

R.I.P

Ipswich: **John Marsh** Leicester & Peterborough with Derby: **Clifford Dunkley**



THE DIPLOMA COURSE



The Central Council of the Guild, at the recommendation of General Synod, formulated a course to cover the work and ministry of the Verger. The course is formulated in four units set in two stages:

The first stage is the **Foundation** Unit, which comprises of sixteen assignments, covering preparation for worship, care of the building, record-keeping, and archives, care of the churchyard, and caring for the people of God.

The second stage comprises of the other three units:

The Verger as **Pastor** covers the individual's personal development, their relationship with the people and God, care for others, and for Church resources.

The Verger as **Historian** covers the history of church building, architecture, and the history of worship, including the Book of Common Prayer, and the Bible.

The Verger as **Administrator** covers communication, forms and registers, and the structures of the Church.

Students who complete the course successfully receive a diploma, an academic hood, and the right to use the post-nominal letters '**Dip.GV**'.

If you are interested in learning more about the Course, please contact the **Training Registrar**: **Susan Ansell** or the **Training Officer**: **Robert Beattie**.



THE GUILD SHOP



The Guild Shop has Guild branded articles available to Fellows, Full and Associate Members. (Non-Members are invited to make contact with the General Secretary about joining the Guild: **CEGVGenSec@gmail.com**)

These will add a little something to every Verger's uniform, whether it's a Guild Fleece or a Guild Gown Badge to spice up your official Vergers robes. The Shop has something for you. For more information on the shops products, to order a catalogue or place an order contact:

The Shop Manager - Mrs Angela Hamilton - 21 Saffron Garth, Patrington, Hull, Yorkshire HU12 0RF or e-mail direct: CEGVGuildShop@gmail.com



THE WAY FORWARD



As has been reported in previous editions of the magazine, we are currently looking how we can redefine the Guild in relation to its current situation. The Constitution states that there are 16 Area Leaders who will vote on matters for the better performance of the Guild. Unfortunately, over the last number of years we have seen two Areas close, namely the Birmingham, Lichfield & Coventry area and the Devon & Cornwall area. This means to that, with regret, the Constitution is not fit for the current state of the Guild.

While we are looking at how we can address the diminishing number of Areas we are also looking at how the overall Management of the National Guild should be defined. It has been already stated that local Branches are not being affected; you will continue to meet in your Branches and enjoy the Fellowship and Friendship that you have always enjoyed.

We, in the Central Council, and Standing Committee, have been working on how to safeguard the Guild for many years to come and ensure that we have the right rules to help us to do this.

Your Area Leaders should now have spoken with all branches on what is being done, namely:

- ♦ To acknowledge that technology (email, mobile phones etc) has progressed to the point that we are able to communicate far easier than we were able to 20 years ago.
- That some of our Branches are struggling and therefore have to amalgamate with neighbouring Branches or become Headquarter Members.
- That Area Leaders which once looked after multiple Branches are, by most, now only looking after a single Branch.
- ♦ That if we do nothing the Guild, as we know it, may cease to be.

To this end, we are looking at restructuring the Areas, so that the elected Regional Representative will once again be covering a number of Branches and bring the voice of you all to the Management of the Guild, and in turn bring the voice of the National Guild to you. We are also looking at a new Constitution that will be fit for current purpose, while also being future proof, allowing the committee structures to be changed within Statues more easily than having to re-write the whole Constitution each time.

There is of course is a timetable for this to be reached, with already nearly 18 months having been spent consulting on this. As Branches need to receive four months-notice of any change of the Constitution prior to it being voted on at the AGM, the Central Council, which meets in March, will be asked to approve these changes so that we can then present them to you for adoption. While it may seem that this is fast, we are acutely aware that momentum must be kept up so as not to lose sight of the end – the Future of our Guild.



BRANCH DIGEST



BLACKBURN, CHESTER & MANCHESTER

In September 2018, we were invited to a BBQ at Ron Griffiths' home in Urmston, Manchester, and 11 members and friends had a very enjoyable time with plenty of good food. The weather was ideal and great fun was had by all. We raised money towards Saint Clements Church Rose window.

On 22nd November 2018, we admitted two new members to the Branch at a Eucharist service held in Manchester Cathedral. This was well supported by members of the Branch.

In December, 4 of us attended the Liverpool Branch Advent Eucharist and Christmas Lunch at Liverpool Cathedral. As usual this was a very harmonious event with the usual Grand Raffle and lovely meal.

In January, we held our AGM in Chester Cathedral. This was attended by 15 members of the Branch. We started by joining the local congregation at the morning Eucharist during which we admitted our new Branch Chaplain to the Guild. Canon Rhodes is the beekeeper at Manchester Cathedral. We were very pleased to at last have a Branch

Chaplain, having been without one for 12 months.

We have a few things lined up for 2019, among them will be a Lenten Service at Manchester Cathedral on 11th March to be led by our new Branch Chaplain; a trip to Blackburn Cathedral on 25th March when we will have a time of fellowship with 5 prospective new vergers. We will be explaining the duties of vergers and the origins of the Guild, we hope they will decide to become full members; we have been invited to Pam Derbyshire's Church in Scorton in September. There are also other trips on the books but these have not been finalised as yet.

Our Chairman, Gareth Screeton was proud to announce the birth of his first child, a daughter, in September, and the Senior Virger at Chester Cathedral announced the adoption of a son to expand his family. A time of great celebration in both families.



Freda M Murphy Branch Secretary





BRANCH DIGEST



IPSWICH

A new year and the first of the reports from Ipswich Branch.

As we have only just got into 2019 we have not had much time to actually do anything apart from starting the year off

with a New Year's Lunch (held at The Railway Inn as in previous years – where the food is really excellent).

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So...with that in mind I thought I would tell you about another first for Ipswich which was the arrival of Auguste Rodin's – "The Kiss". This comes under the 'Kiss and Tell': Rodin and Suffolk Sculpture Exhibition held at Christchurch Mansion Museum in Ipswich. One of my previous reports was on Thomas Wolsey's "Angels" also held at the same venue.

The Kiss exhibition tells of the tale behind the lovers and the iconic life-size marble sculpture. The monumental artwork is on loan from the Tate Museum and I must admit it is very 'monumental' it must have taken much man-power/muscle and hours of careful manoeuvring to get it into place.

It was truly ore inspiring and a real privilege to be able to see locally, I must have circled the sculpture many times seeing something different from each angle.

As well as The Kiss there were several

of Rodin's other sculptures on display.

Hopefully there will be more of a report from Ipswich Branch next time on what 2019 will bring for its members.

Our next meeting is in March when we will be holding our AGM (no snow please this year!!)

I hope you enjoy looking at some of the photos of The Kiss.

Until next time God Bless

Jean Cobb Branch Correspondent



OXFORD

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

On Tuesday 4th December, several of our Branch members met at the Wee Waif in Charvil for our now customary Christmas Lunch, the guests included our National Chaplain, Canon Maureen Palmer which was a great delight to us all.

As usual, the food was excellent, and we had a lovely time of catching up with each other as we are so spread throughout the Diocese. After a happy time spent talking and remembering those who were not able to be with us, we went away to prepare for more Christmas festivities.

AGM

The Oxford Branch AGM was held at the Church of Christ the Servant King, High Wycombe, and commenced with a service of Holy Communion when our new Branch Chaplain, the Reverend Marie Jackson, celebrated.

The service was followed by a light lunch, very nicely serviced by Mrs Betty Golby and Mrs Hazel Knight who always provide us with tasty sustenance.

After the lunch, the AGM was chaired by Michael Golby and included the usual short reports and thanks to all the officers carrying out their duties during the previous year. We then elected the Committee for 2019 and, there being no further proposals, all the officers were re-elected. Our programme for 2019 was approved and we look forward to a very interesting year.

The meeting closed with thanks to all, especially to our retiring Branch Chaplain, Reverend Peter Viney, and prayers led by our Branch Chaplain, the Reverend Marie Jackson.

Heather Ringrose Branch Correspondent

OBITUARIES





JEANNE BARBARA SCOTT 27th August 1932 – 30th October 2018

Jeanne was the youngest of four children born to parents Walter and Edith Scott, starting her life in Leyton, Essex, an area in which she was to spend her earlier years. The Family were shopkeepers, initially in charge of a general store before branching out with the purchase of a builder's yard and it was here that Jeanne learned her practical skills which were put to good use in her later days, as can be vouched for by the many individuals, and Saint John's Church, High Wycombe, all of whom benefited from her carpentry and other D.I.Y. skills.

In her early years, Jeanne trained as a Comptometer Operator, moving into the insurance industry in the London market, eventually becoming part of an audit team tyat travelled around the country. Although still living in the Essex area and commuting into London, family circumstances changed and in the early 1980's she moved to High Wycombe, purchasing the house wherein she lived until a few years ago. By this time she had been promoted and was a Superintendent of the Statistics Department of a major marine insurance company in the City, but, when it was proposed to move her department to Bristol, she called it a day and took early retirement.

By now Jeanne had become a member of Saint John the Evangelist Church in High Wycombe and it wasn't long before she was actively involved in many connected aspects thereof including the role of Verger (succeeding Peter Hudson and myself). She became a founder member of the Oxford Branch of the Guild, which was formed in June 1988, becoming part of its Management Team (a position which she held for some 18 years).

In 2002, the Central Council of the Guild were seeking a new General Secretary and Jeanne's name was put forward – one of six. She was duly elected and took up this role in 2003, a position she fulfilled until her 'retirement' in 2009.

For her services to the Guild she was made a Life Member. In 2016, owing to her deteriorating health and mobility restrictions, Jeanne resigned her role as Administrator of the Oxford Branch and, although remaining a member, her attendance at Branch functions diminished. At those she did attend, however, she was still able to recall and relate (in her authoritative manner) to a very attentive audience, the many stories in her repertoire of past experiences – she was much loved and respected.

Having downsized from her home at 309, Desborough Avenue (for many years the hub for the administration of both the Oxford Branch and the National Guild), and then into a care home, Jeanne passed away on 30th October.

A service for family and close friends was held at the Breakspear Crematorium, Ruislip, on Tuesday 20th November, 2018, followed by a Memorial Service held the following day at Christ the Servant King, High Wycombe. At the latter service the Guild were represented by, not only Branch members, but also current and past members of Central Council whom Jeanne had worked with over many years.

I, personally, had a great admiration of and a fond affection for, Jeanne, through thick and thin and I know she was an influence in many people's lives through her generosity, support, guidance and a love for Our Lord. We give thanks for her varied ministry.

Michael Golby, FCEGV Oxford Branch Chairman



R.I.P



CLIFFORD DUNKLEY

Clifford, who was a member of the Leicester & Peterborough with Derby Branch, sadly passed away on Thursday 24th January. He was the Verger at Saint Mary De Castro, Leicester and had been a member of the Guild for 7 years.

Could you please remember Clifford in your prayers.

JOHN MARSH

John, who was a National Life Member, National Chairman (1992–1995), Guild Chronicler (2003–2005), sometime Area Leader for the East Anglia Area and Head Verger of Saint Edmundsbury Cathedral, sadly passed away 19th February.

Please hold his wife, Joyce, and two daughters, Sally and Jane, in your prayers during this difficult time.



FROM ONE OF OUR PATRONS



THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK



Bishopthorpe Palace York Y023 2GE

25th January 2019



I am writing to you as you will no doubt have seen reports in the media that I have indicated that I plan to retire on 10th June 2020. As your Patron, I thought that it would be helpful to make you aware of the consequences of my retirement. I am your Patron because I hold office as Archbishop of York.

When I cease to hold that office on 10th June 2020 I will no longer be your Patron, and my successor will become Patron in my place. You may be aware that there are a number of legal steps to be taken before my successor can take up office as Archbishop of York, and so there is likely to be a short gap between the date of my retirement and the formal appointment of my successor as Archbishop.

However, as it is the usual practice to make a public announcement of the name of a new Archbishop before they are formally appointed, so you will be able to follow this in the media.

It has been a great honour to be your Patron. Please rest assured that I will remain as your Patron until my retirement in 2020, and very much value my continuing relationship with you during that time.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this letter by completing the attached form and sending it to my chaplain by email or by post.

With every blessing











The York Province Festival 2019 will take place on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd May 2019 in Liverpool

This 2 day Festival will give you a chance to meet in fellowship with other Guild members in the largest Anglican Cathedral in the world

- Join us in worship (Thursday)
- Take a tour of the Liverpool Cathedral (Thursday)
- Explore the city of Liverpool (Thursday)
- See the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King (Thursday)
- Travel to Chester to see the beautiful Cathedral, have a tour, or visit the city and the historic walls. (Friday)

You will need to book your own accommodation, of which there is plenty in Liverpool with some great deals online. You can either eat at the Cathedral as a part of the package price, or find your own places to eat and drink.

If you would like to book, see a full itinerary, or you want some more details then please fill in the Booking Form and send it back ASAP and we will send you details of how to pay.

We look forward to welcoming you to our beautiful city and Cathedral.

All bookings to be made no later than 31st January 2019

A Booking Form is included in this edition of The Virger



DID YOU KNOW....?



The word 'Lent' appears to have its beginnings in Anglo-Saxon times, where the word means to lengthen, indicating that days are getting longer and spring is coming.

Simnel cake, made with fruit and spices, is often eaten on Mothering Sunday. Traditionally it was made by children and given to their mother. Simnel cakes are eaten at Easter too. Simnel Cake sometimes comes decorated with 11 marzipan balls, one for each of the disciples. The 12th, Judas, who betrayed Jesus, is not included.

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On behalf of the National Officers & the Members of the Central Council may we wish all our Members & Friends, at home and abroad, a Quiet & Reflective Lent and a Happy and Holy Easter THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND GUILD OF VERGERS

ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE 2019

THEME: THE VERGER IN MINISTRY

Monday 12th to Thursday 15th August

Elim International Centre
De Walden Road
West Malvern
Worcestershire
WR14 4DF

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