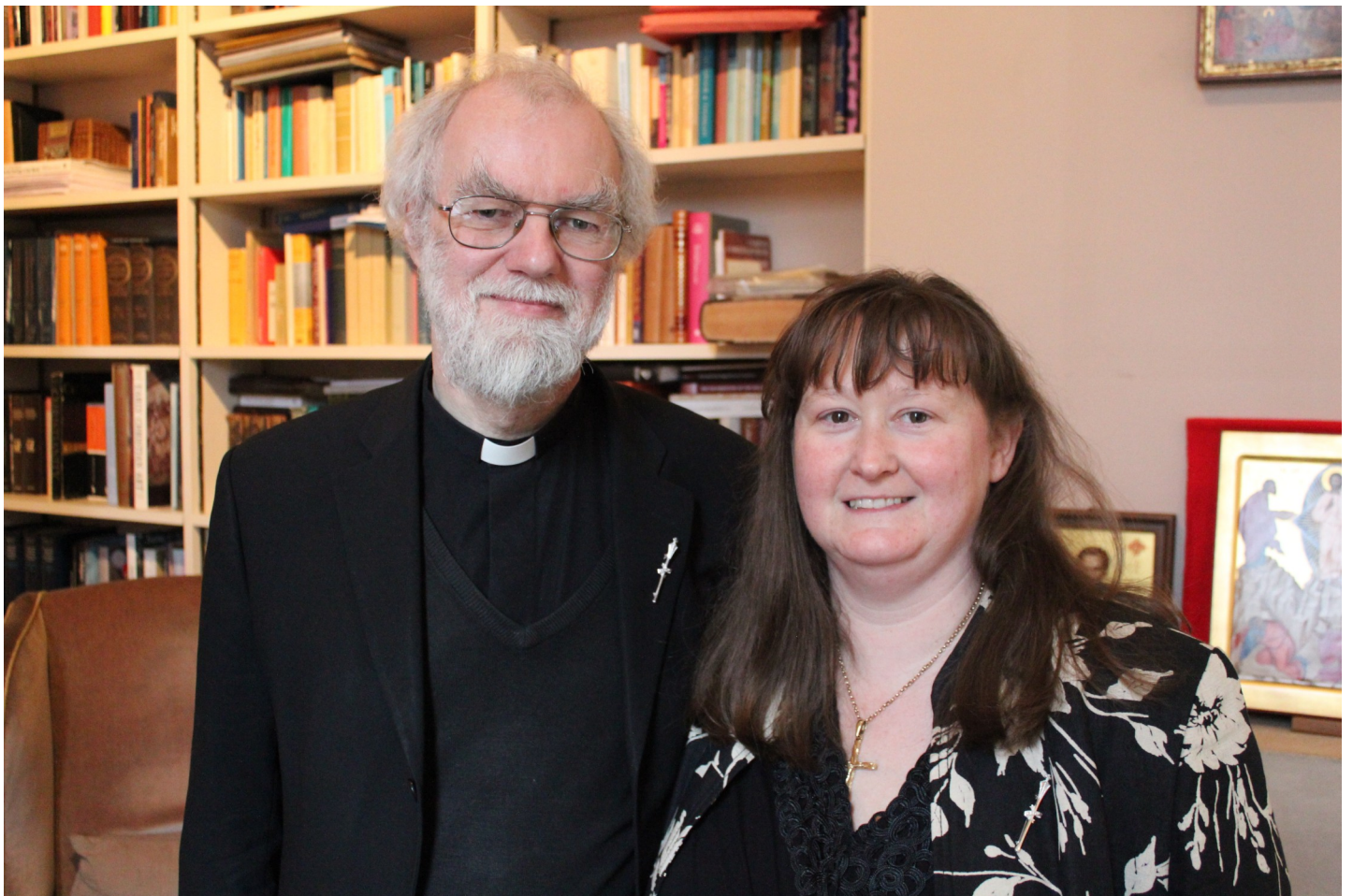


The Virger

Spring 2013

Issue 278



www.cofegv.org.uk

The Official Magazine of the Church of England Guild of Vergers





Welcome to the Spring 2013 issue of *The Virger*. If you would like to include Branch news, articles, adverts, photos, book reviews or any other information you feel our readers would find of interest please send to the Communications Officer.

Marek Barden, MLJ

Flat 6, Belle Court, 1 Bellevue Road

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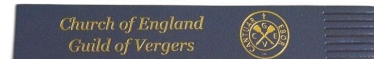
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FRONT COVER: THE NEW MASTER OF MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, DR ROWAN WILLIAMS, (FORMER JOINT PRESIDENT OF THE GUILD), WITH DEE CAULTON-BALL AFTER HE WAS PRESENTED WITH ONE OF THE GUILD'S 80th ANNIVERSARY PIN BADGES



NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



The High Altar of Carlisle Cathedral is shrouded in its Lent Array awaiting the glorious moment on Easter Eve when we remove the Dorsal hanging to reveal the brilliance of the gilded woodwork set behind the Altar. A moment when you almost need to wear your sunglasses, it is this moment that I think I enjoy most of all at Easter, to me a physical representation of the resurrection.



Lent will have been a busy one for you as Vergers, with extra services, concerts and study groups, as well as the big spring clean. You all should take great deal of pride in the fact that on Easter Day the chapels, churches and cathedrals of this land will be sparkling in the spring sunlight. Thank you for all you do to make it so. May I on behalf of the Guild Officer's wish you all a joyful and blessed Easter.



Standing committee met in January to consider items referred to it by the Central Council as well as the ongoing work of keeping the guild moving forward. The Communications team are engaged in the battle to revise all of our publications and to improve their look.

The Training team are drawing together the final threads of the Training Conference program. If you are undertaking the training course then there is much value in attending the conference no matter how far you are along with it. There is so much that can be learned from our shared experiences. We look forward to hearing of our fellow vergers as they take part in the enthronement of the Archbishop of Canterbury and we pray that Archbishop Welby receives the grace and blessings that are needed to fulfil that role.

I hope to see you at one of our national events, until then enjoy Eastertide.

James Armstrong



FORTHCOMING EVENTS



2013

Tuesday 21st May

York Province Festival at Beverley Minster

Sunday 28th July — Thursday 1st August

Annual Training Conference at the Elim Conference Centre, West Malvern

Thursday September 12th

Canterbury Province Festival at Saint Alban's Cathedral

2014

Canterbury Province Festival at Hereford Cathedral (***Details to be Confirmed***)



FROM THE TRAINING OFFICER



The time has come to start thinking about this year's Training Conference. Once again we will be heading to the wonderful Malvern countryside to enjoy the picturesque views at the Elim Conference Centre at West Malvern.

Those who were unable to join us last year would have marveled at the outstanding hospitality that both the new venue and the adjoining parish church showed us. Set on the side of the Malvern Hills, the Conference Centre sported an outdoor pool and views that stretched out into Herefordshire. This year's programme is hoped to utilise the peace and tranquility of the Centre and the stunning grounds. We are delighted that the Bishop of Worcester will join us for Dinner and Choral Evensong and with the theme of caring for each other; we will be focusing on the 'Vergers as a Pastor' unit of the Diploma Course. The Reverend Ann Ogram will be guiding us through the CRB and Safeguarding processes.

When is all this happening? Well, make a note of the following dates: Sunday 28th July until Thursday 1st August. Spread the word and come and have a few days in the Malvern Hills. The conference booking form has already been circulated in the previous edition of The Virger, with this edition and one more to follow, so make sure you grab your copy and fill it in. The Training Team is looking forward to greeting as many of you as possible to West Malvern.

John Shearer



Dear Friends

We have all entered the long journey of discipline, silence, fasting and prayer through Lent which will bring us to the foot of the cross. As we travel we will be changed and the change will sometimes be difficult, dangerous and will cause us pain and grief.

However, Lent is all about change – the change which will allow us to share in the glory of the resurrection with our Lord Jesus even though we must first trudge through the desert

As a very small child, my mother had a friend who began every conversation with the words, 'The world is very evil ...' and she would then continue in her miseries about food rationing, the bombing, the decadence of the youth or whatever was on her mind. Evil was foremost in her reckoning! Following his baptism, Jesus is driven out into the wilderness: that place of hunger, silence, loneliness and fear to confront evil but develops a strategy for obedience to the Father's will. Jesus is now conscious of his true vocation and the exceptional powers with which he has been endowed. He has heard the voice 'You are my Son' and now he must confront the source of the promptings in the wilderness and discern the source. Is the voice the same as before – the same as the one which said 'You are my Son' or is a voice which tempts him to do evil? The 'devil' invests the story, at least to our modern ears, with a certain degree of superstition and unreality but the devil is a mythical figure – a pictorial way of expressing truths not readily expressed in any other way.

As my mother's friend realized, evil is real and potent in our world and it is personal – we have the choice as to whether to serve and obey God or whether to rebel. The tension between doing the good and doing the evil is often very tight: in fact we live on a knife edge. Evil is often distorted good for evil perverts the good gifts of God and often masquerades as good and misleads us into doing the right thing but for the wrong reason. Evil masks the true love of God. Temptation is to do what is attractive, and the most subtle of our temptations is to do what appears to be good, but with ulterior motive.

The word, to 'tempt' here, as indeed throughout the Bible, is not so much to entice to sin but rather to test the godly in his/her fidelity to God. In the Old Testament there is a long tradition of God testing those whom he loved and now Jesus is subjected to temptation to enable him to understand the nature of his mission and to accomplish the divine purpose of bringing in the kingdom of love.

The devil's voice may have appeared like a string of natural ideas to Jesus. If Jesus can convert stones into bread, surely that would be a good idea. God cannot want his Son or his people to starve!

Presently Jesus will feed the multitude as indeed he feeds us at the Eucharist. If God wants Jesus to be sovereign over the world, then why not demonstrate this power now at the beginning of his ministry? Jesus teaches and acts with authority but all is done for the glory of the Father.

If Jesus really is the Messiah could he not prove it by some spectacular display of power? Later Jesus was to heal the sick, restore sight to the blind and raise the dead to life – all spectacular actions but performed out of compassion and love. Notice that Jesus does not argue with the devil, for arguments are often a way of playing with the idea until we convince ourselves that the temptation is right and good, Jesus simply quotes scripture thus putting himself under the authority of scripture and thus under the authority of God.

All Christian people are tested at the points which matter most to them in their lives and vocation. The voice of prompting needs to be discerned – is it the voice of God, or it is an attractive lie?

Resisting temptation means keeping awake – recognizing when we have the choice. The danger is not so much in saying 'No' to God, but rather in the failing to recognize that we are being offered a choice, such that we do not realize that we are saying 'No'. There is no room for complacency.

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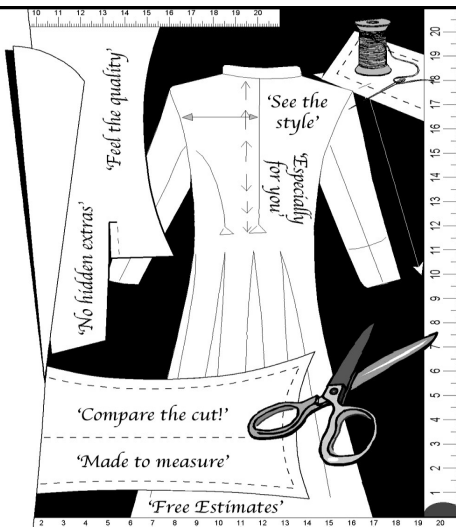
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OUR MOTTO ... "THERE'S ALWAYS TIME FOR COURTESY!"



Fighting temptation is not about self-hatred or the denial of parts of our God-given humanity but it is about honesty and celebrating the gift of humanity so that we and those we serve may have life; life in all its fullness.

I wish you all a blessed and holy Lent and a joyous Easter.

With much love
Canon Maureen



R.I.P



PAUL BIRKIN

The funeral service for Paul Birkin was held in Holy Trinity, Malvern, on Saturday 26th May. Paul was the Verger at Holy Trinity for many years beginning in 1990 and the esteem with which he was held was clearly shown by the large number of people who were present at the funeral not least his colleagues from the Guild of Vergers. As Verger all his dealings with other people were based on a steadfast faith in God, thus enabling him to display efficiency with compassion and to show understanding, occasionally in difficult circumstances. He had complete integrity in all that he did and he was highly regarded by members of the church. When Paul finished his duties he joined the Church Choir. He was an excellent singer who enhanced the quality of the singing. Sadly his time in the choir was curtailed because of his illness.

Paul was a good and kindly man who will be greatly missed.

From Holy Trinity Malvern July Magazine



R.I.P



HARRY METCALF 1938 - 2012

Harry was a faithful member of the Devon and Cornwall Branch. He was Sacristan and Verger at saint Francis of Assisi Parish Church in Woolbrook, Sidmouth, for a number of years. He died in December 2012 aged 74. Over 200 people attended his funeral service on 4th January. People came to give thanks for Harry's full and wonderful life. The crowded church showed that our friend was much in his community. We mourned with his dear wife, Norma, and the family.

Harry was born in Sheffield above a grocery shop. Before he took on the duties as Verger and Hall Manager he was a taxi driver. He took especial care for the elderly in the town. He had an HGV licence, so, maybe this helped with heavy folk in his taxi service. During Harry's National Service he served in the Malayan jungle, Jordan and Aden. He enjoyed many interests. He was a member of the Society of Saint Francis and the Saint John's ambulance Service. He and Norma went line dancing four times a week. Harry's Vicar said in his address, 'He did everything that needed doing in the church. He was a true friend. He allowed space for the Clergy in their preparations. He was much loved by the children, having a dry, jocular Yorkshire wit. Harry as a friend to all experienced a personal faith in Jesus.' This was reflected in the Vicar's text from John's Gospel 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.' We shall miss this dear man of God at our Branch functions very much. He lives on in our hearts.

George Savage

Branch Chairman - Devon & Cornwall Branch



R.I.P



ARTHUR SMITH 1931 - 2012

We lost a good friend of the Branch with the passing of Arthur, who died on 3rd January. He was Verger at Saint Chad's, Poulton-le-Fylde, for ten years before retiring due to ill health. He chose 'Love Divine, all loves excelling', 'Just as I am, without one plea', (his favourite hymn, and which summed up his faith), and 'Thine be the glory', for his funeral service which was conducted by the Reverend Martin Keighley, Vicar of Saint Chad's and our former Branch Chaplain. He spoke of Arthur's strong faith, dedication to duty as Verger and to his family. He read the following eulogy which was written by Arthur's much loved daughter, Rachel.

To paraphrase the 'Singing Postman' - "Arthur's a rum ol'boy and there in't much he don't know." The man I had the honour of calling my Dad was a rum ol'boy and derived the epithet 'Grumpy' thanks to me waking him at 6 a.m. And him protesting "middle of the night". He adored being Verger, and was proud he had "Seen 'em come, and seen 'em go," but, "he wasn't goin' anywhere" himself. He was happiest with his family, friends and animals. He told many tales of his Mum's pot bellied pig, he talked about fishing with Garry, and going about seeing animals and God's creation with Mum and I.

The love of his life was my wonderful Mum, Elsa, and at Huddersfield they formed a Ballroom Dancing Society and she got him into classical music. He couldn't read music but his determination meant he learnt to play the harmonica. His eyes lit up when he played, even though the cat did not appreciate the noise! He loved 'unhealthy' food, pulled a face at 'foreign' or any 'leaves' and made chocolate bars disappear in bed over night. I admired his honesty. He spoke his mind, a spade was a spade, and told you exactly what he thought. He was a very spiritual man who loved God and his Church. He had a lot of love for his family and friends. I am so honoured to have had such an amazing Dad and I hope to emulate him and make him proud in the future. Keep 'a trolshin' Dad, love you loads. R.

Robert Sly, his successor, verged him at the funeral and laid his verge on the coffin during the service. Ten other Branch members were present and formed 'guard of honour' at the door as he left the church.

Frank Woodward

Branch Chairman - Blackburn, Chester & Manchester Branch

**JOHN ROYCROFT 1938 - 2013**

My Dad, John, the youngest of four children, was born in Wallasey on 5th January 1938, two months earlier than expected. His incubator was a shoe box full of cotton wool next to the roaring fire being fed every two hours before progressing to a drawer as he gained strength. As a child growing up in Wallasey he sang in the local Church Choir and like to play 5-a-side football. This interest in football created a lifelong Everton fan out of him. He always enjoyed attending their matches when he could. Playing football got him one of many head injuries which he sustained during his life, the first being when the ball was kicked into the road and he ran after it and straight into the door handle of a moving car leaving him with a scar.

At the age of 15 his first job took him to the docks at Liverpool, working in a local shipping company. After this he completed two years National Service. During his early days in the army he was placed on a special diet to increase his weight, a theme which continued throughout his life as he always had a good appetite but never put on any weight. After his time in the army he went back to the shipping company. I remember him telling me about a ship, when he went aboard the Captain asked him if he wanted a drink but he declined. However, the Russian Captain insisted. Anyone who knew him knows he wasn't a drinker. After sharing a bottle of some alcoholic beverage he had to get back to the dock, but to get back he had to climb over two ships. Once back in his office he could hardly stand up, so goodness only knows how he did not end up in the water and he was sent home by the secretaries in a taxi.

In 1960 he commenced a job working for the YHA in Earls Court. His life changed in 1968 when he returned to Wallasey for Christmas. During this time he met Mum and they were married in October 1969. Shortly after they moved to North Wales with the YHA. Their first child, my sister Olwen, arrived soon after in 1970. In 1972 Dad, Mum and Olwen moved Aysgarth with the YHA. In 1974 I was born, followed by Joan in 1977.

In the 1980's Dad became a keen runner, participating in and completing thirteen half marathons as well as three marathons, he even managed to persuade all the family to take part in the Herriot Half Marathon with Joan only 5 years old. I am pleased we all finished. Another family tradition was our annual trip to Butlin's. I recall one year him consuming half a shandy, falling over and breaking his jaw. This led to Mum liquidising his meals to enable him to consume them through a straw. In 1984 we said goodbye to Aysgarth and the YHA and moved to Catterick. In one job there Dad and his colleagues became competitive with each other, with Dad completing calculations in his head quicker than the others using a calculator.

Later in life Dad became the Verger at the Catterick Garrison Memorial Church, a job he enjoyed until his retirement. It was the Church we attended as a family and it enabled him to interact with a variety of people. This Church was always important to my Dad, along with his faith in God.

As we pay our respects our thoughts go to those who could not be with us, Dad's eldest daughter and my sister, Olwen, granddaughter, Madison, and grandsons, Joshua, Philip and Oscar, who sadly won't know their grandfather, but will hopefully come to enjoy hearing stories of his life through Joan and myself. Our last memory of Dad is visiting him at Hill Crest just before Christmas. During our visit he responded with the same old comments as always to the question 'Are you alright?' 'No, I'm half left, half right and a bit in the middle.' A phrase we will never forget.

*Taken from the Eulogy given by his Son
Sent by Stephen Rutherford of the York Branch*

**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 Chaplain or the National Welfare Officer

Chichester, Guildford & Portsmouth: Graham Brindley

Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester: Joy Birkin & Jim Wooldridge

Lincoln & Southwell: Reverend Robert Whitehead

Oxford: Anita (Annie) Bayliss, David Dutson,

Jean Hedley & Margaret Morris

Rochester: Victor Warren

Saint Albans: Peter Hudson

Salisbury: Barbara Carr & Babs Taylor

Somerset & Avon: Lionel Holway

York: Doreen Cook

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

R.I.P

Birmingham, Lichfield & Coventry: Reginald Poole

Somerset & Avon: Dick Chenoweth

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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND GUILD OF VERGERS

York Branch

York Province Festival - Beverley Minster – Tuesday 21st May 2013



By kind permission of the Vicar of Beverley Minster, the York Branch of the Church of England Guild of Vergers is hosting the York Province Festival at Beverley Minster.

Beverley Minster is one of the largest and most spectacular Parish Churches in England. From an original foundation around 700AD it was home to the relics of the second most important Saint in the north of England and subsequently one of the patron saints of England – St John of Beverley.

A remarkable survivor of the Reformation, it contains some of the finest surviving art and craftsmanship of the 13th, 14th and 16th centuries. Nicholas Hawksmoor copied its West Towers in his designs for the western face of Westminster Abbey.

Today the church serves the parish and the region and is also an active concert venue much-praised by local and international performers alike.

PROGRAMME

- 9.30 a.m. onwards Registration and Refreshments
- 10.15 a.m. Welcome by the Vicar
- 10.45 a.m. Robing for the Eucharist (*Hoods will NOT be worn*)
- 11.15 a.m. The Eucharist
- 12.15 p.m. Group Photograph
- 12.45 p.m. Three Course Lunch (*see over for details*)
- 2.30 p.m. Choice of Tours:
- 1) Tour in the Roof of Beverley Minster
 - 2) Ground Tour of Beverley Minster
 - 3) Ground Tour of Saint Mary's Parish Church, Beverley
 - 4) Tour of the Minster Records in the Beverley Treasure House
 - 5) Tour of Beverley Guild Hall

(Some Tours are limited in numbers. Please indicate your 1st, 2nd & 3rd choices [1st being most preferred] and places will be allotted in order of receipt)

Choice in Order of Preference: 1. ☐ 2. ☐ 3. ☐ 4. ☐ 5. ☐ None of The Above ☐

4.30 p.m. Tea

5.00 p.m. Day Officially Ends

There is the option to attend the service of Choral Evensong sung by the Choir of Beverley Minster, this is open to everyone. The service will start at 5.30 p.m. Attendees will not be robed for this service.

For further information contact the Head Virger, John Dell, on 01482 882128.

A list of reliable B&B's can be supplied by the Assistant Virger, Neil Pickford, who can be contacted via the same number or by e-mail: virgers@bevminster.karoo.co.uk

TRAVEL

Beverley is accessible by train via Hull from Birmingham, London, Manchester, Scarborough & York. The station is a short walk from the Minster.

Access by road is via the Humber Bridge or M62/A63 from the South and West, or via the A1079 from York. SatNav reference: HU17 0DP. There is a car park at the Minster with limited availability via Minster Yard North, or there are other parking areas near Beverley Station and other sites. These are all clearly signed on all approach roads.



APPLICATION DETAILS

ONE FORM PER PERSON PLEASE (PHOTOCOPIES ACCEPTED)

NAME: Mr/ Mrs/Miss/Reverend

ADDRESS:

.....

..... POSTCODE:

HOME TELEPHONE: MOBILE TELEPHONE:

EMAIL:

MENU (PRICE INCLUDES GLASS OF WINE OR SOFT DRINK)

STARTER: Soup

MAIN COURSE: Steak Pie (OR PLEASE INDICATE IF A VEGETARIAN OPTION IS REQUIRED)

DESSERT: Chocolate Pudding (to die for!)

We aim to cater for all dietary requirements. Please indicate if you have any specific requirements and we will contact you to arrange a suitable alternative.

SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS: PLEASE SPECIFY

.....

.....

.....

.....

COST

FULL DAY'S EVENTS INCLUDING LUNCH £20

FULL DAY'S EVENTS EXCLUDING LUNCH £10

Cheques to be made payable to: CEGV YORK Branch
and sent along with this form to: Richard Babington
37 Greenshaw Lane
Patrinton
Hull
HU12 0RL

E-MAIL: holmwoodrb@btinternet.com

TEL/FAX: 01964 630263

A receipt and all relevant information will be issued.

I also wish to attend Choral Evensong



*Saint John of Beverley
One of 44 statues carved by
Richard Baker circa 1911 – 1914
and located in quire.*

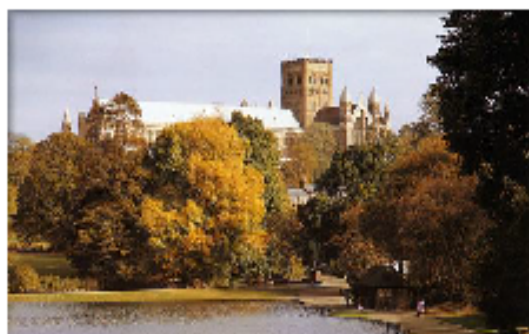
If you are under 18 years of age on the day you will need to be accompanied during the day's events by a Named responsible adult, who will be

CLOSING DATE TO GUARANTEE INCLUSION IN THE LUNCH IS 30th March 2013.

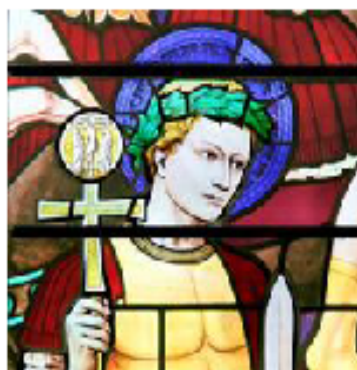
C of E Guild of Vergers Canterbury Province Festival

Saint Albans Cathedral Thursday 12th September 2013

The Saint Albans Branch of the Guild, as your hosts, invite you to join with them to celebrate this event which is to be held in the Cathedral and Abbey Church of Saint Alban by kind permission of The Dean and Chapter.



This is the oldest site of continuous Christian worship in Britain. It stands over the place where Alban, the first martyr, was buried after giving his life for his faith over 1700 years ago - more than 200 years before St Augustine arrived in Canterbury. The building's amazing mixture of



architectural styles bears witness to the many centuries of its life, first as a monastic Abbey and now as a Cathedral. Down all those centuries countless pilgrims have come to honour the saint's sacrifice and offer their prayers at his shrine

Text and pictures taken from www.stalbanscathedral.org

Programme

Time	Event
From 9:30	Arrival and Registration (<i>in the Crypt</i>)
From 9:30	Coffee available @ Lussmanns
10:00	Formal Welcome will take place
11:00 to 11:45	Free Time to look around the Abbey on your own if you wish
12:00	Communion Service <i>in the Lady Chapel</i> (<i>to include admissions/awards</i>)
13:15	Lunch @ Lussmanns
15:00	Tours/Free Time
	<i>In addition to the general free tours there will be a choice of five special subject tours (of around 45 minutes – 1 hours duration each) at a reduced Festival fee of £6.00 per person per tour- see below for selection.</i>
16:00 to 16:30	Afternoon Tea @ Lussmanns
16:30	Robing <i>in Crypt</i> for Evensong and Procession (<i>as directed</i>).
17:00	Evensong <i>in Quire/Crossing</i>
18:00	Festival Photo <i>on steps in front of High Altar</i> and departure

The specialist tours available are:

Tower
Vestments
Stained Glass
Wall Paintings & Graffiti
Brasses

Please note: The tower tour requires a medical certificate, as access is only available to fit and able members who can climb 160 steps in 15 seconds or less!

On a serious note for the Tower Tour there are 193 steps, mostly in a steep and narrow mediaeval staircase. Visitors taking this tour need to be fit enough to manage such a climb. Anyone who suffers from vertigo or claustrophobia should not attempt it. The Cathedral reserves the right to refuse visitors admittance to the Tower and Roof Spaces.

We are delighted that the Proprietor of Lussmanns Fish and Grill, a restaurant 2-3 minutes from the Cathedral, has kindly allowed us sole use of these premises, and, as such, will be providing our refreshments throughout the day. We are grateful to this Establishment for their assistance in this aspect.

It is an award winning restaurant with reviews such as this

"...everything a modern local restaurant should be..." concludes Giles Coren in a very positive review of Lussmanns with an overall score of 8 [The Times Magazine, 29 October 2011]

Lussmanns Fish and Grill Waxhouse Gate St Albans AL3 4EW

For more information about the restaurant please visit their website:

<http://www.lussmanns.com/restaurants/st-albans-restaurants/>

Travel:

Train - Saint Albans is highly accessible by train as it is on the Coast Main Line from Kings Cross Saint Pancras although Saint Alban's Station is away from the centre and the Cathedral

Car - Saint Albans is very close to M1 and M25 interchange Junction 21A of M25

Car Parking There are plenty of car parks in Saint Albans although parking, including disabled parking, near the Cathedral is very limited *NB. It is intended to provide a shuttle service (if demand warrants), between the Westminster Lodge car park and the Abbey during peak arrival and departure times (and upon request where possible). Please indicate below if you wish to utilise this facility.*

Tourist information

A leaflet will be enclosed with your receipt. Please go to <http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/tourism-and-travel/tourist-information-centre/> or contact the tourist information office directly Tel: 01727 884511 Fax: 01727 883533 Email: tic@stalbands.gov.uk for details of accommodation etc.

Application details (one form per person please)

Photocopies accepted

Name

Address.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....

Email.....

Specialist Tour Choice (please put your tour choice in preference Order. As tours have limited numbers we reserve the right to move people to 2nd and 3rd choices should the tours become full

Preference	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	none
Tour						

Menu choices – please tick

starter	v	Main course	v
soup		House fishcake	
mackerel		Ham and eggs	
Chicken liver parfait		House Ravioli	
Slow roast pepper		Steak Frites	

If you have a mobility problem please indicate (v) here as this will assist us with arrangements for access to the crypt, seating for the lunch at the restaurant, ☐ and if travelling by car (shuttle service) ☐

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

Cost	Full day's events including lunch	£25.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Full day's events excluding lunch	£12.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Specialist tour	£6.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

I enclose total payment of

Cheques should be made payable to CEGV Saint Albans Branch Festival 2013

Return to

Guild of Vergers Festival Treasurer c/o All Saints Church Parish Office, Church Square, Leighton Buzzard LU 7 1AE

A receipt and all relevant information will be issued. Closing date to guarantee inclusion in the lunch is 31st July 2013

Menu**Starters a choice of**

Seasonal home-made soup with bread/oatcakes - v/wf

Seared Cornish mackerel baby potatoes, spring onions, crème fraîche & Colman's mustard dressing

Hertfordshire free-range chicken liver & Armagnac parfait

Slow roast pepper, garlic & thyme with free-range speck - wf/v

Main course a choice of

House fishcake baby spinach & beurre blanc

Ham & eggs collar of bacon with a scotch egg & sautéed greens - Sussex Saddleback pigs, reared outdoors

House ravioli filled with ricotta & lemon fresh peas, Wobbly Bottom goat's cheese & pepperonata - v

Steak frites 7oz Onglet, a classic bistro steak packed with flavour, best cooked medium rare

V= vegetarian wf = wheat free

The restaurant is Fully Licensed for purchase of your own drinks with the meal

Any other enquiries/questions

Admin@stalbandsvergers.org.uk

Tel : 01442 217754



GENERAL SECRETARY'S HALF YEARLY REPORT



After being elected to the role of General Secretary my life has not been the same since, and all is still good. At the AGM I offered to visit each Branch during my time in Office, to show my face so that the members can all meet me and so I can see how well we are all doing. I was inundated with invitations and have still a lot to visit.

My first trip was to visit the Somerset & Avon Branch, and also to retrieve the boxes and boxes of files from Roger Lawrence who had been acting General Secretary following Amanda Berry's Resignation. I would like to, at this point, thank Roger for the fantastic job he did and holding everything together and for the continuing support he has shown to me after taking on this role. So I arrived in Yatton, in Bristol, where I was greeted very warmly by Marek Barden, who is Area Leader, and by Reyn Badger, who is the Branch Chairman. As this was my 'first' visit out into the unknown I was a little nervous but it was lovely to see the National Chaplain there also. I was made to feel very welcome and after the Service of Evening Prayer we had a lovely tea provided by the members.

After getting back home I set back to the administration work, Membership forms for the new database were flooding in and I was entering them as quickly as I could. In September, at the Canterbury Festival, I was finding myself with a reserved seat at Services which I found very humbling and strange.

In December I was invited to join the Blackburn, Chester, Liverpool & Manchester Area for their Annual Christmas Lunch. Following a Service of Holy Communion in the Titanic room of the Adelphi Hotel I was treated to a wonderful lunch with fantastic company. I was very grateful for the invitation from Margaret Scott (Area Leader) and the Branch Chairmen, Frank Woodward and Florence Owen. In January I attended the Annual Dinner hosted by the London, Southwark and Chelmsford Branch. The meal and company was a wonderful end to a long day, and my thanks go to the Chairman, Michael Rivers for this fantastic event.

In my five months of office I have been involved with creating a new letter head for each Branch and National Officer so that, as a Guild, we look more professional and have one identity. You will also notice on new publications a strange address appearing:

**The Church of England Guild of Vergers
Box 4465
6 Slington House
Rankine Road
Basingstoke
RG24 8PH**

This is a mail forwarding address that was felt necessary to save the cost of reprinting publications each time there was a change of occupancy in Office of the General Secretary.

This new address will start to appear in Church Year Books and the like (over the years, as we have missed some print deadlines for 2014). The Parsons Pocket book still shows the Name and Address of Ian Griffiths as General Secretary, and he stepped down in 2000! This has now been corrected for 2014.

The Database is drying up with a little over 200 people having returned their forms, which is a great start. However, with over 400 members we have a long way to go. If you still have yet to return a form to me please can you do so, and if you have not received one I would be happy to send one to you.

I hope to be visiting a branch near you soon.

Thank you all for your support.

God Bless
Stephen Stokes

REMINDER TO AREA LEADERS

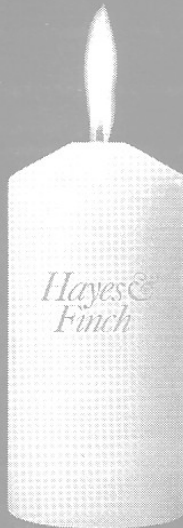
**Could you please submit your
Area Report to me by 1st May 2013**

**Many thanks,
Stephen Stokes**

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CANTERBURY & EAST KENT BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Despite the changeable weather, twenty members of the Canterbury & East Kent Branch met at Saint Martin's Church, Cheriton, on 26th January for our AGM. We gathered in the church for coffee, then, those who wished to, robed and the Reverend Eileen Webb, our Treasurer's wife, conducted a Eucharist Service. During the service our Branch Chaplain, Canon Clare Edwards, admitted three new members to the Guild.

David Arthur Troke of Holy Trinity, Folkestone, as a Full Member, Ann Bates of Saint Mark's, Bexhill, and Patricia Mary Boughton of Saint Mary in the Castle, Dover, (our Under-Secretary), both as Associate Members. It was a lovely service and we had the pleasure of also having Father Frowd of the Parish with us. After the service we went to the Britannia Pub where we had a lovely repast. Lunch over, we returned to the church and got on with the AGM. Julian Thorn, our Chairman, opened the meeting and then stood down, our Deputy Chair, Paul Lockyer, then took over for the election of Officers after apologies, the minutes of the last meeting and matters arising. The re-elections of Julian Thorn as Chairman, Bryan Webb as Treasurer, were unanimous, along with Janet Gallagher as our new Secretary and Jim and Pat Boughton as Co-Deputy Secretaries passed and seconded by many hands. Our Area Leader, Malcolm Bates, was also re-elected. All the reports from the Officers were read and discussed, and we all felt very concerned at the loss of so many Branches. It was felt that the cause of this was the lack of people willing to take on the commitment of running a Branch and fulfil the roles Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. It is a great pity as it could do so much to help in the lives of sometimes very pressed people in need of support and prayer when the going gets tough, and this unfortunately happens to all of us.

At the end of the meeting, Bryan and Eileen gave us a cuppa and we all had a natter and enjoyed the really lovely collection of cross-stitched kneelers the Church possesses, before saying goodbye and leaving for home, very glad that the weather had held after the rather worrying forecasts of the preceding two days.

Cherry Johnstone - Branch Correspondent

CHICHESTER, GUILDFORD & PORTSMOUTH BRANCH

Members met for a coffee morning at Guildford Cathedral Education centre on 31st October 2012. This was a joint meeting with the members of the former Cathedral Fellowship. Elaine King kept us all supplied with plenty of coffee or tea and slices of her delicious home made cake. Bill Groves informed us of the progress of our Chaplain, Canon Chris Vallins who had recently undergone a heart bypass operation. He also thanked Sue Ansell for taking on the role of our Area Leader after the departure of our previous Area Leader, Martin Taylor, to Salisbury. Most of us then had our lunch in the Cathedral Refectory Restaurant before going back to the Education Centre for more tea and chat. Members enjoyed the format of this meeting and we are grateful to Elaine for making all the arrangements. Our next meeting would be our AGM on Tuesday 12th February 2013 at 2pm.

Valerie Groves - Associate Member



THE GUILD 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 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 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: Roger Lawrence** or the **Training Officer: John Shearer**.



DURHAM, NEWCASTLE & CARLISLE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the Durham & Newcastle Branch took place on 31st January in the Priors Hall of Durham Cathedral. The highlight of what was otherwise usual business was the extending of the Branch to include Carlisle, which had closed in 2012. Our Annual Meetings have usually been graced by the presence of our Area Leader, (National Chairman), James Armstrong, who has kept us in touch with national events. At this AGM it was a joy to formerly welcome James, along with his colleague, Lay Reader, Bidget Swan, also from Carlisle into our midst.

Peter Welby - Branch Chaplain & Correspondent

GLOUCESTER, HEREFORD & WORCESTER BRANCH

On Wednesday 21st November the Head Verger at Gloucester Cathedral invited us to visit two churches, Saint Mary de Lode and Saint Nicholas, close to the Cathedral followed by tea and Choral Evensong in the Cathedral.

Our annual Christmas dinner was held on 6th December at Holland House. A number of us gathered for the meal followed by readings and entertainment by some of our members.

Our AGM was held on 29th January at Saint Stephen's Church in Barbourne, Worcester. After reports on the past year the following officers were elected: Tony Day as Chairman, Peter Young as Vice Chairman, Robert Beattie as Treasurer, Sue Lyall as Secretary, and Raymond Fowler as Membership Secretary. Margaret Burston continues as Area Leader with Canon Graham Lyall as Chaplain and Welfare Officer and Peter Young as Branch Correspondent.

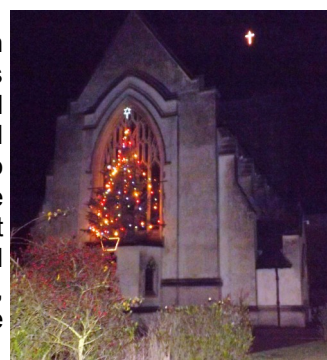
The suggested programme for 2013 was discussed. Shrove Tuesday saw us at Worcester Cathedral for Choral Evensong. This was followed by pancakes at the flat of our Treasurer and a chance to meet the new Head Verger of the Cathedral, James Prior. We are looking forward to visiting Hanbury House on 19th March and our Quiet Day on 2nd April at Holland House, Cropthorne

Peter Young - Branch Correspondent

IPSWICH BRANCH

We would like to start this report with wishing everyone a belated: "Happy and Peaceful New Year" from all friends and colleagues of the Ipswich Branch. As we do not have our next branch meeting until 25th February, rather than not submit a report for this issue of the Verger Magazine, Tom (my husband) and I thought we would write about our area of Kesgrave, Nr. Ipswich. On Sunday 17th December we walked along to our 'local' Church, All Saints, Kesgrave, for their evening Carol Service. Inside All Saints is a mixture of old traditional and new build (extension). The one thing I did want to write about was their frontal, although All Saints do not have what I would consider a 'traditional' High Altar, therefore, the frontals have to hang behind the Altar. Theirs was very modern with a picture depicting the scene of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, a shepherd, king and animals all seated underneath and on a tree, such as 'The tree of life'. Whoever made the frontal is extremely talented and very inspirational.

Another Church, further along towards Ipswich is Saint Augustine's, which is situated on the eastern side of Ipswich, serving a large and varied congregation. (Ipswich was founded around 600AD as a small settlement close to the river Orwell). Until the Orwell Bridge was opened in 1982, traffic to or from Felixstowe, came through the Parish and past Saint Augustine's. We were passing by ourselves one evening and had to stop to take some photographs of the lovely Christmas tree that was erected outside. The church is remembered by many people for the illuminated Cross high above the tower. It continues to be a local landmark and on a dark evening the Cross is highly visible and appears to be suspended in the night sky. Saint Augustine's was given by a local tailor, Charles Howard Bantoft, and the land on which the church is built was given by Lady de Saumarez, a wealthy local benefactor. A plaque in the church commemorates the gift:



**This Church has been given
by an Ipswich tradesman
as a thank offering to Almighty God
for the Blessing
of a pious and affectionate Mother
1927**

As I sit and write this report we are well and truly in the grip of winter, temperatures below freezing and snow with more forecast for the coming weekend. You definitely have to be of hardy stock to live this side of the country! I'm getting used to it.

Until next time, God Bless.

Jean Cobb - Branch Correspondent



LONDON, SOUTHWARK & CHELMSFORD BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the London, Southwark and Chelmsford Branch took place on Wednesday 27th February 2013 at the Church of Saint James, Garlickhythe, in the City of London by the kind invitation of The Rector, the Reverend Guy Treweek. We were privileged to have our National Chaplain, Canon Maureen Palmer, present to admit some new members to the Guild.

The AGM was conducted by our Chairman, Michael Rivers. After the accounts and Branch Officers reports had been approved, the next item was the election of Branch Officers. The Chairman announced that our present Secretary, Denise Mead, had been proposed for Branch Chairman. A secret ballot was held by all the full members present and the votes counted by Canon Maureen. The vote was 2-to-1 in favour of Denise Mead who was duly elected as the new Branch Chairman. She had previously circulated that she would be relinquishing her position as Branch Secretary at this AGM, but as no-one had been proposed for Branch Secretary, the Chairman announced that this post would be vacant.

During the course of the meeting, Nigel Skayman of Saint Barnabas Church, Mitcham, who had only been a member of the Guild for a year, offered his services as the Branch Secretary. He was subsequently proposed, seconded and elected as the new Secretary. The other three posts, Treasurer (Irene Money), Branch Correspondent (Alan Taylor) and Events Co-ordinator (Carole Sharp) were all re-elected. The Area Leader Stephen Haude gave a vote of thanks to our outgoing Chairman for all his hard work over the previous two years.

The Church of Saint James, Garlickhythe, was first mentioned in a will dated about 1100. The name of the church is derived from hythe or jetty where garlic was imported in the Middle Ages when the church stood on the banks of the River Thames.

After the Great Fire of 1666, Sir Christopher Wren rebuilt the Church at a cost of 5,357.10 shillings. The foundation stone was laid in 1676 and the re-opening took place on 10th December 1682. Apart from Saint Paul's, the forty foot high ceiling is the highest in the City of London.

There are ten Livery Companies in The City who regularly use the Church and who have all contributed greatly to its restoration and its maintenance. At the head of the River Pageant for Diamond Jubilee in 2012 was a barge ringing bells. These became the new bells of the Church of Saint James, Garlickhythe.

Following the AGM a service of Holy Communion took place conducted by Father Tom Cameron. Our National Chaplain preached the sermon in which she spoke about the life of George Herbert who wrote a book called "The Country Parson" in 1652



After her sermon she admitted the following into membership of the Guild. Katrina Bradley of Saint Margaret Pattern Church, Arnel Sullano of Saint Laurence Jewry, and James Park and Robert Norton of Saint Marylebone Parish Church as Full members and Ian Kirby of Temple Church as an Associate Member. All are in the Diocese of London. Also admitted was the Right Reverend Edward Holland, Assistant Bishop in London and Europe to be our new Branch Chaplain and an Honorary Associate Member of the Branch.

The evening finished with a delightful selection of food and wine to end a very enjoyable AGM. Our thanks go to the Reverend Guy Treweek and his staff for their hospitality.

Alan Taylor - Branch Correspondent

**DEADLINE
FOR THE
SUMMER ISSUE:**

**Friday 24th May
2013**

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OXFORD BRANCH CELEBRATIONS

At the beginning of December, members, spouses and guests, met at the Wee Waif Restaurant in Charvil, (nr. Reading), for our annual Christmas lunch. This was a change (and a new) venue and, as it transpired, a canny choice as those present enjoyed good food in ample proportions, attentive service and convivial surroundings. It was pleasing to have with us our Branch Chaplain, Roy Taylor, and Mrs. Taylor, who had only arrived back in this country from their visit to Africa, earlier that morning.

Later in December (the 28th), Betty and I were fortunate to be able to attend the marriage of Tim Woods (a previous Chairman of the Branch before his move to Tonbridge and the Rochester Branch of the Guild), and Caroline Lawson. The wedding ceremony took place in a twelfth century church in the estate grounds at Sarnsefield, in Herefordshire, and was conducted by Prebendary Bob King whose input made this an exceptionally joyous occasion. Despite the atrocious weather conditions over this period of time, the rain held off long enough for those present to make their way to and from the church and their vehicles using the path that had been specially repaired only the day before thus saving many a pair of muddy footwear! A wondrous reception followed in a country hotel venue some miles away from the church. The best wishes of this Branch were conveyed to Caroline and Tim, and Betty and I were so pleased that we were able to be part of this happy and blessed event. (There was a sad side to these celebrations in that Tim's Mother (who had not been well) had died in November).

The Branch AGM was held in January and took place at the Church of Saint Andrew and Saint Mary, Maidenhead, commencing with Holy Communion, led by our Branch Chaplain, followed by refreshments (thank you Ladies and Roy) and the meeting. The Officers elected for the next 12 months were Jeanne Scott as Administrator, Gerry Knight as Welfare Officer and myself as Chairman with Molly Payne as Vice-Chairman; the role of Social Officer and Branch Correspondent remains vacant. The Branch Chaplain, Roy Taylor, confirmed his earlier indication that he would be 'retiring' and that the replacement procedure needed to be implemented – more on this at a later date. Our next gathering will be the Quiet Day at Douai Abbey, in early March.

Michael Golby, FCEGV - Branch Chairman

SALISBURY BRANCH

The period since the last report has been very quiet - in more ways than one! Due to the endless floods and snow in our various regions, our one planned Autumn/Winter activity – a Quiet Day – did not take place, but was deferred to the end of January. Held at Saint Michael's Garrison Church, Tidworth, we spent a pleasant day 'sampling' different styles of prayer – linear, corporate, etc. – through the medium of a variety of prayer stations set out around the church. There was something for everyone, including candle decorating, fishing, icons, and so on, and proved to be a very worthwhile day, enjoyed by all who attended. Many thanks to organisers and hosts alike. Next on our agenda is our AGM in March, after which we already have a year's worth of meetings combined with visits, Quiet Days and training days planned for 2013 – 14.

Tina Cullen - Area Leader

YORK BRANCH

On Monday 29th October eighteen members and friends attended Beverley Minster to hear a talk by the Reverend Jeremy Fletcher, Vicar at the Minster, who spoke about the work of the Minster and the increasing variety of events being held there, including a model railway exhibition and a BBC Antiques Roadshow programme. This gave him an opportunity to discuss the roles of the staff at the minster (including the Virgers and the large number of volunteers) from his point of view. He then went on to explain the reasons for the different colours of vestments used in the church. A good discussion followed his talk, after which the group enjoyed lunch. This was followed by a business meeting in the Conference Room and then Communion in the Minster, with Reverend Fletcher celebrating and our Chairman playing the organ. Our thanks to John and Neil for organising this day for us.

On Monday 26th November members assembled at York Minster for a private service of Holy Communion in the Zouch Chapel. We were very grateful to the Duty Priest at the Minster who agreed to celebrate for us at a moment's notice as our Branch Chaplain was unable to attend due to severe floods. Indeed several members were unable to get through to York, which meant there were empty seats at the Christmas Lunch, which followed at the Dean Court Hotel. We enjoyed a first rate lunch followed by the traditional Names Raffle which raised £112.00 for Branch Funds. A presentation of ear rings was made to Doreen Cook on her retirement as Area Leader.

Again, severe weather posed a problem for members and the Chairman had doubts as to whether the Branch AGM on Monday 14th January at the Consistory Court at York Minster would be quorate. His worries were unfounded and eleven members managed to get through. Due to the heavy snowfall, the Chairman kept the meeting moving and it was concluded in 35 minutes. Branch Officers were elected and reports given. One Officer, unable to get through, emailed her report so it could be read out. Members decided they would like two instructional meetings a year rather than one and the Chairman outlined the planning for the York Festival at Beverley Minster in May, which the Branch was hosting. Most members managed to get home without problems but those heading east were severely delayed by the weather and appalling road conditions, with the Chairman and Secretary taking 3 hours to drive the last 20 miles home.

Richard Babbington - Branch Chairman

'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
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