

# The Virger

Winter 2015

Issue 289



*CEGV ~ Canterbury Province Group Photo ~  
Temple Church, London  
Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015*



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The Official Magazine of the Church of England Guild of Vergers







Welcome to the Winter 2015 edition 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 them 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!**

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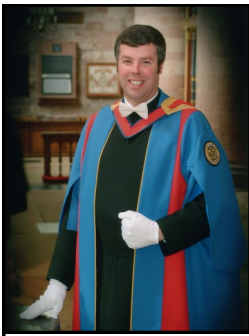


*On behalf of  
the Central Council &  
the National Officers  
We wish all our Members,  
at home & abroad,  
a peaceful Advent,  
a Happy & Holy Christmas  
and  
a Prosperous New Year!*

SHARE  
*Christ*  
THIS CHRISTMAS



**FRONT COVER:** Canterbury Province Festival, Temple Church, London, Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015  
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## NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



I might have missed this in previous years, but I have spotted an Advent Calendar by Alison Gardiner with a procession moving alongside a Cathedral and there are two Vergers. We have made it at long last.

I hope as good Vergers your Christmas preparations are very well advanced, candles, wine and wafers all stocked up, the tree lights in working order, nativity sets dusted down awaiting their moment in the spotlight. But what about you, are you ready? It is so very easy to forget about yourself in all the running around and doing things for the Church in this busy season. However,

without you taking care of yourself and allowing time to catch breath, stop and wonder of the birth of our Lord, what is the point to Christmas?

At Carlisle the Crib figures are set up in front of the High Altar for Christmas Day moving elsewhere for the rest of the season, for Evening Prayer I move some chairs into the sanctuary so that I can sit as close to the crib as possible, that is my time to wonder at his incarnation. Oh and I hear you thinking they obviously don't get many congregation, well the truth is we normally do not, there might only be four or five of us. Two years ago I was most put out as 14 turned up and I had to give my seat up, I was not a happy bunny.

The Central Council of the Guild join with me in the hope that you have a thoughtful Advent, a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**James Armstrong**



## VISIT TO TEMPLE CHURCH & THE ROAD TO THE RULE OF LAW



We received our invitation to the Cantuar Festival 2015, organised by the London, Southwark & Chelmsford Branch in Temple Church with lunch in Middle Temple Hall, and eagerly sent our acceptances back. We had already met the Master of the Temple, Robin Griffith-Jones when he had visited our Cathedral in Bury Saint Edmunds, for our own Magna Carta celebrations in 2014, and were intrigued to visit the famous Knights Templar Church. We were greeted with refreshments and a bag of goodies, booklets and leaflets giving the history of the Temple Church, also including a waterproof cape, which we didn't need because the day was beautiful.

It was interesting to see the effigies of William Marshal, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Pembroke and of his son, as well as taking in the wonder of the building, built by the Knights Templar, which is one of the oldest and most beautiful church buildings in London. The Round Church, in use by the 1160's, was the first Gothic building in England. We were then given a very interesting, and amusing, talk by the Master of the Temple, about the history of the Temple, Magna Carta, and the place that it held in the Rule of Law. He also mentioned its inclusion in the novel 'The Da Vinci Code'. We bought a book to find out the 'secrets of the Temple', but haven't got round to reading it yet.

Afterwards we had a chance to wander around the gardens before our lunch in Middle Temple Hall. We entered this magnificent dining room, which as my husband pointed out "looked like something in a Harry Potter film", only to find out that it was the dining room in the Harry Potter films. The only thing missing were the owls, and the witches hats. There was a double-hammer beam roof and wainscoting on the walls. It was a real pleasure and thrill to be sitting eating a meal in a room with so much history. We then had a couple of hour's free time to explore the surroundings, and walked up to Fleet Street, through narrow alleys, to see the Courts of Justice facing us, and a lovely old timber pub by our side. We walked up to Shaftesbury Avenue and back again and sat in the gardens and by the fountains of the Inns of Court.

Then it was time for the Vergers to Robe and process back to the Temple Church, to hear, and take part in, their wonderful Choral Eucharist. Afterwards it was time for photographs and then home. We arrived back very late, but we had a really memorable and lovely day, visiting somewhere that we had always been intrigued by, and certainly never thought that we would visit (let alone eat in Harry Potter's Middle Temple Hall).

**By Ted and Janet Simmons**  
**Members of the Ipswich Branch**

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## NATIONAL CHAPLAIN'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

November is the month for 'remembering': celebrating the lives of those who have inspired us, those whom we have loved, those to whom we are grateful. Perhaps we shouldn't need such a month but I think we all need a little 'jog' and encouragement to say our 'Thank you's'.

We begin the month with the Feast of All Saints on which we give thanks for the numerous company of men and women who have been ordinary people but who have served God in an extraordinary and special way. All Saints is followed by All Souls when we commemorate those whom we have loved and still miss, as well as those who have no one to remember them. This is always a very poignant occasion and brings back into sharp focus those who have walked beside us for a span of our Christian pilgrimage, perhaps those who taught us the faith, perhaps those who made parts of our pilgrimage bearable and joyful.

Remembrance Sunday follows in all its solemnity as we remember the men and women who died in the two World Wars and in the numerous conflicts which have followed. I noticed that many people, especially our young people, this year have been wearing two poppies, one red and the other white: the red poppy recalling the profuse explosion of scarlet poppies on the disturbed ground where the trenches had been dug out in Flanders while the white poppy symbolizes that absolute yearning for peace and stability.

Then there are the Saints: too numerous to mention more than a few in the space provided! Martin of Tours, who is celebrated on Armistice Day, was a soldier who always had concern for the poor and needy. Legend suggests that he shared his cloak with a beggar and gradually realized his call to enter a monastery and live the religious life. He was called to the See of Tours where he carried on his pastoral care of the poor and the oppressed.

Hugh was also a Bishop – a saintly man, who nonetheless was a brilliant administrator and who was called to be Bishop of the See of Lincoln; in the twelfth century the largest Diocese in England. He visited his people, making the perilous journeys on foot or on horseback; he put the financial affairs of the Diocese on a good footing; he rebuilt the Angel Choir of Lincoln Cathedral; above all he cared about his people, especially the poor, the oppressed and those at the margins of society.

Margery Kempe was also a great traveller and went on pilgrimage to Canterbury, to Rome and even to Jerusalem. She was a very difficult woman who harangued Bishops and Priests and had 'the gift of tears' which made her all the more challenging! Then there was Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, an intelligent and educated woman who facilitated the Synod of Whitby in 664 and negotiated agreement between those who favoured the Benedictine way and those who followed the Celtic way. I could continue to enthuse about the November commemorations!

Recently I had the good fortune to go to South Africa on holiday. I was struck by the continuing influence of Nelson Mandela. In the Botanic Garden of Kirstenbosch there is a bust of Nelson Mandela which stands before a tree that he planted. Beside the bust is a large bed planted with a newly developed *Strelitzia* called 'Mandela's Gold' – which is a permanent reminder of a brave man who served God and his fellow men and women – caring about the poor and the marginalized.

The month of remembering is permeated with the lives of Saints who cared about their fellow men and women and served God through their service to others. We are all called to be Saints – ordinary men and women who serve Christ extraordinarily faithfully and well.

I wish you all a holy Advent and a very happy Christmas.

With my blessing, my prayers 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 National Chaplain or the National Welfare Officer**

*Blackburn, Chester & Manchester: Margaret Scott & Geoffrey Timms*

*Chichester, Guildford & Portsmouth: Marilyn Lee*

*Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester: Joy Birkin & Graham Williams*

*London, Southwark & Chelmsford: Ken Allen*

*Oxford: Anita (Annie) Bayliss, Ernestine Denham, Jeanne Scott & Reverend Canon Roy Taylor*

*Rochester: Tina Lawrence*

*Saint Albans: Peter Hudson*

*Salisbury: Jean Jackson & Babs Taylor*

*Somerset & Avon: Pat Dawes, Lionel & Mary Holway*

*York: George & Doreen Cook*

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

**R.I.P**

**Alan Cottam, Sylvia Crawley & Jack Lippitt**



## TEMPLE CHURCH, LONDON



The Cantuar Festival 2015 was held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015 and hosted by the London, Southwark & Chelmsford Branch.

The registration took place in Temple Church which lies "off street" between Fleet Street and the River Thames, an oasis of ancient buildings, courtyards and gardens. The 91 vergers and friends were welcomed by our Branch Treasurer and Guild Welfare Officer, Irene Money. The wonderful welcome pack included two glossy booklets about the Magna Carta and the Temple Choir together with superb name badges and key fobs made by our software expert Stephen Haude. Very welcome refreshments were provided by our Branch Chairperson and Guild Liaison Officer Denise Mead assisted by her husband Melvyn.

Temple Church is one of the most historic and beautiful churches in London. The church was built by the Knights Templar, the order of crusading monks founded to protect pilgrims on their way to and from Jerusalem in the twelfth Century.

The building is in two parts, the Round and the Chancel. The Round Church was consecrated in 1185. Temple Church is the Collegiate Church of the two Legal Colleges or Inns of Court, Inner and Middle Temple. It is famous as "the Mother-Church of the Common Law"



After being suitably refreshed, we took our place in the pews and were welcomed by the Reverend Robin Griffith-Jones who has been the Master of The Temple since 1996. He is an expert on the Magna Carta and in June 2014 ran the international conference on Magna Carta, Religion and the Rule of Law. He is the author of "Magna Carta, 1215-2015: London's Temple and the Road to the Rule of Law" as well as several other religious books. He gave us a very interesting talk on the long history of Temple Church and an in depth explanation of the Magna Carta.



We adjourned for lunch to the magnificent Middle Temple Hall, probably the finest example of an Elizabethan Hall in the country at 101 feet long and 41 feet wide. Begun in 1562, the hall has remained virtually unaltered to the present day. The Hall was extensively damaged during World War Two but has been so well repaired that the damage cannot be seen. I was fortunate to be seated on the High Table for our very enjoyable lunch. The High table is made of four 29 feet planks of a single Oak, reputedly a gift from Elizabeth the First from Windsor Forest and sailed down the Thames. This was a fantastic venue for a function!

Free time after lunch gave the opportunity to walk down to the River Thames which was a short distance away. Tea was served in the Parliament Chamber of the Middle Temple prior to robing. Then led by Denise Mead we processed through the west door of the Temple Church for the Choral Eucharist. It was led by our National Chaplain, the Reverend Canon Dr Maureen Palmer, who also gave the Homily. The Boys of the Temple Choir sang the Sanctus, the Benedictus and the Agnus Dei.

After processing through the courtyard we took our places for the obligatory group photograph taken in his usual style by Stephen Haude. (I received my copy of the photograph through the post two days later. Well done Stephen)



Our thanks go to our Area Leader and Verger of Temple Church John Shearer and the Reverend Robin Griffith-Jones for the opportunity to hold the Cantuar Festival 2015 in such beautiful and historic surroundings. We are also indebted to our Chairperson Denise Mead and Treasurer Irene Money for their organisation which made the Festival such a success.

**Alan Taylor**  
**Branch Correspondent**

Photographs: Registration & Welcome with Irene Money; Refreshments being served by Melvyn Mead; Reverend Robin Griffith Jones, Master of the Temple, giving us a talk on the history of the Church & Magna Carta; The view of Middle Temple Hall from the Top Table.





## CANTERBURY WITH ROCHESTER BRANCH NEWS



The evening of Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August saw a gaggle of Members gathering outside the Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral. We had come to very special viewing of some of the Ancestors of Christ, many of them possibly designed and made by the Grand Master of Chartres for the Clerestory of the Quire, and it was lovely to see them displayed as they would have been seen when in place in the windows for which they were made in 1174 -1178.

One above another, father and son, Thare (Terah) above Abraham with his lovely red bonnet and long curly white beard; Phalech above Ragau; Mathusala above Lamech, and what a rascal Mathusala is with his hand across his mouth looking mischievous indeed; Jareth (Jared) above Enoch, God grabbing his hand and whisking him up to heaven and Enoch looking slightly startled. There were eighty-four panels altogether originally, forty-five of which still exist. Adam delving with a spade being the oldest, and all taken from the genealogies provided by Matthew and Luke in their Gospels.



The rebuilding of the Great South Window due to it beginning to collapse made it possible to see these lovely works of art close up, and to view the sometimes minute detail of the faces and clothing made it a real treat for everyone who saw them and thanks must go to Chris and Debbie Crooks for organising the event for all to enjoy.

The panels will be reinstated for all to see when the masonry and refit of the window is complete, a massive job from its heavy footings to the very intricate stonework that holds the iron frames to which the glass is fixed, all done by the Cathedral Masons under the direction of Heather Newton, the Senior Conservator and Foreperson of the Masons Yard. Our thanks go to them for their hard work and we look forward to seeing the completed window in all its glory.

The glass of Canterbury is a history all by itself, from ancient to modern, we have examples from most periods, so it is lovely to know that there are dedicated people who still learn the art of conservation and restoration of each period and are able to care so wonderfully for such unique and beautiful treasures.

**Cherry Johnstone**  
**Branch Correspondent**



## CHICHESTER, GUILDFORD & PORTSMOUTH BRANCH NEWS



We are still managing to keep afloat. We had an AGM at Saint Bartholomew's, Haslemere, in mid-February, with about half our members present. The Committee remains the same due to circumstances. A query was made about no lunch meetings last year. Although a number of our Members are retired and we appreciate that but there are a number still working, be it full, part-time or voluntary, who may well have funerals or other weekly services, which makes daytime more difficult, especially bearing in mind the distance we cover from east to west, not to mention northwards.

We went to a special Magna Carta Exhibition in Guildford Cathedral one evening in July, with a film show, various exhibits in the Treasury and many beautiful needlework hangings of the main people of that time.

Three of us enjoyed one of the best Conferences for many a year.

In August we had a lunch meeting at The George in Alton, being the most central east-west place we could find, again about half our Members attended. We were made very welcome and the meals were delicious.

On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October at Saint Mary the Virgin, Horsham, West Sussex, we had our Branch Annual Admission Service. The Reverend Alan Mayer kindly officiated at this service. It was great to gain four new Members this year. Nigel Catterall, from Saint Paul's, Dorking, Eric Doherty, from Saint Leonard's, Seaford, Theresa Gapper, from Saint Mary's, Porchester, and Adam Wilson, from Saint Mary and Saint Nicolas, Lancing College. The admission service was a combined Holy Communion and was followed by refreshments kindly provided by Jane Gorrie, Verger of Saint Mary's.

We congratulate our eldest member, Edward Sherwell, who has recently celebrated his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Sheila J Ford**  
**Branch Chairman & Correspondent**



## DURHAM & NEWCASTLE WITH CARLISLE BRANCH NEWS



On Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September ten of us gathered in the Chapter House at Durham Cathedral for coffee and biscuits, courtesy of Jeffrey Hewitt, Head Verger.

We were then taken on a tour of the Cathedral by Harry Rhodes, one of our new Members, who told us how the site became the final resting place of Saint Cuthbert's remains after a long time roaming around to places as far apart as Stranraer and Newark. He then told us how the Normans decided to try to placate the locals by including a Shrine for Saint Cuthbert's remains, where they remain to this day.

We then gathered in the Galilee Chapel for Eucharist, celebrated by Reverend Canon Jane Grieve, before returning to the Chapter House for a buffet lunch.

In the afternoon, for which I was unable to stay, a visit was made to the new Open Treasures Exhibition area, for a description of which I thank Mervyn Hockin, another new Member. This new area, based on the monks' dormitory and Kitchens, on the West side of the cloisters, which will hold exhibitions some permanent and an area to display some of the Cathedral treasures, on a rotation, as so many are not currently available to view.

In a recent edition of the magazine the Lincoln Branch claimed to be the largest in the Guild - I think we can claim this, as we cover the whole of Northumberland, Durham and Cumbria and have members in Edinburgh!

**Roy Foster**  
Branch Correspondent



## GLOUCESTER, HEREFORD & WORCESTER BRANCH NEWS



Hello again from this mostly rural Branch which covers three beautiful Counties between Birmingham and the Welsh Borders.



During October, a dozen members of the Branch visited the Parish Church of Saint Mary and Saint David, Kilpeck, situated halfway between Hereford and the border with Wales. A special tour had been arranged by Churchwarden, John Bailey, of what is widely regarded as England's most perfect Norman church with its most remarkable Romanesque sculpture of the Herefordshire School. He also told us of the challenges of caring for such a treasure with only a tiny rural congregation. The photographs give you some indication of the historical beauty and significance of this church and the need to find ways to continue caring for their survival.

Christmas is fast approaching and Branch Members are gearing themselves up for the many extra services we will need to prepare for. A busy but lovely time ahead but to help

encourage us all we still have a couple of events in which we can relax and enjoy the friendship and support of our colleagues. The first of these will be a visit to Tewkesbury Abbey. A most beautiful historical former monastery church set on the edge of the Gloucester Diocese where the rivers Severn and Avon meet, often to tragically flood this small town! The meet is on the 24<sup>th</sup> November from 3 p.m. with much arranged to make it a challenging treat including robed Evensong with a procession and climbing up the tower to join the bell ringers.



Our final event of the year is our Christmas dinner party at the stunning Holland House in Cropthorne. The menu looks delicious so we hope many Members will be able to join in and celebrate.

May we from Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Worcestershire and wish all our colleagues within this land a very happy and holy Christmas.

**Philip Dunne**  
Branch Correspondent

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Ipswich Branch's social side kicked off with to a good start on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Reverends Alan & Catherine Forsdike (Branch Chaplains) invited members to their Parishes which has three Churches.



St Mary Magdalene Westerfield

The first visit was to Saint Mary Magdalene at Westerfield which has been a place of Christian worship, prayer and care for over 900 years. In 1086 the village was called Westrefelda, meaning a clearing or open space to the west. There were people in this area as far back as the Stone Age.

Although thousands of English Churches are dedicated to Mary, Churches dedicated to Mary Magdalene are rare. Five churches in Suffolk with only 156 other churches in the whole of England. A plaque shows Priests of Westerfield as starting from 1066 (Aluric) through to 2011 (Alan William Forsdike) present Priest. Saint Mary Magdalene is a solid built church with a simple interior, plaques to former persons of interest adorn the walls with beautiful stained glass windows, one of Mary Magdalene by William Morris. There are exciting plans for the interior, removal of pews to make way and update the rear of the building.

The next visit was to Saint Martin's Church, Tuddenham, which again has been a place of worship for 900 years, which is situated in an elevated position overlooking the village and valley of the River Finn.

The interior is colourful, with large windows where the light floods in. The tower arch has a new internal glass sculpture/window "Millennium Window" – Christ has no hands but yours and whatever you did for one of the least of these my brother of mine, you did for me. The design combines these texts, the window is viewed as you leave the communion rail. Priests of Tuddenham show 1308 (William Estmund of Ipswich) through to 2011. (\*one word of warning – Friday is bin collection day! The bin Lorries were out in force causing mayhem\*)



St Mary's Winesham

The final visit of the day was to Saint Mary's Church, Winesham, which has only stood for 800 years!

The interior of the church before the reformation was rich with colour and carvings, with hovering angels in the roof space, murals on the walls and medieval stained glass windows, after the internal décor was altered to meet with liturgical requirements, much of the colour and carvings disappeared, less need for visual aids. But saying that, Saint Mary's interior is very warm and welcoming, my eye was drawn to the Altar, which is small, very doll's house, with a lovely frontal. The Altar is a seventeenth century communion table.

Our last Branch meeting of 2015 took place at Saint Edmundsbury Cathedral on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Preceded with a Said Eucharist in the Lady Chapel taken by Reverends Alan & Catherine Forsdike we then went to one of the meeting rooms within the Cathedral. Not too much to discuss, but we did look at future 'outings', one more outing this year in early December to 'Greene King Brewery' in Bury for a guided tour, with samples to taste I believe! Our next meeting will be on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

On behalf of Ipswich Branch, to all Guild members, we extend our "Very Best Wishes" for this coming Christmas and 2016.

**Jean Cobb Branch**  
Correspondent Area Leader – East Anglia



## 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: John Shearer**.





## AUTUMN MEETINGS

Our first Branch meeting of the Autumn was held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September in the Collegiate Church of Saint Mary de Castro in one of the oldest parts of Leicester. It is minus the spire at the moment which has been taken down for repairs as it had got rather dangerous and it cannot be put back until sufficient funds have been raised to do this. In the meantime there are alterations going on at the back of the church to provide a refreshment area.

We had a service of Holy Communion with Hymns: 'Ye servants of God', 'Guide me, O thou great Redeemer', 'Alleluia, sing to Jesus', and 'Now thank we all our God'. It was the Eve of the Feast of Saint Michael & All Angels, and this being an Anglo-Catholic Church the service was complete with white vestments and hangings, bells and smells. It was quite dark in the sanctuary, but the candles and smaller lights made it look very effective. The Verger, Clifford Dunkley, looked very smart in his red cassock complete with white tabs. Saint Mary de Castro has Royal connections. Several years ago it was thought that it might close, but the Vicar at the time said it would be unlikely to close because of its connections. Communion was celebrated by Father David Maudlin, SSC, the Priest-in-Charge, and our Branch Chaplain, the Reverend Canon John Tonkin, proclaimed the Gospel and preached. The Altar Party, complete with Crucifer, Acolytes, Thurifer and Sanctuary Bells, performed their acts of devotion with great dignity and reverence, at which I was most impressed. They were led by the Sacristan and Head Server, Terry Doughty, GSS, and we were accompanied by a very fine organ played by Mr Baden Fuller. The Intercessions were led by the Verger, Clifford Dunkley.

Following the service there were some tasty refreshments prepared and served by two of the ladies from the Church. We expressed our thanks to them and all who had taken part in the service. Sadly only six Members were able to attend the meeting, three Members had sent their apologies due to ill health, but others were on holiday or otherwise indisposed, nevertheless we missed them and prayed that we should see them all next time.

Whilst writing this I have just heard the sad news that Jack Lippitt, a former Branch Chairman and Honorary Life Member of the Branch, passed away on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October following a short illness. Sadly we have lost three Members this year. We keep hoping and praying for new Members. An Obituary for Jack can be found elsewhere in this edition of the magazine.

Our last meeting of the year took place on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October in Saint Bartholomew's Church, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire. Twelve Members and our Branch Chaplain attended a service of Holy Communion celebrated by the Rector, the Reverend Tom Ringland, who preached on King Alfred the Great and Saints Simon & Jude whose Feast Days some of us would be keeping that week. Of course our thoughts and prayers were on the soul of our Honorary Branch Life Member and Friend, Jack Lippitt. We sang three Hymns/Songs: 'Christ is made the sure foundation', 'Christ be our light', and 'Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us'. Refreshments were served afterwards and thanks were given to the Rector, the Organist and the ladies of the Church who prepared and served the refreshments, also to Mary, Brian and Jean for hosting us.

Our next meeting will be our AGM on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 2.30 p.m. in Saint Bartholomew's Church Hall, Kirby Muxloe. All that remains for me to do is to wish everyone in the Guild, at Branch, National and International level, a very Happy and Healthy Christmas and New Year.

**Marjorie Thomas, Dip GV**  
**Branch Chairman & Correspondent**



## DOWNLOADABLE PUBLICATIONS



**A large number National Publications are available to download and print from the website, including:**

**A FORM OF ADMISSION TO THE GUILD and ADMISSION OF A BRANCH CHAPLAIN**

**A FORM OF ADMISSION TO THE OFFICE OF VERGER**

**A GUIDE TO ORGANISING A GUILD FESTIVAL**

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**CEGV CONSTITUTION – REVISION 5 – June 2009**

**DIPLOMA COURSE LEAFLET**

**FOUNDATION UNIT APPLICATION FORM**

**HINTS AND TIPS FOR BRANCH OFFICERS**

**INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS**

**NEW MEMBERS FORM**

**NOMINATION FORM**

**THE VERGER IN MINISTRY (The New Tri-Fold Flyer)**

Previous editions of The Virger are also available to download. Official Guild Certificates and Porch Notices, both of which contain non-standard information, are available upon request from the Communications Officer. For a full list of all the publications available please visit the website or contact the Communications Officer. All publications are in PDF format.

Also, Porch Notices and Presentation Certificates for Admission of New Members, Branch Chaplains, Long Service or Branch Life Memberships are available upon application from the Communications Officer, Marek J Barden, MLJ.



## LICOLN & SOUTHWELL BRANCH NEWS



ONE OF THE OLDEST PARISH CHURCHES IN ENGLAND



As the shadows lengthened at the end of September seventeen of our Branch Members made their way to Stow Minster, which is dedicated to Saint Mary and originally founded in the seventh century in what had been the Roman town of Sidnacester. It is sometimes referred to as *the Mother Church of Lincolnshire*, Saint Mary's was originally part of the Saxon Diocese of Lindsey.

We started our visit with a talk and tour of the church led by Alan Marshall. The church's cruciform plan, parts of the crossing and south transept were built around 975 during the time of Bishop Aelfnoth. The nave and chancel were rebuilt in the mid-eleventh and twelfth centuries, respectively. The central tower, supported by Gothic arches, is of the early fifteenth century, although the

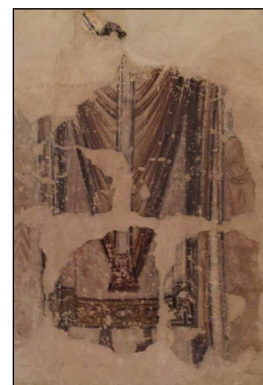
Saxon arches, the tallest in Britain, were kept and enclosed by the later construction. Finally, the chancel and nave were restored in the mid-nineteenth century by John Loughborough Pearson, a famous Victorian architect. The church is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, indicating that it is of national importance.



Of particular interest was the earliest drawing of a Viking long ship scratched into the wall, the ancient green man on the font, and the remains of a wall painting of the martyred Saint Thomas Becket. Sadly, the darkness stopped us being able to see the stained glass, so the group decided to revisit next summer.

The tour was followed by an excellent supper with a choice of wines followed by Compline led by Sue Ritchie. Our thanks again to Eddie Scarsebrook and Sue for arranging a very enjoyable evening.

Our next meeting is in November at The George, Leadenham, for our Annual Christmas Dinner at which the guest speaker will be the Right Reverend David Court, Bishop of Grimsby.



**Colin Beevers**  
**Branch Correspondent**



## OXFORD BRANCH NEWS



The Oxford Branch's second visit to Douai Abbey this year took place on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September, and was, once again, a time for reflection and learning. As is our custom, we started by celebrating the Eucharist together, and heard Peter Viney's short sermon on peace-making (not that we are a particularly turbulent set of people, of course). Peter stressed that there are at least two ways to make peace: you can either annihilate your enemy, or pay the price to make peace that suits both parties. The latter is, of course the more costly way, and the way God chose.

Our later sessions were led by Viv Inch, a Minister from Christ the Servant King, High Wycombe. This was the first time she has led one of our Quiet Days, and we hope it won't be the last. Her overall theme was "Waiting for a word from God". Viv led us through prayerful meditation, focussing on "Streams" – trickling down around obstacles, until strong enough to flow, uniting and gaining strength. Viv gave out a very helpful booklet that she had produced, with suggested scriptures and ideas for meditation. After lunch came a "Question and answer" session, and we heard the Taize Chant: "My peace I leave you" based on John: chapter 14, verse 27. I suspect many of us often hear this scripture as part of a funeral, it was refreshing to hear it sung outside that context, and again "Just for us". We were encouraged to pray for each other's Churches and situations.

The second notable event this quarter was a revisit to Merton College in Oxford on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October. During a Choral Evensong a group of Vergers from our Branch saw Leah Stead come into full membership of the Guild. We offer her our warm congratulations. (Prior to the service a number of us had a cup of tea in a nearby café – and we nearly left without paying. This would not have been so bad but that one member of our party was wearing a cassock and clerical collar. We did pay, of course, promptly and in full.)

### CORRIGENDUM

I have to admit and apologise a couple of spelling mistakes in my last report: Bill Pearce very politely pointed out some errors. "Too many Esses!" he said: so herewith the corrections:

We visited "The Lee", not "The Lees" as I reported.

"Swans Bottom" should read "Swan Bottom". (Which gives an entirely different image!)

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from Oxford Branch.

**Dennis Wildman**  
**Branch Correspondent**





Hi Everyone, here is an update from us all in the wild and woolly west, otherwise known as the Somerset & Avon Branch!

We have enjoyed a number of social events since my last ramblings to you. In April we were entertained right royally by the staff at Bath Abbey. We were generously fed and watered before being given an escorted visit around the Abbey by Mark and Graham, two of the Official Guides. Their knowledge of the history was absolutely amazing, how they kept all that knowledge in their heads is beyond measure! After the tour we celebrated Holy Communion in the Saint Alphege Chapel, the service being conducted by the Curate, the Reverend Evelyn Lee-Barber.

During the service we welcomed one of the Abbey Vergers, Michael Robinson, into the Branch, having transferred from the Salisbury Branch. We also admitted, in abstensia, two more Vergers from the Abbey into the Guild, James Long and James Scott, who I have not yet had the pleasure to meet but hope to be able to soon.

In May a number of us enjoyed a Boat Trip from Bristol City Docks through the Floating Harbour and into the River Avon where we left the hustle and bustle of the City for more tranquil waters. We had a delightful trip which lasted for about an hour and a half until we reached Hanham, which is in South Gloucestershire. Here we enjoyed lunch at a pub called The Lock & Weir, appropriately named as we had to pass through the Lock to reach it and there was a Weir just a short distance away. Our outward and return journeys were blessed with glorious sunshine on a truly wonderful day.

In early August we planned a trip to Llandaff and a visit to another Church in East Glamorgan, followed by Evensong in Llandaff Cathedral. This was all arranged by one of our loyal members, Tim Egan. However, due to illness amongst some of our members and my own car having let me down at the last moment, only two members of the Branch were able to make it, Reyn and Jeanette Badger. This must have been very disappointing for Tim but I hope that a repeat trip can be organised for 2016. At this point we would like to congratulate Tim who has just taken up a part-time post as a Verger in Llandaff Cathedral.

In October we visited Saint Mary's Church in Yatton, which is in North Somerset. The Vicar, the Reverend Tim Scott led us in a Service of Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer.

After the service we retired to the Chapter House for our Bring & Share Supper. This was an opportunity for us to present one of our very faithful and longstanding members, Norah Broomfield, with a certificate commemorating her many long years of service as Verger at Saint Mary's. Norah has now retired but is still a loyal and much loved member of the Church. The photo shows Norah being presented with a bouquet of flowers by my wife, Gill, after having been presented with her certificate by our Area Leader, Marek Barden, also pictured. We wish her well for the future and hope that she will continue to attend our social events and meetings.



Well that's all at the moment, may we wish all other Members of the Guild throughout the Country and beyond a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

**Chris Eynon**  
**Branch Chairman & Correspondent**



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## Visit to Rotherham



Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September saw a small but elite group of 12 vergers gathering at Rotherham Minster for a trip down memory lane. We were warmly greeted by the (non-Guild) verger Martyn Taylor, who apologised for the absence of his Vicar. Apparently he was faced with backlog of work caused by a recent gathering of Bishops, or 'the purple penguins' as a member of the congregation rather rudely called them. After coffee we then walked from the main building to the nearby Chapel of Our Lady on Rotherham Bridge for an impromptu Communion Service. Luckily our Branch Chaplain, Reverend Marian Gardner, was able to step up to the plate and perform the service as if she'd been doing it all her life. What a pity, therefore, that she

will have retired from full-time ministry by the time this report is published.

The Chapel is one of only four surviving mediaeval Bridge Chapels in England and, after a post-Reformation career as alms houses, a jail, dwelling and tobacconist, it was rededicated in 1924. Today it hosts a weekly Communion Services as well as weddings and other special services. Afterwards most of us were able to climb down the difficult steps to the basement to experience the truly damp and rancid conditions that prisoners would have suffered during their incarceration. Returning to the Minster before lunch at Martyn's favoured venue, a nearby Wetherspoon's, where we fortified ourselves for a drive into the unknown: destination – Barnburgh. The reason for our visit was the Norman church at the centre of the small mining village, a church that had, until recent years, been surrounded by scaffolding due to the risk of subsidence caused by all the mineworks. Once the surveyor was satisfied that all was well, however, Saint Peter's could once again stand proudly at the top of the hill.

This visit was an especial treat for Marion as she spent many of her formative years in this Church, and was able to tell us, with great relish, the grisly tale of Sir Percival Creswell and the wild cat. Apparently the beast attacked Sir Percy on his way home and there followed a prolonged battle to the death between the two of them which ended up in the Church porch. Both died of their wounds and red marks inside the porch itself are said to be traces of their blood which have stained the stone. A very informative tour by Churchwarden, Julia Bullars, was followed by tea in the hall before we all went our separate ways once more, until the next event, which is planned to be our traditional pre-Christmas meal at the end of November. Hopefully we'll have some new members joining us at for that.

**Neil Pickford - Branch Secretary & Correspondent**



## R.I.P ~ SYLVIA CRAWLEY



6<sup>th</sup> September 1927 ~ 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015



Sylvia passed away on the 29<sup>th</sup> July in a nursing home near her daughter in Yorkshire. Eleven Members of the Leicester & Peterborough Branch attended the Service of Thanksgiving with the Internment of Ashes held in Saint Bartholomew's Church, Kirby Muxloe, on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August, the funeral having been held the week before in Yorkshire.

We sang three hymns - 'The Lord's my Shepherd', 'How sweet the Name', and 'Dear Lord and Father', all of which may have been chosen by Sylvia. Sylvia's granddaughter, Sarah, gave a very moving tribute in poetry form, there was also a tribute from the Rector, the Reverend Tom Ringland, on her work for the Church and community. and a reading which was a reflection on her life read by the Rector, also a reading from Revelation: chapter 21, verses 1-7, read by one of Sylvia's family. After

the service the robed Members of the Guild formed a Guard of Honour while Sylvia's ashes were carried out of the church. Prayers were said during and after the internment.

The first of the two photos of Sylvia was taken at Launde Abbey in July 2009 and shows her third from the right in the front row. The second shows her looking happy and very smart, this photo was used on the front cover of the service sheet at her Thanksgiving Service. She was always smiling, she was interested in many activities which she enjoyed doing best with her many friends, including her Church family, the Guild of Vergers and, above all, her own family. The church was full for the service. Some of Sylvia's family and friends attended the wake held in the Royal Oak, Kirby Muxloe, where we chatted and laughed over refreshments at some of the funny things which Sylvia had said or done before she became ill.

Our thanks go to Mary, Jean and Brian for performing their verger's duties in a very sensitive manner, also to the other Members for coming and forming the Guard of Honour and to the Team Rector, Reverend Tom Ringland, and the Organist, Jeanette. I am quite sure that Sylvia would have smiled and been very impressed by it all. "Well done thou loyal and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord."



**Marjorie Thomas, Dip GV - Branch Chairman & Correspondent**





31<sup>st</sup> May 1931 - 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015

**TAKEN FROM NOTES COMPILED BY RAY BEASTON**

**FOR CANON KEITH FARROW CANON MISSIONER AT SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL FOR THE EULOGY AT ALAN'S FUNERAL**

Alan was born on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1931 in Dalton-in-Furness, the third child of William and Francis Jackson. Alan was a sickly child and it was soon discovered that as a toddler he had eyesight problems. By the age of eight years old he underwent experimental cataract surgery on his left eye, to say it was painful was an understatement. He was awake and tied down for the whole procedure. When he was thirteen Alan contracted tuberculosis and by the age of twenty seven had to have part of his lung removed. This left him short of breath when climbing hills or stairs all his life. He was admitted to High Carly Hospital in Cumbria where nursing staff in winter would often brush snow off the end of his bed as his room was open to the elements on one side. The doors would only be closed if the wind was blowing in rain.

In 1949, Alan's dad tried to help find employment for Alan. He asked at the local Church, Saint George the Martyr, Barrow-in-Furness where Alan and his family attended on Sunday's. This resulted in the Vicar giving Alan his first post as Verger. Alan often said that it was this job that built up his stamina. His duties involved climbing up the clock tower to wind up the church clock when descending into the boiler room to de-clinker the boiler and Stoke up ready for Sunday worship. The Vicar of Saint George the Martyr, Barrow in Furness, Charles Euston Nurse was made Archdeacon in the Diocese of Carlisle, he became a residentiary Canon at Carlisle Cathedral. When an assistant verger post came up at Carlisle Cathedral, Archdeacon Nurse knew who to contact. The new Vicar of Saint George's, Reverend B K Newton wrote on Alan's appointment to Carlisle Cathedral in 1959:

*"I cannot pay tribute in detail to all that Alan has done here, but I can say that we are all going to miss him very greatly as Verger, Cub and Scoutmaster, as a Server at the altar, as Secretary for the CMS and as Secretary for the SPG. We shall miss him in Sunday School, in scout Group Committee; we are going to miss him in his capacity as District Visitor, and in all those one hundred and one spheres of Parish life which would take too long to record."*

Alan was 29 when he left Barrow-in-Furness.

Alan was appointed in 1959 as Assistant Verger in the Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Carlisle. He was given the Old Gatehouse as a flat with the job as Assistant Verger, it was soon discovered that the flat was the oldest building in Carlisle housing Porters and eventually Vergers for over 500 years.

Alan started in the summer of 1959 when a very young Chorister named Raymond Beck joined the Cathedral Choir as a probationer. It was not long after that Peter James also joined the Carlisle Cathedral Choir. Alan ran Cubs and Scouts for the Choristers and other boys associated with the Cathedral. They ended up touring Italy, France and Germany over the years. On one particular tour to the continent, two coaches were used for the Choristers, Leaders and of course food and equipment. On the return after a successful camp, Alan ended up with an extra Chorister on his coach. He soon found out why. One of the other Scout Leaders had discovered that this particular boy had in fact forgotten his passport and had somehow managed to leave the country without being detected in France. This was not the case on return to the UK, after severe checks, Alan was marched off the coach and grilled. After about half an agonising hour Alan returned the coach with a face like thunder. When they got back to Carlisle Alan exploded at the other Scout Leaders for not checking that all Choristers has a passport. The Leaders all explained that if anyone could talk around an Immigration Officer it would be Alan.

After three years as Assistant Verger Alan was appointed Head Verger in 1962. He served at Carlisle Cathedral for a further ten years. One of his quaint duties in winter was to go around the Cathedral Precincts lighting the gas lamps and then the following morning go around turning them off. He said he always put his trust in the Lord especially with his poor eyesight having to light the lamps with a long pole. Alan was the last lamp lighter in Carlisle. The Dean of Carlisle, Lionel Du Toit was appointed in June 1960 and Alan helped the new Dean to understand the complexities of the Cathedral. Dean Du Toit was often in the Cathedral helping Alan with certain cleaning duties. Dean Du Toit loved to get rid of the cob webs that "poor Alan couldn't see". It amused visitors and the congregation finding the Dean wearing a brown smock coat removing cobwebs!

In 1972 Alan decided that he would apply for the post of Head Verger at Cathedral Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Sheffield. Provost Ivan Neil appointed Alan as Head Verger. He lived at 4 East Parade right in the City Centre. There were only two disappointments with his accommodation, he had to make plans to be away from his flat on Thursday evenings as this was practice night for the Bell Ringers, especially as his flat on East Parade was at the same level as the belfry and not very far away! Alan saw Provost Neill retire and Provost Frank Curtis Appointed. The other discomfort was the annual Cutlers' Feast. It was in days before mobile phones and the Beadle would broadcast over a Tannoy system which car was required next when guests were leaving in the very early hours of the morning. He was always on holiday at that time of year in future.

In 1979 Alan then decided to try his hand at one of the countries more ancient Cathedrals. He applied for and was appointed Head Virger (spelt with an 'i' in the south) at the Cathedral Church of Saint Andrew in the Liberty of Wells in Somerset. Alan was lucky again with his accommodation. He lived at number 13 Vicars Close. This was the only house that had not been modernised too much and still had the original windows and doorways dating from 1342. The Cathedral celebrated its 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1982. This would be an extremely busy year with many events both sacred and secular. The Canon Treasurer, Leslie Ward, a fellow northerner from Conisborough welcomed Alan's hands on approach to the post. He asked if Alan knew anyone that could assist with the team of Virger's. So Alan contacted his friend Raymond Beatson who was duly appointed by the Dean and Chapter of Wells as Head Virger's assistant and Valet. Yes this was his official title.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 .....**



Canon Treasurer Leslie Ward wrote about Alan's time as Head Verger at Wells Cathedral:

*"That his cassock was dark blue not black; his gown grey with velvet trimming contrasting with the colourful copes of the Clergy these things mattered little. For he too is a man of God sensitive to heavenly beckoning and a splendid example of vocational convictions. From his youth upwards he has believed in the calling of a Verger and he has become one of the finest in the Church."*

In 1984 Alan noticed in the Church Times that Sheffield Cathedral were advertising his old post. He was not really settled at Wells, being so far south-west. He applied and was reappointed Head Verger at Sheffield Cathedral. Alan had served a total of 17 Years as Head Verger at Sheffield when he retired aged 63. Alan left Sheffield in 1999 to live at Ivegill in Cumbria, some 15 miles south of Carlisle. He eventually found the isolation too great and moved to be nearer his family in Barrow in Furness. He began worshipping at the Parish Church in Barrow, but again he was restless as he had enjoyed the culture of a big City and missed Cathedral worship.

He bought a caravan on Morecambe Bay so that he could keep up contact with his family and only gave it up in 2011. He returned to Sheffield and began worshipping at the Cathedral once more and became a Guide Welcomer. It was in 2004, Alan with the help of his friends Ray Beatson and Margaret Garner wrote his book on the Stained Glass of Sheffield Cathedral and sold over 300 copies. The book was well received and he was really surprised at its success, especially as it started out as an in-house Guide Book for the Cathedral Guides and Welcomers.

His long suffering eyesight got the better of him in 2012 and it was essential he have a cataract removed from his right eye as his left eye was beginning to fail. It was a risk, but he took the risk. He still had sight problems but he could see better than he had done for years. His friend Raymond Beatson has looked after Alan for the last four years as carer, remember Raymond's job title at Well's Cathedral Head Verger's Assistant and VALET.

His friendships over the years have given Alan much comfort and delight. Raymond Beck, the Chorister at Carlisle who became a fireman in Cumbria and went on holiday to wonderful countries such as Italy and Russia with Alan. Peter James another Chorister and Scout from the Carlisle days who came to Sheffield regularly with his family to see Alan. Alan kept in touch with fellow Carlisle Scout Leader and his family, Mike Tuer. Mikes mother took over as Cub Leader when Alan left Carlisle to come to Sheffield. Brothers Wayne and Nick Cooper need a mention for their love and support over the years, especially in recent months. Not forgetting the number of friends here today and countless friends all over the country who could not be here today but keeping a personal vigil to celebrate Alan's life.

Alan wanted to make sure his Cathedral friends were thanked for their love and friendship over the years, especially Margaret Garner, Edna Bradley, Wendy Vanderveen, Tony Elwis, David Pears, and Margaret Reynolds to mention just a few. For here today from Brighton, Father Keith Perkinson, who attended the Cathedral Youth Club. Alan encouraged Keith to join the ministry and who will soon have been a priest for nearly 25 years. For his friendship with the Dean, Peter Bradley and the Cathedral Chapter, and for all the Cathedral Musicians. He will be remembered for all the work he did as Diocesan Representative of the Friends of Cathedral Music and has supported their work for forty years.

He helped redevelop the Church of England Guild of Verger, both nationally and locally, and using his days off visiting fellow Vergers in the Diocese encouraging them to join the Guild. Alan was given the Fellowship of the Church of England Guild of Vergers on his retirement. It is so wonderful so many of his fellow Vergers are here today. Father Tom Cameron, who has travelled from Hassocks in West Sussex, was former Verger at Sheffield Cathedral and went on to Saint Paul's Cathedral and who became a priest a couple of years ago after retiring as a Verger. Alan attended Tom's priesting get at Saint Paul's not that long ago. Alan was thrilled and honoured at being awarded an MBE in 1991 for services to Sheffield Cathedral.

Alan had reasonable health until last year when he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. He could remember in minute detail events that took place fifty years ago but could not remember what day it was or what he had eaten for lunch, he persevered and his faith was of great importance to him at that difficult time. He found it difficult to attend Church but listened to Daily Worship and Choral Evensong on the radio and of course Songs of Praise. He had bought a CD Collection of all 150 Psalms sung by various Cathedral Choirs across the country and would listen to the set Psalms for the day on his iPad. He rediscovered the Psalms, he was familiar with the evening ones having worked at Cathedrals with daily Choral Evensong, but not really 'listened' to the morning Psalms. His favourite was Psalm 84, Alan referred to this as being the Vergers Psalm because of the words of the eleventh verse.

**O how amiable are thy dwellings : thou Lord of hosts!**  
**My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.**  
**Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young :**  
**even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.**  
**Blessed are they that dwell in thy house : they will be always praising thee.**  
**Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee : in whose heart are thy ways.**  
**Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well : and the pools are filled with water.**  
**They will go from strength to strength : and unto the God of Gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.**  
**O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer : hearken, O God of Jacob.**  
**Behold, O God our defender : and look upon the face of thine Anointed.**  
**For one day in thy courts : is better than a thousand.**  
**I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God : than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.**  
**For the Lord God is a light and defence :**  
**the Lord will give grace and worship, and no good thing shall he withhold from them that live a Godly life.**  
**O Lord God of hosts : blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee.**

Alan had worked as a Verger for a total of 42 years - the meaning of life perhaps.....





3<sup>rd</sup> September 1930 ~ 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2015

I don't know for certain but I think Jack joined the Guild soon after his mother died when he took over in 1973. He was always happy go lucky whilst fulfilling his duties in Saint Peter's Church, Braunstone in Leicestershire. He also liked football and often used to play truant from Branch meetings so that he could go to see a football match. He was clever and blunt, which was probably the reason why he got on with most people.

Jack took over as Branch Chairman in 2000 and he held the post until 2014. You can tell from the photo which shows him presenting one of our Branch Chaplains for admission to the Guild that he was in prayerful thought whilst performing this duty. We were always made welcome at Branch meetings, generally with a service first followed by lovely refreshments. Once a year we had a Branch supper organised by Jack held in Saint Crispin's Church, the neighbouring Parish.

We held two parties in Jack's honour at Saint Peter's Church, the first to celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in September 2010 and the second in March 2013 when he celebrated 40 years as the Verger at Saint Peter's Church. He was presented with a certificate confirming him as an Honorary Branch Life Member during the party. We shall miss him, as will his family, in Church and at the Leicester & Peterborough Branch meetings. But I am sure that he would wish us to think back on the happy memories we shared over the years. We send our sympathy to his immediate family, although only cousins, but still very close. His funeral was held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October, the Feast Day of Saint Simon & Saint Jude, in the Church he loved and served for forty-three years.



### THE SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIFE OF JACK LIPPITT ~ VERGER FOR FORTY-THREE YEARS Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015

These days I would call it this type of service rather than a funeral, especially when people like Jack have worked hard for their Church for that many years. Eleven Members of the Leicester & Peterborough Branch, along with our Area Leader, Lance Bloom, and the Guild's General Secretary, Stephen Stokes, and the National Welfare Officer, Irene Money, attended the service. We were very pleased to welcome the National Officers, especially as they had travelled a fair distance.

We formed a Guard of Honour before and after the service. The cortege was verged by our Branch Secretary, Kate Mobbs, Dip GV Hons. Jack's verge was laid on the altar during the service. The Reverend Canon Chris Burch led the service and gave a tribute to Jack for his hard work in his Church through all those years. Our Branch Chaplain, Reverend Canon John Tonkin, read from Revelation: chapter 21, verses 1-7 and we sang three hymns - 'Praise, my soul, the King of heaven', 'Loving Shepherd of thy sheep', and 'Jerusalem'. Our Branch Treasurer, Clive Mobbs, tolled the bell before and after the service.

The church was full with extra chairs brought in. The sun came out as we performed the Guard of Honour, Jack must have ordered it for us with a welcoming smile, also he may have chosen the hymns himself. Former Clergy, including the Reverend Terry Byron and others were present. We were also very pleased to welcome our former Branch Chaplain, the Reverend James Shakesphere, and other close friends. Some of us attended the wake in the Church Hall after the service, chatting and laughing at some of the things Jack had said and done over the years.

Jack as Verger will be a hard act to follow. "Well done thou loyal and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord."

**Marjorie Thomas, Dip GV**  
**Branch Chairman & Correspondent**

Photographs: Jack with the Reverend Chris Blewett, Warden of Launde Abbey, & the Reverend James Shakesphere being admitted as Branch Chaplain, July 2009; Jack with some friends including the Reverend Terry Byron, a former Vicar of Saint Peter's; Jack cutting his cake during the party celebrating his 40 years as Verger of Saint Peter's Church; Area Leader, Lance Bloom, with Jack as he is presented his Honorary Branch Life Member Certificate by the General Secretary, Stephen Stokes.



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