

# The Virger

Summer 2017  
Issue 295



[www.cofegv.org.uk](http://www.cofegv.org.uk)

The Official Magazine of the Church of England Guild of Vergers





Welcome to the Summer 2017 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!**

**E-MAILED ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT AS MICROSOFT WORD FILES ONLY & ANY PHOTOGRAPHS IN JPEG FORMAT, TEXT & IMAGE FILES SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO E-MAILS SEPARATELY!**

**Marek J Barden, OLJ**  
**Saint Gregory's Vicarage, Filton Road, Horfield, Bristol BS7 0PD**

**PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS:  
Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2017**



*FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY*



**ANNUAL RETURNS ARE NOW OVERDUE  
THESE SHOULD BE RETURNED IMMEDIATELY**



*GUILD SHOP MANAGER*



We are looking to appoint a new Guild Shop Manager. The duties to include:

Managing Stock Levels; Selling of stock at National events; Selling and posting items to members who contact direct; Reporting to the National Treasurer.

For more information please contact the General Secretary [CEGVGenSec@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVGenSec@gmail.com).  
How is your calligraphy?



*GUILD SCRIBE*



After a number of years as our 'scribe' Stella Rogers, (Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester Branch) is looking lay down her pen. Each year we enter the names of those members who have departed this life, and details into our Obit Book.

We are seeking a new 'scribe', we would ask you to copy out some pages from the Obit Book, so that the Central Council can make a fair decision on who should step into these emanate shoes.

For more information please contact the General Secretary: [CEGVGenSec@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVGenSec@gmail.com).

## **HOLY NAME EMBROIDERY**

**New Commissions, restoration,  
conservation, repairs etc... undertaken**

**Welsh Marches Based**

**Dee Caulton-Ball**

**Ecclesiastical Embroiderer**

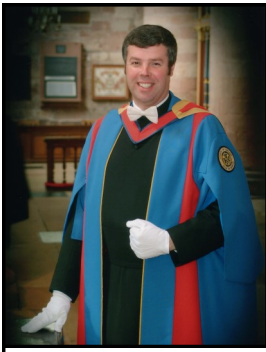
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**[deecb@hotmail.com](mailto:deecb@hotmail.com)**



**FRONT COVER: Pentecost" by Jean Restout II, 1692 - 1768.**





## NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



My last National Chairman's Letter for "The Virger" and I do not know what to say apart from a very big Thank You to all of you for supporting me through these last few years. My time at the helm has had its ups and downs but throughout, my fellow officers and members of Central Council have been there, not just for me but the greater good of the Guild. To them we should be extremely grateful for their diligence, good council and grace. Some of our meetings have needed some tact and diplomacy but whatever issue the Central Council have wrestled with we have always remained friends.

Guild Festivals have been a highlight and it has been a joy to see so many of you at them even when I have tried to organise something a little different. Thank you. Please do not stop being a little different in your thinking over these. They bring together friends old and new, Canterbury and York province united in the love of our vocation.

Training Conference. This set piece in our year aimed at equipping us with the skills to do our job better, whether we are in our infancy as vergers or grizzled old grumpy ones like me. You are never too old to learn they say, well that all depends if you are open to fresh ideas. Some I sit back and think I have heard it all before...but then a fellow verger or the speaker puts a different spin on it and I have to admit it sets my mind ticking. The Training team put a lot of effort into providing an excellent few days with something for everyone. Worship, lectures, practical sessions and fun are all packed into a great few days in a stunning location with good food and they even arrange the Sun to shine.

Enough of me rambling on. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your love and support.

**James Armstrong**



## 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 & Stephen Guy*

*Ipswich: Val Pizzey*

*Leicester & Peterborough: Clifford Dunkley & Leslie Mitchelmore*

*London, Southwark & Chelmsford: Ken Allen*

*Oxford: Don Mitchener, Jeanne Scott, Reverend Canon Roy Taylor, Gill & Dennis Wildman*

*Saint Albans: Peter Hudson*

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

*York: George & Doreen Cook*

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

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## NATIONAL CHAPLAIN'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

Greetings! Whilst writing this we are still in the great 50 days, so I can still wish you every blessing of our Risen Lord Jesus. I hope the Easter Feast was, and continues to be, a source of great blessing and inspiration to you all.

The Service on Easter Day was televised from Hereford Cathedral, and in spite of the cables and cameras, the large group of crew, and the distribution of the sacrament in two parts, we were all very pleased with the way that the Service came over – it has been very gratifying for the dean and Chapter that there have been many letters from sick and house-bound people for whom this was their Easter Service.

Last week at Hereford Cathedral we celebrated the Feast of Consecration. The foundation is so ancient that we do not know in which year we were consecrated but since time immemorial the date has been the nearest Sunday to 11<sup>th</sup> May. I have been reflecting on the reasons why the anniversary of consecration is important. Firstly, I think it is important for Christian people to have a 'gathering place' which is an inspiration to their worship of God. It may be a simple building, but beauty and order make such a place 'special' for those who worship. Secondly, we should never forget that however beautiful and inspirational a building, it is the people who worship there who are the 'living stones' built on the foundation of Jesus Christ, who are the true Church. At the Feast of Consecration we give thanks for the building and all that it means to the worshippers, but we also dedicate ourselves afresh to become the Church of God, working in the community in which we are set and in the world of which we are a part.

Conference is looming on the horizon, I am looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at West Malvern. Not only does this time together give us the opportunity to worship together and to exchange news and views, but it is also a time of learning together. The emphasis in my mind is of the 'togetherness' and this is especially important for those of you who work alone. As you will see from the programme, we are concentrating on the buildings, the art within them in paintings and stained glass, as well as using art for our worship. Please try and attend – the whole time if possible, but a day or two if the whole time seems impossible. If you haven't ventured before, you will find a group of like-minded friends and colleagues with whom to form new links.

With every blessing and my love

**Canon Maureen**



## FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY



### DATA PROTECTION IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

As technology progresses, so does our ability to communicate more easily with each other, however we all should take care who we pass information on to. As General Secretary I feel that I should pass on some pearls of wisdom (though I appreciate that I may be trying to teach you how to suck eggs). It does not hurt to be reminded of these things.

I regularly receive contact from prospective new members. When this happens, I reply to them, also copying in the person listed as the Branch Secretary in that Branch's Annual Returns. If your Branch has issued its own local Branch Directory, and you receive a call from a fellow member of your Branch asking for a number, this is fine to pass on (if their details are included in the Branch Directory). However, if the call comes from a person who is not a member of your Branch, a rule of thumb should be that you take the contact details and pass them on to the person who can then call them back.

With emails, the best way of sending to multiple recipients is to use the 'BCC' box (BCC stands for Blind Carbon Copy) however I have learned that if you do not have an address in the 'To' box then some email servers reject the email as 'spam' and move the email to the junk folder. The way to avoid this is by putting your own email address into the 'To' box. By sending via the 'BCC' box it avoids disclosing personal email addresses; something not all members may want.

From ▼	CEGVGenSec@gmail.com
To...	Stephen Stokes <cegvgensec@gmail.com>;
Cc...	
Bcc...	
Subject	

If you forward an email, please also remove the original sender's information, unless they ask you to forward their email on. To recap, in order for us to comply with data protection, do not pass on personal information to those who are not already privy to it, and when sending out emails to multiple recipients use the BCC box to avoid passing on personal email address as some members may not wish them to be passed on.

**Stephen Stokes, Dip GV (Hons)**  
**General Secretary**



## NATIONAL VACANCIES



The following National posts fall vacant this year: National Chairman, Overseas Liaison Officer and Training Officer. Nominations have been received for the candidates below, further information may be obtained from the General Secretary.: [CEGVGenSec@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVGenSec@gmail.com).

National Chairman - nominations from serving Area Leaders - Mr John Shearer  
Overseas Liaison Officer - Mr John Campbell BEM has indicated his willingness to continue in this role  
Training Officer - nominations for Mr Robert Beattie



### JOHN SHEARER NATIONAL CHAIRMAN NOMINATION

I am humbled to have been nominated to stand as your next National Chairman.

I spent 14 years of service in three of London's Hospitals, the longest being at Great Ormond Street, with two years at the Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead. Not wishing to stay long in the NHS, I then pursued a career in verging, which took me to Saint Marylebone Parish Church. I was appointed as Verger and Parish Administrator. After three years, I was invited to become Head Verger at Saint Mary Redcliffe, Bristol where I managed a team of vergers and also looked after Volunteers within the Church.

After nearly five years, I moved back to London to join the staff at the Temple Church, where I have been for the past 6 years. Temple Church is a famous and busy City Church which is primarily the chapel to two of the Inns of Court. I have just stepped down from my role as the Training Officer for the Church of England Guild of Vergers. This role involved me in the training of vergers within the Guild, and organising the annual training conference in the summer. I also oversee the Diploma Course, which currently has 50 students at various levels, studying areas of History, Administration, Pastoral Care as well as the Foundations of being a Verger.

**John Shearer**

### JOHN G CAMPBELL, BEM OVERSEAS LIAISON OFFICER NOMINATION



I am, once again, humbled and delighted to be considered and nominated for re-election as Overseas Liaison Officer, since joining the Guild in 1978 I have held several Local, Area and National positions, being privileged to serve as National Chairman, General Secretary and, since 1996, Overseas Liaison Officer.

It is a Joy to work internationally with organisations and individuals, the continuing contact is an endorsement of the Guild's fellowship, not least world wide, and to continue this work into the future would be a great privilege as well as a responsibility.

**John G Campbell**

### ROBERT BEATTIE TRAINING OFFICER NOMINATION



I have worked as a Verger at Worcester Cathedral since 2006. I can scarcely imagine doing anything else, and am still filled with quiet wonder some lucky few of us can actually get paid to attend daily Evensong. Before that I spent seven years studying mathematics, while gaining my first Verger experience as a Chapelwarden in College and later as Relief Verger in my own Parish.

Since joining the Guild, I have attended the last ten Training Conferences and have mentored a couple of local Vergers through the Guild's Diploma Course (though, infamously, have never quite got around to completing the Foundation Unit myself). I have been Treasurer of the Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester Branch since 2010, and have received their encouragement to put my name forward for this national role.

**Robert Beattie**

John Shearer has kindly let me 'shadow' him during his final year as Training Officer, but I remain under no illusion it is so small and straightforward a job as he might have me believe. He and Tom Cameron have left big boots to fill, and I would endeavour to carry forward their good work.



## GUILD MUGS



**Does your Church have a need for some Guild Mugs?**

We are looking to dispose of our current stock levels, should you wish to have these for a donation please make contact to the Shop Manager: [CEGVGuildShop@gmail.com](mailto:CEGVGuildShop@gmail.com).

Any that are not claimed by August will be donated to a local charity shop.





## THE LORD GIVETH & THE LORD [ALMOST] TAKETH AWAY



Out of the blue, on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016, an envelope marked **URGENT PERSONAL CABINET OFFICE** dropped onto our door-mat, dismissing the thought that the contents might be a speeding summons, (unlikely being an exemplary driver!) I thought this might be a summons for jury duty and reluctantly opened the envelope.

The contents were as surprising as if they had been a 'speeding summons,' they were an invitation to accept the Prime Minister's intention to submit to Her Majesty my name to be awarded a British Empire Medal in the News Year's Honours list came totally out of the blue.

To be recommended by a person or persons unknown that I should be recognised for my services to the Church in Lincoln (for doing my job) was indeed a humbling privilege. The citation goes on to note my work in the USA, part of which is carried out in the name of the Guild of Vergers - to that end as well as thanking nominees a token of thanks should go to the Guild of Vergers for allowing me to carry on as Overseas Liaison Officer and to those with whom am associated abroad.

God willing I am due to receive the award 21<sup>st</sup> May in Lincoln Cathedral, presented by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Lincolnshire, surrounded by those in the locality who I consider to be 'the Church' and maybe the anonymous nominee[s].

Some of you may be aware, that I sustained two heart attacks 27<sup>th</sup> February this year and the reality of receiving the award seemed less important than surviving the day, the fact that I did survive is in no small way due to the expertise of the medics - at every level - who worked stoically on that day [within three hours of calling for help I was; transported to hospital, admitted to A&E taken to the Resuscitation Unit and thence to theatre before being on the ward and looked after] to keep me this side of the sod.

Together with the hospital's expertise, family support and care, the compassion of the Cathedral Community and the people of Lincoln and beyond, I can do nothing but give thanks, and thanks to the wider Church at home and abroad for the countless cards, letters, email and calls which have confirmed to me that the Church of God is more than mere stone, wood, lead and stained glass - structures without which we would be worse off.

But the Church of God is human flesh and blood, the people of God come in many differing forms and necessities, I am so privileged and humbled to accept my award for service to the Church - *the People of God*.

**John G Campbell, BEM**



## FROM THE ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE 2016



### OUR PERSONAL WELLBEING – REVEREND BRUCE KINSEY, WELFARE OFFICER, ELY

#### SUMMARY

On the Monday afternoon the Reverend Bruce Kinsey covered the difficult subject of personal wellbeing. He is both an ordained Priest – currently amongst his other roles he is the Bishop of Ely's Advisor for the Pastoral Care of Clergy – and a Registered Psychotherapist. His presentation was full of wonderful insights and nuggets of wisdom. He focused on the wide ranging role of Vergers, the flexible job description, the difficulties faced by those who work on their own often in a voluntary capacity, stress, the emotional impact of the job and the fact that vergers are at the sharp end – life can be difficult. He offered various strategies including these “must dos” the need to develop positive relationships, allowing time for ourselves, looking after our mental and physical health, balanced diet, asking for help when needed, structuring our day with mindfulness, contemplation and prayer and crucially the need to engage with some non-Church activities. Finally there was a very interesting take on fasting during Lent – the suggestion was to give up Twitter, Facebook, the internet, emails and mobile phones! I think we could all subscribe to that!

#### LECTURE NOTES

He opened with some thoughts regarding his current role as Welfare Officer in the Ely Diocese and his background. He is an ordained Priest and a Registered Psychotherapist, as he put it, a fascinating crossover. In each Diocese they have both a “shrink and an exorcist” he is the former. He was fortunate to have had a good Spiritual Director (SD) who aimed to avoid hit and run – preaching to people with no idea about their background. His SD argued that he should go visiting – see how people live – this stops you preaching into a vacuum and relying on a scatter gun technique. He hoped that having spoken to some Vergers he had some idea about what the job might entail. He asked the audience to list three things which they like about their job and three things they did not. Pros (in my Verger role) I thought of service to God, service to people and it is deeply satisfying on several levels (although like all roles/jobs it has its moments). Cons – lack of care (by the C of E), appreciation and being taken for granted – many people are not really aware of the back office work involved in running a Church and setting up for services.

In 1978 in *The Road Less Travelled* (I thought of our strap line “leading the way since 1932”) – M Scott Peck wrote that confronting and solving problems is a painful process which most of us attempt to avoid – the very avoidance results in greater pain and an inability to grow both mentally and spiritually. *Life is difficult* are the opening words of that book and remain true today. Sometimes we forget that. Much has changed since 1978 – job specifications for instance. At one time being a Welfare Officer involved undertaking pastoral work which nobody else picked up. Nowadays we have detailed job descriptions, performance objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs). Now Welfare Officers are called Wellbeing Officers soon no doubt to be retitled Resilience Officers. We are seemingly subject to endless change and endless changes of job title.



## FROM THE ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE 2016 CONTINUED



So what is important? What is important is to feel comfortable in your role. Self-esteem is vitally important, but often what goes into creating this is a bespoke mixture for each individual, if one's self-esteem is compromised, we then start to build defence shields around us. So strategies and techniques that help keep our self-esteem healthy are important.

- Men need to show emotion, this is good for everyone's mental health.
- Relationship building is important. It helps a community flow.
- The need to live productive, creative lives contributing to our immediate and wider communities.
- Coping with stress – stress is actually good, as it helps motivate and concentrate our minds – but not unremitting exposure without a break, that is exhausting and damaging.
- The human condition is not perfect – we need to have reasonable realistic standards and we need to understand that not everything can be perfect. We need to forgive as we are forgiven.
- Understand that Vergers' job specs tends to be huge especially if they are a lone workers and a volunteer.
- Know that lack of clarity over expectations leads to stress.
- Make sure that we are truly listened to? There needs to be support and engagement.
- Dealing with tricky situations - make sure we understand the impact that we have on other folk?

We are told that the Church is in general decline and it is still being marginalised. Vergers are at the sharp end of what is happening – all this has a huge effect on our lives. There is a need for some sort of decompression space. We have to understand that our own physical, psychological and spiritual selves overlap and that what affects one part will affect the others.

Things to help wellbeing - gardening is wonderfully therapeutic – but sometimes the things that support us can be a double edged sword such as our friends and relationships: they might be really good but can also be a pain at times, children – good also a downside – all these things have a shadow side. Find out what works for you – how do you restore yourself/your sense of self. The Dalai Lama advises us to do something new – to discover the world – look outwards. We need to develop positive relationships, allow time for ourselves, look after our spiritual, mental and physical health and ask for help when needed. We need to consider what our vulnerabilities are. We know that funerals can “drag us down” and we absorb large amounts of emotion. Loneliness and isolation are much bigger issues than previously realised. Lent and Easter Festivals often damage staff, they can become Churched out? Money – poor pay or no pay at all. Who are you when you do not really feel yourself? Our fear of job insecurity. Happiness and depression are both contagious. So:

- We need to be careful about the company we keep – positive relationships are crucial – be with people who we love and like us.
- Be part of a group – do something not Church based.
- Engage in the discipline of morning and evening prayer.
- Dalai Lama 30 day challenge – learn something new/do something new every 30 days.
- Look after mental health – spot early signs – migraines – backache.
- Have realistic expectations.
- Music is really good for you – mood enhancing.
- Is there a beautiful place you can go back to in your imagination – a place of oneness and holiness?
- Eco-therapy – engage with nature – walking, running.
- Lent – give up Twitter, Facebook, emails and phones! Tech check – treat as a fast.
- Mindfulness, contemplation, prayer, midday office AND finally develop a serious hotline with God!

*NOTES TAKEN BY DAVID ANWYL-HUGHES OF THE GLOUCESTER, HEREFORD & WORCESTER BRANCH  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2016*



## 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: TBC**.



## DURHAM & NEWCASTLE WITH CARLISLE BRANCH NEWS



### NEW MEMBER

On the 21<sup>st</sup> March, a group of members met in the Prior's Hall at Durham Cathedral, where our Branch Chaplain, The Reverend Peter Welby, admitted Julie Smith as a full member of the Guild. Julie was welcomed by our Branch Chairman, Gordon Scott and the members present.



Throughout the year the Branch visits various Churches in Durham, Northumberland and Cumbria. At this meeting we planned visits to Cumbria, Chester-le-Street and Jarrow, as well as a summer outing to the Tanfield Railway to be followed by an Italian meal.

**Patricia Foster**  
**Branch Correspondent**



## IPSWICH BRANCH NEWS



### AGM



Spring at last, snowdrops/crocus/daffodils (plus others), such a lovely display of colour everywhere after the 'Grey' of the past months, sheer joy. With that in mind Ipswich members met for their AGM on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March at Saint Mary's, Felixstowe, on a not so sunny day, the heating was on for us and when the meeting finished – HAILSTONES! Well you certainly can't have it all.

The proceedings started (as all good meetings should) with bring & share lunch – from sandwiches to savouries to lots of yummy cake and to finish fruit, we possibly covered part of our 5 (or is it now) 10 a day, anyway we were certainly full afterwards.

The meeting itself began with a prayer from our Chaplain Reverend Alan Forsdike. I suppose as with all AGM's most are very straight forward, going over what we have done and achieved in the past twelve months and what we can plan for the year ahead, meetings and social events. One

point that we did revisit was events being held in Vergers own Churches/Communities as the possibility of having a Branch calendar/diary to let other vergers know what was being planned for the months ahead, out of this came a 'wedding & flower festival' which would be lovely to support and have a nice couple of hours pleasure at the same time. All part of the social side of the Branch.

Ipswich has a healthy membership and bank balance. Thanks were expressed to Dick Jeffery, who was stepping down, for all his work as our Branch Treasurer, the baton and cheque book was handed over to Paul Collard. Branch Fees remain the same for the forthcoming year.

The Branch Officers were elected as follows: Chair – Ian Cobb, Secretary/Area Leader – Pam Cobb, Treasurer – Paul Collard, Chaplain(s) – Reverends Alan & Catherine Forsdike.

Everyone agreed that our New Year's Lunch and the Venue was the best yet and 'The Railway Inn' will be a firm favourite for many visits to come, more 'Fish & Chips' for those with a healthy appetite. The meeting finished with a very short 'said' service led by Reverend Alan and our next meeting will be at Bury Saint Edmunds in June, hopefully without hailstones. Keep enjoying the spring and all its wonderful plants and colours.

Until next time, God Bless

**Jean Cobb**  
**Branch Correspondent**

# Badges!

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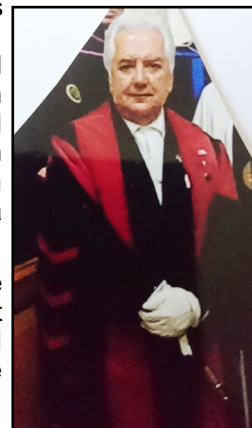
ALL AVAILABLE FROM THE GUILD SHOP





## SPRING MEETINGS

We commenced our Spring meetings on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March with a lunch at Saint Crispin's Church Hall, Braunstone, Leicestershire. There were thirteen members attending plus guests, the Reverend Arthur Deegan, Team Rector, and the Churchwardens. A tasty meal was provided and served by caterers from the Church. The menu comprised of soup and a roll, roast chicken in sauce with vegetables or ham/pork pie with cheese and salad, which I chose and which I thoroughly enjoyed. There was a choice of desserts, followed by tea or coffee. Our Chairman thanked the caterers afterwards with a gift of chocolates. Also, Lance Bloom, who stood down as Area Leader in January after a number of years, was presented with a bottle of wine and a card thanking him for his years of service.



After the meal we transferred to the church where the Reverend Deegan explained about the stained glass window pictured here. "The hands of God reach down in the act of creation, but they also reach out towards the hands of Adam and Eve in response to their looking upward and seeking help. Similarly, Adam and Eve both dance for joy within the womb of the universe looking up in supplication to their creator.

The scientific account of the beginnings of the universe in the 'Big Bang' Theory is illustrated in the golden hot centre of the window and scattering atoms. In this way the window shows that the Genesis ideas and the scientific understandings complement each other without contradiction. The wholeness and order of original creation is symbolized by the circular band which depicts both the microscopic genes at the origins of living creatures and the contrasting pan-galactic procession of the stars at the other end of the scale.



Mankind's struggle to understand and control the world is shown in the cave drawings of deer, a spider and a bird, as well as the forbidden fruit motif on Eve's side of the window. These images are superimposed on the swirling blue chaos in which God's hands do their work. When we look at the bottom of the window we recall that life as we know it came out of the sea, and, at the same time, that Jesus made his followers fishermen of the human race to bring them back to the open-armed loving God from whom they have strayed.

Most of the symbols have at least two sides to their meaning and the window is therefore vibrant in its appeal. It speaks to those inside the church who meditate upon it and also reminds those who pass by outside just whose world it is they are living in. Now look for the meanings hidden in the window especially for you.

After that, one of the Parishioners gave a talk called 'Sarah's Story', but not all of us could stay for all of it, which was a shame. Ann Anderson, one of our members, was thanked for organizing the lunch and the speaker afterwards,

and also the rest of us for coming. Our Chaplain, Canon John Tonkin, gave details about the Laude Abbey Quiet Day to members who were attending.

On Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April eight members and our Branch Chaplain travelled on the M1 to Derby Cathedral. Some of us arrived there without any trouble, we could see the Cathedral Tower very clearly, but after driving around in circles, we had to ask for directions.

We arrived with about 15 minutes to spare, but they waited patiently for us to robe in readiness for Choral Evensong. There was a Choir of young girls who sounded beautiful and the acoustics made them sound better.

During the service, one of the Cathedral Vergers, Joseph Grimoldby, was presented by our Chairman to be admitted to Guild by our Branch Chaplain, who also read one of the Lessons.

The Reverend Dr Sue Jones, Acting Dean, led the service and read the other Lesson. We sang the Hymns, 'Hail Easter bright' and 'For the beauty of the earth', the Choir chanted Psalm 3 and the Canticles to special settings, and sang an Anthem, also the Responses to special arrangements. Following the service we had some lovely refreshments prepared by the Cathedral Staff and Vergers.



At 7:30 p.m. we re-robed and processed into the Chancel for a service of Holy Communion which was led by one of the Cathedral Canons. For the Eucharistic Prayer we proceeded into the Sanctuary, chairs being provided for those who could not stand for long.

Our thanks are given to the Cathedral Chapter, especially the Acting Dean and the Canon who led the services, the Choir and Choirmaster, Hugh Morris, and the Organist, and to the Vergers. A special welcome to the Guild is given to Joseph Grimoldby.

**Continued on Page 10**



## LEICESTER & PETERBOROUGH BRANCH NEWS CONTINUED...



One of our members, Margaret Steadman, was a recipient of the Maundy Money at Leicester Cathedral on Maundy Thursday this year. We congratulate her.

During the service we prayed for Sandra Bloom and Matthew Mawson who have both had health problems recently. We welcomed our new Area Leader, Les Mitchelmore, who has recovered from health problems recently.

Our next meetings will be on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July at Saint Kyneburgha's Church, Castor, Peterborough in Cambridgeshire; and on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August at Saint Bartholomew's Church, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire, both beginning at 7.30 p.m.

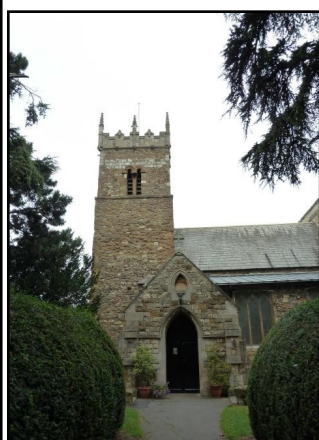
**Marjorie Thomas, Dip GV**  
**Branch Chairman & Correspondent**



## LINCOLN & SOUTHWELL BRANCH NEWS



### OLD CLEE



With the lengthening days and Spring sunshine a Verger's thoughts turn to exploring the Diocese and it was to the Church of the Holy Trinity and Saint Mary at Old Clee that our Branch went in March.

Old Clee is not easy to spot as it is swamped by the Port of Grimsby on one side, and the seaside resort of Cleethorpes on the other side. But the small streets around the church, and the Victorian cottages around the church still retain a village feel - especially with the banners protesting about plans to build more houses on open land nearby.

We started with a look around the church led by Mike Hodson. The church is built of local gold coloured limestone and the tower is very weathered, hardly surprising as it dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The Crossing, Transepts and Chancel were done as one build from the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The church was restored in 1878 by James Fowler of Louth. Fowler was the Diocesan Surveyor for Lincolnshire between 1871 and 1886 and has left his mark, for better or worse, on over ninety of our County's churches.

After the tour Compline was led by the Reverend Katherine Price. Following this the group enjoyed a sumptuous 'church tea' with savouries, sandwiches and cakes. Our thanks go to the Verger, Claire Dimmock, and her team for looking after us so well.

Earlier in the year the Branch AGM was held in Lincoln Cathedral. John Campbell (Lincoln) continues to be our Chair, with Mike Haynes (Boston) as Secretary and Dean Bird (Lincoln) as Treasurer.

We were delighted for John when he was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. Many of you will also know that John suffered a heart attack at the end of February. I am glad to say that John has made an excellent recovery and has returned to work at the beginning of May.

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



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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February the Branch held its AGM in the magnificent surroundings of the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, Birdcage Walk, London. The verger Christopher Harpham had arranged for supper to be provided in the splendid Sergeants Mess for those who had made prior arrangement.

Six of us who had booked the meal met at the Guard Room in Petty France where Chris was waiting to escort us under the watchful eyes of the Guard Room personnel. After a very filling supper we made our way to the Chapel.

The Guards Chapel received a devastating blow at 11:20am on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 1944 when a V1 Doodlebug crashed through the building while Communion was being conducted. 121 personnel were killed and 141 injured many of them being Guardsmen.

The V1 had left the whole of Birdcage Walk a sea of fresh pine leaves after all the trees had been stripped by the blast. Miraculously the altar cross and six silver candlesticks were not damaged. They now adorn the Chapel altar which was rebuilt to the original specification in 1962 – 1963.

Prior to the AGM a Service of Holy Communion was conducted by the Reverend Stephen Dunwoody, Chaplain to The Household Division. The Reading by our Chair Denise Mead was John: chapter 4, verses 1 – 10. Our Branch Chaplain was ill with a winter bug so there was no sermon.

During the service two new members were admitted to the Branch as full members of the Guild by Area Leader John Shearer, these were Avril Nickolson of Saint Cuthbert's, North Wembley, London and Terence (Terry) Straight of All Saints, Terling, Chelmsford, Essex.



After Communion we retired to an anteroom where the business of the AGM took place. Our Chair Denise Mead conducted the meeting with her usual diplomacy going through the Agenda, which she had previously distributed, to all members.

The post of Secretary which had been vacant for a couple of years (during which time Denise had also been the acting secretary) was filled by Stephen Haude after a ballot.

The Events Co-ordinator will now be shared between the Chair and Secretary. The remaining officers were willing to stand again so they were duly elected: Irene Money – Treasurer, Alan Taylor – Branch Correspond-

ent and John Shearer – Area Leader.

Following the AGM, those who wished were escorted again back to the luxury furnishings of the Sergeants Mess where we were surprised at the low cost of the alcohol!

Our thanks go to the Verger Christopher Harpham and the Chapel Padre for making us so welcome and allowing the use of the Guards Chapel for our Service and AGM.

## CHAPEL ROYAL

On Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May members of the London Branch were privileged to have a visit to Saint James' Palace, London which is the senior royal London palace and the London residences of several members of the Royal Family.

Prior to the visit we had to submit personal information for security purposes and on the day to produce photographic identification. We were greeted by Jon Simpson who is the Sergeant of the Vestry. He then escorted us into the courtyard under the watchful eye of several armed Metropolitan Police Officers, and he gave us the history of the numerous buildings around the courtyard before allowing us to enter The Chapel Royal.

The Chapel Royal, designed by Inigo Jones as a Catholic Church and built between 1623 and 1625. What wonderful splendour we saw and the wealth was unimaginable.

While seated in the choir stalls we were allowed to handle the Communion chalices which date back to James the Second. We were also shown a large plate which took two men to carry that is used at Coronations. These precious items are part of the Crown Jewels and are moved everywhere by armed guards.

After visiting the very austere Queens Chapel our visit took us around the various rooms which make up part of the Palace, one of which was waiting for a new carpet at a cost of £158,000!

A memorable visit for which we were most grateful to all the members of Saint James' Palace who took their part to make it so interesting.

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







## VISIT TO ROME

'First Anglican Evensong', 'first Verger', 'first time we have done this', 'amazing opportunity', 'ecumenism'.

Individually these are pretty good words and phrases, but as a collective are an outstanding group of words. These were the words used to describe a recent trip by Merton College Chapel to Rome. When embarking on an Oxford College Chapel Pilgrimage to Rome, they're not what you expect to hear. In March of this year, the Choir of Merton College, Oxford, alongside a group of nineteen members of the Chapel community on pilgrimage travelled to Rome to take part in the first Anglican Evensong in Saint Peter's Basilica. The College was kindly asked by the Anglican Centre in Rome, led by Archbishop David Moxon, whether we would like to participate. This was not an opportunity to be turned down.

On Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March, the Choir and the pilgrimage group met together to rehearse for the Anglican Evensong. The Evensong took place at the Altar of the Chair of Saint Peter, a huge space at the end of the Basilica behind the Confession, where Saint Peter's Tomb is. Normally this area is off limits to visitors to the Saint Peter's, so it was truly incredible to be able to see the Bernini chair up close, as well as the beautiful window high above depicting the Holy Spirit as a dove descending.

Whilst the Choir were rehearsing, the Servers and Stewards had a walk through what would be happening during the service. Some of the pilgrims were Stewards at the service. The Anglican Centre had put together the serving team from local Anglicans and Ordinands. The idea was to have a traditional service of Choral Evensong, featuring classic British composers. The Choir started the service with William Byrd's *Prevent us, O Lord*. The anthem was Bairstow's beautiful setting of *Blessed City, heavenly Salem*, and the Canticles were Wood's *Evening Service in F major*. The Service was led by Archbishop Moxon, with the Chaplain of Merton College The Reverend Canon Dr Simon Jones intoning the Preces and Archbishop Roche, an English Archbishop in the Catholic Church and the Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, preached on Saint Gregory the Great and his life. At the end of the service the Choir and Clergy processed to the Tomb of Saint Gregory, the Pope who had sent Saint Augustine to England. After prayers had been said and the altar had been censed the Choir sang Byrd's *Justorum animae*.

To be the first Verger to ever verge and take part in an Anglican Evensong at Saint Peter's Basilica is something I will hold with me all my life. I have been part of many important services, but none that are as special and important for ecumenism as this one. I was privileged to be able to verge Archbishop Moxon, Archbishop Roche and Cardinal Pell, as well as the College Choir with whom I am fortunate to work with on a daily basis. I was told whilst I was there, that there had never been a female server at the Basilica and judging by some of the looks I got as I went into the sacristy this was not widely accepted. I was so proud to be able to verge and be part of the service in the small way I was.

**Leah Stead**

## THE LONE VERGER, THE GUILD, AND THE MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

Last year, I attended the Maundy Thursday evening service of Holy Communion at Saint John the Evangelist, Woodley, at which Lorna Godwin was welcomed into the Guild. Another element of the service – Stripping the Altar – made a deep impression on me. I mentioned this at my own Church (Saint Michael's, Warfield). We are a "low" Church, with little ceremonial, rarely wear robes, and tend to refer to a "Communion table" rather than an altar.

The Right Reverend The Bishop of Reading, Andrew Proud, who had run some sessions of our Lent course, offered to come and wash feet on this Maundy Thursday. Personally, I had never been at a foot-washing service, and only seen an altar stripped once: but I was asked, "Dennis – can you organise it, and the Stripping of the Altar, please?" Being a member of the Guild proved enormously valuable. I contacted Michael Golby, our Branch Chairman, who talked me through the ceremonies. Then he visited my Church to talk through the layout, logistics, and procedures; he even brought "a few things that may be useful". They were! From the discussions with Michael I compiled lists of people, actions, and things to buy. I contacted the Bishop with sensible questions about how he'd like the service to run (and got helpful replies).

On the day, all was ready early. I set the drinking water boiler thermostat to about 30 degrees – nicely warm for feet – and filled a couple of large carafes. Towels (some looking remarkably like Terry Towelling nappies) and soap had been bought, volunteers to have feet washed, sought (and found). Even the Audio Visual team had a briefing sheet on how and when to dim the lighting. The Bishop suggested that Psalm 22 should be read in the dimmed church while the Altar was being stripped (thank heavens for the Bible App on some smart phones - no need to read in the dark). A reader was found at short notice.

"My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?" as all splendour was removed from the altar and sanctuary. "Why are You so far off from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?" I learned later that some were in tears at this point. We carried a cross, and laid it at the high altar. the next few days I heard how the service has been received by the congregation. Several were deeply moved. There were very complimentary emails. The service had been successful: everything needed was in place, everything ran to plan. And yet the whole service could have been a bit of a shambles, were it not for the help and expertise the Guild can give to "the lone verger". Many, many thanks to Michael Golby – for practical, prayerful, plenary support and encouragement.

**Dennis Wildman**