

The Virger

Summer 2018
Issue 299



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The Official Magazine of the Church of England Guild of Vergers





Welcome to the Summer 2018 edition of *The Virger*. Items for inclusion should be sent to the Communications Officer by the Deadline Date below.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY ARTICLES ETC... SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE MAY BE HELD OVER UNTIL THE NEXT EDITION TO AVOID DELAYS IN PRODUCTION! 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

E-mail: CEGVCommsOff@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS:
SATURDAY 25th August 2018**

 **SAVE THE DATE ~ CANTERBURY PROVINCE FESTIVAL LITE 2018**

CHICHESTER ~ 10th – 11th SEPTEMBER

Continuing our series of Festival Lite's. You have been to the North East, North west, now try the Best.

PROGRAMME

MONDAY 10th: Arrive in Chichester & check into hotels.

17.30: Attend Evensong at the Cathedral, *no reserved seats, no robes*.

19.00: Gather at a restaurant of your choice for dinner at your own expense.

TUESDAY 11th: 10.00 Board Coaches for our Journey to:

BOXGROVE PRIORY

A thirteenth century gem. Parish Church and former Priory, beautifully reordered and restored.

ARUNDEL

Where we visit both the Roman Catholic Cathedral and the nearby Saint Nicholas Church, a shared building housing both Anglican and Roman Catholic places of devotion, where we say Mid-day prayers before we stroll down to the town, with it's many opportunities for retail therapy, admire the Castle from the outside, home of the Duke of Norfolk and have lunch, at your own expense.

LANCING COLLEGE

The largest school Chapel in the world, where we will be greeted by the Virger and say Evening Prayer.

RETURN TO CHICHESTER

Arrive earlier or stay longer, there is lots to do and see in Sussex. Perhaps Bognor beckons or the bright lights of Brighton. For more information about Chichester, places to visit and stay, visit: visitchichester.org. There will be a modest charge to cover the hire of the coach.

While you are in the area why not visit Arundel Wetland Centre, Arundel Museum, Tangmere Military Museum, Tinwood Winery, Fishbourne Roman Palace, Ann of Cleves House & Museum, Lewes Castle, Weald & Downland Rural Museum & lots of other places of interest.

*A Registration Form is included in this issue of *The Virger*. Upon registration, nearer the time further information will be sent.*

There will be a modest charge to cover the hire of the coach of ten pounds.

FRONT COVER: The Boston Stump Lego Model. (See Lincoln & Southwell Branch News for the story)

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



As we head into the summer months, we look forward to new beginnings. By now you should have received a Membership Card through the post which registers you all as a member of the Guild. Many of you will remember that we had something like this in days gone by. You will see that your card has its own unique identifying number. It is hoped that we can seek out some national benefits for our members on production of the card.

So far we have a deal with Hayes & Finch, the details can be found in the covering letter from the General Secretary. If anyone can work on another national company to give us a discount, e.g. 10% off a coffee in Starbucks or Costa Coffee, for example, do let us know.

This summer sees the election of many of our National Officers. In this edition you will find all those who are standing or re-standing. Please read their biographies and make your vote count at the Annual General Meeting. This can be done in a variety of ways, either an email or letter to myself or your current Area Leader. These members are giving up their time to work on your behalf to enable the Guild to strive and survive. Please support them and pray for them. If there is anyone else who feels called to carry out any of the roles that are up for election, you are, of course, welcome to find someone to nominate you and throw your hat into the ring.

On 25th May, new regulations on Data Protection are due to come into force. This will have a profound effect on the way we carry out our information collection and email correspondence. I am grateful to Stephen Stokes and others, who have been working hard on ensuring that we comply with the new guidelines. A policy has been drafted ready to be presented to Central Council which outlines our stance on how we must comply. I am sure that many of you will have heard of the GDPR initials which are definitely the topic du jour. May I urge that all Branches make themselves aware of how to comply with the new regulations and maybe you can be a support to your Churches. If you require any further assistance with this, please email Stephen Stokes, our General Secretary, CEGVGenSec@gmail.com. There will be more information published in due course.

I hope that your applications are now in for our Annual Conference. This is the first conference that Robert Beattie, our Training Officer is organising. I hope that as many of you as possible will have submitted your booking form. If the weather remains as hot as it is at the time of writing this letter, the swimming pool will be a welcome guest.

The Canterbury Province Festival is a Festival 'Lite'. We are starting at Chichester and ending at Lancing College with points in between. This promises to be wonderful day and has been thoughtfully put together by the local Branch with the aid of Father Tom Cameron. Please support this venture and enjoy the fellowship of our vergers in the South, so get your application forms in to Father Tom.

John Shearer



THE DIPLOMA COURSE



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

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

The second stage comprises of the other three units:

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

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

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

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

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



THE GUILD SHOP



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

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

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



Dear Friends, Greetings!

As I write this letter we wait expectantly for the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Last Sunday at Hereford Cathedral was the Feast of Consecration. The actual date and year of Consecration is lost in the mists of time but for many centuries the date of the 11th May, or the Sunday nearest to it, was reckoned as the date of the Consecration and so we keep this Feast each year to give thanks for the building in which we experience God's glory and majesty.

This glory and majesty is celebrated by the addition of an orchestra to the Sunday Mass and this year we enjoyed Haydn's 'Harmoniemesse' – a splendid setting which was written near the end of Haydn's life. In all the celebration of the building we must never forget that we are the 'living stones' which make up the Church.

This year the proximity of the celebration to the Feast of Pentecost makes it the more obvious. We wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit which strengthens us and confirms our faith; which gives us the will and the power to go out into the world and proclaim the good news of God's love and forgiveness, and, most of all, to speak of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the faith in him which leads to eternal life.

The author of the Acts of the Apostles suggests several times that 'You are witnesses'. Like all witnesses, we need to speak the truth and to discern the truth – the truth that comes from our experience of the risen Lord Jesus. It is all too easy for Christian people to become obsessed by the building, its upkeep and its fabric: and I would be the first to acknowledge the importance of a sacred space.

However, we also need to focus on the human element of the building so that the living stones are nurtured and loved. This is a large part of what you all do as vergers! You care for the building: it's cleanliness, it's security and it's beauty and order but I guess you also care for the living stones: the people who use the building and love it, those who enter to find rest, silence and refreshment, those who gravitate into the building when they are in trouble or in distress. I pray that you may all be endowed with the gift of the Spirit that will strengthen and equip you to continue to care for your churches and cathedral both as building and as living stones.

Conference is nearly upon us and I hope to see many of you there. The Evening Service this year is a 'Songs of Praise' so if you have a favourite hymn, that you would like to be included, please let me know by the end of June.

With very blessing and my love
Canon Maureen

PRAYER REQUESTS



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

Our prayers are asked for:

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

Chichester, Guildford & Portsmouth: Marilyn Lee

Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester: Joy Birkin

Ipswich: Val Pizsey

Leicester & Peterborough: Clifford Dunkley, Christine Fagg & Marjorie Thomas

London, Southwark & Chelmsford: Ken Allen

Oxford: Gerry Knight & Jeanne Scott

Saint Albans: Peter Hudson

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

York: George & Doreen Cook

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

HOLY NAME EMBROIDERY

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

Welsh Marches Based

Dee Caulton-Ball
Ecclesiastical Embroiderer
01547 220000 or 07890514888
deecb@hotmail.com





GDPR & THE GUILD

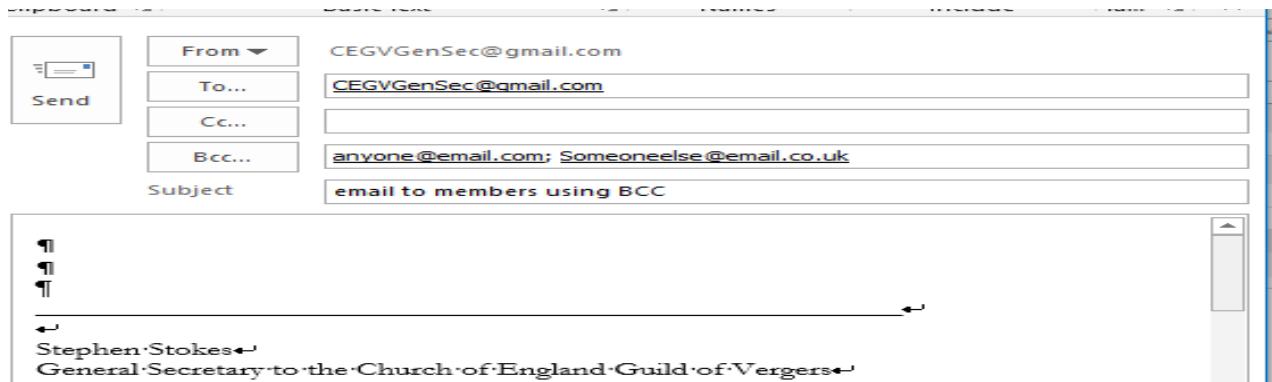


By now most of us would have heard about the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), you may already have had an email inbox full of companies asking if they can still retain your data and contact you.

With the 25th May now having passed, how do we stand and what does it mean to us?

The Guild has now formulated a working policy that has been distributed to your Branches, this will be presented to Central Council in August for their adoption. As an Organisation we hold your data and go to great lengths to protect it. Each of us is not just a member of a local Branch, we are a member of the Church of England Guild of Vergers (National Body). We the National Officers have a duty to protect your data, we do not pass it on to any third party.

So, what do we as individuals do? The easiest rule of thumb is not pass on anyone's data without express consent of that person. When sending emails remember that by including a person's email address visible to everyone, you are indeed sharing that person's personal data – you are advised to use the BCC line of an email.



We, as a Guild utilise the 'GDPR Legitimate Use' bracket for collecting your data, this means while we can contact you about a Guild Event, for example, we cannot use the data to ask you for sponsorship.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions on this matter.

Stephen Stokes
General Secretary



FORTHCOMING NATIONAL VACANCIES



At the National AGM the following positions will be up for election, those who are interested in the roles are asked to submit a nominations form to the General Secretary (correctly filled out).

Please note that this does not exclude any person prior to the meeting standing with the correctly filled in nomination form, but Area Leaders may have already received instructions on how to vote.

General Secretary (5 years) – Stephen Stokes is willing to re-stand, if nominated
Welfare Officer (3 years) – Irene Money is willing to re-stand, if nominated
Training Officer (3 years) – Robert Beattie is willing to re-stand, if nominated
Liaison Officer (3 years) – Denise Mead is willing to re-stand, if nominated
Conference Secretary (3 years) – Margaret Burston is willing to re-stand, if nominated
Guild Chronicler (3 years) – James Armstrong is willing to re-stand, if nominated

While each of the above current Officers are willing to re-stand, (please see the Biographies on pages 6 & 7), this does not in any way preclude any Full Member of the Guild (save that as General Secretary & Guild Chronicler who may be Associate Members) standing for a role above.

Should you wish any further information please speak to the General Secretary: CEGVGenSec@gmail.com about the role (if you wish to speak to someone other than the General Secretary about the General Secretaries role then please contact the National Chairman: CEGVNatChair@gmail.com)

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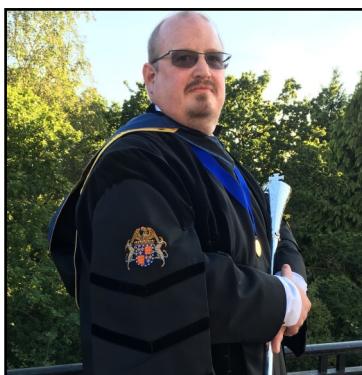
Established by Joyce Davison & Maureen Waterston in 1980



National Vacancies ~ Biographies



STEPHEN STOKES GENERAL SECRETARY NOMINATION



I am looking to stand as the General Secretary of the Guild for a further term.

I feel that I have contributed much towards enabling a forward thinking organisation and preparing it for the future. In the last six years I have, with my fellow Officers, brought a professional approach to Guild, fit for the 21st Century.

There is still much that I can contribute and would value the opportunity to continue the work. I have the full support of my Clergy team and have the resources to draw upon to carry out this role.

I would like your support to carry on this vital work, where I can be of service to you all and the Guild as a whole as we move to the centenary year.

Stephen Stokes

ROBERT BEATTIE TRAINING OFFICER NOMINATION



I have worked as a verger at Worcester Cathedral since 2006 and am still filled with quiet wonder some lucky few of us can actually get paid to attend daily Evensong.

Before that I had spent seven years studying mathematics, while gaining my first verger experience as a Chapelwarden in College and Relief Verger in my Parish.

I have served as Treasurer of the Guild's Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester branch since 2010, and have been Training Officer since last summer.

I haven't yet fulfilled all my ambitions for the post, and would like another three years to keep trying!

Robert Beattie

DENISE MEAD LIAISON OFFICER NOMINATION



I am currently employed by Croydon Minster, formerly Croydon Parish Church which is a large Parish Church in Croydon, Surrey about 10 miles outside London.

I am employed as the Verger & Parish Administrator. I work virtually full time 9 - 4 (except Thursdays) and I work Saturday mornings & Sundays for all our 3/4 services. I look after all the outside bookings for the church whether they are early morning or late at night. I verge for school services, weddings & funerals.

Within my Parish Administrator's role, I am the Vicar's Secretary, although that might change with a new, younger, computer-literate Vicar. However I manage the church halls & the car park and am the Girls' Choir Matron. I also look after all the tradesmen including those who want an early start and see to the regular maintenance of our 3 church houses.

I am happily married to Melvyn whom many of you may have met at various Guild festivals. I have one daughter who lives in Singapore and two wonderful step children who made me a grandma. I am lucky enough to have 4 delightful grandchildren.

I've been the Liaison Officer for over 3 years and would very much like to continue in this role. I think we are about to be having a new broom at the helm.

I always try to maintain the highest standards as the Verger of my church and I promote the Guild where I can, not only in the UK, but also by attending the American Episcopal Vergers Conference.

Denise Mead



National Vacancies ~ Biographies



IRENE MONEY WELFARE OFFICER NOMINATION



Since I joined the Guild of Vergers the one of many aspects of membership to me is 'family' and further to have been your Welfare officer it has become more so as I have discovered that our relationships with each other makes or breaks our working day, I am a lone Verger but never alone if you know what I mean.

There are many groups that call themselves family ,it can be a couple, a Church fellowship ,even a Branch. But within those there are the sick, isolated at home, or those closed in their own mind, the bereaved, and the disabled .

The one factor that brings us all together is our Faith and love in Christ. Since my own beloved son died at Christmas the Guild family has been vital for prayer and encouragement ,other than a sister and her family in Australia that's it.

So Guild of Verger's we are truly blessed by each other and we are never alone when we have the strength of Guild membership.

As a Branch Treasure I have deep sadness when I have to delete members from the membership list and even more so I guess when a Branch is closed. So let us be strong as we step forward into a new leadership and change determined that we can best serve our Lord reaching out to others in our Churches ,communities and Branches.

As this is supposed to be a biog I had better tell you I was born a long time ago but I don't count the years .

The Welfare department is there for you ,do not hesitate to use it.

Irene Money

MARGARET BURSTON CONFERENCE SECRETARY NOMINATION



I joined the guild in Sept 1992. I Completed 25 years last year and at the same time completing the Guild Diploma Course.

During the 25 years I've been Branch Secretary, Branch Chairman and Area Leader.

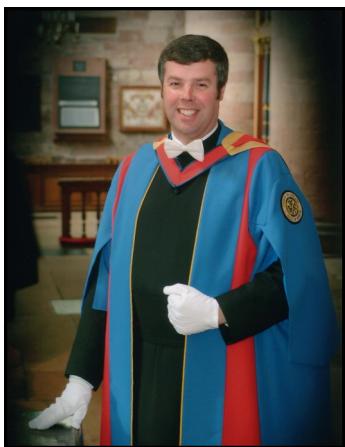
In 2010 I took over as Conference Secretary from the late Richard Falla.

I really enjoy all that I do as a Verger since being widowed, it is a very fulfilling job. I love meeting people especially at the Conference and it worked well with my nursing career (retired).

I also have my grandchildren and great grandchildren to keep me on my toes. I'm looking forward to this year's conference and seeing lots of old friends and new.

Margaret Burston

JAMES ARMSTRONG GUILD CHRONICLER NOMINATION



I was admitted into the Guild in 1983 and have held various positions within the local Branch, being presently Area Leader for the Durham and Newcastle Branch which includes Cumbria and all of Scotland.

I was elected as National Chairman of the CEGV in 1994 and served in that capacity until 2000. I was re-elected to that post in 2011 and again in 2014.

At present I am the Guild Chronicler, a post that was set up to record the activities of the Guild, which in the early days meant collecting all the Conference and Festival photos. So if you were thinking of taking on this role that is all that is required.

Alongside this role I have amassed a collection of other verger related articles and information.

I was awarded a Fellowship for outstanding service to the Guild in 2006.

James Armstrong



The Enthronement of the 133rd Bishop of London



SATURDAY 12th MAY 2018 AT SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, LONDON

I was fortunate to obtain a ticket for this historic event, as my Churchwardens were unable to attend. Arriving in good time I was appointed an aisle seat in the Nave. I was grateful to sit down after an hour out in the drizzle waiting for the doors to open, but I had enjoyed meeting folk in the queue from Salisbury, an Orthodox Priest and a previous Incumbent.

The Service began with uplifting organ music and a very long Procession led of course by a Verger, the Crucifer, Acolytes, Cathedral Choir, the Minor Canons, the Priest Vicar, another Verger leading the Chapter and Bishop of Exeter, another Verger leading the Chairs of the Houses of Laity and Clergy. Yet another Verger led the College of Canons, and a Verger for the Archdeacons.

It was at this point that I spotted our past Branch Chaplain, Stephan Welch, (the Archdeacon of Middlesex), followed by the Bishops of the Diocese of London. Our past National Chairman, Chris Crookes, in his capacity as Vesturer (Head Verger) of Canterbury Cathedral virged the Archdeacon of Canterbury who was representing the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, followed by the Provincial Registrar. One more Verger led the Chapter, the Registrar and the Chancellor of the Diocese.



The new Bishop of London struck the Great West Door three times with her pastoral staff and the doors opened to a fanfare. The first hymn was 'Christ is made the sure foundation'. The reading of the Mandate, the Declaration of Assent and other important Allegiances followed this, and Statutes were read. The second hymn was 'O thou who camest from above'.

Holding the Archbishop's Mandate, the Venerable Joanne Kelly-Moore, the Archdeacon of the Cathedral and Metropolitical Church of Christ in Canterbury inducted and installed the new Bishop of London, Her Grace, Dame Sarah Elisabeth Mullally, to her cathedra throne.

In her sermon Bishop Sarah spoke of the challenges facing London, in particular escalating knife crime, and referenced historical sexual abuse within the Church.

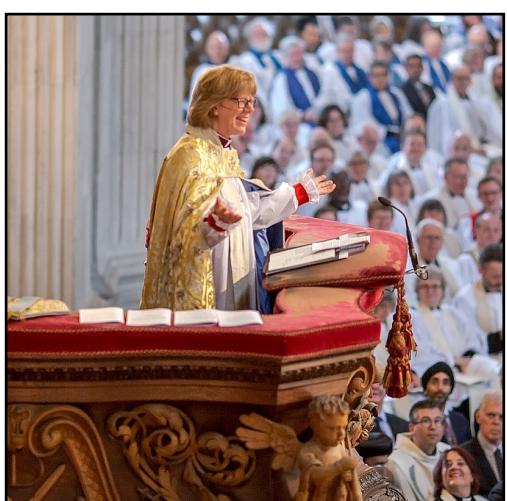
She called for a culture that "challenges deference and the abuse of power" and for victims of abuse to be listened to. She added: "We need to speak up for the whole of London, to work to challenge the violence and the crime that have led mothers to clean their own children's blood from our pavements. Could there be a starker image or a more urgent wake-up call for all who love this city, who believe it can have an even better future?"

She continued with "105 years ago this week suffragettes placed a bomb under the seat in which I have just been enthroned. Vergers were just as eagle eyed then as they are now, and the bomb didn't go off. Let me reassure you I do not come carrying bombs – or perhaps not literal ones anyway! But I am aware that as the first woman Bishop of London I am necessarily subversive – and it's a necessity I intend to embrace."

I know that over the coming years I will make mistakes, and I know that I will not always fulfil your expectations. At times I will feel overwhelmed. But, underneath all this, I know I am called and that God who has called me is faithful.

We have a church, which is rooted in scripture and tradition, but not afraid to re-imagine the future. This is the sort of church and community that I believe the Lord has called me to assist in fostering, here in this Diocese. Will you join me?"

The Prayers of Intercession were led by the Youth Ambassadors from Edmonton, Kensington, Stepney and Willesden. The last hymn was 'There's a wideness in God's mercy'. Followed at the West door by The Saint Michael and All Angels Steel Band from Brent on the Portico of the Cathedral.



I felt privileged to have been present at this very historic event.

**Irene Money MBE, DipGV
London, Southwark & Chelmsford Branch Treasurer and National Welfare Officer**



At a private presentation our Branch Chairman, Peter Young and Branch Secretary, Margaret Burston, met with our former long standing Chaplain, Canon Graham Lyall and his wife Sue, our former Branch Secretary at their home in Worcester.

Both were presented with Branch Life Membership certificates and a book token with the grateful thanks from all past and present members of this Branch for all Graham's generous, caring and sincere pastoral support. Graham and Sue were delighted with this surprise and expressed their thanks to all.

Branch Quiet Day

On the 10th April seventeen members gathered for a very special break from daily life at a change of venue this year; the Worcester Diocesan Retreat Centre, Holland House, within Crofton village. Members weren't let down by this change, both the ambience and food were first class, never mind the company and leadership.

The leader for the day was the Reverend Shelia Nall from Saint Stephen's Parish in Worcester. Shelia had kindly agreed at the last moment to lead this annual day of prayer, study and Holy Communion, and the members were extremely grateful.

The 22nd May sees the Branch gathering at Saint Christopher's Church, Warden Hill, Cheltenham, for a spectacular display of stained glass windows by the renowned artist, Tom Denny.

Philip A M Dunne - Branch Correspondent



We all know the words to 'Flanders & Swans' song ~ "Mud Mud Glorious Mud" well at the time of starting to write this report we are covered in "Snow Snow Glorious Snow!" "The Beast from the East".

Ipswich Branch were due to have their AGM at Linton, but because of the above it was put back a week in the hope that all the 'white stuff' had gone and yes 'NO SNOW', instead it was a beautifully clear day. The snow is now just a distant memory. A change of venue for the AGM took us to Bury, AGM's are very quickly sorted, time to catch up and reflect on the past year, Branch Officers are voted in and plans for the year ahead made.

As this would have been the full extent of my report I thought you would like to hear about an exhibition that was held in Ipswich at Christchurch Mansion - "THOMAS WOLSEY - Ipswich's Greatest Son", the part I want to focus on is the 'Wolsey Angels'. The exhibition had been extended for a further month due to the high demand.

The four bronze angels were commissioned in 1524 as part of a magnificent tomb reflecting Cardinal Wolsey's wealth and statesmanship. The angels, each measuring a metre in height, they were created to stand at each corner of his tomb, but due to Wolsey's inability to persuade the Pope to annul the marriage of Henry VIII to Catherine of Aragon, which led to his fall from power, this never came to pass. He died in 1530. Along with Wolsey's possessions, most of the tomb (including the angels) were appropriated by Henry VIII who intended to use it for himself, which never happened.



The angels remained unknown until two of them appeared in an auction in 1994; the remaining pair were discovered at Harrowden Hall in Northamptonshire (now owned by the Wellingborough Golf Club) where all four angels once stood on top of gateposts. The V&A raised the £5000,000 needed to complete the purchase of the angels aided by a grant of £2000,000 from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund and the friends of the V&A and many other private individuals and trusts, and members of the public also contributed to their eventual purchase.

They are stunning, it was a real pleasure to be able to see them and admire the workmanship in detail from all those years ago up close, but they are unfortunately without their wings, we spent a good hour or more just taking in the whole of the exhibition. If you are lucky enough to have the exhibition visit your part of the country do try and get to see them, you will not be disappointed.

Until next time God Bless

Jean Cobb - Branch Correspondent



SPRING MEETINGS

We began our spring meetings with a lunch at Saint Crispin's Church Hall, Braunstone, on Monday 19th March. The meal consisted of a choice of starter, a main course of ham salad with roast potatoes and parsnips or chicken with vegetables, and a choice of dessert. The meal on the whole was very tasty and we finished with tea or coffee.

The Chairman thanked the Caterers and presented them with some Ferrero Rocher chocolates between them. She also thanked everyone for coming, especially our guests, the Reverend Arthur Deegan, Team Rector in retirement of that Church, and his wife, and Ann Anderson for organising the lunch. Thirteen members of the Branch attended, along with our Branch Chaplain, the Reverend Canon John Tonkin, and his wife Margaret.

On Monday 16th April we met at Saint Mary's Church, Humberstone. Sadly, there were only five members present, some were on holiday, some were poorly, whilst others may have got the change of date wrong.

The Vicar being absent due to another commitment, Les Mitchelmore, our Area Leader and Verger of Saint Mary's, led us in a service beginning with the hymn "Now the green blade riseth", and with a short address and a reading on the theme of Easter followed by Compline. At the end we had a musical version of the Blessing by John Rutter played on a CD and sung by the Cambridge Singers. This was a lovely way to end our worship. After the service we were provided with refreshments by Les. The Chairman thanked him for hosting the evening.

Our next meetings will be as follows: Monday 23rd July at All Saint, Paston, Peterborough, at 7.30 p.m. This will be for the Admission of a new member, David Wood, from Peterborough Cathedral.

Monday 20th August at Our Lady and Saint Nicholas Church, Wanlip, at 7.30 p.m. This will be a special meeting to celebrate the Golden Wedding of two of our members.

Monday 24th September at Holy Apostles Church, Leicester, at 7.30 p.m.

Marjorie Thomas, Dip GV - Branch Chairman & Correspondent



A LENTEN VISIT TO BOSTON



At our AGM in January we decided to experiment with our meeting times. Our three bi-monthly winter meetings would now be in the afternoon, whilst our three summer meetings would still continue as evening meetings. So it was that in the afternoon of Thursday 22nd March we met at Saint Botolph's Church, Boston, better known as Boston Stump.

We were fortunate to be given a guided tour of their exhibition 'Stations of the Holocaust' by their creator, Jean Lamb. Jean is a professional artist and Associate Priest in the Church of England with over thirty years experience of making art for and with the Christian community.

Previously exhibited at Chichester, Norwich and Coventry Cathedrals, these fourteen Stations of the Cross follow the last hours of Jesus' life, from his trial to his burial. Each image is set against a powerful image of the Holocaust. They are made carved in Elm wood, cast and then painted.



On a lighter note, we also inspected progress on the Lego model of the stump ([see the Photo on the Front Cover](#)). This fund raising idea has also been used by Durham, Chester and Exeter Cathedrals. Visitors can buy a brick for £1, (mine is in the toilets - where else?) and receive a certificate. It is expected to take about three years to complete, and will be about 6½ feet high, 6 feet long and 2½ feet wide (2 metres x 1.8 metres x 0.8 metres), and will contain 100,000 bricks.

The meeting ended as always with refreshments - tea and cake free from the Stump's Café. Thank you to Adam Kelk, Head Verger, for organising the visit.

Colin Beevers - Branch Correspondent

Pictures: The Boston Stump; Jesus' Trial - Jesus stands trial before Pilate as women & children are herded along the railway tracks into sheds at Birkenau Concentration Camp; The Artist - Jean Lamb; Jesus & Mary - Mary says goodbye to Jesus before the crucifixion as victims of the Nazi Action Squads unloaded from vans comfort each other before being shot.



QUIET DAY AT DOUAI ABBEY: TUESDAY 27th FEBRUARY

On a very cold morning in February, some of our members met at Douai Abbey for our Spring Quiet Day.

We started our day with a service of Holy Communion, celebrated by our Honorary Branch Chaplain, the Reverend Marie Jackson.

Our Chairman, Michael Golby, then introduced Dr Marianne Dorman, who was in the UK from Australia on a lecture tour and she had very kindly extended her visit to talk to us. Her theme was 'Discipleship in the Johannine Gospel', a fascinating subject that expanded Saint John's Gospel for us.

At midday we joined the Brothers for their lovely, peaceful service before enjoying a very nice lunch.

After lunch we reassembled to hear Session 2 with Dr Marianne Dorman, when she gave us several very interesting points for contemplation,

- I. 'Come and see'. What do you want from Jesus when we receive this invitation?
- II. The Samaritan woman at the well. How would you respond if it was you?
- III. The man born blind. How did you grow in enlightenment after baptism?
- IV. The raising of Lazarus. How do you look upon death and are you prepared?
- V. Washing of the feet by Jesus. How do you see your servant role in your ministry?

Our grateful thanks to Dr Marianne for a very interesting and erudite day, which left us with a lot to think about.

VISIT TO WALTHAM SAINT LAWRENCE TUESDAY 15th MAY

On Tuesday 15th May some of the members of the Branch met at the Parish Church of Waltham Saint Lawrence. This is a very old church, a Grade II* listed building, which dates back to 1086.

We began our day with the usual refreshments – seemingly compulsory for every get-together – this was followed by a quiet service of Holy Communion conducted by the Vicar, the Reverend Charles Mason. After the service we were at liberty to explore the church and marvel at its ancient history. So many plaques and stones noting the people who had lived, worshipped and died in the Parish, including some little children and babies, a very sobering thought that life was so precarious many years ago. There is a memorial to a lady who died in 1855 who was the pew opener for 22 years in the days of the box pews.

After exploring this beautiful, old church, we adjourned to the local hostelry for lunch where we were entertained to some hilarious anecdotes by Simon Shergold. Replete with good food and ribs aching with laughter we ended our visit to Waltham Saint Lawrence.

Our thanks to Verger Mrs. Chris Howell and the Vicar, Reverend Charles Mason, for organizing such an interesting day.

Heather Ringrose
Branch Correspondent

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YORK BRANCH NEWS



Since our last correspondence the York Branch have been busy. Our Christmas lunch was in York at the Palm Court Hotel, opposite the west door of the Minster. Joined by Cannon Maureen we were treated like royalty and had a lovely time there. A small amount raised for charity went to the Lifeboat Association.

In January we welcomed two new members, Gail and Alan, who were admitted during the Holy Communion Service at Saint Michael-le-Belfry. Afterwards we had an indoor picnic as we sat down to the AGM. The New Year saw some changes and your trusty Branch Correspondent was voted in to take on the Chairperson's role. Our Branch Chaplain, Reverend Marian Gardner, remains in post taking care of our spiritual needs. Our Treasurer and Branch Secretary, Angela Hamilton, also remains in post.

We discussed the need for members to be up to date with safeguarding procedures and encouraged training with the relevant Diocese.

In April we visited Leeds Minster (once known as the Parish Church) and were made very welcome by the Caretaker and Church Guides. If you haven't been it is well worth a visit. The wooden mistral gallery seating arrangement is still in place and up until last December one of the box pews that was still paying rent!

There are some splendid things to look at, the large plain glass etched with a scene of Jacob's ladder dominates the entrance. The mosaic apostles behind the high altar are worth a closer look. They were designed to shine when the church was lit with candles.

New associate member Andrew was admitted during the service held in the Lady Chapel. We took part in the open service and were joined by members of the congregation. Afterwards we headed off a very short distance to the Lamb and Flag and had a very enjoyable lunch.



Lady Chapel Leeds Minster



Left panel mosaic, Leeds Minster

Su Graves

Chairperson & Branch Correspondent

Photographs by Gail Lynn Taylor McMillan



FROM THE BOURNEMOUTH & CHANNEL ISLANDS BRANCH



CONGRATULATIONS

At the Annual Training Conference in 2017, Paula Lincoln, who is a member of our Branch and the Virger at the Royal Marines base in Poole, Dorset, was awarded the Church of England Guild of Vergers Diploma with Honours. Paula is now our Area Leader.

We are very proud of Paula as she has been having treatment for cancer and it took her three years to achieve this.

Vera Gale
Branch Secretary

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

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