



The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey

Newsletter - November 2018

Welcome from the Chairman

Dear Friends

It is a great delight to send you this year's Autumn Newsletter. Since I last wrote, in this year's Annual Report, the Friends have had an extremely fruitful and enjoyable time. Friends' Festival on July 8th was a huge success. We welcomed many members to the various services and a pleasing number to the AGM and talk by Rev Joanne Wetherall, which was preceded by a Bring and Share lunch attended by almost a hundred. Following Evensong the day concluded with a joyful musical event on Abbey House lawn: "Brass on the Grass", a festive concert given by Tewkesbury Town Band. In what is fast becoming a Friends' tradition we extended our celebrations into Monday with a thoroughly enjoyable outing to Glastonbury and Wells, an account of which can be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.



Beautiful weather for the Friends' Festival meant a good number chose to take their lunch outside



'Brass on the Grass' in a fabulous setting

Our most recent event was a hugely successful lecture by Adrian Barlow on the Abbey's Stained Glass. Held on October 26th this was attended by about 60 Friends. Young Friends too continue to enjoy a varied programme of activities organised with imagination and skill by Joanne Raywood.

Our primary purpose as an organisation is, of course, to assist the Vicar, Churchwardens and PCC in their responsibility of maintaining the Abbey, and again in 2018 we have been able to do so by contributing significantly to the refurbishment of the Milton Organ and to a programme of minor works in addition to the provision of our annual grant to the Fabric Fund. We have just committed funds for urgent work on the roof of the Camera Cantorum.

This year has seen an exciting development in the establishment of a working partnership between the Abbey and the University of Exeter arising out of the need for us, in common with all Cathedrals and Greater Churches, to devise a Conservation Management Plan. This is necessary in order to access grant funding and also to obtain the necessary permissions to undertake major work in and around the Abbey. Exeter University has created a scholarship for a PhD student to undertake research work on the history, architecture and archaeology of the Abbey, which will be incorporated into a CMP. The Friends have agreed to sponsor the Abbey's share of the joint costs of this course and the PhD student will be known as The Friends' Scholar. We are delighted to welcome Eleanor

March in this role and look forward to working alongside her.

We have been pleased to have been in a position to make a series of very generous grants to the PCC over recent years, several of which have run to six figures. In addition to those mentioned above we have, you'll remember, financed new sound and lighting installations, major work on the south side of the church and repairs to the north porch. Inevitably this has meant an enormous amount of expenditure. We have been fortunate for many years past to benefit from a number of very large legacies, which have given us the luxury of being able to help the PCC from existing funds. Sadly, over recent years, we have not been in receipt of such large legacies and so the finance we have available is reducing significantly. We have not been helped by a very volatile investment climate. All of this means that if we are to continue to be generous Friends to the Abbey we need to become far more proactive in the raising of funds, especially as 2021 approaches. Council is therefore beginning to devise a strategy to replenish our coffers. Two developments in particular are already under consideration. Subscriptions were last revised in 2005, since when inflation has risen by 45% and a minimum annual subscription of £10 barely pays for the cost of the Annual Report and associated mailing. We are therefore contemplating an increase in both annual subscriptions and Life Membership fees. A proposal will be brought to the 2019 AGM with a view to implementing the increase in January 2020. We hope that this will afford adequate notice. Additionally, and in order to enable us to make a significant contribution to the 900th anniversary of the consecration in 2021, we are anticipating a major fund-raising drive in 2019/20. We are hoping that Friends will wish to dig deep to help us support the celebration of this remarkable milestone.

Before then, however, the Friends hope to maintain an exciting programme of events. On January 14th 2019 Schola Cantorum are to sing Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral and the Friends are organising an outing to London, which will also include a visit to the headquarters of St John's in Clerkenwell and also to St Bartholomew's Hospital, with its Great Hall and

William Hogarth murals. Further details will be available soon. We can also give advance notice of the 2019 Fitzhamon Lecture which will be on Saturday April 27th and given by Professor Joyce Hill.

I should like to record here my thanks to all those who work so tirelessly on our behalf for the good of the Abbey and its Friends. In particular, gratitude is due to all members of Council, who have been a source of tremendous support and encouragement to me. We are especially indebted to Karen Vincent our extraordinary Administrator, to Hugh Sweet, the Friends' indefatigable Treasurer, and to Joanne Raywood who continues to work wonders with and for Young Friends. Thank you.

You will find a list of Christmas Services below, from the Advent Carol service on December 2nd to the Epiphany Carol Service and Procession with Candle Displays on January 6th 2019. I hope to meet many of you at one or more of those services and I conclude by wishing you and your loved ones a blessed and peaceful Christmas.

Graham Finch, Chairman

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY AT THE ABBEY

Sunday 2nd December

Advent Carol Service 6.00 pm

Sunday 23rd December

Nine Lessons and Carols 6.00 pm

Monday 24th December

Christingle Service 4.00 pm

Midnight Mass 11.30 pm

Tuesday 25th December

Christmas Day Eucharist 10.30 am

Sunday 6th January

Epiphany Carols 6.00 pm



The Friends' visit to Glastonbury Abbey and Wells Cathedral: Monday 8th July 2018

By happy chance our coach driver, Norman, arrived earlier than scheduled. Everyone had been asked (there were thirty-three of us) to be at The Crescent by 8.15am but the vast majority were as early as Norman so were able to board immediately without having to wait in the already warm sunshine - "rather too warm" sunshine was to be a feature of the day. The coach was new and very smart, with wonderful air conditioning, which was a joy. So in good time I gave out the information literature to everyone and we were on our way.

We arrived in Glastonbury promptly, which meant we had time to have a drink etc. before our tour, which was given by an excellent guide called Edmund. It is vast, impressive site but our thoughtful guide managed to sure we were standing in the shade whilst he explained clearly some of the highlights of the Abbey's long and complex history. The visit made one sense again what a tragedy the Reformation was in so many



A group of Friends listens to our guide, Edmund, amid the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey

ways and what irreplaceable architectural jewels, like Glastonbury Abbey itself, were lost.

Afterwards we got back into our, thankfully, cool coach and were driven to Wells..

We arrived at Wells in a little street that led directly onto the front green of the Cathedral, so we were rewarded immediately with the glorious view of the West Front. By now it was lunchtime and most of us were feeling a little hungry following our early start. Wells is a very small place but has many eateries to satisfy all tastes. Along with eight others Alan and I chose the safe option of the Cathedral Cafe and had a very pleasant, if unexciting lunch. Others were braver and some found a nice pub.

Afterwards most of our small 'cafe' group decided to visit St. Cuthbert's Church. It had been recommended by our Archivist, Pat Webley and certainly did not disappoint; its beautiful vault over the nave and the unpainted one in a side chapel were outstanding. Then we went to Vicars' Close, a stunningly beautiful row of 14th century houses formerly the dwellings of the Cathedral's lay clerks. It is a "must" when visiting Wells and most members of our group went to see it.

After taking numerous photographs we all decided it was too hot to explore further so headed to the Bishop's Palace gardens, where we sat under the trees and ate ice creams! Others visited The Palace itself and tell me they enjoyed it enormously, whilst the more energetic of us went for a walk along the very pretty river in the grounds.

Then it was time for our tour, in two groups, of the Cathedral. The first joy was seeing the nave without seats, as it would have been in medieval times (they were due to start filming later that day and needed it empty). Whilst waiting for our tours we all sat on the old wall seats kept in medieval times for "the weakest". Our guide was called Peter who turned out to be an old friend of our Treasurer Hugh, who was part of our group and both were delighted to see one another again. The other group's guide was called Ben. From what I heard in the Chapter House Ben had a wonderful singing voice.



A view of the famous Vicars' Close

Peter gave us a superb tour. The highlights for me were the aforementioned Chapter House, which is breathtaking and, of course, the famous medieval clock, which is absolutely extraordinary. We had an 'add on' to our tour, as Peter took us outside and gave us the history of that magnificent West Front.

After the tours we had a short break before Evensong. As it was not term time Evensong was sung by a visiting choir, in this case all the way from Alabama, who sang very nicely.

Then it was to the coach where Norman was waiting to drive us home. We had a bit of an unexpected diversion south of Bristol as there had been an accident on the M5 and he had been advised to find an alternative route. In spite of this we arrived at The Crescent only six minutes late.

It had been a long, hot day but many assured me it had been well worth it. We had certainly seen some beautiful things.

May I take this opportunity to thank Claire Redstone for producing such a nice booklet for everyone from the very plain itinerary and map supplied by me, and thanks also to the lovely group of Friends who came on the trip and never got lost, were never late and were still smiling after a long, hot day.

Patricia Purkiss

A further report of the day, from Spen and Cathy Instone, and many more photographs, are available on the Friends' website:

www.friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk/events-activities/visits/

New Friends' Website

The single page the Friends maintained on the Abbey's own website was no longer able to contain all the news, events and photographs which has been generated from the increase in activities by The Friends and Young Friends and so The Friends now have their own dedicated website, and the link on the Abbey's own site now takes you directly to it. The site includes news updates, an Events Calendar, reports and photographs from the events and activities, newsletters and annual reports in electronic formats and some governance documents such as the Friends' Constitution. Do visit the site if you have not already done so:

www.friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk



Young Friends



The Abbey's Director of Music, Mr Carleton Etherington, shows the console of the newly refurbished Milton Organ to a Young Friend

On the 3rd November Young Friends enjoyed another fascinating morning in the Abbey; on this occasion discovering how to ring the bells and how the newly refurbished Milton Organ works. Everybody was able to enjoy the challenge of making a big noise, but outside in the town nobody could hear a thing as the bells were in silent mode, while inside the Abbey Carleton Etherington pulled out all the stops for an impromptu performance of Widor's toccata. Thank you so much to Carleton, to David and Ruth Bagley, Malcolm and Sheila Taylor, James Raywood, Fr Sebastian Hamilton, Graham Finch and Sue Coulton for all their help in the Abbey. The children were thoroughly educated and entertained.

Our morning was followed by lunch in the Abbey Hall. My thanks go to Margaret Wilson, for so very kindly finding time in her busy schedule to provide soup. Thanks also go to Ruth Bagley for her scrummy tray bakes. In the Hall, the Young Friends also met the knitted monks, who will be our responsibility from now on. Thank you to Trish Fearnley for making the

introductions. We will do our best to continue her good work.

Planned events for the Young Friends will see them playing a key part in a range of events within the Abbey's calendar:

- 24th November – helping at the Christmas Fair
- 22nd December – Christingle making
- 5th January – Candle display for Epiphany
- Rogation 2019 – next year's planned walk will take us through the nature reserve to the eastern boundary of our parish
- August 1st – The Young Friends will make Lammas bread for use on at the MDS Eucharist on the following Sunday.

A lovely selection of books, all relevant in one way or another to the Abbey, has recently been donated to the Young Friends and it is hoped that these will be made easily accessible at the Abbey for the Young Friends to use.

Joanne Raywood, Young Friends Coordinator



Beating the bounds in 2018 included crossing the Severn by boat to mark the boundary. Water will feature again in the route for 2019 (this is Tewkesbury after all) but hopefully no boats will be required!

**Tewkesbury Abbey's Stained Glass:
its history and preservation
Friday 26th October 2018**

Many Friends and friends of Friends gathered to fill the parish hall to listen to a fascinating lecture by Mr Adrian Barlow on the subject of the stained glass in Tewkesbury Abbey. In addition to information about the seven mid-14th century windows that encircle the high altar, Mr Barlow presented insights into the importance of the glass from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, and introduced many to the value of the conservation work undertaken by CE Kempe & Co in 1923-24.

Mr Barlow's connection with Tewkesbury Abbey dates from a memorable childhood visit and his affection for the place came through. I am sure that I am not the only one who,



following this lecture, now enters the Abbey looking out for the green glass and quizzical faces which I had previously paid no attention to, and taken a closer look at the fragments in the Sacristy windows which date from the 15th and 16th centuries.

This was also an evening to socialise with food and wine generously provided by the Events Committee, and was an excellent opportunity to be introduced to Ellie March, the Friends' Scholar. With so many treasures to discover in the Abbey I am sure that pleasant evenings such as these will continue as a regular feature of the Friends' calendar for many years to come.

Karen Vincent

Adrian Barlow's professional career was centred on the study, teaching and promotion of English Literature. Writing and lecturing remain important in retirement, including particular interest in architecture and stained glass.

www.adrianbarlow.co.uk

The Friends' Scholar



Eleanor March

I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to the Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey for funding this fantastic PhD which I cannot wait to get stuck into.

I have always been interested in medieval monasteries and church archaeology more generally, but I am also passionate about community engagement and exploring avenues relating to the heritage and conservation management of sites. Consequently, this project, for me, represents a unique and exciting opportunity to combine these interests. I look forward to exploring the medieval history and archaeology of Tewkesbury during the course of my research but also working closely with the Abbey team to develop the conservation management plan, which will hopefully play a positive and active role in the future development of the site.

I look forward to our initial project planning/management meeting and to establishing a strong relationship with you over the course of the next few years.

Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity.

Ellie

You can find out more about Ellie from her online scholar profile:

<http://publications.exeter.ac.uk/tewkesbury-scholar-introduction#!/scholar-profile>

FRIENDS' EVENTS IN 2019

Monday 14th January 2019

Visit to the City of London: the Order of St John's, St Bartholomew's Hospital and St Paul's Cathedral

Our visit to the City of London will start in Clerkenwell at The Priory of England and the Islands, the home of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem. The Order is believed to have been founded in the 11th century. Our Vicar, who has organised this visit, is an officer of the Order and Sub-Dean of the Priory. This particular historic site, which is built around the original round church founded by the Knights of St John, was consecrated in 1185. In the 16th century it was the office of the Master of the Revels, where Shakespeare's plays were licensed. Now only the crypt survives. In the 18th century the Gate was used as a coffee house run by Richard Hogarth, father of the painter William Hogarth.

The walk from St John's Gate to our next stop, St Bartholomew's Hospital, is easy and takes us through Smithfield meat market and past the church of St Bartholomew the Great. Bart's Hospital was founded by Rahere the monk in 1123 and is the oldest hospital in the UK still on its original site. Rahere also built the church of St Bartholomew the Less which you pass as you enter through the Henry VIII gate. The hospital is unique in being a parish in its own right. The hospital is now an annexe of the Royal London Hospital and houses their cardiology and radiotherapy units. We will visit the Great Hall of the hospital, now run by a trust separate from the NHS. We access the hall up the staircase on which there is a mural of Christ at the Pool of Bethesda by William Hogarth.

A short walk down Old Bailey from the hospital brings us to Ludgate Hill and a historic view of the famous portico of St Paul's Cathedral. Included in your ticket is the entrance fee and an audio guide and maps of the Cathedral. The refectory serves teas and closes just before Evensong, which will be sung by our own Schola Cantorum.

Dr Andrew Crowther



St John's Gate, Clerkenwell

By User:Misterweiss - Own work by the original uploader, Public Domain,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=49175913>

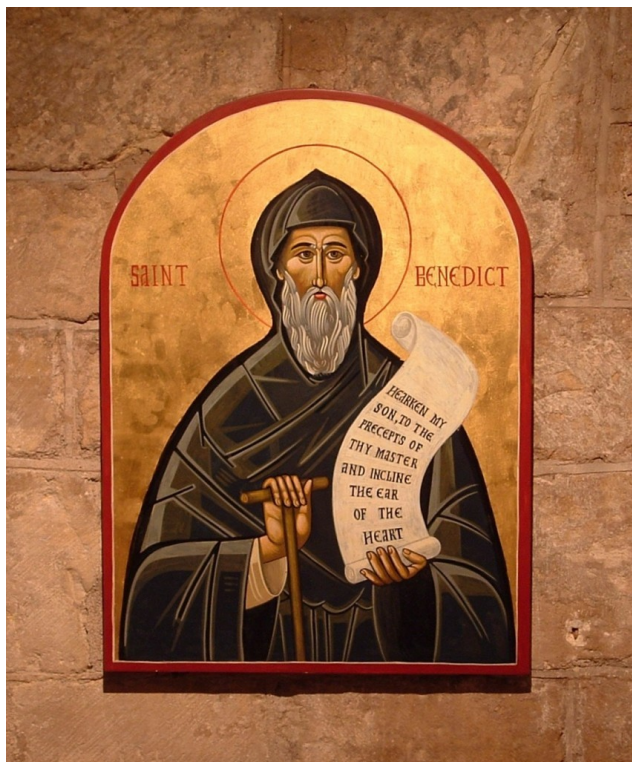
Itinerary for the trip:

7.30am Leave Tewkesbury Crescent
c11.00am Arrive St. John's, Clerkenwell
11.30am Tour of St. John's headquarters and museum
12.45pm Free time and Lunch, allow 7 minutes walk from St John's
2.00pm Tour of Bart's Hospital historic areas, viewing Hogarth mural and Great Hall.
7 minutes walk to St. Paul's Cathedral
3.00pm An audio tour of the Cathedral at own pace with maps
5.00pm Evensong, sung by Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum
6.15pm Leave St Paul's
c9.30pm Arrive The Crescent, Tewkesbury

PRICE £62 per head, includes all entrance fees, coach, and gratuities.

Full details and booking via an application form which can be downloaded from the Friends website (link on the homepage), collected from the Friends' Table in the north aisle, or by contacting the Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey via the Abbey Office.

Saturday 27th April 2019
Annual Fitzhamon Lecture



**“Tewkesbury’s
Benedictine Heritage”
Professor Joyce Hill**

Postponed from 2018, this fully-illustrated lecture will explore the great heritage of Tewkesbury Abbey as a fitting climax to a remarkable series of Benedictine foundations in the 10th and 11th centuries, set in the larger context of the monastic history of Anglo-Saxon England, when Benedictine communities were centres of art and learning.

**The Friends’ Festival Sunday in
2019 is 7th July – put it in your
diary NOW! Details to follow.**



HOW TO CONTACT THE FRIENDS ...

By email to:

admin@friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk

chair@friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk

youngfriends@friendsoftewkesburyabbey.org.uk

Please add our email addresses to your electronic Contacts list – it will help to stop emails from The Friends being treated as ‘Spam’ or ‘Junk’ by your email provider.

By post to:

The Friends of Tewkesbury Abbey, c/o Abbey
Office, Church Street, Tewkesbury, GL20 5RZ

Do let us know if any of your contact details change, we do not want to lose touch with you!

General Data Protection Regulations

Thank you to all who returned their ‘yellow form’ or updated contact details online to ensure that The Friends remain compliant with the legal changes that took effect in May 2018. It is not too late to return your form if you have not already done so! The Council of the Friends have also taken this opportunity to review and update their Data Protection and Privacy Policies and these are available for download from the Friends’ website, or by post from The Friends’ Administrator. All contact details are on the back of this newsletter.



Autumn at the Abbey