

InHouse

the Journal of the Lincoln Cathedral Community Association



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The Old Deanery

It was probably four years ago when I visited the newly stripped-out school premises in what was originally the Old Deanery.

Then it was a dingy, worn out shell smelling vaguely of school, boys and mildew – not a very promising start for what would become the sparkling, state-of-the-art Visitor Centre.

The *InHouse* Team were given a private viewing of the new premises by the Sub Dean and it was quite impossible to correlate the old memory with the new facts – it is simply splendid! Light, airy, fresh, and clean with marvellous windows looking out onto the beautifully landscaped gardens.

We entered by the front, grand entrance on Eastgate; the automatic glass inner doors lead to a short flight of stairs leading into the great hall – but never fear, those of us with mobility problems! At the touch of a button, part of the floor rises up to form a movable platform and – hey presto! – You are taken, wheelchair and all into the hall! Which is grand with a lovely circular staircase winding up to the upper floors – lifts provided, of course – or through elegant doors into the spacious areas overlooking the gardens to the west, the new built exhibition areas and north facing, sheltered courtyard which is beautifully planted with an interesting gravel garden.

A picture is worth a thousand words, so until you are able to visit the centre when it finally opens – and in the current climate who knows when that will be – our photographers will give you a glimpse of the splendour we shall be able to enjoy in future!





Climbing mountains

Andrea Paterson

'Oh no! the gym's closed so I can't go swimming, how am I going to get my exercise?' This was one of my first thoughts at the beginning of the Covid-19 lockdown.

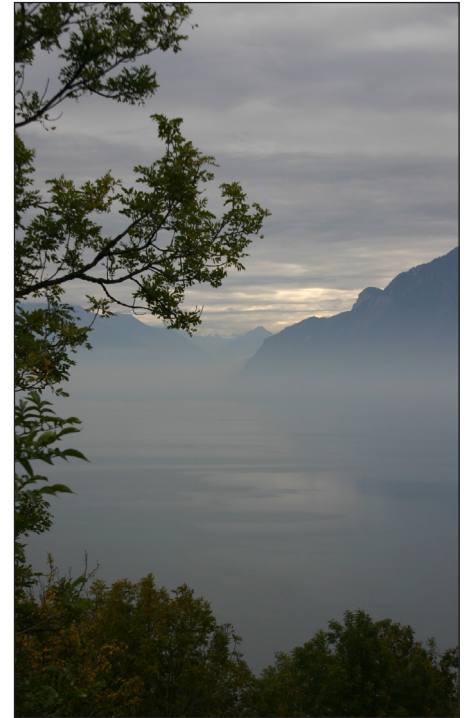
A friend suggested the Stair Climb Challenge so I looked it up and was immediately taken by the idea of climbing buildings and mountains in my own house. Therefore, in week one I set myself a target of 21 flights of stairs or, to put it into a virtual reality context, climbing the Millennium Dome. The feeling of achievement I felt on completing this challenge was enormous and my eldest grandson was soon telling his friends about his Grandma who climbed buildings.

Since then, every week I have increased my target number of flights and in 11 weeks have now climbed most of the famous buildings in the world – all with the added advantage of not having to leave my

front door. The list included, in the UK, Big Ben, Blackpool Tower, and Canary Wharf; and further afield, Sydney Opera House, Petronas Towers in Malaysia and the CN Tower in Toronto.

Having climbed the highest buildings in the work, it was a natural progression to start ascending mountains. My conquests so far have included Snowdon and Ben Nevis and last week reached the half-way point up Mont Blanc.

Psalm 121 starts "I lift my eyes to the mountains – where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth". This statement resonates with me and my on-going challenge not only gives me a sense of self-worth but also reminds me that, by breaking down previously insurmountable objects into smaller pieces, anything is achievable.



Editor's note: for further information about the stair climbing challenge, visit the British Heart Foundation website at www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/publications/health-at-work/health-at-work-stair-climb-challenge

A word from the editor

Muriel Robinson

So here we are again, in a digital-only edition for the second time. We hope that you will find something of interest here and that our publication can help you feel more in touch with the Cathedral and its community.

In Margaret Campion's piece on keeping in touch, she talks about the many lost informal moments, such as the conversations over coffee on a Sunday. As an editorial team we have all felt this loss particularly in terms of hearing what is going on and approaching the relevant people to write about it for us or to talk to us so we can write it with you. As a result, this time we are conscious that we have a much narrower range of contributors than usual and too many articles with our names at the end! Do please consider whether you can offer us an article that might be of interest to our readership, which includes not only LCCA members and regular wor-

shippers but visitors to the Cathedral website from anywhere across the globe. You can find details of deadlines and so forth in the editorial information in each issue.

Keeping in touch remains a constant theme for us all. Some of us will have made tentative forays into socially distanced catchups with friends and family, whilst others are still shielding. None of us are living the lives we lived before March, and every encounter has to be approached with caution. Who would have thought back then that we would be worshipping in such distanced seats in the nave, in masks, and unable to sing or meet socially after the service? We are lucky, however, that our cathedral has the space to offer us even this socially-distanced worship.

Out in the diocese, not every church has been able to open. Issues of isolation are even more real if your parish priest is themselves shielding, or the regular volunteers are older and unable to help much. One beacon of hope has been the

regular videos from the Bishops' Office by Bishop David and Bishop Nicholas. These are there for us as much as for anyone else in the diocese, and can be found on the diocesan website – for example, this August reflection from Bishop Nicholas on isolation www.lincoln.anglican.org/news/a-reflection-from-bishop-nicholas-17th-august-2020 or both Bishops' addresses to the July Diocesan Synod (virtual of course) which both set out challenges to us all around diversity and privilege (www.lincoln.anglican.org/news/are-we-not-being-shaken-awake) and explained the radical steps being considered by the diocese for the future in a series of videos by Bishop David, the latest at the time of writing being at www.lincoln.anglican.org/news/a-reflection-from-bishop-david-26th-august-2020. You can also follow the Bishops' Office on Facebook to see these videos as they go live (www.facebook.com/pg/lincolnbishopsoffice/posts/). They really are worth watching, and perhaps help us to remember that we are part of the diocese!

Keeping in touch

Margaret Campion

It's been a problem for many, I think we can all agree, but the end is in sight – I am writing this at the end of June and already I can have six people in the garden at the same time. Hurrah! And the sun is shining!

This is fine for people I know well and who I see regularly, but the cathedral community is far more diverse and is made up of people I see on Sunday mornings but not usually between times and it is those more casual contacts I have missed the most. It is such a joy on Sunday mornings after the 9.30am Eucharist to pile into the Chapter House and chat and gather news and exchange greetings with people I simply don't see in my normal daily routines.

The cathedral community comes from

all parts of the city and from the villages beyond and I have no idea how you are all coping, if you have been affected by COVID-19, or if other disasters have overtaken you, or what joys in the way of new grandchildren or exams passed or holidays postponed, or any of the myriad chatty (gossipy?) details we discover during that very pleasant communal half hour.

Since writing the previous paragraphs news has come through that services will restart on Sunday 5th of July albeit in the huge social-distancing space of the nave and although there will be no coffee served at least we can see and maybe chat to people not seen for at least three months, so hurrah for that!

It will be fun catching up with everyone – although by the time this edition of In-House is published, the general scenario

may have changed again so I will have to revisit this short article in six weeks' time!

Six weeks later.... Services have now restarted in this new, socially distanced, hand sanitised and masked world but for me, the strangeness is more than compensated by the pleasure of being in communion once again. It is wonderful to hear the cantor singing the responses and psalms, and now to have the lay vicars too, although, of course, we must all miss the full choir and the pleasure of singing joyfully to the Lord.

As always, the acoustics of the nave meant that some people did not hear everything but overall I think that Dean, Chapter and staff are all to be congratulated on both complying with the new regulations and organising safe services in very unsafe times!

The Dean's Door

Margaret Campion

For those of you who (like me) are only vaguely aware of such a feature, you must venture beyond the blue screens in the North West Transept, stumble your way over the chairs, tables and trolleys which are stored there and you will be confronted by a pair of enormous, high, iron bound oak doors below the Dean's Eye window.

I need not say to the readers of In-House that no one should go there alone – accidents happen! I was escorted by one of the vergers on a very quiet day during restricted opening so was very fortunate indeed.

These doors open onto a startlingly beautiful porch leading directly to the gardens of the new Visitor Centre. Earlier deans would have strolled daily through these same gardens from their elegant residence, passing the classical entrance to the newly built Wren Library on their left, possibly under a canopy to the shelter of the porch, through the great doors

beneath their very own window and so process with dignity into the nave of their cathedral.

As you can tell, I was thrilled to make the same progress on a dull July afternoon because in my many years wandering round the cathedral I have never seen these doors open or indeed taken any no-



tice at all of them; any interest has always been directed above to the great Dean's Eye Window.

The porch really is lovely; the door is surmounted by a mitre shaped arch divided into three bays each delineated by two Y-shapes short pillars all decorated with foliate tracery in the decorated style. There are three bays on each side and the roof has three cross vaults and a central boss with either two heads looking two ways or a two headed beast – I could not quite distinguish details. Beyond the porch on the adjoining wall there were traces of what might possibly have been some kind of canopy. Looking at the porch from the garden and moving round the supporting wall to the north, you will see an arrow slit window quite high up which is decorated with a bat carving – apparently a fairly recent addition to the panoply of flying beasts and birds adorning the cathedral!

Whilst talking 'doors' with the vergers, a throw-away remark alerted me to another secret (or, unknown, at least to me) feature called the 'Dean's Den!' Watch this space and some more secret spaces may be revealed!

Keeping in touch, French style

Muriel Robinson

It's easy to accept the stereotype that we British are reserved and don't know our neighbours but that across the Channel, it's not like that.

We've been back in our small town right in the south of France, in Occitanie, and were lucky enough to be invited one Friday to an 'apéro-garage' by some of our French friends. Pierre and Nicole retired back to the town of Pierre's birth some twenty years ago and they are well embedded in the community, running the local walking group and closely involved in the Maison des Jeunes et Culture (a kind of youth and community centre, running all kinds of activities for young people and adults). They've always been very welcoming to us and have been hospitable in the extreme; we've shared some memorable evenings over the years, including a Burns Night in our house where Nicole made an impromptu speech about how much they've valued getting to know us and being welcomed by us.

We were really surprised to learn, then,



that it's only been during the pandemic that they have got to know their neighbours

(in a small, quiet road) beyond simply saying hello. On the evenings when people came out into the street to clap their health workers, gradually conversations started and people began to share drinks and nibbles.

This developed into a group that meets weekly in Pierre and Nicole's garage, sitting around trestle tables and sharing glasses of rosé and snacks. Nicole told me that this had got to a point where people stayed as late as 11.30pm but now they've agreed to stop at 9.30.

So on the Friday of the Assumption weekend, we arrived at 7.30, bearing a plate of Mary Berry cheese scones, and somewhat tentative about joining a group where we only knew two people, to

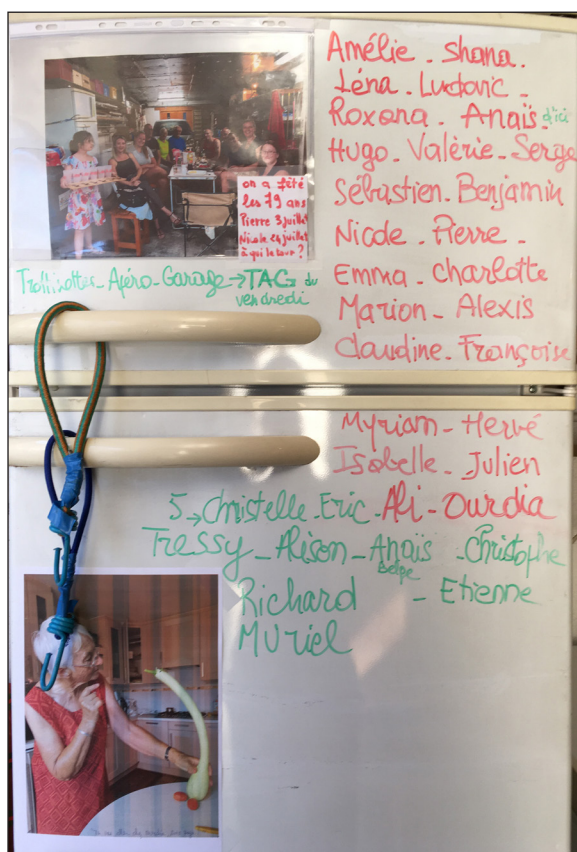
be greeted warmly by everyone.

Just inside the garage door is a large fridge freezer and the door has been annotated to record the names of those who've attended, to which we'd already been added, and with some photos from particular moments of note- both Pierre and Nicole celebrated their 79th birthdays a couple of weeks apart in July.

We were welcomed by everyone, rusty English was used to supplement our French, hare terrine and home-cured olives were pressed on us alongside figs from Pierre's garden.

We've even been invited to stay with one of their neighbours at his home in Binche, Belgium, to see their Mardi Gras carnival! We went with a clear plan to slip away after about an hour, but ended up being there till nearly 9.30, coming away with a tray of green figs, a home grown cucumber and a courgette shaped like a swan.

This pandemic has so many down sides- it was lovely to see this unexpected benefit, which I'm sure will lead to longer term connections for these French neighbours.



The Logsdails of Lincoln

Elaine Johnson

A reference to George Logsdail (a verger of Lincoln Cathedral for over fifty years) by John Campbell, in the last edition of InHouse, caught my eye, and further research proved most rewarding.

Born in Hertfordshire in 1827, George was the son of Benjamin and Sarah Logsdail and one of possibly five children. There is no record of his move to Lincoln but in 1851, aged 24, he is living at 9 Castle Hill with his wife, Mary Ann, and is described as a Verger of the Cathedral.

Whether or not this was full time is not clear, but four years later, September 1855, he is also identified as an agent for 'JOHN CASSELL'S COFFEES' ... 'choice, rich and strong Coffees, sold at *ls. 4d.*, and *ls. 8d. per lb*'. He was one of three agents in Lincoln and had business premises at 94 Bailgate. However, by 1861 he was senior verger at the Cathedral, living at 19 Minster Yard, and 94 Bailgate was occupied by another verger: James Barnett and his wife.

Clearly very respected, George was one of two 'assessors' for the Upper Ward of the city in the election of Mu-



nicipal Officers in 1864 and foreman of the jury at an inquest into an accident in 1867. Correspondence in the *Lincoln Chronicle*, 1881, about the quality and competence of cathedral vergers across the country, praised Mr. Logsdail, who had "studied his subject well, and ... seems most anxious to teach [visitors] as much as is possible while they are under his direction." He also received a glowing testimonial on his retirement as treasurer of the Benevolent Fund of the Russell Lodge of Oddfellows, in 1892, a post he had held for 27 years.

George and Mary Ann had six sons: Walter, George, Arthur, Henry, William and Cecil, and one daughter: Marian. Of the seven, William is particularly notable. He was a very talented painter and at the age of seventeen (1876) had four paintings accepted for the Royal Academy exhibition. He is known for his metropolitan subjects but was later commissioned for a series of portraits and was elected to the Royal Society of Portrait Painters in 1912. His paintings can be seen in the Usher Gallery and there is one in the Royal Collection. Further details can be found in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

Arthur was ordained in 1881 and went out to India as a missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The report of his departure describes his father, George, as one of Lincoln's "most meritorious citizens". Arthur's wife, Elsie, trained as an elementary school teacher at Lincoln Training College (now Bishop Grosseteste University) and joined him in India in 1882, where they were married.

Of the rest of the family, Walter became the Corporation Clerk for Great Yarmouth; George went to sea and retired as a 'Captain, Mercantile Marine'. Henry had his own business as a chemist and druggist in Kings Lynn; Cecil became a journalist and went to America, becoming an American citizen in 1905; Marian was another skilled artist and also exhibited at the Royal Academy several times.

George Logsdail died in 1905 but he is commemorated in a memorial in the cloisters of the cathedral and there is a blue plaque to his son, William, on the wall of 19 Minster Yard, the house where he was born.



Learning to love TODPs... the art of online discernment

Muriel Robinson

Some of our readers may recall that a while back I wrote an article explaining how discernment for recommendations for ordination training worked nationally and the role of Bishops' Advisers and residential Bishops' Advisory Panels (BAPs).

The TODP, or Temporary Online Discernment Process, was the CofE response to the lockdown which made BAPs impossible. With some 500 candidates waiting to be assessed, and theological colleges across the country needing a September intake, something had to be done, and that something was the TODP. (Rumour has it the acronym is deliberately clunky to prevent any bright spark seeing this as a long term way forward...)

In late April I found myself reading forms and preparing for my first TODP. Instead of a team of three Advisers, each with their own patch and a Panel Secretary supporting us, we were down to two advisers covering the three patches and a Panel Secretary interviewing with us. Instead of 48 hours residential panel, with a wealth of evidence to be drawn on from presentations, discussions and extra tasks as well as the interviews, we just had two hours per candidate- one hour each for the two advisers.

Instead, each candidate had a very brief group Zoom introduction to us, a question to prepare over the weekend, then it was straight into a one hour interview with me and the panel secretary in the morning, followed by a repeat in the afternoon. We dealt with two candidates a day, up to ten in a week.

What was lost? Well, gone were the opportunities to see candidates in informal settings and to talk about everyday

things at meals and in coffee breaks to set them at ease. Gone was the rich embedding of the whole process in corporate prayer, with just a very short online prayer at the introduction and a prayer at the end of the second interview. For candidates, gone was the chance to bond with each other and form connections that in some cases prove enduring through years of ministry. In particular, where the preliminary paperwork was equivocal or lacking in evidence, we had so few chances to uncover more so that we could be confident in discerning whether vocations were genuine and realistic.

What was gained? I learned a great deal about the Spirituality criterion (new to me) very quickly. Reports were of necessity shorter, at least for straightforward candidates, so there was less writing into the night. We tended to moderate more or less daily, as once a candidate had been seen, there was no other evidence to wait for, and that may be helped keep candidates more distinct in this weird virtual process. I've worked out a system for reading and annotating long application packs (usually 50 plus pages) on screen instead of having the luxury of a printed set. Most significantly, we learned the value of paired interviewing (which will be part of the new system, now delayed till 2021), particularly for those where discernment was harder. And I saw some inspiring candidates and met some lovely colleagues, whom I hope to meet in real life one day.

There were pros and cons of doing this from home, for sure. One of the big advantages of the normal BAP is that as an Adviser I can concentrate entirely on the job in hand. Someone else prepares

meals and feeds me, and I am not trying to plan menus and get washing done alongside. It's harder to bounce ideas off the rest of the panel when you don't have those informal openings to meetings or chance encounters over the kettle in the morning. However, I did end up with a much tidier study, so I could offer a calm and uncluttered Zoom background, and in between interviews I could get out of the house for daily exercise; there was no tiring drive home afterwards, though I was actually more tired by each Friday than after a normal panel.

Would I stay on as an Adviser if these were the only BAPs? Probably not. The work felt relentless (I did three panels in three months, with each absorbing two weeks) and the rewards far fewer without the physical presence and camaraderie of the other Advisers. It also felt less satisfying and less safe, and put a far greater burden on the household than my being away for 4 days (for example keeping quiet through the house during interviews, then being ready with coffee and Jaffa cakes to soothe my soul..)

Do I feel as confident in the result as with BAPs? Honestly, not in every case. There were times when, with the extra time of a BAP, we might have formed a clearer view, and some candidates where we had to say 'not yet' doing it this way and hope the Holy Spirit was guiding us and supporting the candidate through all that entails. We now know that for the autumn, we will continue to run a slightly amended version of this system, as being better than not doing any selection panels. I pray that in 2021 we can go back to residential BAPs and say goodbye to that clumsy TODP acronym!

FiSH (Food in School Holidays)

Elaine Johnson

FiSH began 18 years ago as MASH: Monks Abbey School Holidays meals. It was set up by Rev Tony Kerswell at All Saints on Monks Road who, along with the then head teacher of the primary school, recognised that a group of children, coming from less well-off families, were taking longer to settle into school after the summer holidays.

Identified as probably due to their not receiving free school meals, the project was formed in order to provide continued support for these families during the holidays. Four years ago, the scheme was adopted by other churches in and around Lincoln and re-branded as FiSH.

The three churches involved this year are Lincoln Baptist, Monks Road Methodist and St. Swithin's, all of which support the families of children attending Monks Abbey Primary School. In consultation with the school, the organisers try to forecast how many children/families there will be and then add a few more, enabling the school to respond to any further needs. This year the project will support 140 children, 10 more than last year. Traditionally, £8 per week per child is allocated, based on donations received before the project commences. The vouchers are printed by Ruddocks,

colour coded, dated and numbered, and then issued by the school to ensure security and confidentiality. This year the vouchers can be used at Lincoln Co-op and Tesco, both of which have been very supportive of the project over the years. To ensure that the children receive healthy, beneficial foods, all the shops have a list of food/products which they cannot supply to the families.

During the lockdown Monks Abbey has been recognised as an area of significant deprivation, with a number of families being single parent, low income. Children who qualify for free school meals, due to family circumstances, have benefitted from the government's food voucher scheme which will now continue during the summer holidays. Rather than duplicate this support, FiSH organisers asked the school if there were any families not in receipt of the food vouchers but who were struggling financially. Called the JAM families

(Just About Managing), the school regularly supports 14 families consisting of 22 children with weekly access to the school food bank, so FiSH will also support them this summer with a £10 voucher per child per week. They will also give the school another 8 voucher sets to use, if necessary.

As FiSH has managed to attract enough funds to carry out its normal project: 140 children x 6 weeks, those 140 children/families can now be supported for two weeks at Christmas and two weeks at Easter. FiSH has never been in a position to support families during these holidays, even though the same problem exists, so the government voucher scheme will enable the project to extend the period when local families can be helped.

The LCCA is delighted to support such a very local, worthwhile project, donating £2,250.00 to date and keeping future donations under review.



HOW TO CONTACT US

If you wish to be added to the list for electronic contact, or if you have an article to submit, please remember our new email: inhouse@lincolncathedral.com

See our editorial policy for more details. Thank you!

Editor and Editorial Policy

The current editor is Muriel Robinson, supported by Elaine Johnson and Margaret Campion and with photographs supplied by the editorial team, the Cathedral external communications team and authors.

Decisions on content are made by the editors for each edition of *InHouse*. **Submissions of short articles are welcomed** though it may not always be possible to use all pieces as space is limited; articles are also commissioned to address identified issues. We reserve the right to edit, carry forward or not include submitted articles.

Copy for the next edition should be emailed **to the Editors** at inhouse@lincolncathedral.com by **November 15th 2020 as attachments in Word format**; accompanying photographs are also welcomed as JPEG files. **Please don't insert photos, clip art or illustrations into the Word files but send them separately** in as high a resolution as possible. Advice for contributors is available - please email for a copy. Regrettably it is not possible to accept hard copy as we do not have any secretarial resources.

If you do not currently receive *InHouse* by email and would like to do so, please email your address to us at inhouse@lincolncathedral.com. You will then be sent the link to the uploaded copy on the cathedral website. The electronic version has full colour photographs and is available ahead of the print version, so there are advantages!

Exchequergate

Margaret Campion

Walking up Steep Hill from the town and turning right towards the cathedral you are confronted by the immense structure known as Exchequergate, barring entry to the cathedral.

Go through one of its three arches and you are rewarded by the breathtaking spectacle of the magnificent West Front of Lincoln Cathedral.

That is how many guidebooks describe the best known approach to the cathedral but what exactly is Exchequergate and how often do we remember to give it a proper look? It has recently been cleaned and the carvings restored or new carvings inserted where the originals were too far gone to be saveable. It now stands out almost too brilliantly in the summer sun, some face book comments have been critical of its shiny new facelift but I think it looks magnificent and worthy of a second look.

The guide books tell us that it is 14th century, its three arches described as 'triumphal' with a larger one in the centre and two smaller ones to each side; it is three storeys high and it most likely housed shops. Today it is used by the



cathedral library to store some of their vast collection of books. There is a team of 'book dusters' who work there in the summer months, cleaning, mending and cataloguing the volumes. It is not used in winter for this purpose because it is too cold and the nimble fingers needed for the purpose get numb and unresponsive!

In 1996, during the time of Chancellor Vernon White, Lynne Broughton was invited by the Dean and Chapter to compile a guide to some of the medieval images in the cathedral and this resulted in the book "Interpreting Lincoln Cathedral, The Medieval Imagery." One of her pieces of original research concerned Exchequergate and she introduced the

chapter with the quotation "The Lord loveth the Gates of Zion". She looked at the ceilings of all three arches and studied the imagery contained in the bosses at the junctions of the vaults in each passageway and concluded that they probably formed an early one-way system. The northern passage images seem to point to the way into the cathedral, the southern passage the way out and into the town area. The central arch could

be read both ways and being wider was probably the wheeled vehicular access for both incoming and outgoing traffic, reserving the narrower arches for pedestrian use only.

If you enter the north archway from the west – Castle Square – the first figure is of a crouching man looking to the east where the cathedral sits. The central boss is the crucifixion and the next two dragons intertwined and the final boss is a devil. These two bosses can be interpreted as being beneath the feet of the crucified Christ, thus reminding pilgrims that sin is crushed by the death of Christ and that evil should be left behind as you enter the sacred area of the cathedral. The bosses on the south passage way all point the other way, out towards the square, the first two are diabolical, the third a Sacred Heart and the final one the castle reminding us that we go out to do battle with the devil in the world!

The wider central arch has a figure on horseback in the central boss and at the east the boss is an angel carrying a scroll which seems to bear the inscription INRI, a reference to the scroll placed above the cross by the soldiers at Calvary and the western boss is carved with the letters IHS, an abbreviation of the name of Jesus - all of which is to remind us that Christ is the door and we should enter putting the world with its troubles behind us and go back into the world with hope and joy.



Hard Times for our Cathedral (and others): 'Provide, Protect, Preserve'

Muriel Robinson and Matthew Tarling

Those of us who are in and out of the cathedral on a regular basis are so used to seeing the signs reminding visitors of the hourly running costs that we possibly almost don't register them.

Those of us who also wade through the annual accounts (always available at the LCCA AGM and to our representatives on the Cathedral Council) also know that even in a normal year there is a distinct holding of breath as we wait to see if we have managed to break even. Some of you will also have seen press reports about the financial difficulties for all cathedrals following a prolonged period of lockdown, with Westminster Abbey, for example, publicly talking of a deficit this year of around £12 million. It doesn't take an accounting genius to work out that our own cathedral will also have been hit very hard by a period when no-one could visit, events were cancelled, and the shop and refectory were closed, yet the building and Close properties still needed to be maintained and not all staff could be furloughed.

We know there are to be some voluntary redundancies and for staff to be invited to consider part-time working, steps we hope will be short term and truly voluntary, but of course this comes with a human cost as well as not always providing savings where they are needed. A much better solution would be an increase in income. Even now, as visitors begin to be able to access the building, the future events programme is still uncertain. The cancellation of the Christmas Market is a big loss to the cathedral, drawing so many visitors as it does. We heard from Matthew Tarling, the Grants and Data Officer for the Cathedral (and a familiar figure to many as he is one of the servers we see regularly on a Sunday morning) about some of the challenges in the recovery appeal, and this is what he told us:

The impact so far

■ **£768,972 of lost income from April 1 to July 31** – including sources such as visitors admissions, events, donations and commercial activity in the Shop and Refectory. This lost income accounts for approximately 41% of annual unrestricted income generated for the Cathedral through these activities. With ongoing uncertainty and footfall still well below the expected levels, this number will continue to grow.

■ **£671,000 reduction in the planned Fabric maintenance programme** – the conservation work to the building has slowed to a near stop, drastically increasing the conservation deficit. In the midst of this, the building continues to degrade, and additional areas are being set-aside as out of bounds because of the danger of stone-falls.

■ **The new Old Deanery Visitors Centre opening delayed** – this new facility which was built to tell the story of the Cathedral and improve its ongoing financial viability, but which we are now without, along with the planned increase in footfall and income that the opening was expected to generate.

■ **Significant cost reductions** – the Cathedral is having to take difficult decisions in shrinking its workforce, which means there is a wealth of knowledge and skill that is being lost. This is not just a loss to the Cathedral and the individuals impacted today, but also into the future as the expertise is lost to other organisations, or to a different field of work.

■ **Investment income down** – income from endowments and restricted funds that support the running of the Cathedral have shrunk by about one third as the investments have been hit.

■ **Maximising use of Government and COVID-19 support funding sources** – many of the fixed costs have remained consistent, and although the Cathedral has made use of Government schemes wherever it is able to qualify, this has not been enough to ensure the viability of the organisation.

Why the Cathedral needs our help

Unrestricted funds support every aspect of the Cathedral's activities including conservation and music. Our heritage is under threat today more than ever before. This is why our help is needed to try and raise £1.5 million in order to minimise the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and help the Cathedral to:

■ **Provide** a sacred space for welcome, hospitality and spiritual nurture, that meets the needs of the community as we all continue to live with the reality of COVID-19.

■ **Protect** as much of Lincoln Cathedral's tradition of choral and musical excellence during a time when the arts are under more pressure than ever.

■ **Preserve** the precious built heritage we have in the Cathedral, and the craft-people, and professionals whose passion and skill we rely on to sustain the building.

So what can each one of us do to help?

For those of us who are taxpayers, and whose income has not been affected by the pandemic, a first step would be to review our regular giving, whether we do this via the LCCA stewardship scheme or directly to the Cathedral. Some of us have actually found that our expenditure has dropped during the pandemic, with fewer opportunities for coffee out with friends or for day trips or restaurant visits. For example, those missed haircuts and dental check-ups alone have

saved our household several hundred pounds, significantly more than we spent on extra packets of biscuits and baking supplies..! Could we take the opportunity to add, say, the weekly cost of coffee with friends to our regular giving? Even an extra £20 a month from 20 of us adds up to an extra £4,800 over a year, plus Gift Aid which could take this up to £6,000. Or maybe we could look at our current bank balances and make a one-off donation, again Gift Aided? An extra £100 (£125 af-

ter Gift Aid) from 100 of us, or £1000 from 10 of us, would bring in £12,500..

Not everyone pays income tax, of course. For anyone in that category, or who fancies a little flutter, there is always the option of joining the 100 Club, with its monthly prizes. Or maybe this is the year to do your Christmas shopping virtually by adopting a piece of glass, a stone, a book, a manuscript page or an organ pipe for your friends and family. Or if money is tight, and you feel safe doing

so, maybe this is the time to respond to calls for volunteers, especially those who welcome visitors.

We all know that the main purpose of our wonderful cathedral is to offer a testimony to the glory of God and to encourage us all in our earthly pilgrimage. How sad it would be if this terrible virus added to its toll of death and suffering by limiting our ability to witness to others through the glory of the building and the witness of its community.

Visit lincolncathedral.com/recovery-appeal/ for more information.

General Synod by Zoom

Muriel Robinson

There can't be many of us now who don't know about Zoom, the online platform for video conferencing formal and informal.

I was probably one of the few who'd used it before lockdown, having been introduced to it by contacts in the US and having used it for meetings of an international committee, but since mid-March I've used it to enjoy supper, morning coffee, afternoon tea, and drinks before dinner with different friends and relations, and it's become routine to attend meetings using this platform.

As a really seasoned Zoom user, I wasn't surprised when I learned that the July session of General Synod, normally held over five days in York, had been turned into a one-day Zoom meeting, but the preparatory emails did give me pause for thought.

With some 400 attendees, this was not Zoom as I'd previously experienced. The meeting ran from 10.30 till 4.30 with two brief comfort breaks and a short lunch hour. We were given strict instructions to use the speaker view, as the gallery option simply can't handle that many people; we were warned that we would all be muted centrally and only able to speak when

called to do so, and to be called we had to use the 'blue hand' symbol.

Time limits were enforced even more tightly than normally, with those who overran simply muted!

The actual agenda was unusual, too; this couldn't be a formal session, as Standing Orders had never been amended to allow for virtual meetings, so it was effectively an information session with an extended question session.

As usual, questions had been submitted in advance and written answers provided, so the session was for supplementaries to be asked. Many of the questions were somewhat inward-looking and critical of the central approach to church closures, and at one point we were reminded by the Archbishop of Canterbury that actually maybe we needed to look outwards more and remember the big picture - a view with which I had some sympathy.

The Dean of Southwark, who chaired the session with style and efficiency, made it less painful than it might have been, with even a degree of his customary wit allowed to shine through.

Overall, though, I found this a fairly dry and dispiriting experience - the same voices asking the same questions

and a very small proportion of us actually able to participate. Even with the breaks, this was simply too long to be looking at a screen and to be trapped in one room. All the usual social interaction and informal opinion-sharing of tea room and meal times was missing and I was left wondering what the point had been of spending a Saturday in July in this way.

Was it better than not meeting? I hope so. At least complaints had been aired and decisions defended.

We now wait to see whether we will be able to meet physically in November. Before then a single item meeting of a much reduced General Synod (the bare minimum for a quorum, to ensure social distancing) will, we hope, have met in person and approved a motion to allow formal business to be conducted online, which should help. If we have to do it this way again, then of course we will.

But even to me, a seasoned user of pretty much any and every new technology, this was a pale shadow of the real thing, and I pray fervently that soon at least some meetings will be able to be just that, with all the warmth of human contact not just via a screen.

Ships of Heaven: the Private Life of Britain's Cathedrals

Muriel Robinson

If, like us, you had hoped to spend time this year visiting cathedrals and collecting stamps for your Cathedrals Passports, then you might enjoy this book, not so much as a substitute but as preliminary reading for rescheduled visits when life opens up a little more.

Ships of Heaven, by Christopher Somerville, is not a conventional guidebook, though, but the result of a personal exploration - what he terms 'a year's passage with this grand flotilla'.

The book is not one necessarily to be read from cover to cover. I've been enjoying dipping in and reading about particular cathedrals that appeal, and looking forward to reading more as we plan future travels.

Inevitably perhaps, I started at Chapter 2, about Lincoln Cathedral. Somerville's chapters all explore specific strands and aspects of each building's history and life behind the scenes. Slightly disappointingly he chooses to spend a few pages revisiting the rather tired topic of the Brandon Jackson era, but of much more interest for me was his account of the work of our stonemasons and in particular his encounter with Paul Ellis. Overall I found this chapter accurate and suitably appreciative - but you will judge for yourselves!

The Ely chapter was one I really enjoyed. Last year we visited Ely - my first visit for some fifty-plus years, the last being as a schoolgirl. Here I found I could

both recognise the building we had explored last summer and learn new things, whetting my appetite for a future visit.

Wells caught my eye as a cathedral only visited as an 8- or 9-year old on a family holiday but which has cropped up regularly since in my fiction reading. It was Wells which captured Somerville's own imagination as a child, and this is perhaps the most personal chapter.

Chichester drew me in as a native of Sussex, and again both distant and recent visits were brought alive. This chapter also dipped into diocesan issues, ex-

treasures to come.

I suspect most readers will regret the absence of favourites (for me that would include Norwich) but the book does not set out to be an exhaustive guide. I hope that for many these lacunae will be more than compensated for by the discovery of unknown places and by the new insights into the familiar.

If you are an enthusiast not just of our own magnificent building but of cathedrals as a species, then this book is well worth a look. I'm so glad that Margaret Campion drew it to my attention!



Ships of Heaven: the Private Life of Britain's Cathedrals, by Christopher Somerville, is published by Doubleday, ISBN 978-08576-2365-5, £9.99 (an ebook is available too).



ploring the legacy of 20th century art in both the cathedral and in parish churches, including the one where I was baptised. I freely admit I have not yet read all the chapters but I can see my reading will be a mix of revisiting places I know (York, now familiar as a place of worship each summer during General Synod; Coventry, visited first as a child when only just open and redolent with family memories as my mother had watched the city burn from my grandmother's house;) and of discovering unknown