

## On our journey from darkness to light



The winter months with the dark mornings and nights are very challenging for some people, particularly for those who suffer from light deprivation or so-called Seasonal Affective Disorder, but we *all* look forward to the clocks going forward at the end of March for more natural daylight.

During these months the Church embarks on a journey of progressive revelation from Christmas and Epiphany through Lent

*en route* to the Passion and Easter, a pilgrimage we make every year. We know that the darkness of Lent and the suffering of the Passion will pale considerably (but not into insignificance) in the light of the reality of Easter and the glory of the Resurrection and we focus on that goal to get us through the darker months of preparation.

Both literal light and metaphorical light permeate the biblical narrative from beginning to end; this can be seen most clearly comparing the references to light in the first and the last books of the Bible. The first words recorded as uttered by God at creation are: *Let there be light* (Genesis 1: 1) and in the final book of the Bible, the Revelation of John, light in the new Jerusalem is ubiquitous emanating from God the Father and the Son: *The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.* (Revelation 21:23). This had been prophesied by Isaiah: *The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory* (Isaiah 60:19).

The birth of the Christian light of the world is celebrated at Christmas right at the turning point in the solar year when the darkest day is past and the world moves progressively towards the light; but the full realisation of Jesus as *the light of the world* takes place at a time which gives us full benefit of the added hours of natural sunlight which announces new life in the colours of flowers in bloom, better weather and a feeling of relief as we emerge from hibernation into Spring which has come again.

Scientific studies have shown the role of natural daylight for mental and physical well-being and the link between light and quality of life is hinted at in the prologue: *In him was life, and that life was the light of all kind* (John 1: 4). The symbolic use of candle light in the darkness is replaced by the natural light of the sun: *the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings* (Malachi 4: 2)

Light shines all the brighter when it emerges from darkness and it is said that the darkest hour of the night is just before dawn. On Good Friday darkness fell on the earth for three hours just as Jesus gave up his spirit and the curtain the Temple was ripped from top to bottom, thereby opening up access to the Holy of Holies and to the presence and glory of God. The darkness had been conquered; the light burst through as the reality of the first Resurrection was experienced on earth. Symbolically we light candles from the Easter Paschal candle and we are commanded by Jesus to *let your light so shine before people that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father who is in heaven* (Matthew 5: 16). Easter is not a spectator event; as in the Christmas story we are participants, with a duty to go out and tell others about what we have experienced and to live in the light of the Easter story in the knowledge that this is just the beginning. We look forward to that time when we will be in the perpetual light of the God but in the meantime, we *walk in the light as he is in the light* (1 John 1: 7) as we reflect that light in an increasingly dark world which craves natural genuine light.

Peter Neil, Residentiary Canon

## The Easter Sepulchre or Tomb of Christ

As you approach the High Altar, look beyond the Communion rail at the beautifully carved tombs on your left. Dating back to about 1290, the nearest one is regarded as belonging to Remigius but it is the other tomb that we are concerned with here. This is the Easter Sepulchre or Tomb of Christ and it is highly rated by scholars. Structures representing the tomb of Christ were built in many ancient churches. Pevsner has praised the wonderful carving of the sleeping soldiers at the base of our shrine and also claimed that the flying ribs of the little vaults inside the canopies are the earliest on record. It is still possible to detect traces of the original paint. The upper part of the tomb probably had an effigy of Christ, the Marys and an angel upon it. These special tombs were used during the Easter services as the focus, or stage prop, for acting out the burial of Christ on Good Friday and then the visit of the three Marys to the tomb on Easter Sunday morning, culminating in the proclamation of the resurrection. It may also have served as a sacrament shrine, where the consecrated host was reserved. The historian, Duffy, has described how, on the morning of Easter Sunday, three priests were dressed as the three Marys and the discovery of Christ's empty tomb was reimagined.

The tomb was maintained by a special guild of Lincoln laymen, the Resurrection Guild, who provided "13 large square wax lights in stands" and "Four angels and banners of the passion" which stood round the hearses of deceased members of the Guild.

This sepulchre still plays an important part in our services for it is here that the reserve sacrament is often laid. The sacrament is covered with a white veil and a 24-hour candle is lit to shed light beside it.



Judi Jones

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## The Lincoln Lowry

I read with interest, in the last edition of In House, Judi Jones's article on The Lincoln Lowry being brought to Lincoln by Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker of the House of Commons and Judi's part in delivering it to the Usher Art Gallery. I can finish off the story of that visit in December 1996 linking Lincoln's Engineering Heritage to the Speaker's early political career in 1950s.

As Judi had been tasked to collect Betty from the station on the Friday, so I was asked to collect her from the White Hart Hotel on the Saturday morning, after she had presented the prizes and certificates and helped celebrate Yarborough School's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the Friday evening and take her to Newark to catch the train for London. So, at 9am sharp I arrived at the White Hart with the porter greeting me with two very large bouquets of flowers and obviously her luggage to place in my car. Then out came the Speaker and in her inimitable style said "Darling, can you please drive to Newark via that area in Lincoln where all the bikes are near the Engineering factories." For a moment I was perplexed as to what she meant but then realized she was talking of the Ropewalk area where in the 1950s hundreds of men would stream out of Ruston Bucyrus, Beavor Foundry and many others on their bikes, few cars then. She remembered her days in the 1950s canvassing for Geoffrey de Freitas our MP, whom Judi referred to in her article, and she had been amazed at this spectacle of so many bikes pouring out only to be stopped very quickly by Lincoln's level crossings on the High Street. She greatly enjoyed being driven down Tritton Road and reliving those days from her early political career.

We duly arrived at Newark and with the help station staff I got her, her flowers and her luggage into First Class. "My dear, thank you so much for allowing me to remember some of those early days in my political career." With that she was away and into her seat with many fellow passengers sat wondering if it really was Betty Boothroyd they were travelling with. An experience I have never forgotten.

Charles Rawding , Trainee Cathedral Guide.





## Lincoln Cathedral Community Association Shrove Tuesday Supper

75 members of the LCCA and friends gathered in the Chapter House for the annual Shrove Tuesday supper. A lovely atmosphere was created by Stephen Strugnall on the piano as people arrived. The Acting Dean, Nick Brown, opened with a Grace before everyone enjoyed a delicious meal of chicken casserole and vegetables with garlic bread. Pancakes with lemon juice and sugar followed.



Three table quizzes encouraged conversation and challenged the little grey cells. Of course, St. Andrew had to be the patron saint of fishermen and St. Peter the patron saint of Rome. We all knew Jim Broadbent's connection with Wickenby but I didn't know that Jennifer Saunders was born in Sleaford.

Between the courses we were entertained by vice-chair of the LCCA, Simon Crookall, who sang a selection of popular songs, accompanied by Stephen Strugnall.



Thanks must go to the cathedral café team who prepared the tasty food, Simon and Stephen for the entertainment and especially the committee who worked so hard to make the evening such a success.

Look out for the Harvest supper in October!

Elaine Johnson

### A word from the Editor

Lent is a season of reflection and preparation, so it is appropriate that the current edition of InHouse is dedicated to some key aspects of the Cathedral and our incredible resources, as we move towards Easter. The treasures of the Cathedral, from our buildings to our vestments, are skilfully and lovingly care for by our knowledgeable staff and volunteers, to the greater glory of God.

My thanks, as always, to our devoted team of writers and editors: Elaine Johnson, Margaret Campion and Judi Jones, together with all of our contributors.

As we were going to print, we heard the very sad news of the passing of one of the most dedicated and supportive members of our community: Lord Patrick Cormack. Lord Cormack was a very familiar presence at Evensong, and a stalwart of the Sunday morning 8am congregation. He will be deeply missed, and our thoughts and prayers are with his widow, Mary and their two children. A full obituary will be published in the next edition of InHouse.

Simon Crookall

## Meet Jane Cowan, our talented Head of Conservation

Our huge and magnificent cathedral is built mainly from Lincoln limestone and it is the conservation of this stone, (together with other stones such as Purbeck and Alwalton marble), that is Jane's primary responsibility. Starting as a stone and sculpture conservator, her remit has grown and she now is responsible for "best conservation practice across the cathedral, its content and estate." She works closely with Michael Graves who is the Head Mason and Acting Director of the Works Department, Dave Skelton, the Head of Joinery, and also the cathedral architect, the archaeologist, the curator and our Librarian.

Based in the Works Department, for about 30 years, Jane has been caring for the main fabric of our cathedral and also keeping a watchful eye over the original stone sculptures. One of her early challenges was the interesting medieval Burghersh tomb set in the north wall of the chantry. It is still unclear whether it contains the original effigy, but the work conserving this elegant and fully armoured knight proved to be fascinating. A much larger task was overseeing the work on the west front of the cathedral, particularly the carvings on the Romanesque frieze. She feels that she was incredibly lucky to be part of this team undertaking the hands-on conservation of these internationally important sculptures and then later in her career being able to project manage the conservation of the west front during the recent Heritage Lottery project. For many years her team has also regularly repaired our striking nativity scene.

Growing up in Basingstoke in Hampshire, Jane was always interested in Art, History and Architecture and she found the perfect degree course to follow through her interests and talents when she joined the Conservation and Restoration Course at Lincoln Art College in 1991. She gained further qualifications when studying for her MSc specialising in stone, sculpture and historic buildings at Bournemouth University. She first worked in London as part of the lime plastering team rebuilding Shakespeare's old Globe Theatre and realised that this job suited her perfectly as she could combine her specialist knowledge with actual physical work. She still finds it a thrill to be elevated in a Cherry Picker! She then came to Lincoln Cathedral where she worked on the west front and then went back to London and was employed by English Heritage based in Savile Row. Jane retrained as a stone carver, specialising in letter carving. She still does this and accepts small private commissions.



After fifteen years of stone carving and conservation, she rejoined the team at our cathedral in 2015. Jane and her husband now live in a small village north of Lincoln in a restored barn with their two daughters and a badly behaved Border Terrier. Before Covid there were 43 craftspeople in the Works Department, now there are only 20. It is a highly focussed and productive team, but the amount of work on the cathedral and its estate mean that they are highly stretched.

Jane's current major projects include working with the Head Mason and Consultant Geologist to find a new source of Lincoln Limestone and reviewing environmental conditions in the cathedral (including around the Father Willis organ) and Exchequergate. She is also assisting managing the Chapter House project (cleaning, conservation of carvings, stone replacement and pointing) and writing up the recent conservation of the west front sculpture as well as many smaller projects. She has just taken delivery of a statue of St. Hugh that has been gifted to us and she needs to work on its restoration. Jane is keen to participate in a new venture of working with volunteers on housekeeping. She also sits on the Church of England's Sculpture and Furnishings and Fabric Advisory Committee for St. Paul's cathedral. I'm just left reeling at the scale of these tasks and feel that we are very lucky for these projects to be in such capable and enthusiastic hands.

I will leave the final words to Jane. She said "Working on the West Front of this cathedral for 30 years has been a great pleasure and privilege. During this time, I have worked with a huge range of talented people from clergy and architects to craftspeople and specialists. It is an enormous team effort to keep this incredible building standing and I have the sense that I am just passing through, but am making a tiny but positive impact on history."

Judi Jones



## Conservation of a Gilbert Pot

In the Burghersh Chantry at the north-east end of the cathedral stand a striking collection of large ceramics, which form part of an area for prayer and reflection. These are the work of renowned C20th potter Robin Welch (1936 -2019) and are an important part of the Cathedral's twentieth century artwork collection. Known as the 'Gilbert Pots', they were commissioned by the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln in 1984 to mark the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of St Gilbert of Sempringham. Gilbert was the founder of the Gilbertine Order, the only Englishman to found a religious order in the Middle Ages, which, unusually, housed a community of both men and women. This art installation of five large coiled and thrown ceramics represent the Order's men, women and Gilbert himself.

During the busy 2021 Lincoln Christmas Market a cathedral visitor lost her footing in this area and toppled one of the tallest pots. This resulted in significant damage to the pot. The vergers swept up the sherds and delivered them in a barrow to the Works Department for conservation.



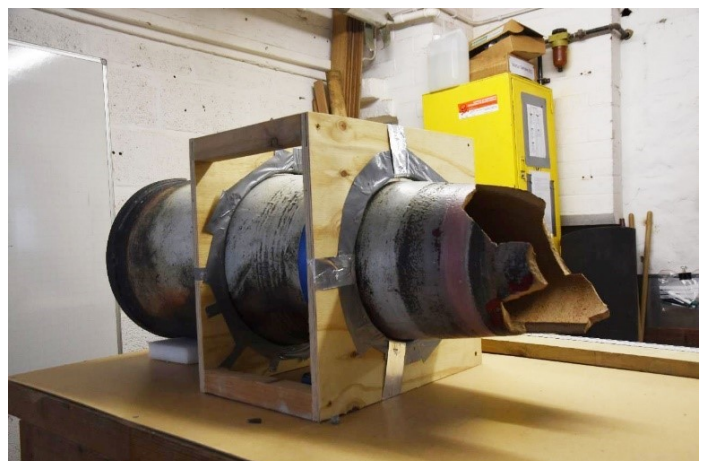
The significance of the ceramic meant that the decision to restore the pot was a straightforward one. However, the time and cost to do this meant the in-house team would be very stretched. Therefore, one of our regular contract conservators, Paul Wooles ACR (previously conservator on the Romanesque Frieze), was asked to undertake the work. An inspection revealed that the main body of the pot had cracked and 'sprung' (i.e. the tension within it causing a step), and that there were roughly 180 smaller fragments.



Paul's first job was to repair the cracked and misaligned cylindrical ceramic body. This was undertaken with a clever technique of a timber jig. Two internal discs corresponded with external supports (which conveniently acted as a stand for the pot as well) and soft wooden wedges were gently tapped in until the step reduced. This was a delicate operation as it risked fracturing the pot further. Following this, a full 'dry' reconstruction was undertaken to work out the order of re-building - this avoided locking fragments out. Once the sticking sequence was determined, bonding of the fragments was undertaken with specialist adhesives. In addition to this, Paul developed a technique of small semi-circular fixings (cut from stainless steel washers) which were embedded over the dozens of break edges to provide additional robust mechanical support. The impact of the smash was such that some areas were missing; Paul expertly reconstructed these using resins, acrylic paints and sand.

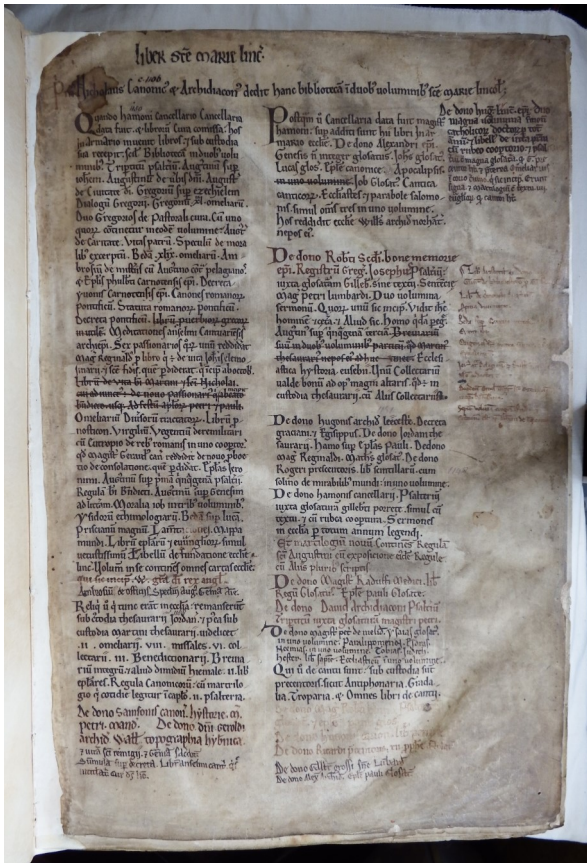
Restoration took five weeks over summer 2023. On completion, discussions were had about whether to weight down the taller pots to avoid a recurrence of the accident. However, ultimately, it was decided to reconfigure the group to ensure the two top-heavy pots were less accessible. Gilbert's missing piece was finally reunited with the rest of the group in January 2024, returning this special corner of the cathedral to its full splendour.

Jane Cowan ACR, Head of Conservation



# The Wren Library

Lincoln Cathedral may not always have had a library but it has always had books. This is demonstrated by the first written catalogue which appears on the fly leaf of MS1, The Lincoln Chapter Bible. The list is dated to 1150 and lists 44 titles which were kept in an 'armarium', plus a further 92 subsequent donations. The 'armarium' is thought to have been in the vicinity of the north choir aisle, possibly the room now known as the Treasury.



At a fascinating talk about the Wren Library in January, Cathedral Archaeologist, Jonathan Clark, showed his audience a slide of this 900-year-old page. It was not until 1422 that a formal library was built on top of the east range of the cloister. This is confirmed by a manuscript which has an inscription at the front specifically saying that it is being donated to the 'new' library and is dated 1422. Despite considerable damage, Lincoln survived both the Reformation and the English Civil War and the latter half of the seventeenth century saw a renewed flourishing of cathedral libraries.

Dean Honynwood had spent the Civil Wars in the Low Countries where he had collected many books and, when appointed Dean of Lincoln on his return in 1660, he set about repairing the structural damage and building a library to accommodate his collection. Sir Christopher Wren was appointed architect and William Evison, a local builder, was contracted in 1674. The contract survives and contains precise details including a room of 18ft breadth, a timber and lead roof, with 7lbs. of lead per square foot (a quantity still adhered to today), stone pillars and arches and glazing with iron bars. On completion, the overall cost to the Dean was £780. The years 1890-1914 saw a renewed interest in the architecture of Wren, with consequent interest in our library and, more recently, Sir Roy Strong called it, "The most beautiful room in England." Cathedral Architect and Surveyor of the Fabric, Nick Cox, took up the narrative at this point. Cracks in the ceiling began to appear in the last 20 years, or so, and an 'alarming bulge' was seen in 2015. When it was realised how serious the problem had become the library had to close. Investigation uncovered fractures in all but one of the main tie beams of the roof trusses. Re-leading in the nineteenth century had necessitated strengthening the roof with more struts and, over time, this additional weight plus deep mortice holes, had reduced the strength of the beams. Metal plates are now being inserted under each beam but the engineering for each beam is different depending on the place of the cracks and the position of the mortice holes. To ensure accuracy of safe fixing, the Works department have made a separate template for each steel plate. Nick has to be congratulated on presenting a technical engineering explanation, with architects' drawings, to a lay audience in accessible terms. It was very interesting. The project also includes looking at the ceiling of the north cloister because moisture has been found in the library floor and renovating the environmental control system. When complete, the Wren Library will not only be secure but provide better environmental conditions for both the space and the contents. No completion date can be forecast yet; we only know 'it will take a while'.

Many thanks to Jonathon and Nick for a fascinating and enlightening afternoon.

Elaine Johnson



## The Cathedral Banners

Wandering around the cathedral one dark autumn afternoon I popped into the Works Chantry to remind myself of the quiet charm of this small portion of our great cathedral – and noticed that nowadays no fewer than five banners are stored there. I know there are more and that we never see (at least at the Sunday Eucharist services) any banners during processions. However, I rather think they are seen at the Solemn Evensong Services for Saints Days but which I do not usually attend. This led my thoughts to... where are the surplus banners stored? Who commissioned them originally and why? Who designed and sewed them? Why are they so rarely seen? Have they simply gone out of fashion?

So many questions, and where to go for answers – and more importantly – does anyone care or even notice their absence?



Many years ago, I think it must have been in the '80's, my husband was a Server and was asked to attend for a special service for the St. Gilbert of Sempringham Day, together with another youngster, at the time a student at the Theological College; anyway, this banner is enormous, very wide and unwieldy requiring two sturdy young men to carry it. This was complicated since they needed to keep in step, negotiate the chancel steps, proceed down the aisle, avoiding the lectern and shimmying sideways through the gate, down the steps and into the Crossing. I remember being in the congregation and watching – not for them to falter and stumble, but to see if they managed without breaking out in fits of giggles. It was a solemn occasion but technically rather like managing the steps in square dance! Further enquiries revealed that this banner was still in the cathedral but "unpopular because it's so big."



Of the five banners in the Works Chantry the one I found most interesting was dedicated to Paulinus and Blaecca with the quote "on this hill I will build my church" running down the centre with twelve workers: carpenters, quarrymen, masons and labourers depicted - six on either side.

On the reverse was a very long quote from St. Bede. A colleague directed me to Google where there is a reference to Bede; Paulinus was an early bishop in the Province of Lindsey who converted Blaecca the Reeve (Mayor) of the city (Lincoln) and who seems to have enabled Paulinus to begin his wish to "build my city on a hill". The Works Chantry seems the perfect place to house this banner.

The other four were more familiar although only one, the extremely graceful banner designed and worked by our own Dilys Laurence showing the Virgin as an elderly woman minding the Swan of St. Hugh and with the lighted cathedral crowning her grey hairs, is frequently in use.



The Mother's Union Banner showing the Virgin and Child in traditional pose – but with (to my mind) a distinctly '70's look' around the eyes is appropriately in the third chapel dedicated to St. Anne, the mother of Mary. Of the remaining two, one is dedicated to St. Hugh and the other is the Risen Christ, both beautifully worked. St. Hugh's Banner makes an annual appearance on 17<sup>th</sup> November and the Risen Christ on Ascension Day.

Margaret Campion

*(Thanks, as always, to Jim Newton for permission to use his beautiful photos)*

## 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers



April 29<sup>th</sup> 2024 sees the beginning of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of The Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers – inaugurated at a meeting in the Chapter House of Lincoln Cathedral and overseen by the Bishop on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1899.

Bells were first authorised for use in Christian churches around 400AD and some 200 years later they were commonly found in monas-

teries around Europe including Great Britain. The first complete ring of bells in Great Britain was probably at Crowland, dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Crowland also has other claims to fame with the first set of tuned bells installed and also appearing as the first church bells to feature on “Bells on Sunday” on the radio.

During the 1800’s ringers became increasingly separated from the church; in many cases ringing was seen as a sport and in no way associated with the church and church services.

Even Lincoln Cathedral ringers were not without fault – in 1808 the Chapter Acts of Lincoln Cathedral noted “that the ringers were disorderly, noted for their drunkenness.” Indeed, in 1821 the Rev. Henry Ellacombe (an engineer by training) developed the Ellacombe Apparatus which allowed the bells to be chimed by one person “so that he didn’t have to tolerate the behaviour of his ringers who he saw as unruly”.

The disconnect between the church and the ringers widened following changes within the church brought about by the Oxford Movement. Many clergy took back control of their towers and agreed rules of engagement with their ringers, encouraging the ringers to form into associations promoting ringing in church. Against this backdrop, the South Lincolnshire Association was founded in 1879 and the North Lincolnshire, East Lincolnshire, and Eastern Counties Associations were founded in 1884.

However, Lincolnshire boasts the oldest ringing society “still functioning as a ringing society” *The Company of Ringers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln*. This was formalised in October 1612 in a constitution granted by the Dean (Laurence Stanton) and Chapter and the company have their own chapel: The Ringers Chapel.

### **The Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers and the Rev. Henry Law James**

With a degree in Natural Sciences from Cambridge University, Henry Law James was ordained as priest in 1892. He became curate at St Martin’s, Stamford and also taught at Stamford Grammar school. Already an accomplished bell ringer from his university days, he was appointed vicar of Surfleet in 1898. There he inherited a derelict ring of 5 bells, which at the time of his death in 1932, had become a ring of 10. Shortly afterwards, they were a ring of 12, until 1970 the lightest ring of 12 in the world.

Active in ringing, he encouraged the geographical associations to join together and April 29<sup>th</sup> 1899 saw the Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers (LDGCB) formed, with Law James elected as Ringing Master, a position he held until his death in 1932. The initial four branches remained the backbone of the guild although the LDGCB now comprises six geographical branches, all with a degree of autonomy.

Law James was succeeded as Ringing Master by the larger-than-life Rupert Richardson whose marriage he had conducted at Surfleet. Acknowledged locally and nationally as a leading composer and conductor of his time (along with Gabriel Lindoff and Arthur Craven who rang at St Peter’s-At-Arches) Law James is buried beside his brother – the equally acclaimed ringer Edward

Bankes James – in the churchyard at Surfleet.

Today the LDGCB has within its Diocesan boundary some 600 churches, 362 of which have two or more bells hung for ringing. Of these, 15 are towers with two bells. Just over 230 are deemed safe to be rung, the rest (usually those towers with four or less bells) being unsafe, either due to the state of bells and frame themselves or the state of the tower.

Progressively the average age of bellringers continues to increase, the COVID era seeing a further decline in the number of ringers, both nationally and in Lincolnshire. As a result, a number of towers have become silent, BUT all is not lost: a number of “lapsed ringers” of all abilities continue to ‘come out of the woodwork’ and “Ring for the King” has seen a number of new recruits keen to learn.

The guild has a Belfry Repair Fund, with charitable status, to help with the upkeep of tower bells, including the augmentation of rings to higher numbers.

Difficult as it may sound, learning to ring is easy and not limited by age but like everything else it seems harder as you get older!!!! If you are interested in giving it a try either visit your local tower when you hear the bells ringing – in general they are a friendly lot - or contact me at [master@ldgcb.org.uk](mailto:master@ldgcb.org.uk)

Keith Butter  
Master - LDGCB



## Nicholas Bennett and 'Digging for Britain'



Lincolnshire fans of "Digging for Britain" will have been delighted by the high profile of the city and county seen in the latest series on BBC2 in January. We were especially pleased to see Dr. Nicholas Bennett, retired cathedral librarian and vice-chancellor, being interviewed by Dr. Onyeka Nubia of Nottingham University about Ankerwycke priory, situated on the Thames opposite Runnymede.

Despite being so far south, Ankerwycke was once in the diocese of Lincoln which then stretched from the Humber to the Thames and records in the cathedral archive recount a visitation here by Bishop Alnwick in 1441. The 15<sup>th</sup> century document was, of course, in Latin but this was translated by Dr. Bennett and gave a fascinating insight into the life of the nuns at the time. The priory was going through a difficult time; there were only seven nuns present, another six having recently run away. The bishop had a separate audience, in confidence, with each nun. The Prioress, Clemence Medford, went first and complained that the nuns moved against her 'at the slightest breeze.' She said that the nuns drank after Compline (the last service of the day) instead of going to bed, thus implying that they were disobedient and the bishop should not take notice of what they had to say. The Sub-prioress, Isabel Standon, was loyal to her mistress saying "Omnia bene" – All is well – but others were very critical.

Dame Margery Kirby felt that the house was being left to fall into ruin. She reported that the Prioress had lost vestments, books and plates and would allow no-one else to share in the running of the establishment. She was seen to wear golden rings 'of great cost' set with precious stones while the ordinary nuns went in threadbare habits. The youngest nuns were supposed to be taught the rule and the offices but no governess was appointed. All this and more is noted in the *Visitations to Religious Houses, 1437-47*. Within two years the prioress had resigned and was replaced by Margery Kirby.

A 1918 printed transcription of the *Visitations to Religious Houses, 1437-47* can be found in the Lincolnshire Archives and was shown to me by Dr. Bennett. The Latin account of the visit has a helpful English translation on the opposite page but the bishop's exhortations to the nuns is in the English of the time. This can be understood fairly easily, although one example illustrated how the meanings of words can change. The nuns were ordered to behave 'buxumly' which, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, meant 'obediently'.

It is wonderful to think that volumes like this, hundreds of years old, are in the Archives and can be accessed to paint such an interesting and informative picture of the lives of women in medieval times, so long ago. A thimble uncovered during the dig has been dated to the fifteenth century. Who knows? It may well have belonged to one of the women whose name is recorded in that cathedral document.

Elaine Johnson



The three volumes above are the registers of Bishop Burghersh, 1320, Bishop Buckingham, 1363, and the *Visitations to religious houses, 1437-47*.

*Thanks to the Lincolnshire Archives for permission to use their photos.*

## The Lincoln Stradivarius

The Halle Orchestra Concert in the Cathedral on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October included the Bartok Viola Concerto, superbly performed by Maxim Rysanov, described in Gramophone as “A prince among viola players,” and it was a real treat to hear this beautiful instrument featured by this highly accomplished soloist. On many occasions the Halle programme has included solo violin works and often it is the Lincoln Stradivarius which is played.



*Photo with the Lincoln Stradivarius, courtesy of Press Release Credit, Tom Stephens, The Halle.*

Although many know the story it is good to revisit its history and its place in the Orchestra.

This violin was made in 1695 by Antonio Stradivari, the renowned Italian craftsman regarded as the world's greatest string instrument player and was purchased by the Honourable Mrs Dudley Pelham, nee Sibthorp, in 1960 when she was a member of the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra. It was then bequeathed by her to the people of Lincoln in 1970 on the condition that it was loaned to the Halle Orchestra for the exclusive use of their leader. In this agreement the Halle are required to look after the instrument, keeping it in good condition, having it properly repaired if necessary, and being expected to replace it with a new violin of commensurate quality and value if stolen or destroyed. Lincoln is greatly indebted to Mrs Pelham for ensuring that the Halle Orchestra continues to visit Lincoln regularly to perform in the Cathedral, giving us the opportunity to hear a world class orchestra perform in one of the world's most beautiful buildings

My thanks to Peter Harrod for allowing me to use the information in his article “The Lincoln Stradivarius” from the Garton Archive which is based on Richard Lucas’ booklet on the Violin. Thanks also to Eleanor from the Halle Archive for her help and the photo of the Leader, Roberto Ruisi.

Lindsey Sutton

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## The Dean's Cope and Hood

Amongst the hidden treasures of the cathedral are the Dean's cope and hood which were designed by Charles Kempe and probably made by the Wantage Sisters. They were donated to the Cathedral by a person named Manvers in about 1900 but it is not known who this person is. It was thought to be a Canon Manvers but no-one of that name is listed in Crockford's clerical directory.

The cope is made of cloth of gold. The ornamental orphreys have angels in gold, white, blue, and grey against a red background in black-edged niches with canopies and pinnacles.



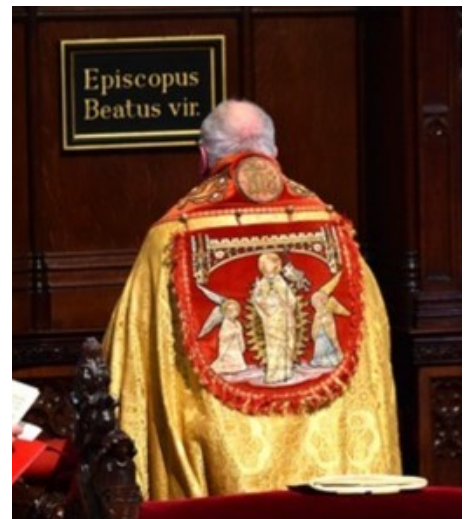
The hood depicts Christ in the centre with two kneeling angels and is adorned with two diamonds on His chest, very much in the medieval style.

The use of precious or valuable materials is a reflection of Heaven and the beauty of what God created; these pieces are an exceptionally fine example of ecclesiastical embroidery.

The cope and hood were extensively restored by the Cathedral Needlework Guild in the 1990's. The cloth of gold was replaced, all the embroidery was restored and remounted on velvet.

This cope and hood are not in general use but they were worn for the enthronement of Bishop Stephen on the 11th November 2023.

Julia Welch





## 25 Years Guiding in Lincoln Cathedral

In 1990, accepting early retirement, I became a trainee cathedral guide. The leader of the guides at that time was Linda Tilbury whom many of you will remember. She had a deep knowledge and love of the building, its history, stories and people and was an inspirational teacher to the group of trainees I joined.

Linda had been a lecturer in Drama at Bishop Grosseteste College and was especially keen on presentation and language: always speak to the whole group, keep your eyes open for signs of boredom, never try to look upwards – for example to the roof – and speak at the same time because you will only strain your voice. That has always stuck in my memory! An elderly canon, John Parker, was also something of a mentor to me; he was an antiquarian with a wide knowledge of the cathedral and with many stories, but the most important piece of advice he gave me was “Always start at baptism and end with St. Hugh and you won’t go far wrong”. That remained my guiding principle and I hated having to start at anywhere but the font!

After a short time, I was asked to become Schools Officer with responsibility for the many groups visiting, so I did less general guiding and spent more time with children. Not being a teacher, I learnt to incorporate the needs of the curriculum into tours which gave tours a different feel and structure from those for adults.

There were several highlights in my memory – every guide tells their own version of the dragons being slaughtered at the entrance to the south choir aisle but my favourite started when, having told them about stealing the grapes and then hanging them upside down on the opposite side, one boy shot up his hand “Miss, Miss, my dad kills rats and hangs them like that to scare the others!” That became a standard part of my repertoire – it was so spontaneous!



Another joyful moment was in St. Hugh’s Choir standing on the ‘dog bone’ and explaining that ‘cantata hic’ meant ‘sing here’ indicating that before the advent of loud speakers, this was acoustically the best place to sing. I invited them to try it out, would they like to sing something? The teacher nodded and suddenly the first verse of ‘It’s a long way to Tipperary’ echoed all around the choir! They had, apparently been doing the First World War in class!

Another interesting moment came when Dean Emeritus Fiennes returned to live in Colsterworth; he had some very wealthy American guests staying and asked if a guide could give them a private tour. I was the only guide available so, armed with Dean Fiennes private hope that a good tour might result in a substantial donation, I started off, giving special note to any connections with our American cousins along the route. It seemed to go well, and several weeks later I had a letter from Dean Fiennes thanking me for the tour and he said: “On the way back we passed the Bubble Car Museum (which used to be situated on the junction where the B6403 to Ancaster joins the A17 Sleaford to Newark), they asked to stop and visit and... bought a Bubble Car with no more thought than I would have given to buying a packet of envelopes!” As far as I know, no donation to the cathedral, substantial or otherwise, resulted!

So many happy memories, such fun, such stories – such a privilege to be allowed to introduce strangers and hope that some might continue as pilgrims. For me the cathedral became a very real and present hope and refuge in the difficult times that lay ahead and I sincerely hope that future guides will also find not only joy in a job well done, but a comfort and refuge in the cathedral community.

Margaret Campion

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## The Mindful Mile — (3 Laps of the Cathedral = 1 mile)



The new 2024 initiative from the Cathedral is the Mindful Mile and 31 people plus 2 dogs gathered at the West Front at 12.30pm on a brilliant but arctic-cold day to see what would happen.

We were greeted by Atma, a local Yoga teacher and former Theology graduate of BCG who was gently guiding the group and talking about her association with the late Thich Nhat Hanhan (1926 – 2022), a Vietnamese monk who was an inspirational teacher of Mindfulness. After introducing herself she suggested that we walked, at a pace comfortable to each individual, and try to take each step 'mindfully', concentrating on the foot's contact with the earth. For some, of course, just keeping upright and not dropping too far behind, was concentration enough, but for others it was a quiet, contemplative time, not chatting but allowing oneself to simply think of each step as a small journey.

Perhaps it was not exactly what had been generally expected but it was a beautiful morning, the sun was bright, the sky blue and since we kept moving (albeit slowly in my case) it was exercise and it was communal, with time to meet new people and greet familiar faces. Although our leader and guide had suggested silent walking there was no restriction on communication and the slow walkers certainly found time to talk – or at least, this walker certainly did!

I mentioned the two dogs; one was Aries, a most beautiful creature who was the companion of Atma, our guide, and who had the distinction of singing with the choir at St. Mary Magdalene – or rather crooning in a soft counter-tenor sort of way during the Gospel Acclamation. I'm not sure that would have been allowed in the cathedral but in the parish it is accepted! The second dog was small and called Bee, but had a sore back foot and had to be carried most of the way. I mention these two additions because they seemed to meld gently into the general feeling of harmony and goodwill of the exercise.

Mindful Walks will take place on the second Tuesday of every month this year and although we are unlikely to be guided by another follower of Thich Nhat Hanhan, we will have other guides on a variety of interesting – or unexpected – topics! Plus, hot drinks were provided in the North Transept where there were no restrictions on either dogs or talk!

Margaret Campion



The editors of InHouse are very grateful for an anonymous donation from a member of the cathedral community which has enabled us to produce this edition in colour. We are looking for other people who would be willing to contribute to the printing costs of 150 copies per quarter, either £55 for black and white or £150 in colour. If you or a business which you know could help, please email the editorial team at [InHouse@lincolncathedral.com](mailto:InHouse@lincolncathedral.com). Thank you.