

Friends of Bolton Priory

PRIORY CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST CUTHBERT
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REPORT on SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING Sunday, 5 September 2021

It was wonderful to be reunited in each others' company at the Friends of Bolton Priory Special General Meeting once again. Events such as these have been greatly missed during the pandemic.

Fifty five members attended and the Secretary reported that apologies for absence had been received from 12 members.

Chairman Jill Riley, opened the meeting by greeting those present and asked the Rector, Rev Nicholas Mercer to read the Friends' Prayer.



During the period of restrictions the Executive Committee had continued to operate with a curtailed brief by email messages, telephone and occasionally meeting as regulations had allowed. There had been no Friends events since the Spring lecture in 2019. No future events to historic venues have been planned currently.

The Secretary explained that due to the pandemic the AGM 2020 had been cancelled. With no objection from members to proposals in the January and April issues of the Newsletter, a Virtual AGM 2021 was held by the Executive Committee by computer screen in early May to satisfy the Constitution requirement that an Annual General Meeting of members be held within six months of 31 December. He proposed that members attending this Special General Meeting approved both the Minutes of the AGM 2019 and Minutes of the Virtual Annual General Meeting 2021. Members present approved this proposal unanimously.

Treasurer, Adrian Hendley presented the Friends

Annual Accounts 2020 and reported that unsurprisingly income had been reduced owing to there having been no Friends events. However, subscriptions had been maintained and there had been a donation of £1,000 from the estate of a late member.

Two donations had been made to the Priory Church in response to PCC requests. They were £1,323 towards the new audio system and £1,000 towards costs incurred by re-opening the Church in the summer of 2020.

Gratifyingly, over the years, Friends donations to the Priory Church in response to PCC requests have exceeded £60,000.

The Membership Secretary reported that four new members joined in 2020 and to date six members had joined in 2021, all of whom were welcomed by name.

The next Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 8 May 2022 after the Sunday Service.

***Thank You:** I had a lovely time today; was very glad to see the Committee in action, and enjoyed both the fellowship and the meal – such superb catering, beautifully presented delicious food, and served with hospitable kindness.*

Thank you all very much indeed.
Joyce Simpson—FoBP member

ADVENT SUNDAY SUPPER

28 NOVEMBER 2021

AFTER THE 4.30PM ADVENT SERVICE

We are delighted to announce that once again the Advent Sunday Supper will be held in the Boyle Room after the 4.30pm Advent Service on Sunday 28 November. Hopefully, this will be well attended as it's always a lovely social event in the company of friends. This year of course, will be an even more special occasion as we are able to get together once again.

Tickets are priced at £8.00 each.

Please see attached Events Booking Form.

WE REMEMBER DECEASED MEMBERS

At the start of the Special General Meeting on Sunday 5 September, the Chairman asked those present to stand whilst she read out the names of members who had died since the AGM 2019 and we remembered the contributions that they had each made to Bolton Priory with grateful thanks.

They are: Shelagh Sunner, Janet Finney, Dorothy Smithson, Stephen Murgatroyd, Andrew Hartley, Richard Bull, Harry Ognall, John Sheard, Christopher Armstrong.

THE HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS OF BOLTON PRIORY

It's interesting to remember the history and development of the Friends of Bolton Priory as a charitable organisation, including the stories of those members who have played a significant role as it has gone from strength to strength over the years. In future issues of the Newsletter we will record some memories of the early days of the FoBP, starting with James Turnbull's recollection of Stephen Murgatroyd.

CHARLES STEPHEN MURGATROYD:

Fond Memories of Stephen by James Turnbull.

We were founder members 1998 - I was the secretary.

Stephen was a strong practical personality, ever willing to use his wide capabilities in ways which many would have found trying. For the days before mechanisation for instance he could be found transporting all that was needed for the Friends gatherings from the Boyle Room to Bolton Hall and back and at a later date to the Village Hall. At the times of the annual fete he spent hard hours in preparation of stakes and notices which helped for smooth running. All this without fuss.

Steve was always a great support at all the functions, especially the annual lunch which in the early days the past Duke & Duchess very kindly allowed us to hold in Bolton Hall (opposite the Priory). Steve would transport numerous plates, cutlery, cup and saucers, dishes etc from the Village Hall down to Bolton Hall as the Boyle Room was not so well equipped in those days to borrow from. He would help clear up and cart the washing-up to the kitchens for us to wash. We all found that difficult, as the kitchen felt a very long, hard walk after you had done it a few times on solid stone floors! When everything was washed up Steve soldiered on and took everything back again. They were great times: we had the French windows open as it always seemed to be sunny!

It was a stroke of genius when Steve was appointed as Head Sidesman. It was then that his speed of 'Getting things done' – as someone said more recently – began to be noticed. He could so move chairs and furniture that transformation happened almost by magic. A true help in need, always willing to respond to a call for help. He was also head sidesman at the Priory for over 20 years and a great helper throughout the Fete times helping putting up marquees, knocking in post and clearing up at the end.

Greatly admired by a myriad of friends and by scores of visitors and worshippers to the Priory who were glad they were there to welcome the smiling Stephen with hand outstretched and help unstintingly afforded. A good doer and supporter!



The Website for the Friends

www.prioryfriends.org.uk is open to all to read on the Internet. There you will find past Newsletters, stories, pictures of events and lots of information.

Our grateful thanks to Rosemary Murgatroyd for arranging the distribution of the newsletters, Aurora Mercer for photography and for maintaining the Friends' website and to Margaret Cody for co-ordinating the ticket sales for FoBP events.

THE RECTOR'S LOCKDOWN DIARY

Saturday 27th March 2021

The final day before the Church comes out of lockdown. I have made preparations for everything I can possibly think of and Palm Sunday is the first of many services that I have already prepared. However, final preparations were required. I amended the service sheet to take account of the fact that we are still unable to sing. I then printed off thirty four copies which should be enough to cover the thirty communicants who are able to attend. In each service sheet I put a Palm Cross and a giving envelope so that we can reduce physical handing in Church. Each communicant is required to take their service sheet away with them. I print off the order of service in large type for the altar as well as the Passion Reading before taking them all across to Church. I then set up everything for the morning which includes moving tables, putting out the orders of service, preparing the lecterns and then making sure that everything I needed was on the altar. All set to go. Finally, my wife and I celebrated Holy Communion together so that the 8am service was ready for those listening on-line in the morning. This is the eleventh hour and we are finally opening Church up once again. As the vaccination programme rolls on impressively, we are all hopeful that this will be the last time that Church is locked down. It has been an extraordinary chapter in World history as well as the history of the Church. This time the World was led by science and not the Church and the Church had to take second place and follow the science like everyone else. That has meant a change in theological perspective but, from my angle, it has brought an interesting perspective on religious life. Just like many others, I do too much and have sometimes allowed Church to become a commodity. The demand for more and more has to be resisted. So often, I have found in this past year that less is more. This will, hopefully, be my guiding star from this day going forward.

Palm Sunday

Bolton Priory re-opened. We remembered our Lord going into Jerusalem. We also made our own triumphal entry.

Rev Nicholas Mercer

We thank the Rector for his contributions to the FoBP Newsletters during the past eighteen months: for sharing his thoughts and the how the impact of the pandemic has affected his ministry at Bolton Priory. FoBP members have valued the opportunity to share some of his personal diary entries during this time.

2022 SPRING LECTURE - Friday 4 March 2022

Ministry in the Falkland Islands—Reflections on the

Anglican Communion

We are delighted to announce that after his previous talk in November 2019, entitled "From Basra to Port Stanley—a Question of Faith", Lieutenant Colonel the Reverend Nicholas Mercer will be speaking about the next stage of his faith journey focusing on ministry in the Falkland Islands. The title of lecture will be "Ministry in the Falkland Islands – reflections on the Anglican Communion" and will examine the history of the Anglican Church in the Falkland Islands, the impact of the Falklands War today and issues arising in the world-wide Anglican Communion.

Further details and tickets will be available from January 2022.



THE RESTORATION OF BOLTON PRIORY 1980-1985

Some thoughts on the Restoration by Frank Lambert

Part 4:

From the Archives



Fundraising was vital; we had to pay builders' accounts and other expenses. Ultimately, we managed to raise over £300,000. Initially, Craigmile were in charge, but we realised we needed our own fund raiser. Michael Roberts was a regular worshipper and he had been made redundant in the wool trade. He was approached, accepted the position, and was trained by Craigmile. He quickly called himself the Appeal Director and was very good at conferences and meetings. There was a very active and lively committee with some very novel ideas of how to raise funds. The village had held a Bolton Abbey Fair in one of the Estate fields near the river, but decided to let the Priory run the event. For several years Reg Horsfall organised the day and raised large sums of money. The Duchess invited the old girls of Leeds Girls High School, who were evacuated to Bolton Hall during the war to revisit the Hall. Tea was provided and a church service with a fund raising theme; there were many such events. Maurice approached a design group he knew who produced a leaflet with a design of some monks holding up the walls of an Abbey, and this was successfully used to raise money.

Mrs Runcie, the wife of the incumbent Archbishop of Canterbury, was a concert pianist, and she very kindly came and gave a recital held in Denton Hall. We also held the first ever Jazz concert in the Priory at which Pat Hudson sang. Maurice was so impressed with her singing he invited her to join the choir. She accepted and sang almost every Sunday until she sadly died about three years ago.

We had a very active, lively supportive PCC and Donald Wood, a church warden for many years, was very involved in all aspects of the restoration and kept Bolton Abbey village informed about everything that was going on. During the whole of the restoration the number of worshippers at the Priory was growing. The choir had been re-established and there was a wonderful sense of companionship with everyone contributing and working hard. Maurice and Jean Slaughter were untiring in their work. Maurice took services at the Priory, regularly going on to Rylstone, and then continuing on Sunday evenings at Arncliffe. He had very little help from the Diocese, but they did not levy a share at that time, so we did not have to make a yearly contribution. As we had been granted a faculty to proceed with the work, we just got on with it.

When the restoration was completed, the church re-opened, and we moved back into a wonderful building. It was bright, clean and warm. There was a big congregation for a service of thanksgiving. It was a joy to see sunlight shining through the West windows throwing coloured light into the church. We were all truly thankful. Maurice recruited and trained guides to do duty in the church talking to visitors, and we encouraged school parties to visit. We also had people to welcome visitors and take them for coffee after the service, and many of them became regular attendees. The church took on a new vigorous life and everyone rejoiced.

Frank Lambert

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