

Friends of Bolton Priory

PRIORY CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST CUTHBERT
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BOLTON PRIORY CHOIR



“The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man that he should proclaim the Word of God through music” - Martin Luther

Under the leadership of the Director of Music, Tim Raymond, we are fortunate that our choir at Bolton Priory are dedicated and talented. Chris Faulkener, this year's Organ Scholar also sings in the choir each Sunday as does his father, Duncan. However, it was especially wonderful at Christmas when the choir's number was increased further when they were joined by several younger members who had returned to the area for the festive season.

These included last year's Organ Scholar, Miriam Davies who is now studying at Birmingham University: Benedict and Fabian Mercer, both of whom are members of the choir at Sherborne Abbey: Jamie Kitchenham, a pupil at Ripon Grammar School and Zac Burns who is currently a choral scholar at Keble College, Oxford. We thank them all for their contribution to the services each week.

You may recall from the last Newsletter that the hymn books used by the choir were desperately in need of replacing. Since then, the Friends of Bolton Priory have met this requirement by a donation to the PCC to cover the cost of £450.00 for twenty copies of Common Praise Full Music.

THE SPRING LECTURE 2020
Friday 13 March at 7pm for 7.30pm
COLIN ALDERSON - CHEF TO THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD

We are delighted that this year our speaker at the Spring Lecture will be Colin Alderson.

For five years Colin Alderson was the Head Pastry Chef with the Royal Household at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and on the Royal Yacht Britannia.

On leaving Scarborough Technical College having qualified as a Chef, Colin obtained work locally in the Yorkshire Dales where his parents had a farm. After a short time in the Army Catering at Catterick, he worked at Bolton Castle in Wensleydale and whilst there he applied for a job as Chef to the Royal Household. Colin's presentation will cover his time working in the kitchens at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Holyrood, Sandringham, Balmoral and the Royal Yacht Britannia. These experiences opened up a whole new world for this young chef from Yorkshire. Colin's talk will include the preparation involved when catering for state banquets, diplomatic receptions and garden parties – making 2,000 canapes and 4,000 lobster tartlets.

You are invited to join us for a glass of wine or soft drink before the start of the lecture.



Colin Alderson

As usual, the Spring Lecture will take place at Bolton Abbey Village Hall.

Please arrive at 7pm for a 7.30pm start

Tickets are available at £5.00 per person
Please see Events Booking Form attached

ADVENT SUNDAY SUPPER

Once again, Amanda Wood and Jill Riley successfully co-ordinated the catering arrangements for the Friends Supper that followed the afternoon service on Advent Sunday.

The table was attractively decorated with candles and greenery suited to the start of Advent.

There was a record attendance of 58 members and guests who tucked into a delicious spread and we're pleased to report that there was very little left over at the end of this happy event.



Our Grateful thanks to Rosemary Murgatroyd for arranging the distribution of the newsletters; to Emma Padgett at Hartleys Auctioneers for maintaining the Friends' website and to Margaret Cody for co-ordinating the ticket sales for FoBP events

REPORT ON THE AUTUMN LECTURE

An audience of 105 were privileged to hear the inaugural Friends Autumn Lecture delivered by Revd Nicholas Mercer, Rector of Bolton Abbey. Nicholas described his life experiences up to the time he was ordained which was quite revealing about the man, his integrity and his humanity.

Nicholas was born in North Yorkshire, educated at Uppingham and St Andrews University and following his early attempt to be ordained into the Church of England was declined, he qualified as a solicitor. As a young lawyer he decided on a military legal career and joined the Army Legal Service. He saw early service in Northern Ireland, then in Germany, Bosnia and Cyprus. By the time of the Iraq war in 2003, Nicholas had risen to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and was the Army's most senior legal officer in Iraq.

Nicholas talked about his experiences in the Iraq war. Following the Lee Clegg case, the legal implications of military action were under greater scrutiny than ever before, and it had become practice that Army Legal Service personnel would be deployed to Divisional Headquarters to ensure that those conducting the war understood the legal framework in which they operated. As the senior military lawyer at HQ 1st (UK) Armoured Division, Nicholas had to advise commanders whether the proposed military action would comply with international legal principles. Nicholas recounted being stationed at the 1st Armoured Division's Main headquarters on the Iraqi border and being asked by Chiefs Ops on the eve of battle whether his troops could engage the enemy. Despite his own concerns about whether the war itself was legal in the absence of a UN resolution, Nicholas advised that they could, upon which guns began firing.

I'm sure I was not alone amongst the audience in being surprised to learn that there is such a thing as "the law of the battlefield", but it is enshrined in treaties we have heard of like the Geneva Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights with which the UK is supposed to comply. As Nicholas found out to his cost, Army

Legal Service lawyers who are part of the chain of command have a potentially conflicting duty to ensure warfare is prosecuted in accordance with the relevant legal principles but are placed in an invidious position when higher authorities decide that the legal advice is wrong, or simply ignore it. Nicholas spoke of his understandable shock at seeing prisoners being held in stress positions, hooded and kneeling on the ground next to an interrogation tent. Evidence mounted that prisoners were being treated in an inhuman and degrading manner which Nicholas reported to senior military staff with clear advice that this was illegal. Notwithstanding that, his findings were confirmed by an independent observer from the International Committee of the Red Cross, Nicholas was ordered to be silent. This was ultimately confirmed by the Ministry of Defence.

The remaining years of Nicholas's Army career saw him continue to press an intransigent and increasingly hostile MoD for recognition that what he had witnessed in Iraq was illegal and required investigation. Even on the battlefield there are rules that must be followed and as part of a civilised society where the rule of law is paramount. Ultimately Nicholas was vindicated after the Public Inquiry into the death of Iraqi detainee Baha Mousa, at which Nicholas gave evidence having previously been tendered as by the MoD as a hostile witness (i.e. a witness against the MoD). The Inquiry concluded that the Army had used illegal interrogation techniques and was responsible for "corporate failure". As a result of his work exposing this wrongdoing Nicholas was named 2011/12 Human Rights Lawyer of the Year by Liberty.

During this difficult time, Nicholas's calling to the church led him to take a theology course at Oxford University whilst undertaking the Oxford Ministry Course at Cuddesdon Theological College. He ultimately resigned from the Army in 2011. He was ordained in Salisbury Cathedral later that year and served a curacy in Gillingham, Dorset. In 2014 he became a Chaplain at Sherborne School and, in 2017, was appointed to be Rector of Christ Church Cathedral, Port Stanley, Falkland Islands.

Report by Keith Simpson

CHRISTMAS AT HAREWOOD

The Christmas visit to Harewood House in December was attended by 56 members and guests. Although the rooms were decorated for the festive season, this experience was somewhat different in that it could be more accurately described as an “exhibition of Christmas”.

Entitled “The Mansion at Christmas”, the statues were singing, the paintings were gossiping and there was a hustle and bustle both above and below stairs. Morning coffee and lunch was delicious and several of our party commented favourably on the room by room tour.



FUTURE EVENTS

The Executive Committee is already in the process of planning events for members and guests to enjoy throughout the year.

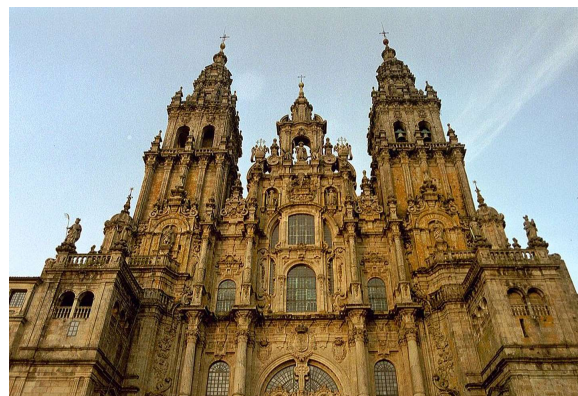
In addition to the Spring Lecture in March and the Annual Meeting in May, we are hoping that there will be a visit to Stonyhurst College in June and the Auckland Project in September. Once again, the Rector has agreed to deliver the Autumn Lecture: then there will be the Advent Sunday supper and possibly a Christmas trip in December.

We thank you for your continued support as not only are these social events a great opportunity to meet up with friends, they also contribute to the Friends of Bolton Priory funds.

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.

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA CATHEDRAL, SPAIN



Jill Riley has successfully completed her seven day pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela – a distance of 120 kilometres.

Jill has vividly described her memorable trek through rural areas, tiny villages and hamlets with lovely churches as well as farmyards where the locals had set up cafes and shops. The terrain was also varied – shingle paths, tarmac tracks, paving stones and soft pine needle walks through beautiful pine and eucalyptus forests.

On arriving at her destination, Jill refers to a superb sculpture of two disciples pointing towards the four spires of the magnificent cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. A memorable experience indeed!

Jill has thanked everyone for their support and messages of encouragement during this undertaking and also for donations for the Friends of Bolton Priory which totalled £1,750.00

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 10th May 2020

Our AGM will be held in Bolton Abbey Village Hall on Sunday 10 May immediately following the 10.30am Eucharist Service.

As usual the meeting will be followed by a cold buffet with a choice of desserts.

Tickets for lunch are excellent value at £17.50 per person.

Please complete the Events Form attached.