

Friends of Bolton Priory

PRIORY CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST CUTHBERT
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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

During these unparalleled times we have all been required to make adjustments to adapt our daily lives and adopt the "new normal". So too with the FoBP Newsletter. Usually, the October edition contains a report of May's AGM and accounts of trips that had taken place in June and September. There would also be details of forthcoming events: the Autumn Lecture, a visit to see Christmas decorations in a stately home and of course, the Advent Supper. None of these has taken place and of course all plans for future activities are on hold.

On a brighter note, you will be able to read the first part of two serials both of which will be continued in subsequent issues. Firstly, the late Frank Lambert was a Priory Church Guide with an extensive knowledge of the Restoration of the Priory Church from 1980. Fortunately Frank committed his recollections to paper and his thoughts, previously published in the Parish Magazine 10 years ago, are reprinted here in serial form. Then secondly, in March no church was allowed to be open to the public and recognising these were unique circumstances, the Rector started a "Lockdown Diary". Nicholas has kindly offered to share some of these entries with us. I hope you will enjoy reading both articles along with other items of news.

Jean Crawford

ANDREW HARTLEY : AN APPRECIATION

It was with great sadness that we received the news of Andrew's death on 5th September 2020.

Andrew had been a member of the Friends of Bolton Priory and on the Executive Committee for twenty years. He had been our Chairman for 8 years. On his retirement from the Chair due to ill health he then became our very first President, sadly a position he only held for a short time. I had the honour and privilege of replacing him in the Chair. He was a very hard act to follow. Not only was he a huge support to me but the commitment he made to the Friends over all those years was remarkable. He was a very busy man as we know, a well-known and successful auctioneer and a very active member of many Ilkley organisations. His knowledge and expertise in antiques and all things 'fine arts' was legendary. We, as Friends were so lucky to have benefitted hugely from his involvement with the Friends of Bolton Priory.

Many of you who have been on our summer and autumn 'outings' over the years will remember the visits to different houses and places of interest which Andrew and Anna organised so brilliantly. Their research and planning made those visits both interesting, informative and memorable, all the more so for the wonderful briefings Andrew gave before arriving at our destination. As Keith Simpson, my righthand man and our Friends secretary puts it, 'his briefings were like a Cambridge college tutorial' !

Andrew's jaunty gait, his sense of humour, his positivity and his huge smile will be sadly missed. We are very lucky to have had him as our colleague and Friend.

On behalf of all the Friends from near and far, I extend to Anna and the family our love and sincere condolences.

God bless you Andrew.

Jill Riley Chairman FoBP



REPORT ON THE FRIENDS FINANCES

I would like to provide a brief summary of the financial aspects of the Friends' activities in 2019, and the early part of 2020. (The 2019 Accounts and Treasurer's Report would normally have been presented at the AGM but, as you will be aware, this was cancelled due to the situation regarding Covid-19).

Income in 2019 was much higher than usual. A good year in terms of income was further enhanced in the Autumn by some very generous donations in connection with our Chairman's pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (see January Newsletter). We also held an Autumn Lecture (for the first time in many years), and this was very well supported.

General expenditure, including the printing and distribution of Newsletters, was generally in line with the average over recent years.

Two items of funding for the Priory Church took place during 2019. These were the refurbishment of the altar candelabra, and the provision of new hymnbooks for the choir.

The first eight months of 2020 have been relatively quiet. We managed to hold the Spring Lecture, but other events have not been possible up to the time of writing.

The Friends have, however, provided some further funds for the Priory Church. A contribution was made towards the sound system inside the Church, and the Friends also assisted with the costs involved in re-opening the Church tower (provision of hand sanitisers, signage, etc).

These latest contributions to the Priory Church have taken total funding by the Friends of Bolton Priory past the **£60,000** mark since inauguration. We look forward to being able to support the Priory Church in the years to come.

Adrian Hendley (Hon. Treasurer)

September 2020

LEGACY RECEIVED

At the beginning of August, the Friends of Bolton Priory received an official letter from Mr Roger Davy as the Executor of the estate of Miss Dorothy Smithson. A cheque for a thousand pounds was enclosed which was a wonderful surprise.

Miss Dorothy Smithson had been a Friend for many years. Her connection with the Priory was through Claudia Armstrong, who many of you will remember. They apparently met many years ago when they were both lecturers at a college somewhere down in the West Country. Miss Smithson's parents lived in Ilkley and she came back to live up here to look after them. It was because of her that Claudia came up to live in Ilkley. Claudia of course became a regular member of the Priory Church congregation and she preached on many occasions. Miss Smithson loved the Priory and became a Friend but she didn't attend our services very often because, as a Methodist Deaconess, she attended her local Methodist church.

Miss Smithson died in Burley Hall just before Christmas. She had a "great affection" for the Priory and we greatly appreciate this generous and timely legacy.

Bless her for her generosity.



On 7 September we held our first Executive Committee meeting in Bolton Abbey Village Hall: socially distanced of course. We wouldn't have enjoyed refreshments like these at a Zoom Meeting! Beautifully prepared and served by Jill and Jenny.

By The Way

FoBP Financial records date back to December 1989. After ten years, donations to the PCC totalled £10,000. After fifteen years, donations reached £20,000. This year contributions to the Priory are proportionately greater and have exceeded £60,000. We are delighted to share this significant milestone with members.

THE RESTORATION OF BOLTON PRIORY 1980-1985

Some thoughts on the Restoration by Frank Lambert

Part 1:

From the Archives

When I was talking to a new guide last year, I found that she knew very little about the Restoration, so I thought it would be appropriate to put some of my recollections on paper.

During the late 1970's the Priory was in a very poor condition with a leaking roof, cold, damp, dirty and in need of major repairs. The Diocese said that they could not afford to undertake the necessary work and that the church was too big for a small village like Bolton Abbey. They proposed removing the roof and letting the building become a ruin. Canon Slaughter was at that time the Rector of Christ Church in Skipton, but was being moved to the Cathedral in Bradford. He said, however that he would prefer to go to Bolton Priory and try to save the church. The Diocese inferred that he would be wasting his time. However, they agreed to his request; Canon Slaughter was made Priest-in-Charge at Bolton Priory and also given responsibility for Rylstone and Arncliffe churches.

I was born in Silsden and often visited the Priory, but I had never attended a service. Barbara, my late wife, and I, together with Alan and Micky Hague, went to the Priory to hear their daughter's wedding banns being read.

Although Maurice preached on that occasion, he had not yet moved to Bolton Priory. I was very impressed with his sermon, and we started to attend the church. The number of people attending services was still quite small. Maurice was not long in announcing that he proposed restoring the Church, and asked the congregation to write to him with ideas of what should be done and how to raise money. I wrote with some ideas about fund raising and was put on the Fund Raising Committee. There was also a Works Committee to oversee the work carried out, and to act as a go-between the architect and the P.C.C. and report on progress. A fundraising company called Craigmile was appointed. They contacted companies and Trusts, as well as individuals, asking for money. A good relationship was established with the Estate and they made an interest-free loan of £20,000, a large percentage of the congregation gave guarantees to donate money over a number of years.



The main committee; the Bolton Abbey Priory Church Appeal Trust had Lord Hartington as its president. The committee members were Leonard Gorner, Alan Hague, Neil Hartley, Michael Roberts and Maurice Slaughter; Peter Marshall joined at a later date replacing Leonard Gorner. This committee, which is still in existence but with different members, was the governing body of the Restoration, and looked after all aspects of the enterprise. The Diocese appointed an architect from Manchester, Mr Buttress, to be in charge of the restoration. Neil Hartley, of James Hartley Architects in Skipton, was already the church architect and he had to work under Buttress and supervise the builders doing the work. It was not an ideal arrangement. A redundant church at Holbeck, Leeds had a unique reredos. It was a wooden structure carved in Bavaria, very elaborate, colourful and a typical work of the Black Forest. Mr Buttress thought it should be saved and taken to the Priory. A party from the Priory went to see it; some thought it was beautiful but completely unsuitable for the Priory. At this time the Works Committee met and decided that having two architects would not be satisfactory and would lead to problems. Mr Buttress was therefore dismissed and Neil Hartley was put in charge. The Diocese was dismayed and the Archdeacon furious but we had been granted a Faculty to carry out the restoration and work proceeded.

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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 Emma Paggett of Hartleys Auctioneers for maintaining the Friends' website.

SPRING LECTURE 2021

Early days and none of us knows what the future holds. However, should we be in a position next March 2021 to hold our Spring Lecture, the Rector will be talking about his ministry in the Falkland Islands, the southernmost Anglican cathedral in the world.

THE RECTOR'S LOCKDOWN DIARY

During lockdown, the Rector of Bolton Abbey (Reverend Nicholas Mercer) kept a diary as he realised that the Priory was living through historic and unprecedented times. Although we can't be certain, the Priory has never been closed throughout its 850 year history despite the ravages of invasion, Reformation, Civil and World wars. Over the coming editions of the Friends Newsletter, he will be sharing extracts from his Diary during lockdown.

In this edition, the first Sunday of the lockdown for the Priory is remembered.

Sunday 22nd March 2020

I started the day celebrating Holy Communion in the Priory Church. All services had been suspended just three days earlier as Coronavirus or Covid-19 as it is known had begun to take hold in the Country. Before then, precautions had been gradually introduced. First hand washing before coming into Church, then distribution in one kind and then the withdrawal of physical contact. No sign of the peace (which was easy for the Priory as we use 1662) but then no contact during a blessing at the altar. There was an air of unreality until this point. People were not very attentive to the gradual restrictions and met for coffee after the services which rendered all the precautions nugatory. But then came the *Ad Clerum* suspending all services. I put a notice on the door of the Church that all services were suspended until further notice but that the Priory would be open for prayer at all times. However, despite the Government instructions to go home and keep safe the public had largely ignored the advice. This Sunday was Mothering Sunday. People had already made plans to do something with their Mothers and the weather was beautiful for almost the first time that year. There was an ice cream van in the field and people came and went as if it was the first day of a holiday rather than a shutdown due to a deadly virus sweeping the world. It was the same throughout the country and the message had clearly not got through to the public at large. It is hard to accept the gravity of the situation however as we were all still largely shielded from what is unfolding in our hospitals. The family came up from Dorset today as term had ended abruptly. There will be no summer term and it is far from certain that anyone will go back for the winter term either. Despite the suspension of services, I decided to celebrate Holy Communion with the verger for the benefit of the community. I recorded the service on an MP3 player next to my prayer book on the altar. It is now posted on the website. The Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Lent asked God "for the comfort of his grace because we worthily deserve to be punished for our evil deeds".

MEMBERSHIP: A GENTLE REMINDER

Did you know that many of the Friends update their annual subscription each year at the Annual General Meeting?

Understandably, as this year's AGM was cancelled, more than forty people haven't realised that the next payment is due. Owing to the cancellation of the usual fundraising events in recent months, we are reliant on the income from membership subscriptions more than ever. If this gentle reminder touches a nerve, please would you contact Rosemary Murgatroyd, FoBP Membership Secretary at frmurgy@hotmail.com

She would be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Individual	£10.00
Husband & Wife	£15.00
Senior Citizen <i>individual</i>	£5.00
Senior Citizen <i>couple</i>	£10.00
Student	£5.00

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Individual <i>(single payment)</i>	£100.00
Husband & Wife <i>(single payment)</i>	£150.00