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## Newsletter - Spring 2020

In This Issue:	Page		Page
Editorial	1	Teatime Talks	4
Membership Update	1	Projects	4
An article from Rowan Maurice	2	Planned visit to Kings Lynn and Sandringham	4
An article from Ann Irvine	3	Forthcoming events	4

### Editorial

Welcome to this latest edition of the Friends' newsletter. Although much has happened since the publication of the previous issue last autumn, considerable uncertainty still exists about how the future will unfold at our cathedral. We remain excited about the new visitor centre project, although it's still a bit of a building site! (right) I am indebted to Anne Irvine of Lincoln Cathedral Connected for providing an article to bring us up to date with developments. Unfortunately, our usual cycle of events has been somewhat curtailed by the loss of the Cathedral Centre as a base for our activities but we were able to host two teatime talks during February in the Cathedral Connected premises at 27, Minster Yard. We were unable to find a suitable venue in which to celebrate the feast of St Hugh last year but it is hoped that this popular luncheon event will be taking place next November in the new premises. We had expected that the venue for this year's Annual General Meeting would be in the new centre but this is looking increasingly unlikely. Our highly successful flagship event of Carols by Candlelight did take place as usual last December and tickets were quickly sold out. Planning for this year's event has already begun and the evening will continue to be a mixture of both traditional and more contemporary items. A number of projects supported by the Friends have been completed and details of these can be found on page 4. As a result of a most generous legacy, most of which was specifically targeted towards our choir, we have been able to support its forthcoming tour to Bruges later this year. Also included in this newsletter is an article by Rowan Maurice, the current Friends' Choral Scholar. This is a reminder that, whilst our organisation will always maintain a desire to provide assistance towards physical projects within the cathedral environment, offering support for members of our cathedral community in the development of their chosen careers is an equally important aim.



### Membership

In the last issue of the newsletter notice was given by the Membership Secretary that subscriptions would rise from the beginning of this year, from an annual fee of £15 to £20, with a new joint membership of £35 for couples. We would like to thank all those members who have either updated their bankers' orders to reflect this increase or who have paid the new amount by cheque. We would respectfully encourage other members to consider updating their subscriptions, as maintaining a payment of £15 means that no new membership card (which enables free entry into the cathedral) would be issued. All members paying at least £15 will continue to receive mailings. Membership continues to grow steadily and we have been pleased to welcome a number of new life members.

*Rowan Maurice is the current Friends' Choral Scholar. He has kindly written this article for our newsletter and I am sure that members will enjoy reading about his experiences. We wish him well in his desire for a future career in music.*

My career in music started when I was in college at the age of 14. I discovered that I did not have much musical aptitude and I could barely play the piano at best, if not at all! I was 'subjugated' by my music teacher at the time to join the college chorus which was without an audition and gathered at lunchtimes. I look back at this moment often because this is the very thing that



pulled me towards the choral tradition and I haven't looked back since. Hearing Stanford's *'The Blue Bird'* sung by the college chamber choir at the time in the concert, for the first time was captivating and winsome. I sought out the director immediately and asked if I could audition... Unsurprisingly, I didn't quite hit the mark! I worked hard to improve upon my ability to read music and was later offered a place. Needless to say, I found that all aspects of my academic performance increased dramatically the moment I decided to do music. As a result of this, I was able to study music at the University of Huddersfield and became a choral scholar at Leeds Cathedral. Since then, I have worked as a choral director with the Diocese of Leeds singing programme, a choral scholar at Blackburn Cathedral and now, Lincoln Cathedral.

The very first time I went to Lincoln must have been nearly ten years ago on a choir residential trip. This experience encouraged me to apply as a bass choral scholar, since I already felt at home with the cathedral and its city. Regardless of that, I am extremely grateful to be here. I am able to sing with professional singers daily, who are caring, and respect the nature of what we, the choral scholars, bring to the choir on a yearly basis. Performing works such as Handel's *Messiah* or Bach's *St John Passion* in such a huge environment is such a rewarding prospect, as well as working with such a talented music department. It's truly remarkable what Aric Prentice, Jeffrey Makinson and Co. have achieved with the music department and it is very much alive.

With their guidance, I hope to find a lay clerkship and continue singing as a soloist, with perhaps even going back into schools to stress the importance of the impact that music can have on our lives.

I would like to give a warm-hearted 'thank you' to the Association of Friends for its support, generosity, and sponsorship.

All the best,  
Rowan Maurice



*Anne Irvine was until recently the programme manager for the Lincoln Cathedral Connected project. She has continued to work on a part time basis for the project and has kindly provided a final update for our newsletter.*

As Spring approaches, the final touches are being put to the Old Deanery Visitor Centre. The 'ODVC' as it has affectionately become known, will house the Cathedral's refectory, shop, community rooms, education centre and exhibition spaces. The contractor, William Birch Ltd, has been on site since September 2018 and now, after 18 months, the end of their work is in sight. The tired Grade II listed building on Eastgate, which until a few years ago was home to Lincoln Minster School, has been transformed. Currently the decorators are putting the finishing touches to their handiwork and floors are being laid.



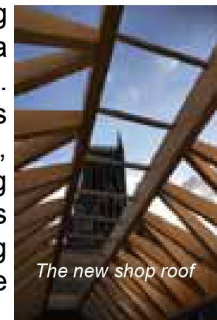
*The new Refectory*

Landscaping on the Dean's Green is creating beautiful spaces for everyone to enjoy. Over the next few weeks, a sea of brown mud will turn a deep, verdant green as turf is laid.



*The Community Rooms*

Birch will hand the building and the Dean's Green to the Cathedral at the end of May, at which point those departments inhabiting the centre can start to move in. So begins an intense period of preparation, training and testing prior to the Visitor Centre opening officially to the public.



*The new shop roof*

One of aims of 'Lincoln Cathedral Connected', the banner under which these works have progressed, was to improve the Cathedral's hospitality and welcome for worshippers, volunteers and residents of Lincoln, as well as visitors to this magnificent City. Access has been at the heart of the project, resulting in raised ground levels at the West Front, a fully accessible visitor centre and provision of a Changing Places facility. Further to this, the project has



*The exhibition space*

identified audiences with which the Cathedral struggles to engage, including children, families and those living in deprived areas of the county. The project is therefore supporting an exciting and varied programme of activities and events, hoping to encourage a wider range of people to visit the Cathedral.



*The exhibition space*

In addition, the Cathedral's Works Department has been busy with conservation of the West Front, including the southern run of the Romanesque Frieze. This work requires painstaking attention to detail, ensuring that conservation of the sculpture meets rigorous academic and professional standards. The results will be revealed in autumn 2021, when the scaffolding will be removed and the steel platform dismantled.

Until then, we all look forward to the next milestone: the opening of the new Visitor Centre and Dean's Green in July this year.

*Anne Irvine*

## Teatime Talks



We were fortunate enough to arrange two teatime talks during February, attended by a small but select audience, at the Cathedral Connected premises at 27 Minster Yard. The first, given by Judy Jones, was an engaging presentation about the Heritage Education Trust and Sandford Award, the

aim of which is 'to celebrate and promote high quality in heritage education.' A fortnight later we enjoyed a welcome return visit from Margaret and John Crompton. This time their subject was 'The mysteries surrounding George Elliot's visit to Gainsborough when writing 'The Mill on the Floss.' and also celebrated the bi-centenary of her birth.

## Projects



The Friends have recently supported a number of projects in the Cathedral. The largest of these has been the refurbishment of the Lay Vicars' Vestry. Although special cupboards had to be built by the Works Department everybody was very satisfied when the final invoice turned out to be considerably less than the original estimate! We also supported the replacement of the soft furnishings in St Hugh's Choir-again a bespoke project, as very few of the medieval misericord seats are of the same size. A new set of four purple copes for the Advent and Lent seasons, made by the Cathedral Needlework Guild, was recently dedicated, again paid for with funds supplied by the Friends. We also paid for the manufacture of a number of black cassocks for use by volunteer vergers.

## Annual Visit

On Tuesday 19th May we have arranged a visit to the Sandringham estate in Norfolk, the much-loved country retreat of Her Majesty the Queen. We shall be able to tour the house and enjoy both the gardens and the popular café. On the way it is proposed to stop off in Kings Lynn to explore the architecture of this ancient port. Last year's visit to Bletchley Park was heavily oversubscribed so early booking is recommended.



### Forthcoming Events

Wednesday	25th March	Friends' Council Meeting
Saturday	16th May	Welcome to New Members
Tuesday	19th May	Visit to Kings Lynn and Sandringham Estate
Saturday	20th June	Annual General Meeting
Monday	16th November	St Hugh's Feast Day
Wednesday	16th December	Carols by Candlelight concert