



REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2001

Once again, the Society's services to its members during the year were centred on two main fields: events and publications. Perhaps the most significant development in these areas, and one which opens up a prospect of enhanced benefits in the future, was the venture into joint enterprises with other institutions having objectives or interests compatible with our own. These were the first fruits of policy decision reached by the Council during the year 2000 and announced in last year's Annual Report. They are referred to in the summary which now follows.

Events

As is customary, a varied selection of church visits and tours was offered, with a far greater emphasis this year on regional locations, to reflect a changing pattern in the geographical spread of the Society's membership. The programme, which took place largely in the summer, began with visits to medieval churches in Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire. This was followed by a whole-day walking tour to some of the old city churches in York. Churches of more recent date were explored in tours of Leeds and the Eltham district of south-east London. Our member Jonathan Fryer, acting independently of the Society, organised two tours: to churches in Leicestershire, and a weekend visit to France featuring the cathedral city of Saint Claude in Jura. Our member, John Vigar, similarly organised a visit to churches in the Medway Valley

Three regular annual events took place in central London. The Annual General Meeting was held on 31st May in the hall of St Anne's, Soho, in conjunction with an illustrated talk by Kenneth Richardson on a South London campaign of early twentieth-century church building. The Annual Conference, at the Courtauld Institute in October, had as its theme the techniques and methods of building medieval parish churches, and was presented by a team of distinguished speakers specialising in the crafts of stone masonry, glass painting and wood working. This was followed by the now established Dykes Bower lecture, held at the Art Workers' Guild, which on this occasion was very appropriately delivered by the Society's President, Dr Donald Buttress, who spoke on his completed twelve-year tenure as Surveyor of Westminster Abbey.

In November, in association with the Victorian Society, the Society presented a lecture and recital, at the Church of St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, London, of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century West Gallery Choir Music, performed by the London Gallery Quire.

Publications

The Society's Journal, *Ecclesiology Today*, again formed the backbone of its publishing programme. The usual three issues were distributed to members during the year, including a 40-page 'bumper' edition in September – the biggest so far. As well as the familiar mix of news, book reviews and

correspondence, their coverage included a numerous selection of short articles and reports on a wide diversity of subjects in the field of ecclesiology.

A new undertaking for the Society was its association with other organisations, either as co-publishers or by providing other forms of support, thus giving effect to a decision which the Council set in train during the year 2000. Two books have so far appeared under a joint publishing arrangement: *The Journal of William Dowsing*, edited by Trevor Cooper, which the Society published in collaboration with the Boydell Press; this was launched at a 'Dowsing Day' in Cambridge, based at Peterhouse. The second was *The Stained Glass of Frederick Preedy*, by Michael Kerney, which appeared under the Society's imprint as a result of co-operation with Maney Publishing. In addition, the Society welcomed the production of the book *A Church as it Should Be: the Cambridge Camden Society and its Influence*, edited by Christopher Webster and John Elliott; though published independently, this was offered to the Society's members at a concessionary price.

The illustrated monograph by our member, Dr John Thomas on *Albi Cathedral and British Church Architecture* reached its last stages of preparation and went forward to the printers prior to distribution to members in early 2002.

The Society's website continued to be updated on a monthly basis. First published in September 1998, it has attracted a slowly but steadily increasing number of visitors, averaging about 1500 visitors per month during 2001.

Membership and Administration

Some 99 new members were welcomed into the Society during the year, increasing the roll to 766 as at 31st December: a net gain of 27.

With great regret, the Council have to record the deaths of the following members: Dr A. M. Craven, Mrs J. Little, Mr G. Slattery, Mrs C. I. I. Ward.

The Council continues to meet formally at about two-monthly intervals, to discuss the conduct and development of the Society's activities and administration. They were glad to be joined by Dr James Johnston, as a co-opted member with particular responsibility for maintaining and extending co-operation with other amenity and learned Societies having interests similar to our own. His former role as independent examiner ('Hon. Auditor') of our accounts is now in the hands of Mark Ockelton, who kindly volunteered for the role and was duly elected at an Extraordinary General Meeting in October.

As always, the Council are very grateful to members who provide active support to the Society in so many ways: organising and attending events of various kinds, contributing to the Journal, putting forward suggestions, and so on. With their help, the Society is indeed flourishing, and will continue to do so.