



## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2015

### **Visits during the year**

Members enjoyed a fascinating early evening visit to the church of St Mary Magdalene, Paddington in September. G.E. Street's artful design for a complex site and the intricate interior decoration were interesting in their own right but Ninian Comper's highly embellished Chapel of St Sepulchre in the crypt was a highlight. The tour was given by the vicar, Fr Henry Everett, who showed the group some of the extraordinary features of the building including the concealed tabernacle, and the 'false aisle' employed by Street to circumvent the Building Act of the time. The Society is indebted to Fr Everett who was a very knowledgeable and engaging guide.

A summer walking tour of Bath's churches and talk on the new work proposed at Bath Abbey unfortunately had to be postponed this year but it is hoped that a visit in the South West will be rearranged in the near future.

After five years of organising the Society's visits Ruth Knight handed over to Sarah Perons who has kindly agreed to take on the role of Visits Co-ordinator. The Council is grateful to Ruth for her effective and efficient organisation of visits during her time in the role.

### **Annual conference**

The eighteenth Annual Conference, which was attended by nearly one hundred people, including a number of non-members, was held at the St Alban's Centre, Holborn on 3 October 2015. Its title was 'Looking at Stained Glass'.

The following people spoke (listed in alphabetical order): Jasmine Allen on Victorian glass, Sarah Brown on medieval glass and in a second presentation on how a stained glass window is made and the implications for conservation, James Jago on seventeenth-century glass, Ivor Rauch on twentieth-century structural stained glass (*dalle de verre*) and Helen Whittaker on designing stained glass today.

A number of themes emerged during the day, for example the role of technological innovation at various periods, the tension between monumental coloured light for its own sake and the use of the window opening to create a picture, and the fact that stained glass production is a craft skill, which has various consequences for continuity and development. The day was much enjoyed by everyone present.

### **Annual lectures, etc**

The annual lecture immediately before the Society's AGM was held at the St Alban's Centre, Holborn on the evening of Thursday 9 April 2015. It was given by Dr Geoff Brandwood. Geoff is a member of the Society's Council, and well known for his work on Victorian ecclesiology, including the Society's publication *Seven Church Architects, 1830–1930*, and books on Temple Moore and Sharpe, Paley and Austin. He spoke on 'The Churches of Sir Gilbert Scott'. His lecture covered all periods of Scott's extensive body of work, showing how his work developed, and was often of a strikingly high quality. A surprise to many in the audience was Scott's occasionally branching out into styles not usually associated with him, such as polychromy. The lecture was illustrated with the author's photographs, of unusual quality and clarity, and was very well received.

The eighteenth Dykes Bower Lecture was held on the evening of Wednesday 2 December 2015 at The Art Workers' Guild in Queen Square. Noted architectural historian Dr Michael Hall, author of the recently published book on the life and work of George Frederick Bodley, and of other works on Victorian architecture and the Gothic Revival, spoke on 'Squires in the slums: G.F. Bodley and the Eton Mission in Hackney Wick'. In a beautifully illustrated lecture, Michael set the scene of the growth of the university and school missions in the socially deprived areas of London in the 1880s and 1890s, and conveyed the complex story of the design, development and construction of the Eton College Mission's buildings and church in Hackney Wick in 1890–1892, supported by fascinating plans and photographs. Most helpfully, Michael brought the story up to the present, referring to the recent re-ordering of the Grade II\* listed church and the development of the new, award-winning housing scheme on part of the Mission site. The lecture was very well received, and the evening was agreeably concluded with the customary pre-Christmas reception for members and their guests in The Master's Room.

### **Publications**

A number of e-newsletters were issued by the Society during the course of the year. These, which are free to anyone who wishes to sign up, advertise the Society's events, and draw attention to many other matters of ecclesiological interest, including events organised by other societies. There are about 1,500 recipients, of whom approximately 500 are members of the Society. The Society's policy is that those members of the Society who do not receive the emailing are at no disadvantage in respect of the Society's events.

One issue of *Ecclesiology Today* was published, no. 52. This was the normal miscellany, and marked the end of Trevor Cooper's role as caretaker editor. The reins were picked up by Nick Chapple.

Two editions of *Church Crawler* were published in this year, continuing with a mix of news and features from members. There was an entertaining tour around some South Gloucestershire churches from Neil Marchant, and Robert Halliday took us to two Suffolk churchyards to explain the history and events linked to the memorials there. Members continue to send items of news to the editor which are gratefully received if not always used. The editor is always glad to discuss any ideas members may have for a feature or article.

## **Website**

The year saw a complete overhaul of the Society's website, which was launched in the Autumn, and has been well received. As well as familiar features such as an extensive list of links and the provision of previous publications there are also new pages on 'featured churches' and 'church crawls' which continue to develop and grow. These aim to highlight particularly interesting buildings to visit; members' ideas for additions to these pages are very welcome. The site also provides a list of future events (including those of other organisations) and news items as well as providing the chance to sign up the Society's newsletter and enquire about membership of the Society.

The Council wishes to thank Ruth Knight for her work in project managing the development of the website, and then populating it. This involved considerable effort, and the Council is very grateful.

## **Membership**

With regret the Council noted during the course of the year the death of the following members, either in 2015 or earlier: Mr. V. F. Kimber; Canon D. G. F. Hinge; Mr. J. B. W. Morley; Mr. A. J. Petford; Mr. Peter Thornber; Mr. J. E. Vaughan; Mr. E. H. Warrell MBE FKC HonFTCL.

At the close of 2015, there were 795 active individual members in the UK (either Life or Honorary members, or with up to date annual subscriptions), at 748 different postal addresses (2014: 817 at 759 addresses). In addition there were 6 overseas members.

Twenty-seven new members joined the Society during the year. During the year one member formally resigned, giving financial restraints as the reason, whilst a further 35 failed to pay their subscription. Two members have moved and not advised of their new address. Unfortunately, 57 members (last year, 58) continue to pay their subscription at the old rate despite several letters and they remain on the list of non-active members.

## **Council members**

During the course of the year Sarah Brown and Dr John Elliott resigned from the Council. Both contributed significantly to the work of the Society, and tribute was paid to their work at the 2015 AGM. During the course of the year Sarah Perons was co-opted to the role of Visits Co-ordinator, replacing Ruth Knight who remains a member of Council but has withdrawn from active membership whilst she is on maternity leave.

The Council advertised for other volunteers, and received a good response, as will be apparent in the list of proposed Council members which will be put forward at the 2016 AGM.

## **Thanks**

As always, the Council is grateful to those members of the Society who provide active support to the Society in so many ways: organising and attending events of various kinds, contributing to *Ecclesiology Today* and *Church Crawler*, and carrying out administrative tasks of one sort or another. The Council would particularly like to thank Brigid Ockelton for

distributing publications. It is grateful, too, to Mark Ockelton for his willingness yet again to inspect the Society's accounts.

*The Council of the Ecclesiological Society*  
14 April 2016

### **Details of the Society**

The Ecclesiological Society is a registered charity, number 210501

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Website: [www.ecclsoc.org](http://www.ecclsoc.org)  
Twitter user name: Ecclsoc

The Laws of the Society describe its aims and how it is governed. They were last modified and approved by the AGM of 19 April 2012. The Society's affairs are administered by a Council, and the Laws describe how members are elected by the membership onto the Council, or are co-opted onto that body.

Continuing to meet four times a year in central London, the Council has transacted a variety of business in pursuance of the aims of the Society. In exercising its duties, it has taken due regard of the guidance published by the Charity Commission, including guidance on public benefit. The Council normally meets at Church House, and the Society is grateful to the Church of England authorities for allowing use of their premises in this way.

The Council has reviewed the training received by new members of Council. As at present, it is intended that this training will draw as appropriate from the history of the Society, its Laws, its policies and the supporting evidence, its recent and planned activities, and general guidance on the responsibilities of a Trustee.

Members of Council are the Trustees of the charity, and during 2015 they were:

Dr Paul Barnwell  
Dr Geoff Brandwood  
Nick Chapple  
Trevor Cooper  
Andrew Derrick  
Phil Draper  
Anthony Gilmour

Dr Valerie Hitchman  
Ruth Knight  
Becky Payne  
Sarah Perons (co-opted during year)  
Paul Velluet  
Dr Christopher Webster