



REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2019

Introduction

2019 was an active and successful year for the Society, as will be apparent from this report.

The programme of summer visits was well-attended and provided a variety of churches of interest. We were particularly privileged to have a private visit to St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, after the Castle had closed to visitors for the day. Our annual conference – which examined chancel screens after the Reformation – was very well-received. An edition of *Ecclesiology Today* and two editions of *Church Crawler* maintained the quality of our publications, as did a lecture by Diarmaid MacCulloch and an evening of talks on the future of Notre Dame after the tragedy of the fire in April 2019. This report sets out our activities in more detail.

Early in the year, we carried out a survey of members, to which a healthy 287 members (37%) responded. This has been very helpful to Council in reviewing our activities and planning for the future. Key areas where you should expect to see change in the coming years include the organisation of visits outside the South East, the publication of the proceedings of the annual conference, and making video recordings of the AGM lecture and Dykes Bower Lecture available online. Each of these is in an experimental phase at the moment, and doubtless we will learn as we go along.

Visits

On the evening of 20th May, about 35 members and their guests visited **St Mary Magdalene, Paddington**. One of the greatest and most unusual churches of Victorian England, St Mary Magdalen's was built in 1867–73 to designs by G.E. Street as a beacon of Anglo-Catholic faith in an area of great poverty. The founder, Fr. Richard Temple West was a passionate advocate for improving the plight of the poor through Christian ministry in the dense, urban setting of London. Apart from its striking architecture, the building has an almost completely intact internal decorative scheme of the highest quality: carving by Earp, glass by Holiday and Heaton, Butler & Bayne, and, above all, a magnificent ceiling decoration by Daniel Bell. Having been on the Heritage at Risk Register for several years, this church underwent a major, award-winning restoration re-opening at the end of 2018. Sitting in the glorious nave, attendees heard an illustrated presentation by Geoff Brandwood about G.E. Street, and then Ven. Dr. William Jacob, who had been engaged since its inception, discussed how the project had been achieved & the ideas which lay behind it. Fr. Henry Everett lead a tour of the building, and attendees were able to see the restored undercroft Chapel of St Sepulchre by Sir

Ninian Comper as well as walk around the new extension by architects, Dow Jones, which is helping the church provide a focus for its community.

On 6th June, members were privileged, by special permission of the Dean and Chapter, to have an evening visit to the cathedral-size **St George's Chapel** which lies within the lower ward of Windsor Castle, H.M. the Queen's principal residence.

Dating from 1475 under the reign of Edward IV, the present chapel is a glorious example of late gothic building. Within the Chapel are the tombs of 10 monarchs, including Henry VIII and his third wife Jane Seymour, and Charles I. It is the spiritual home of the Order of the Garter, the senior order of British Chivalry established in 1348 by Edward III.

St George's, Windsor, is among the most important and ambitious medieval chantry foundations to have survived in England. The college, itself a medieval chantry, also contains a number of independent chantries in the form of altars and small chapels dedicated to various members of the English monarchy and also to a number of prominent courtiers, deans and canons. Masses, the Office, and prayers would be offered in these chantries for the good of the founder. Henry VIII had intended a chantry to be set up in the chapel, despite the fact that he instituted the religious changes which brought about the Reformation in England and the eventual suppression of chantries. The status of the college as a Royal foundation saved it from dissolution at the Reformation. As a result, many of the smaller chantries within the chapel were preserved. These are the only remaining chantries of their kind in England which have never formally been suppressed.

Led by our guides, the College archivist and the Senior Chapter Clerk, Charlotte Manley, the tour concentrated upon the craftsmanship in stone, wood, and ironwork of the late C15 and early C16. It included access to the upper chapels, such as the chapel of Queen Katherine of Aragon.

On 1st August, members visited **Lambeth Palace** which has been the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury for nearly eight hundred years and remains a working palace. The visit included Langton's Chapel, and below it the Crypt: these form the oldest part of Lambeth Palace today. All of the other buildings that exist within the Palace grounds have been added, expanded and altered over the centuries to suit changes in fashion and purpose.

A highlight of the tour was the Great Hall at Lambeth Palace which currently houses much of the Lambeth Palace Library. It has been re-built many times over the centuries, not least as a result of damage during the English Civil War and the London blitz. Following the Second World War, Archbishop Fisher commissioned massive restoration work on the Palace; the Chapel and Lollards Tower had been gutted by the direct hit of an incendiary bomb in May 1941. The roof and windows were replaced in the Chapel, whilst the ceilings in the Post Room and Lollards Tower were reinforced with brick and timber.

The guided tour also included an impressive red brick Tudor gatehouse, Moreton's Tower, complete with a private gaol; the Guard Room named from the time when the Archbishop had his own private militia; Cranmer's study, associated with the creation of the Book of Common Prayer; and the State Apartments.

In summary we had a wonderful series of excursions, greatly enjoyed by our members. It was most encouraging to find our bookings much improved upon previous years and this gives us reason to be ambitious for the future.

Annual conference

The twenty-second Annual Conference which was attended by approximately 80 people was held at the St Alban's Centre, Holborn, on 28th September 2019. The theme was chancel screens since the Reformation, and the conference set out to develop an understanding of how and why attitudes towards chancel screens changed across this long period. We heard how, in almost every period, at one and the same time, surviving screens were removed as well as restored, and new churches were built both with and without screens. Liturgical change and the bedding down of competing concepts of Church were explored in depth by the speakers, and the entire day was a feast for the eyes. The papers presented at the conference are now being prepared for publication, probably early in 2021.

The expert speakers were:

- Lucy Wrapson: *Chancel screens at the eve of the Reformation*
Trevor Cooper: *"A comely partition betwixt the chancel and the church": English chancel screens from the Reformation to the Civil War.*
Mark Kirby: *A Patristic experiment: the screens of Sir Christopher Wren's churches.*
John Roberts: *"A chancel without a screen is scarcely a chancel at all" (The Ecclesiologist, January 1845): The Oxford Movement, A.W.N. Pugin, Camdenians, Ritualists, Evangelicals, and the rood screen.*
Andrew Derrick: *Gallicans versus Romans: squaring medievalism with Trent.*
Clare Price: *"A Considerable Devotional and Artistic Asset" or an "Obstruction to Worshippers"? Changing perspectives on chancel screens in the twentieth century.*
Panel session: *Attitudes to screens in the twenty-first century.* A discussion panel with Paul Velluet, John Hendy and Geoffrey Hunter.

Lectures

The Annual Lecture immediately before the Society's AGM was held at the St Alban's Centre, Holborn on 1st May. The speaker was the Rev Prof Diarmaid MacCulloch, Professor of Church History at the University of Oxford, who spoke on "Thomas Cromwell and the End of Medieval Monasticism." The lecture was exceptionally well attended, and we were treated to the fruits of Prof MacCulloch's long research into the life of Thomas Cromwell in preparation for his recent biography of the man.

Prof MacCulloch showed how much wider participation in the Dissolution was than might be expected. Wolsey had dissolved houses before the Reformation, and Catholics like Princess Mary and the Duke of Norfolk benefited from the spoils later on. At times, Cromwell had to intervene to hold back some of the more enthusiastic lay proponents of Dissolution. There was, for a while, a prospect of converting some religious houses to become colleges and places of learning, as Wolsey had set in train in his conversion of St Frideswide's, Oxford, to become Cardinal College. Although some houses in Oxford and Cambridge were purged of their monastic character, no such colleges outside the University towns survived for long. Prof MacCulloch concluded with the observation that this momentous change in the religious life of the country, accompanied by the largest transfer of property since the Conquest, was achieved without there ever having been a published statement that this had been Royal policy.

The twenty-second Annual Stephen Dykes Bower Memorial Lecture was held on the evening

of Wednesday 4th December. In accordance with our now well-established practice, the event was held in the most attractive, Arts and Crafts setting of the Lecture Hall of the Art Workers' Guild in Queen Square, Bloomsbury. The evening was attended by some forty members of the Society and their guests.

In the light of the tragic fire at Notre Dame on the evening of the 15th April resulting in the loss of the entire, medieval roof of the cathedral, Viollet-le-Duc's mid-19th flèche above the crossing and much of the stone vaulting below, the event focused on the history and development of the great church from earliest times to the recent past, the extent and nature of the damage suffered in April and on the emerging proposals for the work of repair and restoration. In planning the event, we had hoped to secure a speaker from the professional team actually working on the project, but sadly, the French Government has closed-down participation by those directly involved in public discussion about the project – seemingly related to the President's desire to secure completion of the project in time for the Olympic Games in Paris in the summer of 2024.

However, we were most fortunate to be able to welcome architectural historian, mediaevalist, author, university lecturer and Reviews Editor of *The Burlington* magazine - Dr Alexandra Gajewski, FSA - to speak about the history and development of Notre Dame, and to receive an extraordinarily revealing and dramatically illustrated presentation and briefing about the situation at Notre Dame since the fire, prepared by Andrew Aroll, the present Surveyor of the Fabric of York Minster, who visited and inspected the site in June. It is unlikely that anyone attending the event could have been left other than unmoved by the tragic loss of so much of the historic fabric of Notre Dame and daunted by the scale of the challenges faced by those involved in the repair and restoration of this outstanding, European cultural monument.

The evening was agreeably concluded with the customary pre-Christmas reception for members and their guests in The Master's Room.

Publications

The Society sends out four **e-newsletters** during the course of the year. These 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. Members are very welcome to suggest items for inclusion. There are about 1,500 recipients, of whom approximately 500 are members of the Society. Although e-newsletters include notice of bookings for events, the Society's policy is endeavour to ensure that members of the Society who do not have access to the internet or email are not materially disadvantaged in the booking of tickets for events.

In August 2019 we published *Ecclesiology Today* 57. It contained five articles on a variety of topics and the customary book reviews section. It opened with Kate Jordan's account of her ancestor, the architect J. D. Sedding, which many members will have heard first as a paper at our 2018 conference. This was followed by articles on two Victorian churches: St Andrew's, Moscow, written by its inspecting architect, the Revd Tony Redman, and St Mary Magdalene's, Paddington, by its incumbent, Fr Henry Everett. On a different note, Cameron Newham presented an in-depth account of how computational photogrammetry can be used in the study of churches. Finally, Laura Moffatt, director of Art and Christianity, reviewed 25 years of that organisation's activities, promoting modern and contemporary art in churches.

Two editions of *Church Crawler* were published in this year, with the usual mix of news and features from members. In the Society's survey of members it was pleasing to see that *Church*

Crawler was valued highly by the membership and a number of people responded to an appeal for future articles, some of whom are already in contact with the editor Phil Draper for future editions.

The Spring edition contained a personal feature from reader Martin Jones, about English parish churches 1558-1642, drawing our attention to evidence that this period was not one of neglect of our buildings and their contents as suggested by other authors. The article was accompanied by some lovely photographs provided by the author. This edition was at the printers when news broke of the awful fire at Notre Dame de Paris and it was possible to get a "stop-press" insert produced to update the news section ahead of posting.

The Autumn edition's feature also took us across to Paris and into the early C20 with the reinforced concrete Art Nouveau church of St John the Evangelist in Montmartre. Robert Shaw provided photographs of this unusual building to illustrate his article. This edition also included a promised update on the status of Notre Dame after nearly six months post-fire, rather than a description of what had occurred which was surely "old news" to members by then.

Members continue to send items of news to the editor, which are gratefully received if not always used. Any other members who have a feature or article that they would like to see in a future *Church Crawler* should contact the editor.

Finances

The draft accounts for 2019 will be posted on the Society's website in due course.

Membership

With regret, the Council noted during the course of the year the death of the following members, either in 2019 or earlier:

Mr. Roger W. Jenner
Mr. W. P. Anelay
Rev. P. W. Elliott
Mr. Norman Harries
Professor B. Hamilton
Mr. Michael H. Crosby
Mr. Richard Weston
Mr. Richard Benny

At the close of 2019, there were 822 active individual members in the UK (either Life or Honorary members, or with up to date annual subscriptions), at 763 different postal addresses (2018: 840 at 790 addresses). Of these, 9 were overseas members, and 99 were Life Members.

During the year there were 11 resignations. We removed a further 7 members whose subscriptions had lapsed.

Changes to Council members

Early in the year, Ruth Knight and Clive Chapman stepped down from Council. Ruth had been responsible at various times for visits, marketing and setting up the new website. Clive was our Membership Secretary. They have both been valued colleagues on Council and we are grateful to them for all their efforts over the years. Graham White succeeded Clive as

Membership Secretary in April and we welcome him to his new role.

Other volunteers

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 Stuart Macbeth for managing the website, and Mark Ockelton for inspecting the Society's accounts.

We would like to give a special thanks to Jonathan McCafferty for organizing the visits programme for 2018 and 2019. Sadly, Jonathan has had to give up his role for health reasons. We will greatly miss his excellent companionship and great efficiency in organising our visits.

The Council of the Ecclesiological Society 22nd April 2020

Details of the Society

The Ecclesiological Society is a registered charity, number 210501.

Registered address: c/o the Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0HS. General correspondence should be sent to: 68 Scholars Road, Balham, SW12 0PG. Email: admin@ecclsoc.org

Website: 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 at the end of 2019 they were as follows: Dr Paul Barnwell, Dr Geoff Brandwood, Nick Chapple, Trevor Cooper, Andrew Derrick, Phil Draper, Anthony Gilmour, Dr Mark Kirby, Christopher Moore, Becky Payne, Sarah Perons, Paul Velluet, Dr Christopher Webster, Graham White