



REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2022

Introduction

2022 felt like a return to something like normality after the disruptions of Covid. One of the lasting impacts, with which we are still grappling, has been the change in the attitude of many towards attending events, which colleagues in other voluntary organisations have also observed. Even long after the end of lockdown, numbers signing up for lectures and conferences are lower than before, and we need to work through what this means for the Society in the longer term. Interestingly, attending events online (resoundingly rejected by members in our survey in 2019) is now something with which most members have become comfortable, and we face the challenge of being able to provide this service in a straightforward and professional way.

Visits

For the first time in two years, we were able to implement a visits programme for Society members and their guests.

On April 9th, twenty people enjoyed a private tour of **Kensal Green Cemetery**, led by the Head Guide, Henry Vivian-Neal. Inspired by Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris, All Souls Cemetery, Kensal Green was founded by the barrister George Frederick Carden. The cemetery opened in 1833, and comprises 72 acres of grounds, including two conservation areas, adjoining a canal. It is home to at least 33 species of bird and other wildlife. The cemetery has memorials ranging from large mausolea housing the rich and famous to many distinctive smaller graves, and includes special areas dedicated to the very young. It serves all faiths and has four chapels. The visit included the catacombs at the Dissenters' Chapel and special access to three mausolea, including two which have been recently restored.

On May 14th, twenty people participated in a guided **walking tour of medieval churches in York** led by Rob Andrews, an authority on York's extraordinarily rich heritage of medieval churches. The tour lasted about four hours and included Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, All Saints, North Street, St Olave and St Mary's Abbey. At each, our guide outlined the site's history and key features of interest, with special regard to its place in life of the medieval city, its architectural history and its evolution as a liturgical space, up to the present day.

On June 9th, nearly thirty people enjoyed an evening visit to **two London Roman Catholic churches in Notting Hill and Bayswater** designed by John Francis Bentley, architect of Westminster Cathedral. Peter Howell, the authority on Bentley, was our guide. We first visited St Francis of Assisi, Pottery Lane, Notting Hill (listed Grade II*), a church by Henry Clutton of 1859-60, where Bentley's additions are his earliest architectural designs. Bentley had been

Clutton's assistant, and his highly accomplished Lady Chapel, porch and baptistry (1862-3) benefitted both the church and Bentley himself, for, following his Catholic conversion in 1862, he was the first person to be baptised there. The tour also looked at the superb restoration of this Grade II* listed church, recently completed under Fr Gerard Skinner. The second church, St Mary of the Angels, Moorhouse Road, Bayswater (also Grade II*), was begun by Thomas Meyer in 1851-2 in Puginian Gothic style, as a mission church for Irish Catholic labourers building nearby Paddington Station. It was added to by Clutton in 1857 and greatly enhanced by Bentley, who added an outer north aisle (1869), south aisle and Lady Chapel (1872).

Annual Conference

The 2022 Conference was organised jointly by the Church Monuments Society and the Ecclesiological Society and took place on Saturday 1st October 2022. We are very grateful to our friends in the Church Monuments Society for all their contributions to this excellent event. Originally intended as an in-person event, the conference had to be moved online at the eleventh hour on account of a rail strike, and was attended by over 100 people.

Entitled **Last Rites - Funerals and Funeral Monuments**, the day explored funerals and funeral monuments in the medieval, early modern and Victorian periods. The conference came at a time of increased public focus on monuments in churches and cathedrals and was a timely reminder of the rich complexity of the subject matter. Monuments have already received much attention, especially since the establishment of the Church Monuments Society in 1979, but new studies and fresh perspectives nonetheless abound. In contrast, the changing form of funerals through the ages has not received the attention that it merits, and it was a great pleasure to hear from experts in both fields.

The distinguished line-up of speakers was:

Nicholas Orme: *Medieval Funerals*

Brian & Moira Gittos: *Effigial Commemoration in the Medieval Churchyard*

Sally Badham: *Heraldic Funerals* (presented by Moira Gittos)

Adam White: *Funereal Monuments and Monumental Funerals: England in the Early Modern Period*

Brian Parsons: *The Victorian Funeral*

Roger Bowdler: *Funereal Monuments in the 19th century: echoes of interment in the cemetery tomb.*

In addition, Cameron Newham gave a presentation on his brilliantly-illustrated new book, *Country Church Monuments*.

Lectures

The Annual Lecture took place immediately after the Society's AGM on 21st April 2022 and was held in person at the Art Workers' Guild and 'live-streamed' via Zoom. The speaker was Dr Christopher Webster, whose subject was '*Late-Georgian Churches: a reassessment*'. This was based on his book, *Late-Georgian Churches: Anglican architecture, patronage and church-going in England, 1790-1840* published in Summer 2022 by John Hudson Publishing. This is the first comprehensive study of church-building in that period. After centuries of relative post-Reformation inactivity, the Church of England began to address the desperate shortage of accommodation and to build on a huge scale. Almost all the leading architects of the day were involved and, amongst approximately 1,500 new churches, there are some outstanding designs; buildings of the very highest order architecturally. For a long time however we have lived with the legacy of nineteenth century ecclesiologists, whose

condemnation of these buildings has served to discourage serious study. The lecture considered them in the context of the period's requirement for auditory worship and revealed many considered solutions to the challenges of accommodating large congregations in ways that all could hear and see. It explored the period's stylistic debates, material innovations and planning solutions. Ways of worship were also considered, evoking a lost world of late-Georgian churchgoing.

On December 5th 2022, **The Stephen Dykes Bower Memorial Lecture** was, after a break of three years, once again held 'live', in the attractive setting of the Art Workers' Guild. It was a delight to return to our old home for the twenty-fifth lecture – not least, against the background threat of rail strikes. The lecture comprised three presentations on the highly topical theme of 'Realising the Church's Response to Climate Change', and focussed on the significant works being carried out at York Minster and other cathedrals and churches to meet the Church of England's 2030 sustainability target, as well as meeting the need to enhance access to cathedrals and churches for those with ambulant disabilities. The speakers were Alex McCallion, Director of Works and Estate at York Minster; Oliver Caroe, Surveyor of the Fabric at York Minster and St Paul's Cathedral; and Andrew Arroll, Cathedral Architect at Chester Cathedral and former Surveyor of the Fabric at York Minster. The event attracted some forty members of the Society and their guests, and concluded with a lively reception in the Master's Room.

Publications

The Society sends out four **e-newsletters** during the course of the year, which are free to anyone who wishes to sign up. These newsletters advertise the Society's events, and draw attention to 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.

In September 2022, we published a monograph, **Leeds Minster**, comprising the papers from a conference held by the Society at the Minster in 2021. The papers addressed the medieval parish church (by Kevin Grady), the new church of 1837–41 (by Christopher Webster), the liturgical tradition of the church (by Kenneth Powell), the congregation (by Janet Douglas), the churches and schools built for Dr Hook (by Christopher Hammond), music (by Simon Lindley and Alexander Woodrow) and stained glass (by Michael Swift), with an appendix on the Vicars of Leeds 1859–1916.

Issue 61 of ***Ecclesiology Today*** was published in December 2022. It contained articles on a variety of topics, demonstrating diverse approaches to ecclesiology: 'Late-Georgian Church-Building: the Legal and Administrative Challenges' by Christopher Webster; 'Vitrum Resurgentium: a Transatlantic Illumination' by Marie Clausén, telling the story of how a collection of stained glass from English churches found its way to a small church in rural Canada; and 'The Bacton Altar Cloth, a Hidden Church Treasure' by Ruth E. Richardson. These were followed by an appreciation of our late colleague, Geoff Brandwood, consisting of reminiscences by David Parsons and Christopher Webster, and a bibliography compiled by the editor. Our customary book review section comprised reviews of thirteen new books on ecclesiological and related subjects.

Two editions of ***Church Crawler*** were published in 2022. As well as the usual news items in both, the Spring edition had an article looking at the reordering of St Thomas, Salisbury, written by John Elliot. The Autumn edition took us on a delightful church crawl in the Welsh Marches, Powys, and to a collection of churches selected by Valerie Hughes. Any members

who have ideas for a feature or article that they would like to see in a future *Church Crawler* should contact the editor, Phil Draper. Consideration is also being given to making *Church Crawler* available in electronic form to the membership and Phil would be grateful to receive any comments on this proposal to inform discussion at Council meetings.

Social media and the website

At the beginning of 2022, Paul Gray assumed responsibility for website content, updating and maintenance, and for the social media channels Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. In May, Paul set up a LinkedIn presence for the Society, and the three channels now regularly direct followers to the website for information about visits and conferences as well as for specific articles and profiles. He also publishes various standalone pieces on the channels and republishes relevant material from other sources and followers. During the year Paul and Andrew Derrick overhauled the website content, which is now updated more regularly. Over the next year Google Analytics will be used to identify the most and least visited pages which will help inform future content.

Twitter: 1,545 followers (since 2013)
Facebook: 586 followers (since 2019)
LinkedIn: 93 followers (since May 2022)

Finances

The draft accounts for 2022 will be posted on the Society’s website in due course here: <http://ecclsoc.org/annual-reports-etc/>

Membership as at 31 December 2022

Individual and Retired	654
Life	89
Organisational	14
Overseas	11
Honorary	8
Total:	776

Those who joined in 2022 (26):

- Mrs Frances Stride
- Mr Rodney Troubridge
- Dr Stuart Blaylock FSA
- Mr David James
- Mr Mark Ponman
- Ms Signe Hoffos
- Miss Hilary Wheeler
- Ms Nicky Charlish
- Miss Rachel Morley
- Dr Johan Bergström-Allen
- Mr David Hayes
- Mr Anthony Biebuyck
- Mr Bruce Fletcher BSc FIAP
- Revd. Dr. Martin Wellings
- Mrs Clare Garvey
- Mr Robin Goodfellow

Mr Sean Eckersley
Mrs Rosalind Anderson
Dr Catherine Spirit
Mrs Shan Hounsell MA
Dr Peter Hawkes
Dr Catharine Otton-Goulder KC
Mr Timothy Jones
Mrs Priscilla Frost
And two new members who asked for their names not to be published

Those who left us in 2022 (27):

Deceased (9):

Mr George McHardy
Mr C Walton
Mr A. F. Watson
Mr F. J. Willy
Mr J. R. Lewis
Mr Keith R. Bridges
Mrs M Jones
Mr Graham Elcombe
Mr M Kerney

Fifteen members resigned. The Society lost contact with two. And one was removed for non-payment of subscription.

Volunteers and Council members

During 2022, we welcomed Frances Cook as the new Visits Secretary, Fiona Rosen as the new Conference and Events Coordinator, and Paul Gray as our Website and Social Media Manager, all of whom have hit the ground running. The Society is currently looking for a volunteer to take on the critical role of Publishing Administrator.

Although taking effect in 2023, Council has said goodbye to two former Chairmen and longstanding members of Council, Trevor Cooper and Paul Velluet, both of whom have retired. Between them, they have served the Society for nearly 75 years. We owe them a considerable debt of gratitude for all that they have done to bring the Society to the good health in which it now stands, and for maintaining the flame of ecclesiology during that time.

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 Mark Ockelton for inspecting the Society's accounts.

The Council of the Ecclesiological Society, 15th May 2023

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.

Meeting four times a year (either in central London or on Zoom), 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. In the last year we have met at the Chapter House of St Paul's Cathedral, and the Society is grateful to the Cathedral 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 2022 they were as follows: Dr Paul Barnwell, Nick Chapple, Trevor Cooper, Andrew Derrick, Phil Draper, Anthony Gilmour, Dr Mark Kirby, Becky Payne, Dr Christopher Webster, Graham White, and Paul Velluet.