

The Friends@40:

Forty years of supporting this
magnificent Cathedral



WESTMINSTER
CATHEDRAL



WESTMINSTER
CATHEDRAL
CHOIR

Allegri
Miserere

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis - Vaughan Williams
Seven Last Words from the Cross - James MacMillan

Westminster Cathedral Choir & Orchestra
Conductor - Martin Baker

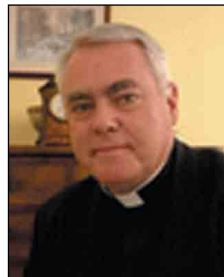
Wednesday 29 March 2017 7:30pm

Tickets are available from: www.ticketmaster.co.uk | 0844 844 0444
or in person from the Cathedral Gift Shop | £35 | £25 | £15

www.westminstercathedralchoir.com

Dear Friends of Westminster Cathedral

Since writing my last letter to you so much seems to have happened and yet when I try to bring events to mind there is a terrible blank. Our celebration of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany was a very happy and enjoyable time and now we are halfway through the journey of Lent and looking forward in faith and hope to another Easter. The weather has certainly improved and we have had some beautiful warm and sunny days just lately with the trees coming into leaf and spring flowers in abundance.



In August of last year I began to experience the early onset of sciatica, and by mid-September I was in a very painful and uncomfortable state. I know that this is a condition that many others have shared and I was not short of advice and commiseration. Thankfully, I was able to receive treatment from a spine clinic and, up to now, I am almost completely pain-free.

Having had robust health all my life, an unexpected complaint such as this causes a strange response of anger and resentment. But that has now been replaced by a huge feeling of thanksgiving and relief. It has also made me far more aware of the less mobile around me. And I am frequently saying prayers for those I see hobbling or limping or walking with sticks. If any of you reading this are suffering from sciatica or associated problems, you have my deepest sympathy.

From time to time, prominent members of the Friends fall ill and die. And just recently we have lost three very faithful and much-loved members of the Friends, namely Robert Crane, Hannah Perera and Sharon Jennings. Please pray for the repose of their souls and for the comforting of their families.

As we experience the first days of warmer weather, so we look forward to a number of interesting and attractive Friends' events at which I hope to see many of you present. This is the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Friends of Westminster Cathedral and I would like as your chairman to thank you all for your support, your prayers and your good wishes for the life and work of Westminster Cathedral.

With every blessing,

Canon Christopher Tuckwell

Cathedral Administrator and Chairman of the Friends of Westminster Cathedral

GIFT AID (UK)

If you're a UK taxpayer, you can add an extra 25p to every £1 you give - at no cost to yourself - with Gift Aid. Friends Gift Aid forms are available from The Friends Office

Telephone: **0207 798 9059** Email: **friends@rcdow.org.uk** Charity number: 272899

The Council: Canon Christopher Tuckwell, Chairman; Andrew Sanders, Vice-Chairman; Andrew Hollingsworth, Treasurer; assisted by Joseph Bonner, Oliver Davey, Elizabeth Gibson, Zoe Goodway, Linda McHugh and Neil Worsey. The Council is aided by Barry Lock chairman of the Mosaics Appeal Group. Christina White, Director.

...Looking back

One of the highlights of our autumn season was a wonderful talk in October by the writer and historian Alison Weir on our beloved Queen Katherine of Aragon. Alison has undertaken to write a full series of books focusing on Henry's queens and she found a receptive audience in the Friends, fiercely loyal to Katherine and her devotion to God, King and country.



Miriam Power, the Cathedral archivist, very kindly brought in the Queen Mary prayer book and the Cathedral's copy of Julian of Norwich's writings – both of which have recently been restored with substantial grants from the Friends. Alison was delighted to see these original texts. The Queen Mary book was of particular interest given the Princess's sad life – removed from her mother for Katherine's dogged determination not to recognise Anne Boleyn as Queen.

Alison gave a barnstorming performance and included readings from her new book. She lives and breathes the Tudors and there was an interesting Q & A to follow. Friends gathered for a glass of wine



after the event and queued to have their books signed by Alison. Alison is returning to the Cathedral Hall this coming June for the second book in the series on Anne Boleyn (see What's Coming Up).



Later in the month, a group of Friends met for a tour of poet Alexander Pope's grotto which now forms part of a private school on the river bank in Twickenham. We were joined by Professor Andrew Sanders who gave a preliminary talk on Pope's place amidst the luminaries of 18th-century English writing. Pope was famous for a sharp wit and satirical tongue and also for his translation of Homer which really made his fortune - sufficient to lease an estate on the banks of the Thames where his grotto came to fruition.



The grotto is still pretty intact and is studded with geological gems and archaeological artefacts. We walked through using camera phones to catch the light

reflecting off quartz and mica. Our tour was followed by Mass at the nearby church of St James in Twickenham, celebrated by parish priest Fr Ulick Loring, and then we took advantage of a lovely autumn afternoon and walked down to the river where lunch was booked at the White Swan – an 18th-century English pub that has stood at this spot since 1714. We were duly reminded of Pope: 'A little learning is a dangerous thing; drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.'

2016 saw the completion of the mosaics of St George's Chapel and many Friends came to the Cathedral for the blessing by Cardinal Vincent Nichols and the party that followed. The Friends officially took over the mosaics appeal in 2007, invited by Mgr Mark Langham to spearhead the fundraising, and it became a labour of love for our Mosaics Chairman, Mr Barry Lock.

The project was not straightforward – the artist changed his mind mid-term over the design which had already received approval – and a new, simpler scheme was put forward. Michael Drury, the architect responsible for fulfilling the project and Tom Phillips' wife, speaking on behalf of her husband, both expressed their commitment to the chapel mosaics project and their pride in being responsible for an artistic work that now fully recognises the importance of the chapel in the structure of the Cathedral.

Barry has always insisted that it should be a mark of honour to complete the mosaics, given that the chapel houses the memorials to the war dead. The response to the mosaics has been very positive and moves are now afoot to formally recognise another mosaics appeal for the Friends. Watch this space.

We hit a bit of a black spot in November with two Friends' events cancelled through lack of support – the Crossness Pumping Station visit was cancelled and likewise the

Three Wise Men Party. I am delighted to report that one of our number, Cynthia, was inspired by the idea of the Crossness visit and indeed is organising a visit for a separate society. They have also taken inspiration from Mary's now famous Quiz and Fish and Chip suppers. Large numbers of you, undeterred by awful November weather, turned out for the November Fish and Chip Supper and Quiz.



As the year drew to a close, the Friends started to gather in donations for the Christmas Fair which really dominated our itinerary in December.

Recalling the Christmas Fair, I would like to give a special mention to Sharon Jennings RIP. Sharon was a stalwart of Friends' events and the inspiration behind our last two summer parties with performances of her plays celebrating 'Will's Will' and 'Waterloo Eve'. We were losing helpers by the dozen at the Fair and Sharon stepped up and manned a stall. She was always a delight to have around and she brought her enthusiasm and good humour to that event as she did to all events that she touched.

A select group of Friends made a very generous donation to the Big Give appeal for the Cathedral Hall and were invited to a private supper in the Clergy House dining room with Canon Christopher Tuckwell. They dined on spinach soup, superlative fish pie and a pear pudding. It was by all accounts a great success and we hope to repeat the private supper later this year.

Past Events



Looking back we must mention the Count Alexander Benckendorff anniversary which the Friends helped to commemorate at the start of 2017. We were delighted to welcome Mr Alexander Kramarenko, Chargé d'affaires from the Russian embassy, Nathalie Brooke - granddaughter of the Count – and Professor Dominic Lieven who gave a talk on Russian diplomacy at the start of the 20th century. The event was covered by Russian television.

In preparation for the Count Benckendorff anniversary celebration we searched the archives and came across a description of the funeral which gave details of the wreath given by the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia: 'A large cross of white lilac, lilies of the valley and La France roses.'

We thought it would be nice to replicate the wreath and Dovers Flowers in Churton Street rose magnificently to the challenge. A beautiful wreath of scarlet, white and blue was laid on the Count's tomb by Mr Kramarenko, and Fr Andrew Gallagher laid our tribute – a tribute from both the



Cathedral and the Friends. The Count loved Westminster Cathedral and it was fitting that we should mark his passing.



Sir Rocco Forte generously hosted a reception for major donors to the Friends at Brown's Hotel in London on 13 February, 2017. The guest speaker was Sir Edward Leigh who exhorted the faithful to dig deep and give generously to the Friends@40 anniversary appeal. The lay clerks of Westminster Cathedral provided the musical entertainment and Mr Ben Anderson read a 'letter to the editor' from 1901 advertising for boys for the newly-formed Choir School to be of 'good ear and true voice'.

Count Alexander Benckendorff

The death of the Russian Ambassador last week evoked a great deal of public regret. Count Benckendorff had proved a consistent friend of England, a powerful force for cordial relationship between ourselves and Russia, and a genial, benevolent gentleman. He had lived many years in London.

He was buried in the crypt of Westminster Cathedral, where only two others lay – Cardinals Wiseman and Manning. Cardinal Newman reposes in Birmingham, and Cardinal Vaughan in a church at Mill Hill, North London.

The funeral ceremonies of the late Ambassador were exceedingly impressive, and the scene outside the Cathedral, as well as within, was dignified and solemn. It was a gloomy, melancholy day with a misty atmosphere, through which the Guard of Honour of Grenadier Guards, drawn up in the street loomed like phantom soldiers.

A number of important personages arrived in detachments. First came the Duke of Connaught, representing the King who was saluted while the Band of the Irish Guards played the National Anthem. Representatives of Queen Alexandra, the Prince of Wales, and other Royalties followed and then the Grand Duke Michael of Russia, a very tall military noble, who looks a picture.

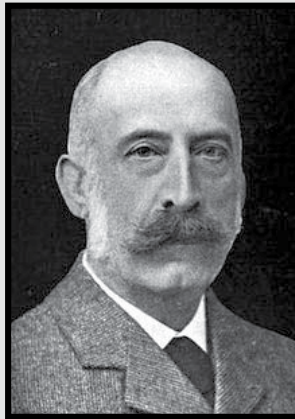
The foreign ambassadors made many imposing groups, each one was received and honoured with his own National Anthem.

We inside who lined the main central route to the altar, knew in this way whom to expect. In uniform, and covered in medals with their ladies in deep mourning, they made stately and imposing little processions, while the organist played.

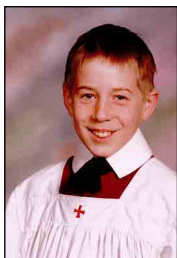
In front of the altar, the deceased gentleman's coffin lay on a high bier, covered with a black pall and a white fabric embroidered with the Royal Arms of Russia. On this rested his cocked hat and cushion bearing his orders and medals. Three immense candles were placed on each side and outside them, three soldiers stood with bowed heads, while an officer stood at the head of the coffin.

At the conclusion of the Mass, the officer gave an order and the clicking of heels, bayonets and rifles in the salute made an astonishing sound in the quietened Cathedral. Then the Russian Anthem and God Save the King on the organ, and the ceremony closed.

From the Evening News in Sydney – printed in 1917



A Chorister's Life on Tour



I was sorting through a dusty old box in the attic and chanced upon a tour booklet, produced when the Cathedral Choir visited America, in October 1998.

The booklet

contains a detailed itinerary for seven concerts, starting at Holy Name Cathedral, Chicago, and concluding at St Thomas's Church, New York. At the time, one Great British pound would buy you \$1.69 – oh how things have changed! At the back of the booklet is the space for notes, and to my delight I discovered a handwritten diary, scrawled on the coach from New York on 2 November 1998.

Notes.

Left school at 7.40 approx.

Three rows of seats on plane. Everyone excited. Icebergs in sea. A nice lunch and snack (for a change!) Arrived in Chicago. Went shopping – bought Halloween lights, Played boys versus men and we tied five all!

Day 1 – 23/10/98 Got up and had breakfast of doughnuts etc. Choir practice, then left for Chicago Bears. Found new hotel and had a kip. Showers plus dinner. Yum!

Day 2 – 24/10/98 Got up, had brekky, went to zoo. Saw a huge lion and it roared. Went up J Hancock Tower – third highest! Had dinner, showered and did a reception.

Day 3 – 25/10/98 Sang 10:30 Mass and concert in the Holy Name Cathedral. My solo went down quite well!

Day 4 – 26/10/98 Flew to Cleveland and did concert in evening. A LUSH hotel!

Day 5 – 27/10/98 Drove to Pittsburgh.

Day 6 – 28/10/98 Drove for eight hours to Philadelphia. Choir practice, then footy and TV. Concert in evening. Stayed with hosts.

Day 7 – 29/10/98 Got up – saw town and got given \$20 each! Had a free day while we drove to Washington DC and stayed with different hosts.

Day 8 – 30/10/98 Got up and played on PlayStation. Went to Air and Space Museum. Rehearsal at 5pm. Supper and concert at Washington Cathedral, then to Embassy.

Day 9 – 31/10/98 Got on plane to Boston. Went to hotel, had swim. Halloween party!

Day 10 – 1/11/98 Sung Mass at College, and rehearsal, lunch at buffet – basically anything to eat! Free time then concert. Cold weather. Supper (egg toast!) Go to hotel to pack. Swam, telly and bed.

The booklet has given me cause to reflect upon the importance of touring for the Westminster Cathedral Choir. Choir tours are great fun, but to a young chorister they also offer the realisation that there is an intrinsic value to singing sacred music: it is applauded and cherished by people all over the world.

Touring and public concert-giving should be central to the work of a top cathedral choir. In the words of our Holy Father, we have a duty as laity 'to go outside of ourselves and take risks in evangelising', rather than staying stuffed up at home while the moths move in.

Nicholas Morrell is Deputy Head (Academic) and Head of Boarding at Westminster Cathedral Choir School. Contact direct: nmorrell@choirschool.com

George Malcolm: Exhibition



As part of the 40th anniversary celebrations, the Friends have agreed to sponsor an exhibition in the Cathedral on the life and work of the great George Malcolm who was Master of Music here from 1947 until 1959. The exhibition was originally conceived to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Malcolm in 1917 but he died in 1997 so the anniversary is two-fold, and indeed three-fold – for it is 70 years since he was appointed as Master of Music here at the Cathedral.

The exhibition started life with Balliol College in Oxford – Malcolm's alma mater – and the resting place for a formidable archive that covers all manner of things relating to Malcolm: photographs with prime ministers and impresarios; newspaper reports of his appointment to Westminster Cathedral; a photograph of Malcolm at his First Holy Communion; printed music written when he was just six years old.

I travelled up to Oxford earlier this month to see the exhibition which is currently housed in the St Cross church in Holywell, a restored Grade I listed building and now converted into an Historic Collections Centre for Balliol college. It is a real treasure trove, and not just for musicophiles. Malcolm was an extraordinary 20th-century character whose influence extended beyond these shores. He has been described as a 'renaissance man' of culture and learning – sometimes irascible, never forgotten.

Sir Nicholas Kenyon has agreed to formally open the exhibition, and this will be followed by a talk – to be given jointly by the curator Giles Dawson and Martin Baker, the Master of Music. Afterwards, there will be a drinks reception. It is likely that the choir will sing Britten's *Missa Brevis* on 9 May this work was conceived by Britten after hearing the unique sound of the Choir under Malcolm; a continental, open sound in marked contrast to 'hooty' voices of the Anglican tradition.

Malcolm himself said he likened the sound to that of the choristers in the playground – open and full-throated and full of life. It is a nice thought that the sounds of children at play rather than hard at work, inspired the musical tradition of Westminster Cathedral. A further commemoration will be held on 10 October 2017, the 20th anniversary of Malcolm's death.

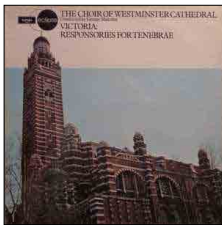
On Desert Island Discs on 7 December 1964 (more sevens) Malcolm was asked by Roy Plomley to choose the one record that he would save from the waves. He chose *Recessit Pastor Noster* (responsories for *Tenebrae* – Holy Saturday) by Westminster Cathedral Choir. His luxury was a clavichord

Christina White

Looking forward...

Our spring season begins with a pre-concert talk by one of the Cathedral chaplains, Fr Brian O'Mahony, on Miserere – the inspiration behind Allegri's most beautiful setting of Psalm 50. The talk will take place in Clergy House Library at 6.30pm and refreshments will be served. Concert-goers will be escorted through to the Cathedral for 7.15pm and the concert starts at 7.30pm. Tickets for the concert only, which includes Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis by Vaughan Williams, are available from the Cathedral Gift Shop.

2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of George Malcolm – Master of Music here at Westminster Cathedral for 12 years – and the inspiration behind the unique sound of the Cathedral choir. An exhibition on the life and work of George Malcolm has been sponsored by the Friends of Westminster Cathedral. Curated by Giles Dawson, the exhibition will be formally opened on 9 May (after the 5.30pm Mass) by Sir Nicholas Kenyon



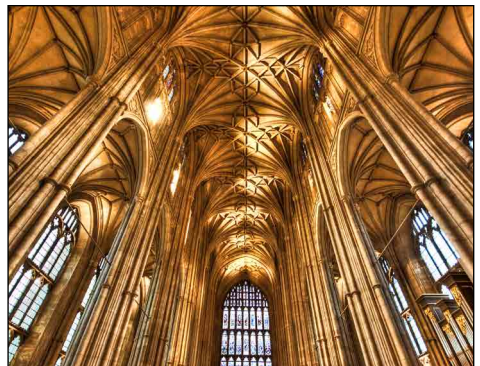
and there will be a talk and reception for Friends to follow. Tickets are just £25. The choristers, under Malcolm's instruction, inspired Benjamin Britten to write the beautiful Missa Brevis which will also be the Mass setting for the 9th of May.

The Friends' Anniversary Mass will be held in Westminster Cathedral at 5.30pm

on 11 May and Cardinal Vincent Nichols will be the main celebrant. The Mass is open to all – please do come along and celebrate 40 years of a very important organisation in the life and work of Westminster Cathedral. The Friends have commissioned a new anthem which will receive its premiere at the Mass. After the Mass, we have a ticketed reception in the Hall – our Ruby Red Party for the anniversary - with entertainment from the lay-clerks. The members of the Friends' Council will be on hand serving drinks. The reception will start at 6.30pm.

A quiz and fish and chip supper will be held in the Cathedral Hall on 16 May - time to get the brain cells working before the summer. The quizzes continue in popularity and are attracting ever-larger crowds. If you haven't been before – don't worry, you will be put on a table of like-minded quiz types. It is a very social evening and long-standing friendships have been formed and nurtured through the quizzes which bring in parishioners from well outside the diocese.

Monday 22 May sees our first outing of the summer with a day-trip to Canterbury Cathedral where we will have a tour



Forthcoming Events: Spring/Summer 2017

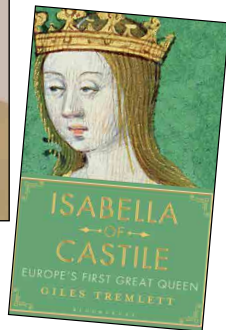
and Canon Christopher Tuckwell will celebrate Mass. We will have lunch in Canterbury before an afternoon tour of some of the City's other highlights including the Catholic church of St Thomas of Canterbury – dedicated to St Thomas a Becket – which houses relics and the original Stations of the Cross from Westminster Cathedral. These were donated by Cardinal Bernard Griffin when the Gill Stations were installed. Cardinal Henry Manning also preached at the opening of the church in 1875, so the Cathedral connections are well established.

On 8 June we are delighted to welcome the journalist and author Giles Tremlett back to Westminster Cathedral for a talk on his latest book: *Isabella of Castile – Europe's First Great Queen*. Giles is a Fellow of the Canada Blanch Centre and the London School of Economics, and Contributing Editor to the



Guardian. He gave a wonderful talk to the Friends on Katherine of Aragon some years ago and we can expect the same high standard of scholarship and literary intrigue.

Isabella was just 23-years-old when she ascended the throne of Castile, the largest



and strongest kingdom in Spain, but her reign laid the foundations for a modern nation. A controversial monarch, she instigated the Spanish Inquisition and the expulsion of the world's largest population of Jews but she also re-established and revitalised Christendom in the new age of the early Renaissance. There will be copies of the book on sale and refreshments will be served. *Please note that this talk was originally scheduled for 30 March.*

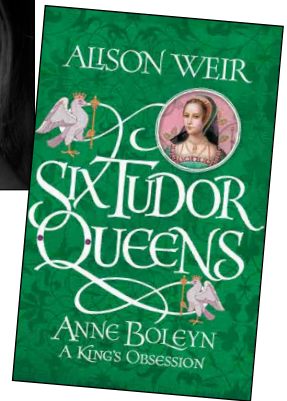
Another talk in June and another welcome return, this time to Alison



Weir who will be speaking on the second book in her series on the wives of Henry VIII: *Anne Boleyn – A King's Obsession*.

Alison enthralled her audience last year with the story of Katherine of Aragon and we can expect another fascinating evening. She has said that she is firmly in the Katherine 'camp' but has sympathy for a woman who was manipulated by her family, yet found her own voice in the Great Matter that would change England forever. Books will be on sale and Alison will be signing copies.

With a nod to the Great Matter our second day-trip of the season is to

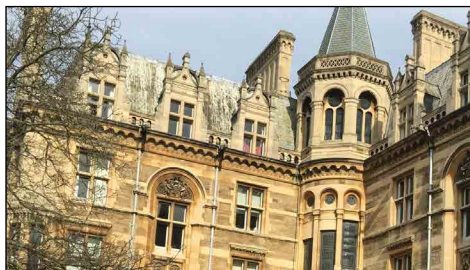


Buckden Towers in St Neots and then on to Cambridge. Buckden Towers is the 12th-century manor house where Katherine resided briefly whilst the divorce was debated. It was from here that she was sent, very much into exile, to Kimbolton where she died. Buckden Towers is now a Claretian Retreat Centre and we will have Mass in the chapel before making our way to Cambridge. I am delighted to report that Dr Michael Woods, fellow of Gonville and Caius, will be leading us in a private tour of the college.



Caius is the fourth oldest college in Cambridge. It was first founded as Gonville Hall by Edmund Gonville, Rector of Terrington St Clement in Norfolk,

in 1348, and refounded in 1557 by John Caius as Gonville and Caius College. Caius is of special interest to the Friends; he was physician to Edward VI, Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth I and dismissed from his post in 1568 accused of both



atheism and adherence to the Roman Catholic faith. A collection of vestments and Mass items were found and burned in the College court. We will finish our day with tea in Cambridge.

The Friends' Summer Party takes place on 4 July so Independence Day is our theme with a pre-independence day cocktail dedicated to our own Bishop Richard Challoner – the first Catholic bishop to the then British possessions in America. Bishop Challoner's nickname was apparently 'Book' so enjoy a good book on arrival at Allen Hall. Karl and his team will be on hand with a suitably American-themed BBQ. We will pray for good weather.

The Duke of Norfolk has very generously invited the Friends to Arundel Castle on Monday 17 July where we will have the estate to ourselves for the day. Arriving in the morning we will have a tour of the castle and then free time for lunch and a leisurely tour of the gardens – bring a packed lunch or there are plenty of good restaurants in Arundel. At 3.15pm Canon Christopher will celebrate Mass for the Friends in the private Norfolk chapel. We are then invited to the restaurant for Afternoon Tea. Diary permitting, the Duke will be joining us for Mass.

The Friends' Office will be closed from 24 April to the 5 May. Tickets will be available for all events from Clergy House Reception during this period. Please make sure that you leave your name and details so that we can update our event listings. There may be some limited cover in the office but please do try and book early, as that will really help our administration – ticketing as usual for all other periods.

BEQUEST TO THE FRIENDS OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

The donations that we make to Westminster Cathedral and the projects that we undertake benefit greatly from members remembering the charity in their wills. Anyone considering leaving a bequest may find the following notes helpful.

Because the Society of Friends of Westminster Cathedral is a registered charity bequests are exempt from inheritance tax, and can help to reduce the overall inheritance tax liability of your estate. If you would like to remember Westminster Cathedral in your will and wish to continue to support the work of the Friends the following wording may be useful:

I give to the Society of Friends of Westminster Cathedral (Reg. Charity No: 272899), Clergy House, 42 Francis Street, London SW1P 1QW, the sum of £..... Free of tax, on trust, for such charitable purposes. In connection with the Friends of Westminster Cathedral as the Trustees in their absolute discretion think fit, and the receipt of the Treasurer or other officer of the Trust shall be a full discharge to my executors in respect of the same.

If there is a particular project that you wish to support such as mosaic decoration in the Cathedral then you may specify how you would like your bequest to be used.

For further details please do not hesitate to contact the office on **0207 798 9059**, and we will be pleased to help.

Thank you for your generosity.



Mosaics *update*



Planning ahead

With the mosaic decoration of the Chapel of St George and the English Martyrs now completed and blessed by the Cardinal, we are gathering our breath before planning for the next venture. It is gratifying how well the completed chapel has been received by art experts and by worshippers at the Cathedral – not just the design, but also the lighting which greatly enhances the overall effect.

Thoughts are now turning to the Friends' next mosaic project. I can confirm that it will be the completion of the mosaic decoration of St Patrick's Chapel – the last chapel in the Cathedral to be completed. We are in the very, very early stages of planning; a design, once selected, has to win the approval of several bodies before it can be adopted as the subject of an appeal for funds. Consequently, it will be at least another year at least before the appeal can be launched. You will, however, be informed of progress.

I am mindful that this mosaics update was written on St Patrick's Day – an auspicious date for the mention of such a mosaics appeal. Let us hope that this time next year we will have a more formal launch to celebrate. Thank you, dear Friends, for your continued support and generosity.

Barry DS Lock

Chairman of the Friends' Mosaics Committee

The Friends@40 Anniversary Appeal



We love the Cathedral Hall. It is the location for all manner of activities: solemn receptions, fish and chip suppers, dinners and dances, and the Christmas and Summer Fairs. And who could forget the SVP's book sales, and tea and coffee on a Sunday morning. But the Hall is more than a parish reception room. It raises money for Westminster Cathedral through external events and lettings, and this is a market that the Cathedral desperately needs to tap into to secure an income stream for the future.

Westminster Cathedral must raise £5000 a day to cover its operating costs so the Hall is a vital source of revenue for the Cathedral. An analysis of comparable venues in the local area reveals that the Hall is not fully realising its income potential. However, higher letting fees cannot be charged without bringing the Hall up to the specification required for a conference, event venue. Improvements to the Hall will therefore directly benefit the Cathedral.

What do we support?

In the past, the Friends have supported projects that beautify the Cathedral – the chapel mosaics fall into this category. We have sponsored new vestments and altar frontals, new bespoke information stands, and supported the Cathedral's Treasures Exhibition which provides an essential space to showcase an historic collection of artefacts that speaks to the history of the Church in England and Wales.

In recent years the Friends have sought to support projects that are more 'pro-active' in terms of raising revenue. Our Tower Appeal is on-going; the plans for renovating the Viewing Gallery will be placed before the Historic Churches Commission next month. Once restored this renovated space should help to raise more funds for the Cathedral, enhancing the Tower's appeal on the tourist trail.

Historic space

The Hall is an historic space; a Grade II* listed building in the heart of Victoria. The Divine Office was first sung here in 1902 on the Feast of the Assumption and the hall was used the evening before the consecration on 28 June 1910, with the exposition of the relics of the saints which were to be deposited in each of the altars of the Cathedral. The ceremony was accompanied by music from William Byrd, sung by the Cathedral choir and was followed by Matins and Lauds.

The first organ in the Cathedral complex was a small, three-manual organ by Waddington which was placed on the raised stage of the Hall and reputedly never used – it was described as hopelessly defective and out of tune!

In the 1990s the Hall was 'refurbished' with the original paint and decorative scheme re-instated through a collaboration with the HCC. There has been no major refurbishment since, save for the installation of new radiators – more in keeping with the Edwardian design – and painting of the central vault. All aspects of the Hall complex require major refurbishment.

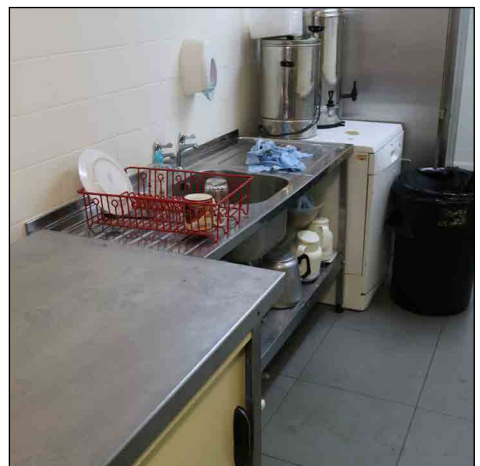
What needs to be done?

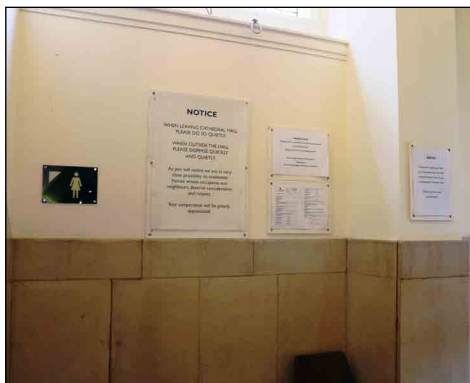
Lavatories: We are looking to reconfigure the existing lavatories, improving the layout and redesigning the facilities. The lavatories are out-dated, and not to the standard expected of a conference or indeed parish venue.



Break-Out Spaces: A number of regular users of the Hall have identified the need for more break-out spaces. At present the only room available is the 'Green Room' and this is used primarily for storage.

Kitchen: The Cathedral Hall kitchen is out-dated and badly in need of major refurbishment. Discussions with caterers have identified the need for comprehensive warming facilities, a proper catering fridge and space for setting-up. The kitchen needs to be modern and functional.





The Hall Lobby: At present the lobby feels unwelcoming and municipal in character, yet with its high ceiling and central columns it has the potential to be much grander. The composite stone cladding in the lobby is not original – possibly 1930s or later - and for aesthetic and safety reasons we want to replace this, possibly with wood panelling to echo the panelling in the Hall.

A proper reception area, with a cloakroom for coats and bag storage, would help to raise the tone of the Hall, making it more welcoming and functional.

The Gallery: This is really under-used, although it provides a good view of the stage and upper reaches of the Hall. A new treatment for the floor and windows is being proposed and the space may be used partly for a new Audio-Visual system for the Hall.

Sound and Audio-Visual: The Hall has limited sound and AV facilities all of which need updating. Improved AV facilities are crucial for improving the status of the Hall as an events venue. Our preferred solution is to have a rising electric screen built into the floor of the stage, with an AV system that can be controlled via a console.

Lighting: Lighting is a major issue throughout the Hall complex. The lobby lights are not in keeping with the age or grandeur of the building and the same applies with the medieval-esque iron chandeliers hanging from the central vault of the Hall. We recognise that new, improved and imaginative lighting could enhance the space and bring out its unique architectural details.

How can you help?

We recognise that the Hall complex requires an imaginative design solution that respects the architectural importance of the space and brings out its best features. The Hall has the potential to be an elegant function room but it needs modernising to provide a venue that is both adaptable and beautiful. We recognise that any design solution must bear in mind that the Hall still serves as the main parish reception space and is regularly used for Mass when the Cathedral is closed.

Our appeal target to complete the works proposed is £250,000. We are looking to raise this money through direct giving via the Big Give, launched in 2016, but to be repeated in 2017, through applications to trusts and via private individuals. Donations of £5000 or more will be acknowledged in the fabric of the Hall and we are open to discussion as to how people's generosity may be rewarded. If you would like to see the space please contact the Friends' Office on 0207 798 9059 and we will arrange a private visit.



For the Diary: Calendar March 2017 –

29 March: Pre-concert talk by Fr Brian O'Mahony on Miserere, the inspiration behind Allegri's beautiful setting of Psalm 50. The talk is in Clergy House Library at 6.30pm. Refreshments will be served. The concert in the Cathedral starts at 7.30pm; guests will be escorted through to the Cathedral at 7.15pm. Please be at Clergy House Reception for 6.15pm. Tickets £10

9 May: Launch of the George Malcolm Exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of the birth and 20th anniversary of the death of this celebrated musician and former Master of Music. A private view of the exhibition in the Cathedral at 6.30pm will be followed by a talk from curator Giles Dawson and the Master of Music in Clergy House – drinks reception to follow. Tickets £25

11 May: The Friends' 40th Anniversary Mass to be celebrated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols in Westminster Cathedral at 5.30pm. The Mass will see the premiere of an anthem specially commissioned to mark the anniversary. Afterwards there will be a 'Ruby Red' drinks and canapés reception in the Cathedral Hall with singing from the lay clerks' ensemble. Tickets for the reception: £25

16 May: Quiz and fish and chip supper – Westminster Cathedral Hall 6.30pm. Tickets £15

22 May: Day trip to Canterbury Cathedral to include a tour and Mass celebrated by Canon Christopher Tuckwell. The coach will depart from Clergy House at 8.30am. There will be free time in Canterbury for lunch and then further sightseeing in the afternoon to include the Catholic church of St Thomas of Canterbury. Tickets £40

25 May: Society of Friends of Westminster Cathedral AGM Westminster Cathedral Hall 6.30pm

8 June: Isabella of Castile: Europe's First Great Queen. Talk by journalist and historian Giles Tremlett: Westminster Cathedral Hall. Doors open at 6.30pm and the talk starts at 7pm. There will be a glass of wine and book signing after the event. Tickets £10 (Please note this is a change of date from the previously advertised 30 March)

13 June: Anne Boleyn: A King's Obsession. Talk by writer Alison Weir on Henry VIII's controversial wife – the second book in her series on the wives of the Tudor king. Westminster Cathedral Hall. Doors open at 6.30pm and the talk will commence at 7pm. There will be a glass of wine to follow and book signing after the event. Tickets £10

21 June: Day trip to Buckden Towers, a 12th-century manor house and former palace now a Catholic retreat



END POINT



July 2017

centre. Queen Katherine of Aragon resided at the palace from July 1533 to May 1534 during the King's Great Matter. Mass will be celebrated and in the afternoon we visit Cambridge for a private tour of Gonville and Caius College with College Life Fellow Dr Michael Wood. Please bring a packed lunch. Afternoon tea included. The coach will leave Clergy House at 8.15 am. Tickets £45

4 July: The Friends' Summer Party and Independence Day BBQ at Allen Hall. 6.30pm. Tickets are £30 plus we are asking for an additional £10 donation per person to the Cathedral Hall Appeal which may be gift aided.

17 July: A private tour of Arundel castle and gardens with free time for lunch and then Mass in the Norfolk family chapel. Our day will conclude with Afternoon Tea. Subject to diary commitments, the Duke of Norfolk will be joining us for Mass. Coaches will be leaving Clergy House at 8.30am. This event has been generously sponsored by the Duke of Norfolk. Tickets £40

For detailed information on all the events listed please ring the Friends' Office on: **0207 798 9059**.

Regular updates are also posted on the Cathedral website **www.westminstercathedral.org.uk** and on the Friends' noticeboard.

As I put pen to paper, Westminster Cathedral is preparing for the Requiem Mass of a much loved member of the parish community – Sharon Jennings.

Sharon was a central figure in the *Oremus* editorial team, and more besides. Her laughter – distinctive, throaty and always naughty – usually preceded her presence. She had such a love of the Cathedral, and such boundless knowledge that I feel she is irreplaceable in the life of this great and noble institution. Sharon, always bright and cheerful, brought something of the sun to Clergy House. She was everything a Friend of the Cathedral should be – loyal, compassionate, funny and a comrade in arms.

Last autumn I asked her to write a short piece about the inspiration behind her play 'Will's Will' which was premiered at our 2016 summer party. She reflected upon the emergent ideas and themes: 'Mortality, faith, fame, love, loss, cakes and ale... Everything that concerns us all.' It could serve as an epitaph but I will always think of her in grander, Shakespearean terms. She was, as Charmian so memorably recounted in Antony and Cleopatra, a 'lass unparallel'd'. God bless you Sharon.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Friends and your Council has chosen to support the renovation of the Cathedral Hall as the main appeal for the year. Plans are underway to improve the lavatories and kitchen areas – not glamorous, but essential. The Hall has terrific potential and with funding we can create a space that befits the Cathedral and is worthy of the people who worship here. Please be generous.

The appeal extends to Cathedral Music and the Friends are making a major donation to the Song School for new song desks. We thought it would be a nice idea to get a reflection from a former chorister, and Nicholas Morrell (P8) gamely offered his tour diary with its small boy fixation on food. Nothing changes!

My thanks must go to you, the Friends of Westminster Cathedral, and especially to Lord Forte and the Duke of Norfolk for their support in this 40th year. Happy Anniversary.

Christina White

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*St Joseph's Mass in Lourdes during the Westminster
Lourdes Pilgrimage*

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