

From the Secretary

Dear Friends

I do hope this newsletter finds you all well. How quickly this particular year has gone by – I can't believe that New Year is around the corner again. On the back of this newsletter is the listing of services at Salisbury

Cathedral to celebrate Advent, Christmas and Epiphany.

Friends' Day on Saturday 10th September was blustery, and there were showers, but I hope all those Friends' who were able to come to Salisbury enjoyed the tours arranged, our lecture, the AGM and of course



the opportunity to come together for the beautiful evensong service in the Cathedral. We were delighted that Anne Lyles, a Curator of British Art at Tate Britain and Constable scholar, gave the Friends' lecture in the North Transept, 'Constable, Salisbury and Religious Sentiment'. Anne's engaging introduction to our two tours of the Constable exhibition at Salisbury Museum gave an excellent insight into Constable's connection with Salisbury Cathedral which Anne expanded on during her enlightening and well delivered lecture in the afternoon – she made Constable's work come alive for us. Anne has close connections with our choir, and very kindly donated her fee, split with the Choral Foundation.

At the AGM, two former Council members, David Felgate and Paul Williams, were both elected, and we thanked the outgoing Council members, Ian Hutton-Penman and Kate Weale, for their excellent support over the past three years. If any members are interested in finding out about becoming a

Council member, please don't hesitate to contact me in the office. Canon Mark Bonney gave the address this year, in the absence of the Very Reverend June Osborne. Our Treasurer Mr Ian McNeil reported that although Friends' funds were holding strong, legacies received continued to play an important part in boosting our funds. Minutes of the meeting will be published in the next edition of Spire.

Tory and I were honoured to represent the Friends at a **topping out** ceremony in May, on the completion of phased MRP work on the north transept. Although not expecting it, we rode in the works cage-lift to the top of the scaffolding enfolding the north side of the cathedral, and bravely walked about on the wooden boards around the roof, with a final climb on ladders to the highest point where the newly blessed cross and finials were being fixed. Canon Mark Bonney reports on current grants later.

Our newly designed application forms have stimulated a good number of applications for membership, which is very encouraging. Many thanks to those Friends' who passed on an application form to prospective members – personal recommendation is one of the best ways to enrol new members! If you know repeat visitors to Salisbury

Cathedral, it's certainly worth them joining the Friends! We have seen a slight decrease in our membership, not only through natural causes – death, moving away from the area, lapses etc. – but also resignations by members who are cutting their charitable giving for economic reasons. This has to be expected, but by the same token, we are greatly heartened by the generosity of those who have implemented the subscription increase. We are equally grateful for all contributions, as collectively they are an important support to Salisbury Cathedral. If you pay by Standing Order and wish to make an increase, please contact your bank direct, but if this is difficult, please contact us in the office, and we will send you a new Standing Order form and send it for you. Cash payers receive an annual reminder.

On our **programme of visits** during the year, we had day trips to the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court; Lyme Regis and the new organ in St Michael's church;



and we attended matins service at St George's Chapel, Windsor, with an afternoon boat ride on the Thames to Runnymede. We also had a 4-night visit based in King's Lynn, Norfolk, from where we visited Sandringham, Norfolk Lavender, Holkham Hall, and the pilgrimage sites at Walsingham (pictured). Norwich Cathedral made us very welcome, and their Friends gave us tea after a tour which included glimpses of the giant props used during filming there of a film based on Jack the Giant Killer.

Our **Christmas and note-cards** are selling well, and our **Chair Project** also continues, offering the opportunity for anyone to sponsor a personal commemoration within the Cathedral, whilst raising funds at the same time. Please do contact the office if you would like to sponsor a chair or order cards – we can send you a form to complete or it can be downloaded from our website – www.salisburycathedralfriends.co.uk.

Just before you read the last instalment of Robert Key's fascinating memories of his childhood in the Close, there are a few items of **news from the Cathedral community** to tell you about. A weekend of special celebrations culminated in a brilliant Sunday service to celebrate 20 years of the girl chorister tradition at our Cathedral, and admission of new choristers. The new choir in

September welcomed four new girl and five new boy choristers, eight probationer choristers and organ scholar Matthew Jorysz. Many of you may know that Daniel Cook, Assistant Director of Music, has now left Salisbury to be Organist and Master of the Choristers at St David's Cathedral in West Wales. Ted Hillier retired as Works Manager in the summer, he joined the Cathedral works department in 1992; Suzanne Eward, Cathedral Librarian and Friend, retired earlier this year after 30 years, and the library is currently under the jurisdiction of the Canon Chancellor. They have been valued

'friends' to us, and we hope they enjoy their retirement!

Brigadier Mark Elcomb, the Chapter Clerk, has moved to

pastures new - a replacement has yet to be appointed, and Katrine Sporle is holding the fort for now. After 33 years of service Verger Peter Wheatcroft has taken voluntary redundancy, and a new job with a local company of Funeral Directors. Salisbury Cathedral's Precentor, Canon Jeremy Davies, will retire in January, and a new Precentor will be chosen by the time you read this! Jeremy has been Precentor for 26 years, and we will all miss his



inspiration, warmth and great character.

Saying goodbye to members of our longstanding community and coming to terms with change is

often challenging, but we felt great joy during the wonderful service held on Saturday 15th October, the Enthronement of Bishop Nicholas Holtam as the 78th Bishop of Salisbury. It was a very warm and happy service, with many of the Bishop's family and friends joining the celebrations from St Martin's, including two Pearly Queens for good luck (pictured). We greatly look forward to his leadership. If anyone is interested in art, Bishop Nicholas' new book, *The Art of Worship*, is on sale in the Cathedral Shop, £12.99.



A final word – for those who know and love him, Wolfie the Cathedral cat is a star in his own right but he is also now a great TV star through 'Songs of Praise' and you may well soon catch him on his own facebook page! If you are visiting Salisbury between Mon 21st to Sun 27th November, the Cathedral Shop will again run a Christmas discount week, and is open from 9.30 am – 5.30 pm.

Kate Beckett