

BEACON

The regular newsletter from the Development Office of Rochester Cathedral

OCTOBER 2020

From the Dean's desk...



The Covid-19 pandemic has affected everyone. It has certainly been devastating for all cathedrals; ministry and outreach has been significantly challenged and changed.

Fortunately, at Rochester we had already begun to make some critical decisions prior to the Covid-19 outbreak in terms of our long term sustainability.

Nevertheless, reduced income streams will limit our operations in the foreseeable future.

Despite this difficult situation we remain positive, not only about the future, but about how we can continue to serve our communities, localities, regions, diocese and county today. Increased use of technology has meant that we are now able to stream services online and potentially reach a wider audience. Yet, we mustn't lose sight of the importance of gathering for worship as the physical body of the risen Christ. Those who have been physically present for worship in the Cathedral after so many months denied have found that experience very emotional. The importance of place is just as important as it was prior to lockdown. Words, or for that matter Zoom, can only take us so far and some of the keenest human experiences are beyond any words.

The Christian faith teaches us to look for light in the darkest corners and situations. To reach out into the darkness and put our hand into the hand of God and take the next step; simply one step is enough to start a journey. As we begin to access

what recovery might look like, our primary concern is the safety and well-being of everyone - the public, our visitors, staff and volunteers. There is a lot to be done and I am deeply grateful to people who contacted me early on in the crisis and made it financially possible to buy the necessary equipment and PPE for staff. They helped us take that first step.

In other areas we have been blessed. The Trust's great success in raising funds last year for the Quire and window repairs has meant that this work has gone on unimpeded in an empty Cathedral, ahead of schedule! I'm only sad that we were not able to organise trips up the scaffold for the public to see the impressive roof bosses and the amazing view down the nave from over the organ.

As you read this edition of The Beacon, I hope you will be encouraged by the work that is going on despite the restrictions. Each cathedral in Britain will have distinctive opportunities and challenges ahead of it depending on its context. At Rochester we will continue as best we can to witness to the love and faithfulness of God and to celebrate the many acts of kindness and generosity that this present crisis has produced. As my mentor was fond of saying, 'It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness'. Amen to that!

The Very Revd Dr Philip Hesketh
Dean of Rochester

Rochester
CATHEDRAL
Growing in Christ since AD604

Please note: You are receiving this newsletter because we think you have an interest in Rochester Cathedral and its events. If we have got this wrong please let us know by emailing development@rochestercathedral.org or telephone 01634 810074.

In order to process your kind donations, keep you updated with news and events, and carry out our work effectively, we will need to store and use the information you have provided to us. We are committed to treating your information with respect and in a transparent way. To find out more, please read our fundraising promise at <https://www.rochestercathedral.org/cathedral-trust/>

Pledges and gifts from 1st January to end August 2020 total **£345,947.37**

Business Guild News

Rise Communications joins Rochester Cathedral Business Guild

We are delighted to welcome Rise Communications as a sponsor of the Rochester Cathedral Business Guild. Their role will be to advise the Guild on best practice with PR and Marketing and will also sit on the Steering Group and assist with forthcoming events.

As Event Managers of the Medway Business Awards and founders of the Kent Charity Awards, Rise has extensive knowledge of the county in both the business and charity sectors and are eager to share their expertise, ethics, and ideas with the Guild.

Rochester Cathedral is England's second oldest, having been founded in AD604 by Bishop Justus and as expected, is steeped in history. It is also incredibly forward-thinking and has a vibrant programme of concerts, exhibitions and activities held across the Cathedral throughout the year. From Adventure Golf in the Nave, Luke Jerram's awe-inspiring installation "Museum of the Moon" and the thought provoking, 'The Knife Angel' installation, there is always something happening either physically or virtually at the Cathedral, and for all age groups. We hope to be able to return to hosting excellent installations and events as soon as it is safe to do so. In the meantime we will be circulating Webinar invitations. Sarah Macdonald, Partner at Rise Communications said, "Being part of the team

supporting the Cathedral is going to be incredibly exciting for us. There are many benefits in becoming a member of the Rochester Cathedral Business Guild and we are looking forward to promoting these to businesses across Kent."

David Ward

Chairman – Rochester Cathedral Business Guild

Sponsorship Opportunities

Whilst Rochester Cathedral Business Guild makes no charge for membership, it does seek corporate sponsorship from businesses to cover its costs.

In exchange, sponsors are given the unique opportunity to promote their brand at networking events at Rochester Cathedral and across the Diocese, benefiting from association with the Cathedral's prestigious name and history as being at the centre of the community.

Sponsors are promoted on our website, newsletters, event brochures and marketing communications throughout the year and runs annually from 1st January to 31st December.

Developing the Gundulf Society

The trustees of Rochester Cathedral Trust formed the Gundulf Society, as a small society for benefactors, a couple of years ago in recognition of their significant historic contributions to Rochester Cathedral. Bishop Gundulf presided over the building of the Norman Cathedral as the first bishop of Rochester after the Conquest in 1075.

We have for some time been considering how to best develop this Society further, and have now successfully recruited a number of founding members which include Sir Michael Palin and Jools Holland.



Furthermore, Joanna Lumley, has kindly agreed to become president of the society.

Although what the Gundulf Society can do may be

constrained for a while, the need for the Society has been magnified by the Corona-crisis. We will, once able to, aim to



ensure that Gundulf members are invited to Cathedral events each year and, if they are not already, become members of Rochester Cathedral's Friends. In addition, we envisage an annual exclusive Gundulf event to strengthen ties between its members and the Cathedral.

The aim of the expansion of the Society would be to bring in, from Kent and further afield, people who are well disposed to

Rochester Cathedral and its musical and conservation efforts, with an annual subscription of £500; and to provide a feeling of affinity of its members with one another in support of a wonderful cause.

We are actively looking for additional members and I would encourage anyone interested to hear more to contact myself Lynne.Bax@rochestercathedral.org

Completed projects funded by Rochester Cathedral Trust

Despite the current circumstances, we have been able to complete several important fabric projects. Now, for the first time in a very long time, we are able to say that **Priority 1** work is complete. The Trust now has the opportunity to focus on **Priority 2** including essential important health and safety work.

The completed/currently ongoing works are:

South Quire Clerestory, Quire Ceiling & Vault

Budget £169,120 COMPLETED The work was undertaken in the summer of 2020 and the project completed on 7th September. Final cost TBC but expected to be under budget. Funded by grant-aid from the Rochester Cathedral Trust and the Headley Trust (£45,000).

Window Repairs

Budget £53,134 Commenced in June 2020 and expected to be completed before the end of October, the project is funded entirely by the Rochester Cathedral Trust.

North Nave Clerestory

Budget £155,980 Commenced on 7th September and is expected to be completed by the end of November 2020. Funded entirely by the Rochester Cathedral Trust.

North Aisle

Budget £91,980 The work commenced in June 2020 and is expected to be completed before the end of October 2020. Funded entirely by the Rochester Cathedral Trust.

South Nave Clerestory

Budget £121,175 The work commenced in June 2020 and is expected to be completed before the end of October. Funded entirely by the Rochester Cathedral Trust.

Chapter House

Budget £20,000 An initial phase to tackle to most urgent repairs commenced on 1st September. The project is funded entirely by the Rochester Cathedral Trust.

Of course we could not do this fund raising without the tireless efforts of our Trustees:

Richard Oldfield OBE,DL (Trust Chairman); The Very Revd Dr Philip Hesketh DL (Dean); The Lord Colgrain DL; Joss Croft; Clare Denison-Pender; Kate Fenwick (Development Committee Chairman); Canon Ralph Godsall; Paul Hudson; Kate Lampard CBE, DL; Lars Lemonius (Chair of the Gundulf Society); Remony Millwater (current High Sheriff of Kent) Russell Race JP, DL; Canon Matthew Rushton; John A Spence OBE, DL; David Ward (Chairman Business Guild); Georgie Warner DL.

Our Royal Patron is HRH The Countess of Wessex GCVO, with Vice Patrons Jools Holland OBE, DL(Music) and Rory Sutherland. President of The Gundulf Society is Joanna Lumley OBE.

A lot of people are working very hard for us and we are very grateful. A huge thank you to all of them.

Association of Friends of Rochester Cathedral

The Friends of the Cathedral continue to be proactive in their endeavours to financially support Chapter in its ongoing responsibility for the maintenance and welfare of the Fabric of the Cathedral. At the Friends Advent Luncheon held at Aylesford Priory in November 2019, the Association was proud to have formally launched its next major financial initiative in the sum of £500K for the complete overhaul of the Lighting and Sound System throughout the cathedral. Following lunch, the Cathedral Architect, John Bailey gave a very inspirational talk to the assembled Friends as he focused on this element of the planned projects.

In addition, Friends Council approved the first stage payment of £50K in respect of the re-lighting of the Cathedral Spire and the Nave chandeliers. Our President, Dean Philip, anticipates this work being completed by mid-February.

In order to give the Friends a greater profile throughout the Diocese, on Sunday 26th April we shall be supporting the

Cathedral Choir in undertaking a Festal Evensong at St Mark's Church Bromley followed by an informal reception with members of various congregations from other nearby Churches.

In May the Friends Annual Holiday will take place in Suffolk/Norfolk with a visit to St Edmundsbury Cathedral – being welcomed by their Association of Friends. As well as the customary Advent Luncheon in November 2020, consideration and planning is taking place for various Events in 2021 which may include a Concert by the Kent Police Male Voice Choir*.

Those of you who are not yet members are warmly recommended to join us by contacting: Christine Tucker, our administrator at: friendsofrochestercathedral@btinternet.com telephone 01634 832142. It will be wonderful for you to acknowledge the good work being undertaken by joining us and enjoying each other's company as good Friends really do!

** Events subject to Covid-19 guidelines*

Colour over the Quire

Once-in-a-lifetime access to the bosses 15 metres over the quire has provided a glimpse back to the colourful medieval Cathedral.

Repairs to the quire vaulting this summer by Paye Stone Ltd under the direction of Cathedral Architect John Bailey of Thomas Ford & Partners have seen the east end of the Cathedral filled with two enormous scaffold towers installed by Alltask. Although the objective was to repair cracks in the masonry between the blocks of chalk used in the vault webbing (remember the netting?) these towers also provided access for close-up inspection and photography of the vaulting ribs.

It was known that the vaulting ribs feature surviving medieval painted patterning after a limited investigation and resulting reconstruction by Peter Martindale throughout the quire transept and presbytery in 1994 (the wavy red-orange/black you may have noticed before).



An unintended discovery was surviving paint on two keystone bosses over the quire stalls, featuring original decoration from the east end building campaign around the year 1200.

An investigation was carried out by Arte Conservation Ltd and the bosses were 3D-modelled, providing a high-quality record for future reference. Such an intensive inspection and recording



could not be carried out from floor-level. A rare early example of blue pigmentation was discovered on the westernmost of the two bosses (above).

The most illuminating of the two bosses is to the east (above). Here the dog tooth mouldings are painted with a thin white limewash and the edges outlined in black and red ochre lines. Two reds are visible including a red lead colour called minium. Spaces between the radial dog tooth are decorated with five black dots arranged like a flower.

The surviving decoration of this boss provides evidence to propose an almost complete reconstruction, and to hazard a guess at the colouring of the other. Although not yet identified, greens were probably used to highlight the leaf-like sculpture on each boss (known as foliation). Both bosses feature holes through which it would have been possible to hang a chain or rope, possibly for a chandelier.

Large single black spots decorate the spaces between the dog tooth carvings of the transverse ribs. The plainer diagonal ribs feature bands of yellow ochre and black lines. Fragments of a single-line red masonry pattern survive in areas of the vault webbing under the later limewashes. This masonry pattern seems to have been used extensively throughout the south quire transept and possibly the entire east end.

The evidence from these bosses will be of great use in the wider project of reconstructing the cathedral's painted decoration. Stay tuned!

You can see more bosses in the Virtual Cathedral Project model collections of the North Quire Aisle, the South Quire Aisle, the North Nave Transept and the South Nave Transept.

The Virtual Cathedral Project brings together thousands of hours of work by staff and volunteers over many years and you can see more on the Cathedral website.

Jacob Scott

Rochester Cathedral Research Guild