

The Friends of St. George's Memorial Church, Ypres

Registered with the Charities Commission No. 213282-L1



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Vice-President: Lord Astor of Hever, D.L.
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Newsletter: c/o The Honorary Vice-Chairman
Life Member: John Sumner
Chaplain: The Revd. G. Trinder

No. 100

NEWSLETTER

November 2017



The Eight Bells of St. George's on their Dedication Service Day

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DATA PROTECTION

Information about our members which is held in our records is kept confidentially for the use of the Friends of St. George's Memorial Church. We do not pass names and addresses, nor any other details, to any other person or organisation.

DATABASE UPDATE

Dear Friend, we are continuing the process of updating our membership database and have had a number of requests to consider sending future editions of the Friends newsletter electronically. If you would like to receive the newsletter and other occasional communications such as updates on St Georges Memorial Church via email, please send your e mail address details to the address below with a brief note giving us permission to contact you via e mail. You can rest assured that these details will not be shared with any other organisation.

Espeare32@talktalk.net

In the event that we do not hear from you, we will continue to send the Newsletter by post with pleasure; likewise if there are any details that we may not have correct or any other queries on your membership, please feel free to contact us and help us to keep our records up to date. Alternatively, please write to: Miss E Speare, Membership Secretary, 32 Fulwood Walk, London SW19 6RB.

St. GEORGE'S WEBSITE

The new St George's website, developed through support of The Friends, has been up and running since June 2017. It contains up to date news and information about St George's activities, events and contact points for The Friends. Or you can easily find yourself at any time inside St George's by taking a 360 degree tour of this beautiful church.

So, one good way of keeping in contact with St George's is by visiting its website on a regular basis.

www.stgeorgesmemorialchurchypres.com

PUBLICITY FOR ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

One of the objects of the Association of the Friends of St. George's Church is "To promote interest in and knowledge of St. George's Memorial Church in Ypres". An effective means of bringing St. George's Church to the notice of people in the United Kingdom is through local newspapers, magazines and local history societies. It may, for example, be possible for our members to send reports to local newspapers about their experiences on our pilgrimages. Church magazines are usually looking for articles and will often welcome articles about St. George's and the Friends. Local history societies and similar organisations often welcome talks in which St. George's and the Friends are mentioned, bringing the church and the Friends to a wider audience. We hope our members will grasp any opportunity that arises to engage in such publicity.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 63rd Annual General Meeting of the Friends of St. George's Memorial Church, Ypres, will take place on Monday 27th November 2017 at 2.00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, Waterloo, London SE1 8UJ. The nearest mainline station is Waterloo. The nearest underground station is Waterloo on the Jubilee, Bakerloo and Northern lines. From the station, take the exit on to Waterloo Road and Sandell Street is opposite the station.

Copies of the Annual Report and the Accounts are included in this newsletter. Please bring it with you.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting, held on 28th November 2016
(Previously circulated to those who attended)
3. Matters arising from the minutes.
4. Chairman's Annual Report.
5. Hon. Secretary's Report.
6. Hon. Membership Secretary's Report.
7. Hon. Treasurer's Report.
Annual Accounts and Independent Examiner's Report.
8. Chaplain's Report.
9. Hon. Pilgrimage Secretary's Report. (2017)
10. Election of Officers and Committee.
11. Observations by members.
12. Any other business.
13. Date of next Annual General Meeting.

If any member wishes to propose a formal motion at the meeting, it would be appreciated if details are sent to the Honorary Secretary by 17th November 2017.

Committee: Mr. J. Arnold, Mr C. Butler, M.B.E., The Revd. Canon G.S. Derriman, Mr N.G. Divers, Mr B.C.Fawcett, Mrs F.L.McClorey, Mr M.McKeon, Mr R.G.Thorne.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017



Introduction

As I mentioned in my Report last year, the Centenary Commemorations for the Battle of Passchendaele would bring the City of Ypres once more into the international limelight.

They duly took place over the weekend of 30th/31st July. They were masterminded by the patronage of Her Majesty's Government, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Ieper City Council and the Last Post Association. For those who had the privilege of attending any of the commemorative events, they could not have failed to be hugely impressed by the work put in by all who were involved in the organising, in addition to being profoundly moved by the ceremonies themselves.

The Vice Chairman, Hon Secretary and I officially represented The Friends. We arrived on the Friday (28th), and paid a brief visit to St George's in the afternoon. En route I called on the Chaplain, the Rev Gillian Trinder, and had the pleasure of meeting her for the first time since she assumed the Appointment at the beginning of the month.

The Saturday was spent on Steward Duty in St George's, where we had the pleasure of meeting and speaking to visitors. What made everything so rewarding was their willingness to talk to us, their interest in the fact that we were representing The Friends, and the role that The Friends play within the Church community. Sunday was a full day in St George's, from early church onwards. There were more visitors, and we were specifically on duty in the afternoon to welcome the relatives of those who had fought in the Battle. Some national Broadcasting Corporations were present, including the BBC. The Vice Chairman, whose grandfather, Jack Mudd, a Private in The London Regiment who was killed in the Battle, was interviewed at length by Jonny Dymond, the Radio 4 Presenter at the BBC, and also by the Belgian network and ITN News. The evening saw us at the Menin Gate for the Last Post Ceremony, which was attended by Their Majesties The King and Queen of The Belgians, The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Prime Minister. A Reception followed, hosted by The City of Ieper, during which The Duke of Cambridge invested Mr Benoit Mottrie, the Chairman of the Last Post Association, with the insignia of an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE). The climax to the evening was Her Majesty's Government's Commemoration of the War on the Ypres Salient in the Market Square. This was a tour de force and a brilliant portrayal, which included the letter from Jack Mudd to his wife, four days before his death on 26th October; which was illuminated along the wall of the Cloth Hall. We did not attend the final Ceremony at Tyne Cot on the Monday, before returning home, but having spent some time in St George's again meeting visitors, we then watched the proceedings on the screen in the Market Square. It was indeed a fitting finale to three days of Homeric tribute to all who served in the Salient during those five terrible years.



A Photograph of Jack Mudd and his family poignantly reflected onto the wall of the Cloth Hall.

For us, there had been the opportunity to meet and talk to the descendants of those who had fought at Passchendaele, and also to visitors from many parts of the United Kingdom, as well as to friends and acquaintances in Belgium. We were able to explain the Mission and work of our Charity, and how it operates in today's world and standards. People were genuinely interested in what we had to tell them, and so from our point of view it was a very productive dialogue and an opportunity to swell our ranks

The Website and Membership

The Website was launched in June, and has been very well received. It is the result of much tireless work on the part of the Secretary. It embraces both the Church and The Friends, with the aim of attracting more visitors to St George's and new members to The Friends. I do encourage all our current members to circulate the address, stgeorgesmemorialchurchypres.com, to as wide an audience as possible. Our membership continues to remain constant at 376, but it is now important to see it increase, and I expect the Website, among other options, to play a part.

Finance and The Accounts

I am pleased to report that our finances have achieved a significant net surplus over the year, and overall remain healthy. Our investments continue to be looked after, on a discretionary basis, by Investec, and I am very grateful to Mr Peter Birchall for his custodianship.

Following the audit of the Accounts, the accountant announced that she considered it would be advisable to change the way of presenting them. In that context, she felt that she was not conversant with the current presentation of charity accounts, and therefore wished to stand down from the commitment. I would like to thank Ms Wendy Allen for her work on our behalf.

The Committee has been very fortunate to have acquired the services of Mr Alex Spofforth, from Kreston Reeves, who has agreed to take over, and has since reformatted the Accounts for the recent Financial Year.

Gateways to the First World War

The association with Gateways to the First World War, at the University of Kent, has flourished during the year. In early April, following a prior period of training, a team of four post graduate students set out for Ypres to commence for what became a very successful trial Project on behalf of The Friends. Aimed at improving knowledge of St George's and its history, the plan was for the students to act as stewards of the Church, interpreting its history and fabric for visitors, as well as offering them the opportunity

of a free guided tour around Ypres, to help place the Church in context. The feedback for the work carried out by the students was extremely positive from those at St George's and visitors alike. In addition, much interest in the project was to be found on social media.

One very special innovation by the students was to conduct live broadcasts (via a Twitter feed) from within the church interior itself, thereby attracting global audiences in real time.

The initial Concept was followed up in July with a team being present in Flanders for the Passchendaele Centenary Commemorations, but participating mainly under the auspices of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The students were present with us on the Sunday to assist with the vast numbers of visitors. The interest of the recently established Commonwealth War Graves Commission Information Centre in Ypres, in the outcome of the trial, has provided the potential for a wider collaboration, with the intention of ensuring even more publicity for St George's maintaining its significance as both a living place of worship, and as a unique war memorial.



The Rev. Gillian Trinder with Kent University students, Hannah Kerns and Natasha Silk

However, to take the Project to a more advanced stage will depend on how ambitious The Friends would like to be in terms of scaling up the programme. There are various possibilities to this aspiration; among them, running the programme across the summer months, which would involve enlargement of team sizes, the targeting of audiences in advance, eg schools, and the time commitment needed to manage the process together with the potential for wider use of the church facilities. All food for thought.

2018 Pilgrimage

At one stage it was doubtful that this year's Pilgrimage would take place, owing to lack of numbers. However, thanks to the efforts of Nigel Divers and Beryl Burgess, a group of 20 departed from Dover at the end of April. As is the norm, the event was a great success, and Nigel is in the process of planning for next year. As I have said in the Summer Newsletter, we do need at least 25 to make it viable. The dates are 4th to 8th May inclusive. More detail will appear on the website in due course. I urge you all to join us on what has often been described as an experience of a lifetime.

Bells4StGeorges

The 8 bells are now in situ in the Church Tower, where they were dedicated by our President, Bishop Robert Innes on Sunday 22nd October. Known as a 'peal', this is the first of its kind in Belgium, and is a fitting memorial to the 1368 bell ringers who were killed during the War. Reports regarding the development of the Bells Project can be found later in the Newsletter.

The Committee

There have been a few changes to the Committee. Michael Derriman stood down at last year's AGM, after many years exemplary service. Malcolm Brown and Yvonne Twyman have also departed after loyal service, Yvonne having gallantly typed the Minutes for successive Chairmen! In her place we welcome Sally Moger. Freda McClorey has sadly also decided to stand down, and we thank her for her contribution over the years. The need of the Committee is for new faces who are prepared to give the time, which, in all honesty, is not onerous for the year; 2 meetings and the AGM.

Conclusion

My third year as your Chairman has passed even quicker than its predecessor. I suppose that time does hurry along if you are enjoying yourself! I am, as always, immensely grateful to those who do give so freely of their time and energies to keep things ticking along. Our President gives unstinting support in the midst of a very busy programme, which is greatly appreciated. I would also like to pay a special tribute to Adrian Mumford who has just stepped down as Diocesan Secretary at 14 Tufton Street, after more years than any of us can probably remember! He has fielded the accolades and brickbats with charm and equanimity! We wish him well in his new employment. Meanwhile, Adrian's replacement is Mike Fegan. His is an interim appointment but Mike is expected to be at the helm for some months and, consequently, we very much look forward to working with him.

The points that I made in my Conclusion last year still hold good. Life, with the advances of technology and social media, is not necessarily made any easier. However we have to accept and adapt to the challenges that face us today. This is what our predecessors would expect of us, and therefore what The Friends of St George's must do.

Floreamus

Edward Crofton



*Sir Edward Crofton reciting the Kohima Epitaph at the
Menin Gate on Saturday 29th July 2017*

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

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CHARITY INFORMATION

Chairman	Sir Edward Crofton, Bt
Trustees	Sir Edward Crofton, Bt
	Dr Derek Gallagher
	Mr William Leetham
	Mr Michael McKeon
	Miss Eve Speare
	The Revd Canon Graham Derriman
	Mr Nigel Divers
	Mr Robin Thorne
	Mr Brian Fawcett
	Mrs Freda McClorey
	Mr Colin Butler
Charity Registration No	213282
Principal Address	69 Honey Hill, Whitstable CT5 3BP

THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH YPRES TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 30 June 2017.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on page 7 and comply with the governing document, statutory requirements and the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities 2011 (SORP).

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is organised so that the Trustees meet to manage its affairs. There are currently eleven trustees who manage the charity. The trust is also assisted by volunteers who offer their services from time to time.

In selecting individuals for appointment as Trustees regard is given to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity. New trustees are provided with the trust deed and latest report and accounts, and appraised of the application of the charitable objectives set, and of the essential duties of a Trustee. This includes an annual evaluation of risks facing the Trust in pursuit of its charitable objectives.

Risk Management

The Trustees have informally assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate the exposure to major risks.

Objectives and Activities

The object of the charity is to provide interest and knowledge of St George's Memorial Church in Ypres, and to provide funds to ensure the future of the Church and augment the Endowment Fund administered by the Ypres British Settlement.

Grant Making Policy

Grant applications are considered by the Trustees and grants are given consistent with the charity's objectives.

Statement of Public Benefit

We have reviewed the Trust's objectives in accordance with the Charities Commission guidance on public benefit.

Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities is shown on page 5. There was a net increase in funds, after realised and unrealised gains on investments of £79,659 (2016:£27,345 deficit), on the unrestricted funds of £142,630 (2016: £3,469 deficit). The Trustees confirm that the charity's assets are available and adequate to fulfil its financial obligations.

Achievements and performance

The Trust was set up in 1957 to promote interest in St George's Memorial Church, Ypres and acting as a link between the Church and people in the United Kingdom and overseas, co-operating with other organisations in Belgium and Britain for the benefit of the Church, making grants to the Church for specific projects, and arranging visits to the Church by groups of members and friends.

This has been a busy and eventful year.

The Friends have contributed over £20,000 for a new and improved website, to attract donors and interest. During the year we have also paid for a new sound system in the Church, and we also subscribed for an inscription on one of the new bells which are currently being installed and will be blessed on 22 October 2017.

The Friends funded the welcomers at the Church during the Easter period organised by the University of Kent, which proved to be very successful.

We have paid for a 'life time subscription' to the Last Post Committee in support of their ongoing commitment to the daily sounding of the last post at the Menin Gate. The group received high profile exposure during the commemorations of the Battle of Passchendaele at the end of July 2017.

There has been an increase in our expenses as the Chairman and other committee members have made a number of visits to the Church supporting the welcomers, the 2017 commemorations and the Church council meetings. This has enabled us to improve relations and work more closely together.

Investment Policy and Performance

In accordance with the Trust Deed, the Trustees have the power to invest in such stocks, shares, investments and property in the UK as they see fit. Investec manage the investments on behalf of the trust.

Reserves Policy

Whilst the need for certain specific reserves are identified to produce income for grants, the balance representing the general fund is retained on the basis of working capital being required in order to allow the charity to fund future activities in furtherance of its charitable objects over future years.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 10 October 2017 and signed on their behalf by:-

Sir Edward Crofton, Bt

Chairman

THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH YPRES
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	Note	Unrestricted Funds General fund	2017 Total	2016 Total
		£	£	£
INCOME				
<i>Income from</i>				
Voluntary income		68,630	68,630	5,501
Investment income	2	32,184	32,184	30,578
Total income		<u>100,814</u>	<u>100,814</u>	<u>36,079</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Expenditure on				
Charitable activities	3	6,363	6,363	3,881
Other expenditure	4	31,480	31,480	8,322
Total expenditure		<u>37,843</u>	<u>37,843</u>	<u>12,203</u>
Net income and net movement in funds before gains and losses on investments		62,971	62,971	23,876
Net gains/(losses) on investments		79,659	79,659	(27,345)
Net movement in funds		<u>142,630</u>	<u>142,630</u>	<u>(3,469)</u>
Total funds brought forward		730,310	730,310	733,779
Total funds carried forward		<u>872,9408</u>	<u>72,940</u>	<u>730,310</u>

All reserves movements are on Unrestricted Funds.

THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH YPRES
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 JUNE 2017

	Notes	2017		2016
		£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Investments	7	847,086		712,756
Website	5	10,886		-
		<u>857,972</u>		<u>712,756</u>
Current assets				
Cash at bank		<u>14,968</u>	<u>17,554</u>	
Net current assets		<u>14,968</u>		<u>17,554</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>872,940</u>		<u>730,310</u>
Represented by:				
Unrestricted funds:				
General funds		<u>872,940</u>		<u>730,310</u>
Total funds	8	<u>872,940</u>		<u>730,310</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue on 10 October 2017 and signed on behalf of the Trustees by

Sir Edward Crofton, Bt
Chairman

Mr William Leetham
Treasurer

THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH YPRES
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

1 Principal accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of investments. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities'.

Incoming resources

Donations are accounted for on receipt, at the estimated value of investments donated, or the actual value of cash donated. Voluntary income and donations, and any gift aid relief, are accounted for on receipt by the charity, and recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Resources expended

Expenses and grants payable are recognised in the accounts when they are incurred by the charity.

Investments

Investments are stated at market value. Realised and unrealised gains and losses on investments are recognised within the Statement of Financial Activities. Dividend income is credited to income on an accruals basis, using the date of payment of the dividend.

Reserves

The charity holds reserves in order to fund future charitable activities and grants in furtherance of the charitable objectives.

	Unrestricted Funds	2017 Total	2016 Total
	£	£	£
2 Investment income			
Income from listed investments	32,184	32,184	30,578
	<u>32,184</u>	<u>32,184</u>	<u>30,578</u>

	Unrestricted Funds	2017 Total	2016 Total
	£	£	£
3 Grants made			
Bells inscription	3,000	3,000	-
Sound system	3,363	3,363	-
Window repairs	-	-	518
Grants	-	-	3,363
Charitable grants to the Church	<u>6,363</u>	<u>6,363</u>	<u>3,881</u>

THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH YPRES
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	Unrestricted Funds	2017 Total	2016 Total
	£	£	£
4 Other expenditure			
Welcomers	7,890	7,890	-
Last Post	1,088	1,088	-
Amortisation of website costs	10,686	10,686	-
Newsletter	1,726	1,726	1,811
Fundmanagers' fees	4,247	4,247	4,041
Sundry expenses	5,593	5,593	2,220
Independent Examiners' fee	250	250	250
	31,480	31,480	8,322

5 trustees received reimbursement of expenses during the year for travel costs, accommodation and stationery, of £3,217, included in sundry expenses.

	Website Costs £
5 Tangible fixed assets	
Cost	
Additions	21,572
At end of year	21,572
Depreciation	
Charge for the year	10,686
At end of year	10,686
Net book value	
At 30 June 2017	10,886

6 Contingent asset

The Friends of St George's Memorial Church at Ypres made a grant of £108,000 in 1996, to assist the Church with the purchase of the chaplaincy house. This is held in a trust. The trustees have undertaken to pay the sale proceeds to The Friends of St George's Memorial Church at Ypres should the property ever be sold, at no loss to Friends of St George's Memorial Church at Ypres.

THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH YPRES
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

	Listed Investments	2017 Total	2016 Total
	£	£	£
7 Investments			
At beginning of year	712,756	712,756	716,129
Additions & disposals	54,671	54,671	23,972
Realised and unrealised gains/(losses)	79,659	79,659	(27,345)
At end of year	<u>847,086</u>	<u>847,086</u>	<u>712,756</u>

8 Analysis of fund balances:

movement in resources	at beginning of year	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	At end of year
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	730,310	180,473	37,843	872,940
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u>730,310</u>	<u>180,473</u>	<u>37,843</u>	<u>872,940</u>

9 Registered charity

The charity is registered in England (No. 213282) and as such is not liable to tax.

THE FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH YPRES

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Independent examiner's report to the trustees on the unaudited accounts of The Friends of St George's Memorial Church Ypres

I report on the accounts for the year ended 30 June 2017

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:-

- examine the financial statements (under section 145 of the 2011 Act),
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act), and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

W Allen FCCA
15 Heathfield Close
Maidstone ME14 2AB

CHAPLAIN'S LETTER

Ring Out Wild Bells

On the very day after the Blessing of the Bells Service at St George's church I received the request for the chaplain's newsletter. So what better subject could I choose than the successful completion of the Bells project? The genesis of the bells project has been a very long term one. When the church was originally built in 1927 the bell tower was built by Sir James Knott in memory of his two sons Basil and James Knott who both fell in the Great War. And it was built to hang a set of change-ringing bells just like the ones which are hanging there today. But for some unknown reason the bells were never purchased at the time.

The initiator of the bells project is Alan Regin who is the Steward of the Rolls of Honour for the Bell Ringers Association of Great Britain. This Roll of Honour consists of two leather bound books which record the names of 1,400 bell ringers that died during the Great War.

Alan writes articles about these bellringers every month for the Ringing World magazine. And in the course of his research he travelled many times to Ypres to visit the graves of ringers in the war cemeteries and view their memorials. It was this research that first brought Alan to St George's memorial church ten years ago. There are hundreds of memorial plaques upon the walls of the church which commemorate a variety of different groups including English cricketers, St John's Ambulance and the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry. But there is no memorial dedicated to the fallen bellringers of the Great War. And then he noticed that St George's had a bell tower but no set of bells to go in it. Alan told me that it was the precise moment when he saw the tower of the church that the seed for the bells project was sown. What better memorial could there be for the bellringers than a set of bells for St George's church?

Such was the interest generated by this project that the £200,000 needed for the bells project was raised in just eight months. And today we would like to give thanks for the generosity of all the donors and sponsors who have supported this project. The bells have been cast at the John Taylor foundry in Loughborough and they are the first of their kind in Belgium. Each bell has a poppy motif cast around the shoulder as a symbol of the fallen of the Great War. The eight bells are all inscribed with the names of fallen soldiers of the Great War and Bell Six is dedicated in the names of Basil and James Knott whose father built the bell tower to their memories. The bells were loaded onto two WW1 army lorries and taken on a tour around the war cemeteries before their arrival at St George's church today. They visited Tyne Cot cemetery, Hooge Crater, Perth cemetery and Transport Farm and finally attended the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate. The treble bell is dedicated to memory of "A soldier of the Great War known unto God" — and these words can be seen upon

many gravestones of unknown soldiers in the war cemeteries around Ypres. This year is the centenary of the Battle of Passchendaele in which half a million soldiers fell and so this new memorial is a fitting tribute to them.

The Bells were christened at a special service on their arrival on 31st July and they were blessed on 22nd October by Bishop Robert when they rang for the first time. They are the only set of English change ringing bells in Belgium. Next January the bells trustees will send over a team of English bellringers to train a team of local Belgian bellringers to ring them at our Sunday services. And this will add an important extra dimension to the worship and ministry of St George's. The bells will establish a new connection between the life of the church and the people of the local community. We also expect that we can look forward to hosting many bellringing groups from the UK who will want to come over and ring this new set of bells and this will attract a new set of visitors to the church.

As the voices of the bells ring out over Ypres in future years they will call us to worship, lead us in celebration and remind us of all those whose great sacrifice enabled us to live in freedom and peace.

Blessings and prayers, Revd Gillian Trinder.



The St. Georges Bells installed

Our President, Bishop Robert recently reflected on the Diocese of Europe website about the Bells of St. Georges Project and the Service of Dedication on the 22nd October 2017.

NEW BELLS FOR ST GEORGE'S YPRES

St George's Ypres was built as a place of remembrance following the horrors of World War 1. The church building included a bell tower, given by the Knott family in memory of their two sons killed in the Great War. But, back in the 1920s, there was no money to buy a set of bells. So the bell tower has been used mainly as a store room and dumping ground.



The sun rises over the bell tower of St. George's Ypres

Ten years ago, Mr. Alan Regin, Steward of the Rolls of Honour of the Council of Bell Ringers, had the idea of equipping the tower with a full set of change ringing bells. Alan carried the project forward during the ministry of three chaplains – Ray Jones, Brian Llewelyn and now Gillian Trinder. A trust was formed which raised the large sums of money needed. Skilled workmen were found to refurbish completely the ringing room. And John Taylor & Co., the last remaining bell foundry in England, was commissioned to cast the bells. The bells were delivered to Ypres at the end of August, and on Sunday 22nd October, I had the privilege of dedicating them.



St. George's Ypres was packed with local people, members of veterans organisations, and bell ringers from all over the United Kingdom.

The service included some stirring traditional hymns, and a reading from the Book of Numbers 10:1-10 – ‘the silver trumpets’. I had not previously noticed that Moses’s silver trumpets had two uses, just like English church bells have had – to summon people to assembly and also to warn of impending war.

After the sermon, Andrew Wilby, the Managing Director of John Taylor and Co. Bell Founders in Loughborough, presented a token bell rope to The Revd. Gillian Trinder as a sign of the new ministry at St. George’s Church. We then heard a delightful ‘touch’ rung on a set of handbells, newly presented to St. George’s by Mr. John Coles.



The set of 16 handbells were cast by James Shaw of Bradford in the nineteenth century and were once owned by John's grandfather, Charles Coles, himself a wonderful ringer. They have recently been restored by Steve McEwan of Whitechapel Handbells and will now be housed in the ringing chamber of St. George's for use by local and visiting ringers.



At the end of the service, a (very) few of us proceeded to the beautifully refurbished and panelled ringing room, dedicated to Bertram Prewett, a renowned bell ringer who perished in the Great War.

These lovely words were used:

“In the faith of Jesus Christ, we dedicate these bells.

May they proclaim Christ’s message of love and salvation to this parish;

May they warn the heedless, comfort the sorrowing

And call all willing hearts to prayer and praise.”

The bells then rang out for the first time!

After the service, I spoke to many bell ringers who were thrilled with the new set of bells. I was also introduced to the chairman of the Sir James Knott Charity. The charity exists mainly to give grants to good causes in the North East of England (in fact I applied to it as a vicar in County Durham!). The chairman told me that because of the particular link of the Knott family with Ypres, and having in mind the ‘unfinished’ bell tower of St. Georges (built in memory of two of the Knott brothers), they had made a donation of £100,000 to purchase one of the set of 8 bells.

Following the dedication of the bells, a team of British bell ringers has offered to live in Ypres for 6 months in order to train up local teams of ringers in the art of bell ringing. Moreover, I was assured that St. George’s will now be firmly on the ‘bell ringers pilgrimage’ itinerary. These are the only ‘in use’ public set of English church bells on the European continent of which I’m aware, so they are very special!

One of the Christian creeds, the Westminster Catechism says: ‘man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever.’ Bells put that catechism into practice. They summon us to worship God, they declare the praise of God and they point to the enjoyment of God.

And I think that church bells have a very important and contemporary function. Because in our time, people mostly neglect the worship of God. They have forgotten how to praise God, and they don’t know how to enjoy God. And religion is something which, if it is tolerated at all, is supposed to be something quiet and personal and private. By contrast, a set of pealing church bells says to us: ‘Don’t apologise! We have good news to share!

Come and join us! Praise God with all your heart and mind and strength! It will do you good. And it will do your community good too.’

So, as some words we used at St. George’s put it:

‘We pray that the ringing of these bells will awaken in the hearts of all who hear them, the desire to worship God in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.’

Mike McKeon, our Hon. Secretary has dipped into our archives (Newsletter of March 1979) and in doing so found a most beautiful poem describing a soldier's last visit to the battlefields of the Somme. It truly evokes the Somme landscape. Interestingly, whilst reading the newsletter, Mike found there is a note to say that the average attendance to weekly services at 6pm on Sundays was 30 in 1978. It also references 425 present on Remembrance Sunday 1978 which the BBC recorded.

“Somme Pilgrimage” - Summer 1975

Mars and Minerva

This year I trod my final pilgrimage
When with some effort and the will to urge me
I toiled and scrambled, bothered with old age,
On “Butte” de Warlencourt for views I wished to see.

This shell-torn ground, when Mars held regal sway
Commended all around war's disarray.
This massive stronghold of the Boche machine-gun
Took heavy toll before the tump was won.
Last year when plough turned furrows to be sown
The shares unearthed two Englishmen “unknown”.

A single cross of oak stands sentinel,
Upon the chalky mound,
Now clothed in blossoms found
On Berkshires downs, where Anglo-Saxons fell.
The blue-cap I perceived beneath the bramble,
The wold thyme growing close up by the elder,
The scabious with the sweet forget-me-knot,
The travellers' joy o'er corpses now forgot;
Minerva's art has now adorned the plot.

The stark straight road from Bapaume to Albert
Lay shimmering 'tween the fields of corn and beet,
In view from Warlencourt to distant Pozieres
Where once was tramp of countless thousand feet-
And poppies plashed amongst the waves of wheat

C.F. Taylor
(Late L.R.B. ATTCD Artists Rifles)

2018 PILGRIMAGE TO ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, YPRES

We hope to arrange a Pilgrimage to St George's Church and Ieper from Friday 4 May to Tuesday 8 May (inclusive) in 2018. This would broadly follow the pattern of 2017's event;

Friday

travel to Ieper by coach and ferry from Dover via Calais

Saturday

visit the Somme area, probably including Vimy and Thiepval

Sunday

morning service at St George's followed by lunch with church members. Local visits in the afternoon and attendance at the Menin Gate in the evening.

Monday

Visits in the Ypres Salient, probably including a gentle walk.

Tuesday

Return to the UK.

So far as practicable visits will be based on requests from participants. Sometimes geography, available time or other factors mean that not all requests can be accommodated.

It is hoped to arrange accommodation at the Hotel O. Those people who wish to stay elsewhere are welcome to make their own arrangements for hotel accommodation and the Pilgrimage cost to them would be adjusted. People making their own arrangements should choose a town centre hotel as the pick up and set down point for the coach will be by the cathedral. They should also bear in mind that the Pilgrimage will not be confirmed until sometime in 2018, probably January, once we know that there will be enough participants to make the event financially viable. If there are insufficient bookings the Pilgrimage will not take place.

The cost of the event has not yet been settled as we do not yet know the prices for the coach and ferry. The cost is likely to be of the order of £450 to £500. The exchange rate for the pound/euro will affect the cost.

More detailed information and a booking form will be sent out later in November to people on the Pilgrimage Organiser's current list.

If you would like to register your interest please contact **Nigel Divers, 93 Eastern Avenue, Shoreham by Sea, West Sussex BN43 6PE.**
Email; nigeldivers@ntlworld.com Phone 01273465164

Nigel Divers
Pilgrimage Secretary



Members of The Friends 2017 Pilgrimage at Guillemont Road Cemetery

The following article, written by our Chairman, appeared this Autumn in the Guards Magazine and serves as a synopsis of the history of St George's Church and the work of The Friends'.

ST. GEORGE'S MEMORIAL CHURCH, YPRES

By MAJOR SIR EDWARD CROFTON, BT

Formerly Coldstream Guards

In the words of the late Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, the Right Reverend Geoffrey Rowell, "St George's is unique". There is no reason to doubt him. St George's is part of the largest diocese on earth, the Diocese in Europe, which covers approximately one sixth of the world's land surface! It is one of the two great Memorials to the fallen in Ypres (Ieper), (the other being the Menin Gate), which were both designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield. It serves the needs of a local congregation, and the many thousands of pilgrims who have been visiting the battlefields of Flanders since 1918.

It was Field Marshal Sir John French, the first Earl of Ypres, who first called for a church to be built 'as a military memorial'. As a result, discussion about the idea of having an Anglican Church in Ypres took place in August 1919. The intention was to build it not only as a memorial, but also as somewhere for the relatives of the fallen to visit and find a peaceful place for reflection. However there were opposing views. Some felt that an Anglican Church would not be appropriate, owing to many of the soldiers who had been killed not being members of the Church of England, and also because Belgium was predominantly a Roman Catholic Country.

In spite of these differences of opinion, the movement to build such a church got underway in 1920, under the auspices of the Ypres League. This was a First World War veterans and remembrance society, which had been founded to act as a brotherhood for veterans of the battles in the Ypres Salient, to remember those who died there, and to assist pilgrims travelling to the battlefields. Sir John French was the first President. In 1924, it was he again who took the initiative, supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury, to call for donations to build the Church in Ypres. The Ypres League contacted Sir Reginald Blomfield to draw up plans. He was already involved with the architectural design of a number of the British and Commonwealth military cemeteries in the Ypres Salient. The first location considered was by the Lille Gate, but this was turned down by the Town Council. The land for the current location in Elverdingestraat, which is near the Cathedral, was subsequently purchased from the widow of the Town Archivist. On July 24th 1927, the Foundation Stone was laid by Field Marshal Lord Plumer, on the same day that he unveiled the Menin Gate Memorial.

St George's was dedicated and opened for worship by the Bishop of Fulham on 24th March 1929. Adjacent, a Pilgrims Hall and Chaplaincy House had also been built, as had a School for the British Community which had been paid for by Old Etonians in memory of 341 of their number who had given their lives in the Ypres Salient. During the Second World War, many thousands of British and Commonwealth soldiers passed through the City, with the retreat to Dunkirk in 1940, and the Liberation of the City in 1944 being of particular significance. Consequently, since 1945 it has served as the Memorial Church for all who have died in Flanders in both World Wars.

As well as being an Anglican Church, it is also a 'Listed Building', which is not State owned. However it is controlled by both Belgian Law and British Ecclesiastical Law. It has a dual system of governance; in addition to the familiar Anglican Church Council, there is a separate, though linked, 'Kerkfabriek' Committee, which manages subsidies granted through mandatory compliance to regulations issued by the Belgian Heritage Department. This is of vital importance nowadays, with congregations dwindling and thereby failing to provide sufficient funds to keep churches open. The number of visitors to St George's has increased from year to year. In 2015 the 'visitors counter' recorded over 41,000, and, so far, in 2017, nearly 50,000. These figures may sound substantial, but pale when compared with the number of visitors to the Menin Gate and the other places of interest in the City. The maintaining of a viable congregation is arguably the greatest challenge that St George's faces in the future.

St George's has been central to the pilgrimage to Ypres for many of those visiting Flanders Fields. All items in the Church commemorate individual soldiers, regiments, school old boys and many others. It is a place of great poignancy: a place of a thousand stories. In February 2016, the Standards of The Life Guards and The Blues and Royals were laid up, joining those Standards, Colours and Banners already in situ. They now hang resplendent either side of the magnificent East Window, which commemorates all ranks who served in and with the Guards Division during 1914-18. In October



this year, a full peal of eight bells, which have been cast in Loughborough, will be installed and dedicated; the first of its kind in Belgium. They will be sounded not only to remember all those who fought and died along the Western Front, but also to commemorate the 1,368 bell ringers killed during the First World War. The Church also figured prominently during the recent Passchendaele Centenary Commemorations. For those of us who were there, it was encouraging to welcome the large number of visitors, many of whom were relatives of those who fought in the Battle.

At the conclusion of the Second World War in 1945, the Church buildings, which had suffered only minor damage, were restored by the Royal British Legion. However, the British Community was much smaller than it had been before the War, and it was apparent that wider support was necessary in order to provide for the Church. The Charity of The Friends of St George's Memorial Church was therefore formed in 1955. Its main objectives are to promote interest in, and knowledge of, the history, traditions, life, work and mission of the Church, and to ensure that the memorial aspect of St George's is preserved and cherished. The Charity also provides the link between St George's and those in the United Kingdom and overseas, in addition to making gifts which will maintain and improve the Building, both inside and out. Two Newsletters are issued during the year, and a Friends annual Pilgrimage takes place in April or May. In June this year a new combined Website was introduced for both St George's and The Friends, which is regularly updated. The address is:
stgeorgesmemorialchurchypres.com through which an application can be made by anyone wishing to support St George's, by joining The Friends.

This year new ground was broken with the appointment on 1st July of the Reverend Gillian Trinder, as the first female Chaplain. The Chaplain is much involved with the wider diplomatic and military communities, and her lot is a full one. Unlike English churches, peak periods in Ypres include ANZAC and Armistice Days. There are also regular monthly and annual ceremonies to be attended, both in Belgium and France, plus support given to voluntary organisations; all in addition to routine chaplaincy duties.

The years following the Centenary Commemorations of the First World War in Ypres are likely to reflect a changing and uncertain world. However the future of St George's as a National Memorial must be safeguarded, through those nations which are so closely associated with Ypres working together to ensure that their forbears who made the Supreme Sacrifice from 1914-18 are never forgotten.

The Friends of St George's Memorial Church, Ypres, Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ in whose name
The St George's Memorial Church
in Ypres is dedicated.

Grant that its life and worship
may ever abound to your greatest glory;
And that as The Friends we may do our part,
by prayer and offering,
To strengthen its witness to all the world;
Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit
live and reign ever One God.

Amen.



NOTES

Members are asked to send their subscriptions and donations to the Honorary Treasurer, Mr W.L. Leetham, who will deal with all cheques from members and send out receipts.

All cheques should be made payable to "The Friends of St. George's Memorial Church, Ypres".

Please send any change of address with cheques so that the mailing list can be amended, ensuring that newsletters do not go astray.

Members who pay their subscriptions by standing order are asked to ensure that any change of address is sent to the Honorary Assistant Secretary, who keeps the membership records. Similarly, please let her know if you hear of the change of address of any other member.

Copies of the Register of Memorials 1984 are still available from the Honorary Secretary or the Honorary Treasurer, but it must be remembered that it does not include the many plaques and memorials installed in St. George's Church in recent years. It is regretted that it is not possible at present to update this publication. There is no charge for a copy of the register, but we do appreciate a donation towards the cost.

To: The Honorary Membership Secretary, The Friends of St. George's Memorial Church, Ypres
32 Fulwood Road, London SW19 6RB

I wish to become a member and enclose £ as my first subscription.

Name

Address

..... Date

..... Postcode

Minimum subscription	Individuals	£10 per year
	Corporate bodies	£20 per year

Please indicate if you wish to pay using (a) gift aid and/or (b) banker's order.

Under gift aid, the Friends can reclaim the tax paid on any individual subscription.

Forms will be sent if requested.