

# Friends of Bolton Priory

PRIORY CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST CUTHBERT  
Church Office, Bolton Abbey, Skipton, North Yorkshire BD23 6AL  
Tel: 01756 710238 Website: <http://prioryfriends.org.uk>

Charity Number 701342

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Editor : *Chris Dale*

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**A very happy 2012 to all our members!**



## Report on Theatre Visit 10 November 2011

### Ilkley Playhouse – Alan Bennett's

#### Habeas Corpus

Twenty two members gathered together at 6pm in Ilkley Playhouse for an evening of food and entertainment arranged by Barry and Margaret Cody. We were greeted by Roger Davy, who, when we all had suitable glass of refreshment, announced that he has persuaded the Playhouse Artistic Director Walter Swan to talk to us about the Playhouse and some of its activities.

Walter gave us a very wide ranging talk. The Playhouse Membership is around 750 of whom 90+ are required for each show plus a very small number of paid staff and the charity manages to pay its way from ticket sales, the bar and hosting social events. A substantial proportion of income comes from the regular invitation to perform at the Open Air Minack Theatre in Cornwall - a remarkable reflection on the standards achieved at the Playhouse.

The Wharfeside Theatre, where we were due to see Alan Bennett's Habeas Corpus, holds 148 and

the Wildman where we were sitting can take as many as 130. Casting takes place up to six months in advance so forward planning can sometimes be difficult. Walter was thanked by Andrew Hartley for giving us such an insight to the Playhouse.

An excellent repast followed with large platters of canapes and sweetmeats until we were ushered into the Wharfeside. Alan Bennett's play soon warmed up and the activities of Dr Wicksteed, his wife Muriel and son Dennis caused plenty of hilarity with the rest of the trouser losing cast in front of a full house and gave us an excellent evening very reminiscent of Brian Rix and the Whitehall Theatre.

*(Editor - I understand that the play's complete run was a sell out so obviously struck a chord with Ilkley audiences, a very popular choice)*

## Report on cheese and wine after Advent Service 27 November 2011



The picture above shows the 'team' having prepared the Boyle Room about to go into the Priory for the Advent Service.

The Advent Service was perhaps the best that I have attended – and that is saying something for a Priory service. It was beautifully staged to a full church and the service and music was greatly appreciated.

Unlike 2010 there were no problems with weather closing down all communications. This year the drama was strictly focussed on the wonderful candlelit service. Our director of music provided some marvellous choral work including antiphons and other early music.

The ten lessons were arranged in pairs, each with an Old and a New Testament reading together, and these were all read by members of the Friends. All valiantly tackled the darkness of the lectern steps. They started with Jill Riley reading from Genesis 1 (“in the Beginning”) and ended with the Chairman’s wife Anna reading the final verses of Revelations (the last word as usual - AH).

And thence uplifted we proceeded to the Boyle Room where Jill Riley, Jenny Laycock and all their team provided a superb spread of cheese, Christmas cake, topless mince pies, amazing sausages and of course wine. Sixty three people attended, including Cheshire members Dr Alistair and Liz Kennedy-Young, an excellent social event rattled on happily until around 9.15. Roll on Christmas!



*Canon George Moffat and the Revd John Bennett enjoying the refreshments*

**Extract from a report on the Parochial Church Council meeting for last September:**

*“Recently we have piled three requests onto the Priory Friends and at their latest Committee meeting they very kindly agreed to all of them. They have paid for new pew Bibles, the*

*replacement of the computer and two new pieces of carpet for the Sanctuary, by the altar rail. Thank you very much Friends.”*

As you know the Friends of Bolton Priory is not just a social club – important though this is – but also we pledge to support the Parochial Church Council in preserving, maintaining and repairing the fabric of Bolton Priory, its fittings, furniture, ornaments and also its services and music. It is good to know that our efforts have been acknowledged in this way. Our support is of course listed in our accounts showing how our funds are spent but not everyone gets round to studying all the figures!!

**James Pearson**

To mark the work of our former Chairman over the best part of a decade, the Executive Committee awarded Honorary Life Membership to both James and his wife Molly. Well done!

**Summer Trip 2012**

The committee is considering a visit to Scampston Hall and plans are being made. Please remember that the Executive Committee welcomes suggestions from members, including possible places to visit and Lecturers for our Spring Lecture.

**Spotlight on .....Edmund Butler**



Born in Burley Woodhead, Edmund and his family came to Bolton Abbey some thirty years ago. His initial draw to the Priory was its traditional service, which is possibly the reason for many other members of the congregation today.

Edmund can trace his family back through several generations and has many beautiful original books reflecting his historical roots with Yorkshire. He has a tremendous respect for Abbeys and this was possibly another draw towards the Priory. Through his family he became the 8<sup>th</sup> member to be a Patron of Leeds Parish Church and has a deep interest in churches and history.

Following Canon Maurice Slaughter taking up the challenge of the Priory in the late seventies/early eighties (when legend has it that the then Bishop thought it past saving with a congregation of only 3) Edmund became involved with its restoration and refurbishment. Edmund was a member of the PCC from 1984 until 2005, and a Guide for the Priory from the late eighties until 2005. He was drawn to the Priory also by the magnetic personality of Maurice, and his wife Jean. He has been heavily involved in fund raising, seemingly ever since.

When the numbers in the congregation were falling in 1994 he instigated the Stewardship Campaign to illustrate the need to contribute more towards the Share in the Diocese and to explain to the members how the Share system worked and what it provided. It is only of relatively recent times that Edmund has handed over the Chair in favour of Andrew Wade.

Edmund has an interest in and records church attendance. At present only those over 16 years of age are noted but he feels there is an argument to be made to include all who attend.

He has been a 'Friend' since the start and is one of the co-signatories on the original Constitution and is now a Life Member. Over the years he has done a lot of 'jobs' within the committee and, through his experience, still has much to contribute.

It was in 1993 when the Rector, Roland Hirst, was writing his "Notes from The Beeches" that the idea was born for the Church Magazine. It was Edmund who secured the advertisements to make it possible for the magazine to be printed and delivered to every household in the Parish. Again, this was something he continued to do for many years.

Edmund was instrumental in the work on the sound enforcement system in the Priory; he started the series of Concerts – now a very popular part of the Priory year; and he was a member of the Diocesan Tourist Group producing an informative pamphlet.

Peter Watkins' book on the History of the Priory, now out of print, was printed free of charge by the

prestigious printers Watmoughs in 1989 through Edmund's connection with the company. He and the Duke and a very few others received a beautiful leather bound copy of the book which he rightly treasures as a memento. (*The paperback version is on sale on the bookstall at the rear of the Church and is well worth a look – Ed*) Without this sponsorship there would have been no money to publish the book, which is a wonderful record of the Priory and beautifully illustrated.

Edmund has been involved with Bolton Abbey's Village Hall and its renovation – he must be the Prince of fund raisers! He told me that the 'Wednesday Nighters' was now in its 31<sup>st</sup> year and just as popular an event. He originally was the Priory representative on the Village Hall Committee and the rest just followed.....

On a different note, Edmund said that he had taken part in three of the Village Hall pantomimes, once as a spy, as Gypsy Rose Lee, and doing a tango as part of Treasure Island – (*how I would have loved to have seen this!! –Ed*)

This charming man is yet another example of someone who has helped shape his community and yet remains very unassuming and reticent about his contribution.

*Editor*

#### **For your information :**

Liturgical Colours – church vestments - do you know what they mean?

**WHITE** is for major festivals, eg Easter Christmas

**RED** Feasts of Martyrs and Whitsun, e.g. Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost

**VIOLET** Penitential seasons, e.g. Advent, Lent

**GREEN** 'Ordinary' Sundays

**BLACK** Funerals and Good Friday

## **Diary Dates**

### **Spring Lecture**

Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012

### ***“Vocation, Vocation, Vocation”***

This year's Lecture is to be delivered by a former Bishop of Bradford, the Rt Reverend David Smith. Bishop David is a renowned speaker and much in demand; we are very lucky with our contacts for speakers making our Spring Lectures very popular.

*Please see attached booking forms for more details and to book your place.*

### **If you have any comments, stories or pictures for consideration in future issues of the newsletter**

*please send them to the Editor via the Church Office at the address on page 1 or e-mail direct to [chris.dale3@talktalk.net](mailto:chris.dale3@talktalk.net)*

*Thanking you in anticipation !!*

## **Wills**

Not an easy subject to bring up and discuss but could we ask that you consider The Friends of Bolton Priory when you review your affairs? Legacies can make a huge difference to our funding.

***Could we ask that all Friends keep the office up to date with any changes in circumstances or addresses?***

***We like to keep our records up to date.***

***Remember that our website is also YOUR website!***

*We welcome your visits to the site but particularly would like your contributions of pictures (**Send direct to the Webmaster**).*

*You will notice there are many pictures in the Photo Gallery covering events in the life of the Priory Friends going back several years.*

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# FRIENDS OF BOLTON PRIORY

## EVENTS BOOKING FORM

### SPRING LECTURE 2012

Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 At Bolton Abbey Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm

“*Vocation, Vocation, Vocation*” - to be given by the Rt Reverend David Smith, a former Bishop of Bradford

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Number of tickets at £ 5 each

Cheque: payable to FRIENDS OF BOLTON PRIORY enclosed for £

**Book early to ensure your place!!!!**

***Please enclose a stamped, addressed envelope***

Please apply for tickets from : Church Office, Bolton Abbey, Skipton BD23 6AL

Telephone : 01756 710238

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