

SKYLINE



June 2023



St Lawrence Jewry

THE FRIENDS OF THE CITY CHURCHES

(Registered in England and Wales, registered charity number 1155049)

www.london-city-churches.org.uk

Patrons: the Rt Revd and Rt Hon Richard J C Chartres KCVO DD FSA and the Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE The Bishop of London

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held at St Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BA

at 3pm on Monday 3 July 2023

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 To confirm the minutes of the 2022 AGM
- 3 Chairman's Report
- 4 Treasurer's Report
- 5 To receive the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023
- 6 To elect Trustees and Officers:
 - The following Trustee died on 13 August 2022: Brian Evans
 - The following Trustee will resign at this AGM: Rebecca Banfield (Honorary Treasurer)
 - The following Trustees have completed their terms of office and have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election for a period of three years: Nancy Jane Branson, Tony Tucker
 - Michael Normington has indicated his willingness to stand for election as Trustee for a term of three years, and accept the position of Honorary Treasurer
- 7 To re-appoint Keith Raffan and Co as Independent Examiners
- 8 Any other business
- 9 Illustrated lecture by Tony Tucker: 'My Favourite City Churches'

Sonja Judith Guy-Briscoe

Honorary Secretary

April 2023

Noticebo

TONY ZOTTI

Since 2015, there has been a Wednesday lunchtime service at **St Mary Abchurch**, taken by the chaplain The Revd David Goodburn, for which he travelled from his home in Hythe every week. Alas all good things come to an end, and following illness at the end of last year, from which he fortunately has made a good recovery, he has bowed to uxorial pressure and took his last service on 15 March.

This was no routine service: he was thanked by the Archdeacon The Ven Luke Miller, and by the Priest in Charge The Revd Dr Malcolm Torry. Present were the Area Dean The Revd Catherine Hedderly, and parish clerk Martin Woods, as well as a handful of us who remembered him from Enfield Lock, and also from the days when, as a mounted policeman, he was on duty at Tottenham's ground. He was also on mounted police duty at Lord Mayor's Shows for several years. He maintained that taking a church service was like getting up on to a horse.

In true FCC style there was cake after the service, and he was presented with a 'thank you' gift of book tokens and books. It was a sad occasion for him and all of us. We wish him a long and happy retirement, and hope he may yet return occasionally to celebrate at St Mary Abchurch.

DICKON LOVE

VIVAT REX

The City bells rang throughout the weekend of the Coronation kicking off with a full peal on Friday 5 May on the Royal Jubilee Bells of **St James Garlickhythe**. On Saturday full peals were performed at **St Paul's Cathedral** (that took 3h 53), **St Mary le Bow** and Garlickhythe, plus other ringing at **St Dunstan in the West**, **St Magnus**, **St Vedast**, and tune chiming at **All Hallows by the Tower**. Coronation Sunday saw peals at St Magnus and **St Olave** with additional ringing at **St Bartholomew the Great**. Unlike Westminster, the City streets were quite quiet on Saturday, so the bells' ringing had greater presence.

DAVID JESSOP

In March **St Mary Abchurch** hosted a musical evening provided by the pupils and staff of Orwell Park Prep School of Nacton (Ipswich). This co-educational boarding and day school has been coming to St Mary Abchurch on an annual basis in very early Spring for many years, and always delights a large audience with a whole range of instruments and singing. This year was no exception – the quality of the performances was superb and the evening ended with a fine display by the school's drummers.

KAREN HEARN

In March the Friends awarded a small grant of £4,890 to **St Katharine Cree** for the restoration/conservation of the monument erected in 1794 to Samuel Thorp.

OLIVER LEIGH-WOOD

The Melba Coombs Memorial Fund has now been closed. We are incredibly grateful to those who have so generously given to this fund which now stands at just over £100,000. The income from this can be used to help fund our small grants scheme.

LESLEY THRIFT

CHURCH WATCHING REMINDER

If you can't make your church Watching date, please try hard to get a replacement. Only if unsuccessful contact the Rota Manager, but if that fails contact lesley.thrift@gmail.com who will send out an email to all the Watchers. Please don't leave it hanging in the air!

EDITORIAL

St Mary Abchurch held the memorial service for Brian Evans on 19 April. The Revd Stephen Baxter officiated and gave the address. It was a very personal service with tributes from a number of Friends

Melvyn Gwynne Jeremiah CB Friends will be sad to learn, died on 22 March. The motto on his coat of arms reads 'Tolerant But Steadfast' and all of us who knew him will know he lived up to that aspiration. During his time on the Committee he established valid procedures, and was the Honorary Secretary until 2011. He had joined the Friends in 2004 and was a regular, informative church Watcher, bringing **St Benet Paul's Wharf** into the mix. He established the befriending scheme. He was responsible for the FCC constitution in 2006, and its charitable status in 2014. The Friends were well represented at his funeral on 10 May at **St Stephen Walbrook**, where he served for many years as churchwarden and parish clerk.

Friends, especially Watchers who remember Mary Ann Tarver from being 'on duty' with her, or meeting her at other FCC events, will be sad to learn of her unexpected death on Wednesday 5 April. She was 79. Her funeral was in May, and her daughter, Leigh extended the invitation to her FCC Friends, and we extend our sympathies.

Last year we went to town on Grinling Gibbons, and this year we (w)ring

and (w)rest meaning from all things Christopher Wren. Friends may like to consult the Wren300 website for happenings in the City and beyond: several practical restoration projects and lectures have been in St Mary Abchurch.

Compare the front cover of May 2018 with this issue's. May 18 has blue clock faces, but that's the least of it. The Revd David Parrott described the works as 'probably one of the largest restoration projects on a Wren church for many years'. **St Lawrence Jewry** now glows: the stonework is luminescent. Go and see for yourself: you will find yourself smiling. The smile broadens once you are inside. The Commonwealth Chapel is the most transformed (photo on p11).

We have been invited by the London Topological Society to have a promotional table at their AGM at **St Giles Cripplegate** in July, when our Chairman has also been asked to speak.

Watching at St Benet Paul's Wharf, I was intrigued by the wording on the Cottle memorial, especially Nath Lloyd pv. In **St Martin Ludgate**, the new statuary made me see the whole church with new eyes. There are blank cartouches on either side of the reredos. Let me invite Friends to investigate for a future Plums column.

This issue of *Skyline* may be coming to you later than usual. Our designer John Finn was laid low in May. We trust he will be well and able to gather autumnal nuts for our October issue, he couldn't in May.

JUDY STEPHENSON

DAVID JESSOP

On 14 May the Charity was based with its headquarters in **St Mary Abchurch** for 10 years. You will see a few posters advertising this milestone. Many people associated with FCC have worked hard over the years to keep the church open and thriving. Our thanks go to everyone.

Letters to the Editor

Penelope Bernard writes: Great edition! I really enjoyed it. I also was thoughtful about the volunteer, or lack thereof, editorial. I was discussing this with some friends and the general consensus was that due to the last few years of austerity etc, if you do volunteer, chances are it's in a foodbank or on a more frontline service than at places like churches and museums. Several of my friends volunteer, despite the pressures of jobs and children (and husbands) and they help run projects that in years past were done by social services, child services or schools, and now would have been cancelled due to lack of funding, which is so sad.

Laura Hamilton writes: I thought you might be interested to see the baptistry at **St Helen Bishopsgate**. I have more photographs of it open and covered. Before Christmas I was being shown around **St Andrew Undershaft**, and was very kindly invited to attend a baptism service in January for three teenagers. The baptistry is pretty much opposite the pulpit. Under normal circumstances



you don't notice it because it is covered with chairs for ordinary services or talks.

Mike Howgate writes: continuing the ww2 incendiary bomb theme in the last issue. The fire bombs used in

the Blitz were called *Elektronbrandbomben* in German because the casing was made of electron, a magnesium/copper alloy. The filling was of thermite, a mixture of powdered iron oxide and magnesium which, once ignited, produced a classic exothermic reaction (which I used to demonstrate when a chemistry teacher, but is now probably banned for health and safety reasons).

The end result of the chemical reaction was molten iron, which would have melted the casing and ignited it. These 1.2 kg bombs were not explosive and could be extinguished with a bucket of sand and removed to a safe place with a scoop, as explained in a series of cigarette cards issued just before the outbreak of war by Players.

The bomb incorporated into the weathervane of **St Lawrence Jewry** must have been a dud or a de-activated, unexploded bomb. I have a few Wills ARP cigarette cards which illustrate a housewife dealing with an incendiary bomb with a scoop and hoe in her sitting room, implying this would happen often. Any incendiary bomb which went off would be reduced to the tail-fin and the weighted front end, as illustrated. These are from a street urchin's shrapnel collection. The white powder covering the fin is the other product of the thermite reaction, magnesium oxide. There would, of course, have been no shock-wave.

Eric Hearn writes: Veteran church Watchers may recall that for a number of years we Watched at **St Mary Aldermary** when the



A complete but deactivated incendiary bomb and the remains after it had burnt out.

priest in charge was The Revd John Mothersole. He was always most welcoming and appreciative of our help. I was reminded of this dear man on a recent visit to **St Anselm** in Hayes, Hillingdon, (my home borough). On the north wall, I spotted a rather impressive statue and shrine of Saint Anselm. Mounted alongside the memorial are two engraved brass plaques: the first in memory of Winifred Mothersole, 1896-1980; the second in memory of John Mothersole himself (1925-2021).

Fr John's family had moved to Hayes when he was a small boy, and he grew up and went to school in the town, leaving aged 14, just before the outbreak of war, when he went to work as a junior clerk for the Nestlé Company, which in those days had a large factory near where he lived. In 1943 he was conscripted into the Royal Army Medical Corps, mostly serving in India until his discharge

in 1947. He then resumed his career at Nestlé, rising to become their Chief Accountant. However, in 1980 following the death of his mother, he came to the view that serving God was his destiny: he took early retirement and, aged 55, commenced training for the priesthood at Chichester Theological College. He often mused that at the College he was twice the age of many of his fellow students.

Following his ordination in 1984, he began his ministry at St Anselm, and also served as part-time chaplain at **St Paul's Cathedral**. During this time he also assisted at **St Vedast** and **St Michael Cornhill**. In 1998 he was appointed to St Mary Aldermary, which at that time had fallen into disuse. Fr John worked tirelessly to rejuvenate his church, and even used

to raise money for it by selling old Roman coins (yes I still have some!) In 2005, following a special appeal, the Friends presented him with a cheque for £12,260 to facilitate the cleaning of monuments. This special appeal had been organised as a tribute to the support he had given to the Friends in our efforts to raise the profile of the life and presentation of the City churches.

He finally retired his ministry at St Mary Aldermary in 2010 and, in recognition of his outstanding service, the Bishop of London bestowed on him the title of Rector emeritus, and presented him with the Medal of Mellitus. In 2015 Fr John celebrated his 90th birthday and wrote a very nice letter to the FCC recalling the happy times he spent with Watchers (see November 2015). ✨

TONY HOLLINGWORTH

PERCIVALL POTT

Two Ls, two Ts and other clarifications

POn the south wall of **St Mary Aldermary** there is a significantly sized marble plaque to Percivall Pott (1713-1788) erected by one of his sons, an archdeacon in St Albans. It speaks eloquently of Pott's achievements as a surgeon at St Bartholomew's Hospital in glowing though very general terms. If one embarks on a guided tour of the area which includes St Mary Aldermary, mention is always made of Pott's horse-riding accident (1756 in Southwark) which resulted in a compound fracture of his tibia (lower leg) described in one of his biographies as 'bone being forced through the integument'. In other words, the skin was breached by the bone, which increased the risk of subsequent infection. The recommended treatment in a pre-antibiotic era was the amputation of the leg.

At the time of the accident, Pott had the presence of mind to call for two pole bearers who carried him back to his home. They laid him down on a door which he managed to purchase from a local construction site. In the days before modern analgesics, the jolting from being carried in this way from Southwark across London Bridge to the City must have been excruciatingly painful. Sources vary about the ensuing events, but a description by Sir James Earle (Pott's son-in-law) in his 1808 introduction to a re-publication of Pott's collected works describes the scene.

His surgical colleagues were apparently ready to amputate when Mr Edward Nourse, the surgeon to whom Pott had been apprenticed arrived on the scene. 'He [Nourse] conceived there was a possibility of preserving it [the leg]' with a ➔



conservative approach of disinfection and splinting.

The appearance of Mr Pott as an author was an immediate effect of his accident and subsequent convalescence. He continued writing throughout the rest of his career and came to be considered the most eminent writer, teacher and practitioner of surgery of his time.

Who was Percivall Pott, and why has he been dubbed 'the best surgeon in England'? Percivall Pott was born in 1713 and lived in Threadneedle Street. His father was a scrivener: someone who could read, write and make his living from writing or copying written material. However, he died when Pott was young, leaving him, his mother and a half-sister destitute. Fortunately, they were related to Joseph Wilcocks, Bishop of Rochester, who funded Pott's private education from the age of 7.

In 1729, he was apprenticed to the surgeon, Mr Edward Nourse at St Bartholomew's Hospital for seven years at the cost of 200 guineas to his mother. He became a full member of the Barber Surgeons' Company, appointed assistant surgeon at Barts in 1744 and promoted to full surgeon in 1749. He viewed surgery as an intellectual and sensory exercise, where it was essential to engage emotionally with patients and be completely honest with them.

One of his aims was to modernize and improve the profession, so that the treatments patients received were more humane and less painful. In an age where there was a lack of any significant anaesthetic, the pain of surgery affected patients in different ways, some being 'uncontrollably turbulent'. Pott stressed that a surgeon required 'courage, a cool head, a steady hand, a keen eye and the ability to gain and keep the trust of patients upon whom you were going to generally inflict great pain.'

For nearly 40 years he provided annually a series of lectures on surgery for the trainees of the day, covering the whole gamut of clinical problems. He was widely recognised as being the best practical surgeon



of his generation. His numerous publications were praised for the elegance of their prose and the clarity of the explanations offered. They were widely read in Britain, America and continental Europe, translated into other languages and went through many editions.

He joined the newly formed Corporation of Surgeons in 1745. Accolades followed, including his being made a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1764, elected in 1765 as Master of the Company of Surgeons, a forerunner of the Royal College of Surgeons of England and honoured as the first Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in 1786. Part of his legacy lay in training a generation of surgeons. His best student was John Hunter (1728-1793) who would become one of the most distinguished scientists and surgeons of his time.

His first treatise in 1757 was on ruptures and congenital hernias, and was followed by a steady stream of treatises on other surgical problems. His name has been attached to a number of conditions, two of which remain in use. Pott's disease refers to his description of arthritic tuberculosis of the spine, which is still a major cause of back pain in the developing world. His drainage of the abscesses associated with this condition resulted in the restoration of

several totally helpless people, to regain the use of their limbs, thereby affecting their livelihoods. In 1768 Pott lucidly described injury to the ankle bones (medial and lateral malleoli). This is now termed Pott's fracture: his description and subsequent sequelae concur with current x-ray and clinical findings. It is assumed that the condition was named after his own injury. However, Earle's description of his

fracture suggests that it was unlikely to have been at the ankle, more likely further up the lower leg.

Percivall Pott should be considered the first occupational medicine doctor. He attributed cancer of the scrotum to soot's collecting in the scrotal skin in chimney sweeps, especially those who started sweeping as boys. There was pressure for action as early as 1788 with the Chimney Sweepers Act, but it was not until 1875 that his work finally began to influence change and subsequent legislation was finally enforced. This eventually resulted in a decrease in the incidence and mortality of scrotal cancer.

For nearly 50 years in Georgian London, Pott lectured and wrote with great clarity and precision about surgery. He had a leading role in crafting the image of the professional surgeon as a person who treats the masses at a leading hospital, teaches and trains the next generation of surgeons and manages to establish a successful private practice. His memorial in St Mary Aldermary, where he is buried, is well-deserved.



REFERENCES:

- Earle, Sir J, *The Chirurgical Works of Percival (sic) Pott*. (London, 1808)
Payne, L, *The Best Surgeon in England Percivall Pott 1713-88*. (New York, 2017)

Where there is Brass • 11

THE MERCERY MAN

The brass to Sir Richard Haddon, Mercer and Lord Mayor, 1516

The church of **St Olave Hart Street** is one of the smallest in the City of London, and one of only a handful to have escaped the Great Fire in 1666. However, it did not escape enemy bombs during the London Blitz of 1941 when many of the windows and the majority of the furnishings were destroyed. Amazingly the brasses survived. The building remained empty until it was rebuilt and reopened again for worship in 1954.

The brass commemorating Sir Richard Haddon is the earliest surviving in the church. When recorded by Strype in 1720, it was on the chancel wall 'much defaced', but is now in the south aisle in the same condition as he described it. The brass plates are in a stone frame, probably of Purbeck marble, discovered in 1845 behind panelling on the north side of the chancel before being moved in 1870. In 1894 it was mural on the south wall at the east end of the south aisle. It is now on the floor at the east end of the south aisle.

It shows Sir Richard, between his two wives, although his effigy is lost but would have depicted him kneeling before a *prie Dieu*. On either side are his wives, also kneeling at *prie Dieux* on which lie rosaries. Both wives wear long dresses and pedimental headdresses. In front of the dexter wife kneel her two sons, William and John whose names appear on a scroll below them, while on the sinister side behind the wife are three daughters, whose names are on a scroll below their figures, Brigitta, Anna and Brigitta.

Over the male effigy is a further

indent that originally held a large shield. Above the figures are five shields bearing the following heraldic charges. That in the centre bears a single hose around which is a crest bearing a man's leg couped below the thigh, in armour, the foot upwards the toe pointing to the dexter, spur on heel for Haddon.

The two upper shields relate to Haddon's business, with the upper dexter bearing Barry nebulée of six, on a chief, a lion passant for the Merchants of the Staple of Calais. The upper sinister bears the arms of the Mercers' Company, Gules, a demi-*virgin* couped below the shoulders, her hair dishevelled, vested and crowned or, wreathed above the brows with roses and issuing from an orle of clouds proper.

The lower dexter shield bears On a chevron between three lions rampant, the two in chief respecting each other, as many roundles, for Byfield, for Hatton's second wife, Katherine. The lower sinister shield bears the arms of



quarterly of four:

1. Five roundles in saltire and a chief for Byfield; 2. a chevron between three eagles' legs erect à la cuisse, ermine possibly for Wortham; 3. Bendy of six; 4. a chief dancettée, for Hatton's first wife, although her Christian name is unknown. Much of the original colour remains in the shields

Around the figures are the remains of invocatory scrolls in black letter. The portion above the indent of Haddon reads: *Te deum prem ingenitum a quo ola consitemur*. That above the wife to Haddon's right is lost, but probably read: *Te filium unigenitum per quem ola consitemur*. The scroll around her three daughters reads: *Libera nos salva nos iustifica nos o beata trinitas*. The scroll above his second wife, Katherine is inscribed: *Te spiritu praeclitu in quo ola consitemur*, while that around her two sons reads: *Te unum in su[bs]tantia trinitatem in personis consitem*. Strangely the brass never had an inscription.

Unfortunately, little is known about Haddon. He is thought to have been born in East Haddon, Northants. He was apprenticed to the mercer William Bufford, after which he became a member of the Mercers' Company. He was elected Sheriff of London in 1496, Alderman for Bridge Ward in 1506 and 1515, and Lord Mayor in 1506 and 1513.

In his will Haddon left a message, garden and three tenements in Syvedon [Seething] Lane for life to his wife Katherine. She was also charged with the maintenance of his chantry in the church and ensuring that his obit was observed. Following her death his property devolved to the Mercers' Company.

SOURCES

- A Povah, *The Annals of St Olave's Hart Street* 1894
- J Strype, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster* 1720
- A Sutton, *The Mercery of London: Trade, Goods and People 1130-1578* 2005
- L Lyell & F D Watney, *Acts of the Mercers' Company 1453-1527* 1936



TONY TUCKER

WREN'S CITY CHURCHES

This year sees the 300th anniversary of the death of Sir Christopher Wren. I am constantly in awe of the variety of the great man's work. With around 50 City churches to rebuild, one might have expected an architect to find one or two general designs and broadly stick to them.

Wren, of course, did no such thing, partly because of his apparent desire to experiment with new ideas, and also because of the restraints imposed on him by the oddly-shaped sites on which he had to build, and the limited financial resources at his disposal. As well as the design of the buildings themselves, Wren's towers and steeples are of incredible originality and variety.

Wren's biggest churches are great galleried basilicas, with aisles on both north and south sides, like **St Bride Fleet Street**. Today's barrel-vaulted interior in St Bride is similar to Wren's original, but the galleries were not replaced in Godfrey Allen's post-war restoration. This design is seen at its best in **St James Piccadilly**, a church built by Wren outside the City, and the idea was repeated at **St Andrew by the Wardrobe** and **St Andrew Holborn**.

Christ Church Newgate Street follows this design, but the nave had a

groin-vault, rather than a barrel-vault, (destroyed, alas, in the Blitz).

Two of these churches (St Bride and Christ Church) feature steeples of outstanding quality and ingenuity. St Bride's steeple of arcaded octagons of diminishing sizes still stands out against the modern London skyline. The steeple of Christ Church, thank goodness, survived the War (with a bit of restoration by Lord Mottistone) and must surely rank as one of Wren's greatest achievements.

There are other Wren churches with two aisles, though without galleries, typified by **St Peter Cornhill**. This church has a barrel-vaulted nave and aisles with transverse barrel vaults, as does **St Mary le Bow**. The latter church, however, has very narrow aisles. Wren based the design on the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine in the Roman Forum. It is distinct from the other aisled churches by being almost square in plan, not longitudinal. Both these churches have quite different steeples: St Peter has a brick tower, leaded dome and copper-clad spire; St Mary le Bow a breath-taking classical steeple designed by Wren at the height of his powers. **St Magnus the Martyr** also falls into this category of churches with two aisles. The nave is again

barrel-vaulted, but the aisles in this case are flat-ceilinged. St Magnus still contains some of the City's finest woodcarvings. **St Mary Aldermary** also belongs to the group of two-aisled churches, although it is a rare example of Wren's working in the Gothic style and is therefore more traditional than the others. Its principal glories are its superb tower and the stunning plaster ceiling by Henry Doogood: a beautiful creation of shallow saucer domes and fan vaulting.

The next group of churches to consider is those with just one aisle, normally to be found on the same side as the tower. This group includes **St Vedast**, **St Margaret Lothbury**, **St Clement Eastcheap**, **St Margaret Pattens**, **St Benet Paul's Wharf** and **St Lawrence Jewry**. The first three have one aisle on the south and the last three one aisle on the north. Those at St Margaret Pattens and St Benet feature a gallery. At St Lawrence, the aisle has become a chapel in Cecil Brown's excellent post-war restoration. The church is in some ways in its own category as a great hall-type design. Again, with this group, the steeples/towers show great variety and St Vedast is a truly inspirational design.

We now come to another group of churches, those consisting of a single room with no aisles including **St Edmund the King**, **St Michael Paternoster Royal** and **St Nicholas Cole Abbey**. The last two show a



Clockwise from top left: St Mary le Bow; St Stephen Walbrook; St Andrew Holborn; St Bride Fleet Street

1980s. The design is certainly evidence of Wren's training as a mathematician, with perfect combinations of circles, semi-circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. The steeple has similarities with those at St James Garlickhythe and St Michael Paternoster Royal, resembling a little Roman temple, but the interior is unique. Wren displays in St Stephen a sureness of touch and complexity of design that creates a building to justify the claim that it is 'the most perfectly proportioned interior in the world'.

I have not included any mention of **St Michael Cornhill** because Wren had no part in the design of this church, other than 'signing off' the completed building when it was finished.

All Wren's other City churches have, alas, disappeared, apart from a few elegant towers and steeples. These include the beautiful Portland stone steeple of **St Dunstan in the East**, supported on four flying buttresses which rise behind slender pinnacles on top of a Gothic tower; and the most unusual silhouette of **St Mary Somerset**, with the central obelisks on the tower higher than the corner vases, the reverse of what one might expect. The fibre-glass post-war reconstruction of the lead steeple of **St Augustine, Watling Street** demonstrates the architect's intention to use this as a counterpoint to the mighty dome of St Paul's, whilst the tower of **St Olave Jewry** is battered (ie: the walls have an inward inclination). **St Alban Wood Street** is another of Wren's rare Gothic towers.

It is, of course, to be regretted that a combination of 19c demolition and ww2 bombing has destroyed so many of Wren's churches, but we are fortunate to have so much of his work left in the City. This year is clearly one when people will want to admire his brilliant accomplishments. ✨

considerable amount of post-war restoration. **St Mary Abchurch** is also a single room, but instead of a flat ceiling, we have a lovely painted dome, creating space over the single-celled interior of small dimensions. The exterior of plain brick with an unexceptional lead steeple gives no hint of the treasures that lie within: treasures that include the finest display of woodcarving to be seen anywhere in the City.

Finally, there is a group of Wren churches that can be described as being centrally planned. A glance at the ceilings of **St Martin Ludgate**, **St Anne and St Agnes** and **St Mary**

at Hill reveals that all three are in the shape of a Greek cross in a square. The four short barrel-vaulted arms of each church meet in the centre in a groin vault (St Martin and St Anne and St Agnes) and in a shallow dome (St Mary at Hill). The towers/steeples of these churches are quite different from each other, St Martin's featuring the most elegant of lead steeples, the other two having fairly simple plain towers.

St James Garlickhythe, although with an oblong rather than a square interior, also seems centrally planned because the entablature above the nave is broken in the same way as the three others. If you look at the roof, there are similarities in the cross-shaped design with that at St Anne and St Agnes, although the latter is in the shape of a Greek cross with equal arms, whereas St James's cross has Roman dimensions, with two long arms and two shorter.

Finally, **St Stephen Walbrook** has features of both centrally-planned and longitudinal designs. The breath-taking dome is supported on eight pendentives, based on four groups of three Corinthian columns. The area beneath the dome is accordingly square in plan, but Wren extended this by adding four more columns to create a nave and thereby ended up with a building that can also be seen as longitudinal. This distinction has, however, been blurred by the introduction of the central altar in the



◆ WREN REFUR

PETER MORTON

WREN 300 AT ST MARY ABCHURCH

Arriving to Watch **St Mary Abchurch** on Tuesday 25 April, I was pleasantly surprised by the hive of activity going on inside. Members of The Master Carvers' Association were *in situ*, restoring and renovating parts of the interior church fabric.

This work is part of the Wren 300 project, the tercentenary celebration of one of the nation's greatest and most distinguished architects, Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723). The celebration includes the restoration and renovation of many London City churches (including **St Paul's Cathedral**), designed by Wren following the Great Fire of London in 1666, which sadly destroyed or badly damaged many fine ancient City churches. Wren was furthermore a founder of the Royal Society and lauded by luminaries such as Sir Isaac Newton.

I chatted to the carvers, who had laid out tools for display that they were using along with examples of the church carvings being restored. They were happy to demonstrate and allow visitors to try their hand

at carving out letters from blocks of wood. My own efforts didn't make the cut! I watched fascinated at their delicate work in restoring the intricate filigree carving from the pews and wood around the reredos.

One of the restorers mentioned that they were going to bring in a cherry picker to reach the magnificently decorated cupola and make repairs to the fabric and ornate decoration. A large screen monitor was set up in the nave for visitors, showing a continuous video of the restoration work being undertaken.

With this activity there was a wonderful organ recital by visiting organist David Pearson, assisted by resident organist Ian Shaw. Sitting in a pew with the warm spring sunlight streaming in through the windows made David's recital including one of my favourites, 'Greensleeves' the more glorious. ✨



FRANCES ROLLASON

Anyone walking into **Holy Sepulchre** on Monday 14 March, who was familiar with the church would have been astonished. The nave resembled a construction site, albeit a very sanitised one. It was full of people: students aged between 16 and 18 and their helpers, under the watchful eyes of the project managers Chris Wise and Catherine Ramsden. The task before them was to construct a replica of the dome of **St Paul's Cathedral**, Sir Christopher Wren's masterpiece, in one day.

The floor was covered in the necessary equipment including a large cherry picker, foam bricks, bamboo strips, muslin cloth and ladders. The final act would be to place the lantern (preconstructed by the students) complete with a light on top of the dome, hence the necessity for the cherry picker. The students, divided into teams, commenced their tasks.

The wooden support structure forming the base was preconstructed. The bamboo struts were cut into the

REFURBISHMENT

correct lengths and strapped into the triangular shapes to form the trusses to create the outer dome shape. The central cone to support the lantern was built from foam bricks. The dome covering was of muslin cut into segments to fall over the bamboo structure.

By 16.45 the tasks were completed, with the exception of lifting the lighted lantern on to the structure. The scene was enhanced by the arrival of the Bishop of London and Gregory Jones, Alderman for Farringdon Without who was accompanied by his Beadle Andrew Briton dressed in full regalia, carrying the Mace.

At 17.00, to much applause, the lighted lantern was lifted on to the dome: a great achievement, and I am sure an enjoyable experience for all concerned with the venture.

Unfortunately, the dome had to be dismantled by the next morning. ✨

ST LAWRENCE JEWRY

Katrina Bradley, the administrator has written an engaging piece on the works undertaken, which is having to be held over for the October issue. In the meantime, The Revd James Titley, late of the diocese of Lincoln, will have his institution and induction as the new guild vicar on 17 July. Ed



PAUL CONOLLY

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, ST HELEN BISHOPSGATE

ST PETER UPON CORNHILL

St Peter upon Cornhill is an iconic church located in the heart of the world-famous 'Square Mile' of London. Designed by the capital's most famous architect, Christopher Wren, the building has stood for over three centuries as a testament, after the Great Fire, to the grandeur and elegance of 17c architecture. However, time has taken its toll on this iconic structure, and a much-needed project to refurbish the entire church building is currently underway.

The aim of the refurbishment project is to restore the tired church to Wren's original vision, while making the building fit for purpose in 21c. The project aims to preserve the architectural heritage of the building while also making it a more welcoming, accessible, and useful place for visitors, worshippers, and the wide variety of ministry events that call the church home on a weekly basis. In every aspect of the project, from sprucing up the churchyard to adding new storage facilities, relocating the hidden-away font to a position of prominence, creating new space for ministry training and activities, refreshing audio-visual capabilities, introducing energy-efficient heating systems, and improving accessibility to the building itself, no stone is being left unturned in a massive effort to bring the historic landmark into 21c.

One of the key features is the intention to restore the church's clear windows, which were originally designed by Wren himself. Wren, who was a fierce advocate for natural light, was adamant that clear windows were most appropriate for a place of worship. He summed it up with one of his most famous and succinct quotes: 'God's greatest gift to man is light'.

The weary churchyard will also be transformed into a much more welcoming and tranquil space – one that not only complements the splendour of Wren's work but also provides a place of refuge for City workers looking to escape the hustle and bustle of the working week. Finally, the building will become far more energy-efficient through the introduction of new lighting and heating systems, bringing down operational costs while substantially reducing its carbon footprint to fall into line with the Church of England's drive to reduce carbon emissions.

The project, which is in the exciting RIBA Stage 2 of the planning process, is progressing at an encouraging pace, but will require further partnership as efforts ramp up towards the beginning of physical works. The hope is to launch the project officially to run alongside some of the Wren 300 celebrations taking place across the country in 2023.

If you wish to partner in the crucial work of both restoring and equipping St Peter upon Cornhill for the coming generations, please reach out to the team at p.conolly@stpeteruponcornhill.org.uk. ✨



PULPITS IN CITY CHURCHES: 'IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD'

A congregation's ability to hear sermons and Bible readings was a central concern of Wren's in the design of his City churches. In a letter to a friend in about 1710 published in *Parentalia*, he sets out some thoughts on this topic: 'it would be vain to make a Parish church larger than all are present can both hear and see. The Romanists indeed may build larger churches, it is enough if they hear the Murmur of the Mass, and see the Elevation of the Host, but ours are to be fitted as auditories.' In a later passage he analyses the carrying power of the moderate voice in relation to the positioning of the pulpit, and even criticises contemporary English preachers for their shortcomings. ✍



St Stephen Walbrook



St Margaret Lothbury



St Vedast alias Foster



St Clement Eastcheap



St Mary Abchurch

UNSUNG HEROES OF WREN'S CITY CHURCHES

Friends will need little reminding that this is the tercentenary year of Sir Christopher Wren's death. Of the 51 City churches, towers and steeples his office is credited with designing, at least half were helped into being by Wren's right-hand men, a group of master masons from Oxfordshire quarries: the Burford Masons.

The Stronges, Kempsters, and Beauchamps were three dynasties of mason-entrepreneurs from the Burford area, some 20 miles west of Oxford. Stone from their famous quarries had been used in London for many centuries, in the late 11c for instance in the crypt of **St Mary le Bow** as well as old **St Paul's Cathedral**, but following the Great Fire of London it became the stone of choice for rebuilding many City churches as well as the new cathedral. The Thames, flowing just eight miles south of Burford town, provided the highway for delivering competitively-priced, quality freestone from their landlocked quarries.

Of these highly skilled master masons, Thomas Strong and his brother Edward were responsible for building nine churches. Edward's son Edward took another nine contracts, largely in the steeple programme. Christopher Kempster was mason-contractor for five City churches, and his son William for thirteen, often repair work. Ephraim Beauchamp constructed the church and soaring corona steeple of **St Dunstan in the East**. In some cases the younger generation of the dynasties completed the elders' buildings with steeples or towers, as at **St Vedast alias Foster**, **St James Garlickhythe**, **St Michael Paternoster Royal**, and the jewel in the City church crown, **St Stephen**

Walbrook. The stonework for **St Mary Abchurch** was the responsibility of Christopher Kempster. It was he who also built and probably helped design **St Mary Somerset**, its eccentric Baroque tower now standing in isolation. This tally of the Burford Masons' church rebuilding is even more impressive when viewed alongside their contemporaneous work at St Paul's, where all three dynasties were engaged, the Stronges for its entire period of construction, laying both its first and last stone.

In addition to their role as stone suppliers, builders, and site architects, these masons were sculptors too, their cherub-decorated fonts still to be enjoyed in St Mary Abchurch and in St Stephen Walbrook and St James Garlickhythe. Their carved keystones, corbels, and swags can be found in many of their churches. St Vedast's 'Dove in Glory' wall sculpture is Edward Strong senior's creation.

The rebuilding Commissions were, however, inadequately funded by the coal tax, and soon fell into arrears with their payments. This state of affairs effectively passed the Commissions' burden of payment for work and materials on to their contractors. Mason-contractors were at highest risk, being the first on site at foundations stage and unable to receive payment in full until

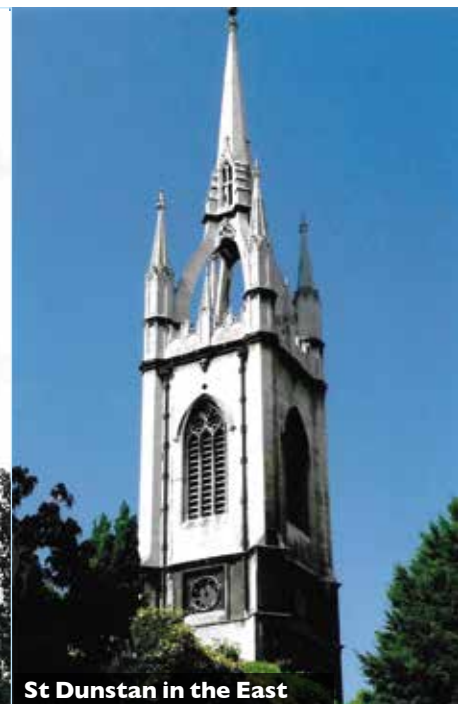
completion, sometimes over a decade later. Burford Masons, holding many contracts contemporaneously, were most at risk and found themselves forced into the position of financiers. Without their financial resilience, many of these churches – and St Paul's especially – could not have been completed in the style Wren intended.

The later 20c has shown a growing awareness of Wren's indebtedness to these master craftsmen, although the extent has yet to be fully appreciated. Visual acknowledgement of their inter-reliance can be found at **St Lawrence Jewry**, in Christopher Webb's stained glass window of the late 1950s depicting Edward Strong senior to one side of Wren, standing on the plinth of a stone pillar and unfurling a ground plan. Grinling Gibbons is to Wren's other side, and below all three, are etchings of City churches and St Paul's.

In the crypt of St Paul's, in 1972 the Worshipful Company of Masons erected a plaque above Wren's tomb remembering 'the men who made shapely the stones' of the cathedral, naming Edward and Thomas Strong 'and all who laboured with them'. This hangs directly below Wren's own memorial entreating the reader seeking his monument to look around him: similar words could be applied to these Burford Masons. *✿*



St Mary Somerset



St Dunstan in the East

'TUBBY' CLAYTON AND Toc H

For our more mature readers, **All Hallows Barking by the Tower** will always be associated with Toc H, an informal religious organisation which flourished in the trenches of Flanders during WW1, and which is still active to this day. The guiding light of this movement was Australian-born 'Tubby' Clayton (1885-1972), who served as vicar to this parish, and whose raised tomb can be seen close by the pulpit. Toc H still maintains a headquarters and guest house in Poperinge, a town that lay in part of unoccupied Belgium. It acts also as a museum devoted to the history of Toc H's operations.

This venerable institution opened for business in December 1915, having been converted from a hop-merchant's house, with its attendant storehouse, and an attic which served as a chapel. For three years the house provided rest and recreation to all soldiers coming in, regardless of their rank. Today, as real as then, the place offers a welcoming and friendly stop in Flanders fields.

The last of 'Tubby's' medals happened still to be with his family, and when they heard that one of All Hallows' resident guides, Mr Paul Matcham, was planning to visit relations in Belgium they suggested he might care to deliver his Belgian Order of Merit to Talbot House, Poperinge, where the rest of Tubby's decorations are to be found, and recently he duly obliged.

Talbot House takes its name from the Lt Gilbert Talbot, who was killed at Hooze, 30 July 1915, and was the brother of The Revd Neville Talbot, MC (1879-1943), senior chaplain of the British 6th Division, whose work is strongly linked to that of 'Tubby' Clayton. The Revd Neville Talbot's ashes are interred here in the crypt, at All Hallows.



above: 'Tubby' Clayton's tomb



left: model in All Hallows of the upper room of Talbot House

Sir Ernest Shackleton and the Quest

Bearing in mind this church's association with so many things nautical, it should, perhaps, come as no great surprise to find normally in the crypt the 'Crow's Nest' of the *Quest*, the ship that Sir Ernest Shackleton (1874-1922) took on his third and last Antarctic expedition (1921-22).

While there seems to be no documentation as to how this simple barrel-like structure came into the possession of 'Tubby' Clayton, what is certain is that 'Tubby' was immensely well connected. He knew just about everybody who was worth knowing, baring, perhaps, a handful of obscure royals in the outer reaches of the *Almanach de Gotha*. However, a brass plaque affixed to the Crow's Nest itself may offer some sort of clue. It reads: 'Once the Crow's Nest used by Sir Ernest Shackleton on his last Antarctic Expedition in the good ship *Quest*. Now brought here by "Tubby" in quest of "Siller" for Talbot House.' A brief note in the

Derby Daily Telegraph (15 April 1930) sheds light on this cryptic message by explaining that Toc H purchased the 'Crow's Nest' and that 'Tubby' toured the country with it, using it as an attraction to raise funds for his organisation; 'Siller' being an Old English name for money, a Scottish variant of silver.

The crow's nest, which is expected back at All Hallows some time later this year, is recorded as having spent time in the local Talbot House, just across the Green from the church, where it shares a corner with Trinity House, but it came to rest in All Hallows we know not when. It is currently on display in a centenary exhibition at Grytviken's South Georgia Museum, close to the local cemetery where Shackleton lies buried. Before making its epic voyage south, this item was briefly reunited with another portion of the *Quest* – the specially-built deck cabin – which is the only known other surviving part, and which is preserved at Athy, in the Province of Leinster, Irish Republic, where Shackleton was born.

✍️



BOOK REVIEW



OLD PARISH LIFE: A GUIDE FOR THE CURIOUS

Parish life in England, broadly from Medieval to Victorian times, particularly from c1500 to c1700 as revealed in the Church Wardens' accounts and other records

Edited by JUSTIN LOVILL

xiii + 626 pages; many illustrations; parish index; general index

The Bunbury Press, 2022

£20

ISBN 978-0-956 2046-2-2

MARY MILNE-DAY

This is a fascinating book, but not one to be read through, rather dipped-into. The author, or editor as he describes himself, has a tremendous enthusiasm for churchwardens' accounts. So, he gives us a social history by an overview of parish life with dozens of quotations from these accounts and from parish registers, vestry minutes and other documents. He describes the book as 'a very long introduction to a chronicle that does not exist.'

The result is, frankly, overwhelming. The source notes and bibliography take up over 60 pages. There is so much of interest, but I think the extracts could perhaps have been pruned: are 13 extracts on coffins really necessary or 9 about the communion wine? We are told that in 1541 our own **St Mary Abchurch** had 18 banners.

Those entries regarding the parish poor are, to me, the most interesting: **St Ethelburga** in Bishopsgate paid 2/6 for 'mending Mary Goodwin's wooden leg' in 1714, and a few years later gave 'Sarah Justice being very bad of the blowes and bruises her husband gave her' one shilling. Previously the parish had paid 1/6 for a quart of wine 'for the constable carrying a sturdy

beggar to Bridewell for breaking Old Kemp's head'. And it is fascinating to learn that disaster funds are not a new invention: after the Great Fire the parish of Tavistock, Devon, collected £11.5.9d 'towards the relieve of the poore inhabitants of London who have lately suffered by the lamentable fire'.

I think the book, a snip at £20, with dozens of excellent black-and-white photographs, has something for everyone interested in churches. I found the source notes somewhat complicated and I wonder if perhaps an editor would have made more of Justin Lovill's erudite commentary on each section, and slightly less of his use of quotations. Overall, this is a marvellous reference book rather than a straight read.

MUDLARKS – TREASURES FROM THE THAMES

JASON SANDY

306 pages; textual illustrations throughout; index

Silver Gravity, 2022

£27.99 softback

ISBN 1739 178106

PETER BROWNE

The first time I met a group of mudlarks was while Watching at **St Magnus Martyr**. They had come to admire the model of the medieval London Bridge, now installed in its freshly-funded vitrine. I learnt from one of the group that the chapel in the middle of the Bridge had been dedicated to Thomas Becket – a local lad, born on Cheapside, who made good and then became a sainted martyr – and that pilgrims to his shrine at Canterbury would have started from here, and thrown a metal token of the saint into the Thames. My Mudlark had indeed found one – and there it is, on page 129.

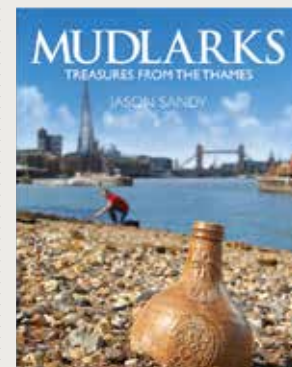
The river brought trade, and trade brought wealth with which the City built its halls and schools and churches. 'The Thames knows everything' as Kipling said, and while we Watch and admire and guard

the memorials to the great and the good, the mudlarks daily scour what is described here as, at low tide, the longest archaeological site in Britain. They bring to light the stories of the nameless busy citizens who made the City thrive. Their badges, buckles, coins and medals are each given a chapter, and the development of form and function, eg bronze pins from the Iron Age to decorated Tudor gold, is easily traced as the format of this treasury integrates images alongside text.

Why there are so many garnets glinting in the river is still a mystery, but the ubiquitous clay pipes: 'churchwardens' pipes' as they are called here, can be explained. Churches were often open all night, while their wardens watched! As the trade in tobacco increased through 17c and 18c, tobacco was no longer a rich man's luxury. The pipe bowls got bigger, often sold already stuffed with the noxious weed for a single use.

The chapters on different articles and their histories are interspersed with cameos of individual mudlarks, members of the Society of Thames Mudlarks who work closely with the Museum of London, on what impels them to search the Thames foreshore

by day and night, and in some cases their ongoing research. There is the poignant story of finding a Victoria



Cross, and discovering the identity of its original holder and subsequently visiting his grave.

I found this book to be a treasury indeed, and although there is little reference to the City's churches *per se*, and none indicated in the index apart from **St Paul's Cathedral**, I felt that this perspective on the history of the City has broadened my understanding of it.

Diary

Any suggestions for future events should be sent to events@london-city-churches.org.uk

The ballot will be on **Wednesday 28 June**

Please use the booking form and remember to enclose a stamped sae.

Saturday 24 June

Wrenathon

Church bells will ring all over the City in Wren churches

Saturday 1 July

Chairman's outing

Trains to Ashford International

- London Bridge dep 9.38, arr 10.48;
- St Pancras International dep 10.07, arr 10.44
- Victoria dep 9.38, arr 10.41

**Monday 3 July
3pm**

FCC AGM

See the agenda on p2 and reserve your place. Numbers are needed for cake..

St Mary Abchurch

**1 Tuesday 11 July
10.45 for 11**

City Grandees in Tower Hamlets Cemetery

Anne Tickell will repeat this walk through the beautiful grounds full of interesting memorials in one of the Magnificent Seven cemeteries.

£10 per person

Meet Mile End underground station exit

Wednesday 26 July

10.20 for 10.30

Watchers' sign-up meeting

St Michael Paternoster Royal

2 Saturday 29 July

10.45 for 11 am

Steeple of the City

A walk with Tony Tucker from Blackfriars to the Tower

£10 per person

Meet Blackfriars underground station exit

**3 Saturday 12 August
11.40 for 12noon**

Visit to the London Metropolitan Archives

Two hours, which will start with a short introduction and a behind-the-scenes tour. We shall then proceed to view original material relating to City churches. Participants will also be able to see the 'Unforgotten Lives' exhibition.

£10 per person

Meet in the visitor lounge on the mezzanine floor. We must sign in at Reception.

LMA: 40 Northampton Rd, EC1R 0HB

**4 Monday 18 September
10.30 for 11**

Visit to Trinity House

Trinity House is a charity dedicated to safeguarding shipping and seafarers, providing education, support and welfare to the seafaring community with a statutory duty as a General Lighthouse Authority.

Trinity House was founded by Henry VIII in 1514, and the present building dates from 1796: full of treasures, well worth the visit.

£21 per person to include

refreshments and a souvenir booklet.

Meet outside Trinity House

**5 Tuesday 17 October
11.15 for 11.30**

Visit to St Alfege, Greenwich

This is a Nicholas Hawksmoor church, needing a lot of TLC. We shall be given a tour of the church and the hidden spaces programme.

£10 per person

Meet at the church, Greenwich Church Street, SE10 9BJ

WREN CITY CHURCHES PAST AND PRESENT

CLIVE WHICHELOW

St Mary Aldermary
St Mary Le Bow
St Anne & St Agnes
St Andrew By The Wardrobe

All Hallows Bread Street
All Hallows the Great
St Edmund King And Martyr
St Martin's Ludgate

St James Garlickhythe
St Antholin Budge Row
St Margaret Lothbury
St Swithin London Stone

St Augustine Watling Street
St Vedast Alias Foster
St Nicholas Cole Abbey
St Michael Paternoster

St Christopher Le Stocks
St Mary at Hill
St Dionis Backchurch,
St Mary Abchurch
St Peter Cornhill

St Dunstan In The East
St Mildred Poultry
St Benet Gracechurch,
St Benet Paul's Wharf
St Olave Jewry

St Mary Somerset
St Bride Fleet Street
St Magnus the Martyr
St Clement Eastcheap

St Stephen Walbrook
St Bartholomew by the Exchange
St Michael Queenhithe,
St Michael Wood Street
St Michael Crooked Lane

St Matthew Friday Street
St Michael Bassishaw
St Alban Wood Street
St Margaret Pattens and more

St George Botolph Lane
St Lawrence Jewry
St Mildred Bread Street
St Mary the Virgin Aldermanbury

Christchurch Greyfriars
St Stephen Coleman Street
St Andrew Holborn
All Hallows Lombard Street

The Wren churches of the City
Some have gone and some
remain
If they should fall, like the London
Wall
We shall not see their like again

THE FRIENDS OF THE CITY CHURCHES

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October 2023 deadline: Tuesday 29 August

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