



Friends of St Cross Hospital Winchester

Celebrate its Past – Support its Future

'Retrospective'

Annual Newsletter

As we move into the second decade of our charity's life, we have decided to make a few small changes to this magazine. We decided that the roll of new and deceased Friends would be more suitably placed in our annual report so that this publication can focus slightly more on the Hospital and the people who live and work there as well as on our own activities and events. In this issue, we feature a profile of the new Master, and an interview with Ian the groundsman, whom many Friends will have seen hard at work, maintaining the grounds at St Cross which we all enjoy. If any Friend would care to contribute an article for the next issue or to advertise in future issues, please get in touch with the Editor.



John Pringle, Chairman, shaking hands with the Master of St Cross, after the presentation of the Friends' grant at the AGM, with Fiona Whitehouse, Administrator, and Robin Goater, Treasurer, smiling in the background, 10th June 2022.

Foreword by our Chairman, John Pringle



I think I can say normal service, or very nearly, was resumed in 2022. A blend of social, informative and visit events took place; we signed up a good number of new Friends, and the Hospital received its regular stream of visitors to marvel at the beauty of the buildings and gardens.

As usual Gill, our Editor, has produced a marvellous record of our activities. I know you will enjoy looking through the pages to remind yourselves that the Friends is a great charity to be part of.

Introduction to two of our newer Trustees

Many Friends will already know our two newest Trustees: Felicity Pennycook (below left), who is also a Trustee of the Hospital of St Cross, and Stephen Shuttleworth (below right), who gave the Friends two splendid talks during 2021.

As a Chartered Accountant, Felicity worked in London, Amsterdam and Brussels before returning to the UK to live in Shawford several years ago. She subsequently obtained an MA in art history, a subject in which she has always been interested, and which initially fired her enthusiasm for St Cross. She is currently Honorary Treasurer of the Hospital of St Cross.



Stephen has lived in Winchester, on and off, since 1965. He was a schoolmaster and taught Chemistry at Charterhouse for 31 years before returning to teach at Winchester College in 2011. He is a regular member of the congregation at St Faith's. Now that he is retired, he hopes to spend more time painting and travelling to Italy.



Promotional Activities

At the end of 2022, our membership numbered 798 and as always we are grateful to our Friends for all their support. Fiona, our Administrator, kept us well-informed of activities via regular e-bulletins, whilst Jonathan Sleath and Claire McDonnell continued to post on our social media during the year.

In the early summer, the Trustees once again undertook a mail-drop, this time in Oliver's Battery and in Peninsular Barracks, and were delighted that new Friends joined our number as a direct result. The St Cross Parish Fête returned in June 2022 and we maintained a Friends' stand at that event and also at the NGS Open Gardens event and the Michaelmas Fayre, both held in September.



Friends' table at the Michaelmas Fair, 24th September 2022.

We are grateful to all those who made donations during the year, which is especially welcome after the lean years of the pandemic. If anyone wishes to make a donation in future, this may be done through our JustGiving site or directly by contacting the Treasurer. Shopping via www.easyfundraising.org.uk also enables donations with every purchase - at no extra cost to the purchaser - as long as you nominate our charity for this purpose.



Grant to the Hospital of St Cross

The Friends' 2021 grant contributed towards the re-laying of the paving outside the Porter's Lodge. The work was done in early 2022 and has made this area much more accessible, as shown below right. The Friends' 2022 grant of £15,000 will contribute towards improved accessibility to the Old Kitchen and the Brethren's Hall.



2022 At A Glance

New Year Reception and Winter Lunches

Following a reception on Zoom in 2021, we were delighted to hold an in-person event in 2022, which felt like a turning-point in our progress towards normality. On 7th January, about 32 Friends enjoyed wine, canapés and fellowship in the renovated Hundred Men's Hall. We all appreciated the new heating and the decoration, tastefully done in the style familiar to us from Friends' lectures and summer teas, and it was particularly good to welcome new Friends and also one of our Patrons, Victoria Wakefield. Joyce Corner was our lucky raffle-winner.

John Pringle, our Chairman, thanked everyone for their loyalty to the Friends during the previous difficult year. He particularly mentioned our Administrator, Fiona Whitehouse, who had managed our memberships and the few events that were possible, in her usual efficient and friendly way, and he concluded by hoping that 2022 would be an uninterrupted year so that we could all meet again frequently as we had done before the pandemic.



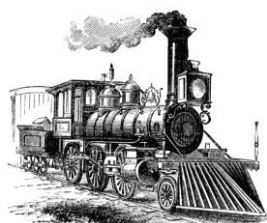
Friends at the New Year Reception, 7th January 2022.

We also held two winter lunches in the early months of 2022, as depicted below. Our thanks as always go to Doreen Jenkins, Brother Andrew and all their helpers for making these lunches such enjoyable occasions.



Lectures, January-March 2022

On 28th January 2022, the Hundred Men's Hall was filled to capacity to hear a talk by fellow-Friend, Clare Dixon, on the former Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Railway. Clare was well-known to most in the audience, not only as a Blue Badge and City Guide but also for her Friends' tours – both virtual and real – over the last few years. On this evening, our tour embraced the Winchester end of the now-defunct DNS railway.



Clare brought the railway to life, with wonderful ‘then and now’ slides, and evocative film-footage of the steam trains, taken by Howard Blake of Southampton. She paid tribute to Kevin Robertson’s book about the line, but we learnt so much more than could have been gleaned from a book, as she regaled us with anecdotes from some who had taken her tours in the past including railway buffs and former members of staff, and even a Chesil station-master. She recounted the history of the line from the original Act of Parliament permitting its construction, to its opening on 1st May 1885, its partnership with the Great Western Railway and up to its eventual closure in August 1964.



Clare Dixon, our speaker, with Chairman John; and Brothers Richard, Clive and Kevin serving drinks to Friends on arrival.

Maps helped to give us our bearings as the area is much-changed today, with the Chesil car park now sited where the station once was, the tunnel now used for storage and a rifle range, and the goods yard developed into the Bar End Industrial estate. She explained that initially passengers were of secondary importance as the railway had been constructed mainly for the transportation of heavy goods such as chalk, strawberries, racehorses and animal feed. However this changed dramatically in the First World War with the arrival of the large military camps around the city; and before D-Day in the Second World War, about 60,000 men were transported to the port from Winchester.

Clare showed us many photographs of the old railway cutting, pointing out interesting features such as the fence posts at Chesil car park which are former broad gauge tracks, the footbridge which once crossed the line, and the former station-master’s house on St Giles’s Hill. She showed us photos of staff who had worked at the station and we heard about the cat who wore a coat in the railway colours of brown and cream! We also saw the Hockley viaduct, built originally as a branch line to Shawford, which opened in 1891 as the first concrete-cored structure of its kind and she told us that the line also pioneered electrification in the 1920s.



Chesil station in its heyday; a modern sign near the station site; and the approach to the railway tunnel in 2022.

Eventually the arrival of the Winchester bypass in the 1930s and the popularity of road transport spelt the end of the line. The last regular train ran through the station on 4th March 1960, although in May 1964 a train was diverted along the line because of an accident elsewhere.

This was a fascinating talk about an area which many know well and it left some in the audience wanting to go out and explore the relics of a bygone age for themselves. Clare added that she regularly takes special interest tours of this area in the summer months and details are available on the Winchester ‘Tourist Guides’ website at www.winchestertouristguides.com

On 4th March 2022, Friends were treated to a masterful talk by Andrew Sparkes, former diplomat and ambassador. (depicted below left). Introducing him, our Chairman explained that Andrew now teaches 'Div' at Winchester College, which involves discussion and debate on subjects outside the curriculum, allowing pupils to broaden their education and encouraging them to think independently. The title of Andrew's presentation was 'Can you have an ethical foreign policy?', which encouraged us all to consider the bigger picture in international diplomacy.



Andrew Sparkes speaking to the Friends, 4th March 2022.

As this talk took place in the second week of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, it could not have been more topical. However Andrew did not limit himself to the present day, but referred to issues which had arisen since the end of the Second World War, bringing in quotations from leader-columns in 'The Times' and from politicians' speeches. He commented on world leaders as diverse as Tony Blair, Saddam Hussein, David Cameron and Xi Jinping and he illustrated his ideas with reference to a wide range of international problems, such as the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, the Afghanistan war, and the Chinese treatment of the Uighurs. Andrew also suggested that whilst the West may feel a huge moral outrage about the ongoing situation in Ukraine, historians of the future may evaluate the actions of today rather less one-sidedly, assessing how provocative to Russia the West's triumphalism at the collapse of the USSR in 1991 and the enlargement of NATO to the east, had seemed.

This was a far-ranging and very thought-provoking lecture, which invited much discussion afterwards. Questions and comment concerned the effect of 'soft power' in influencing and changing international relationships, the role of NATO, the viability of an EU foreign policy and the likely effect on China of recent events. Our speaker emphasized that the fundamental role of every government is to ensure its citizens' security and prosperity, however difficult this may be to define. Any action - whether by force, economic sanction or diplomacy - has consequences, and 'seeing off the dragon' must take these into account, whilst always ensuring that inaction does not lead to a worse situation.

Our Chairman thanked Andrew at the end of his talk, and so interesting had it been that several groups continued the discussion privately even after this. We were very privileged to have heard such a knowledgeable and experienced speaker at this particularly concerning time in international affairs.

On 25th March 2022, in view of ongoing pandemic concerns, we reverted to Zoom for a talk by Professor Elizabeth Hurren, known to some of us from her attendance at the Friends' Zoom chats during lockdown. Leicester University, where she works, describes her on its website as an 'historian of the body, poverty, and welfare'. Her evocative title for our talk was 'The Dangerous Dead of Winchester: Murder, Execution and the Power of the Criminal Corpse', and she focused on the realities of what happened to those who were convicted of serious crimes after the 1752 Murder Act and before the 1832 Anatomy Act.

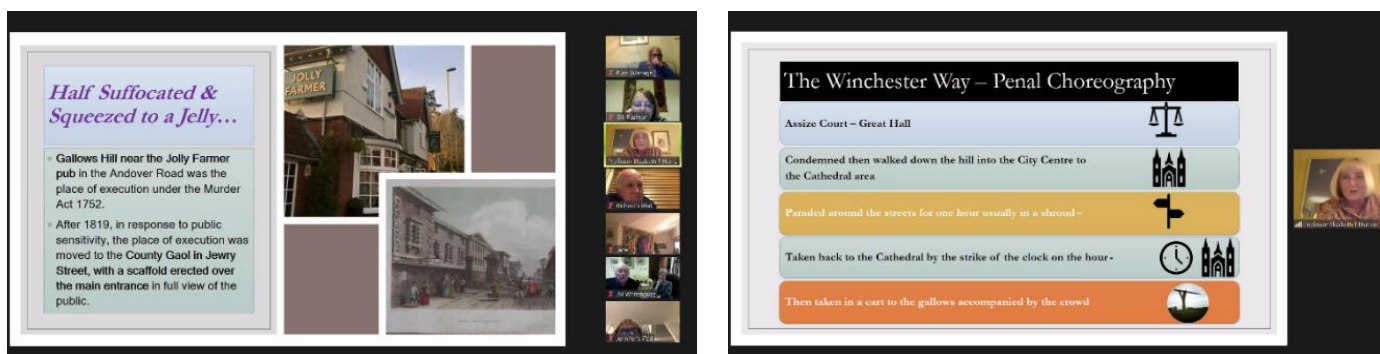
In those days, convicts were generally hanged and their bodies were sent either for post-mortem, thus contributing towards medical education, or placed on a gibbet where they remained as a deterrent. Elizabeth explained that a

different popular culture prevailed then and both the hangings and the post-mortems were often watched by huge crowds, who came for the drama and entertainment, in the eighteenth century tradition of ‘immersive theatre’; but this waned in the early nineteenth century when hangings, although still public, were moved to more easily controllable locations, and when post-mortems for educational purposes were performed not on recently-hanged criminals but on the poor and the mentally ill from the workhouses and asylums.



Professor Elizabeth Hurren (left) telling a rapt Zoom audience about different attitudes to punishment two hundred years ago.

Elizabeth described the situation in Winchester and how serious offenders would be taken from their prison cell to the Assizes in the Great Hall and then paraded to the execution site in Andover Road (near the Jolly Farmer public house) and thence by cart to the hospital (then in the city centre). So great was the public interest, that crowds might accompany the convicted person, and viewings for the post-mortems were ticketed events.



Elizabeth explained how the moment of death could be variously defined, and that there was much public fascination in this. Execution was not an exact science and many hangings were botched, so before a post-mortem, a surgeon might put pepper up the nose or use a swan’s feather to tickle the chin of the person on the slab, to ensure that the criminal was truly dead. She recounted some shocking incidents when corpses woke up on the dissecting table to the horror of the surrounding onlookers. This presented the surgeon with a moral dilemma: whether to end the criminal’s life there and then (going counter to the medical principle of ‘do no harm’), or not to do so, in which case the sentence of death would be commuted to transportation to America or Australia. She then explained what happened to the bodies after their post-mortem. Criminals were not buried in consecrated ground and their skeletons were sometimes auctioned, with their skins sometimes used in book-binding.

This was not a talk for the faint-hearted but our speaker concluded on a positive note. The fact that death from hanging might not be immediate has been an important factor in informing neuroscientists about the brain. This has led to developments in cold therapy and anaesthetics, and there is potential for other medical breakthroughs in the future.

Richard Chisnell gave a warm vote of thanks for this enthralling lecture which had emphasized to us all how much the philosophy and reality of managing criminals has changed over the centuries.

If anyone would like to know more about the subject, Elizabeth’s book *Dissecting the Criminal Corpse: Staging Post-Execution Punishment in Early Modern England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) is available either free online, or to purchase in hard copy.

Summer Party

We were blessed with a warm and sunny evening on 13th May 2022, for the first summer party we have been able to hold for three years, and it was lovely to see everyone enjoying themselves together once again. About 250 guests attended the party, and the successful format was very much as in previous years, with fizz and canapés in the Master's Garden, preceding a picnic supper under a marquee on the Bowling Green, and followed by salsa dancing to live Cumbia music by Atlantico, led by Ukrainian Sergiy Bondarenko.



Above and below: Guests in the Master's Garden.



Our Patron, Alastair Bruce, imaginatively used a large cow-bell to gather guests in the Master's Garden and thank them for their support. Later, the picnic supper in the marquee was made all the more celebratory when one table presented a birthday cake to Catherine Ogle, Dean of Winchester Cathedral, and the band struck up 'Happy Birthday' in which we all joined in (see photo below right).



The picnic marquee with the Chapel as backdrop; Patron Alastair Bruce with Pip Billington, who headed up the organising committee; and Dean Catherine Ogle celebrating her birthday with friends.

At the end of the evening our Chairman thanked the party committee for all the hard work they had put into making this such a convivial occasion. Through ticket sales, the bar and the raffle, organized by Fiona Goodman, the event raised over £7,000 for the charity. The photographs show that a good time was had by all!



Friends' Day

On 10th June, the Friends' AGM was held in the parish hall as usual. At the close of the business meeting, our Chairman presented a cheque for £15,000 from the Friends to the Master of St Cross – as depicted on the front cover. He then made an extra presentation, of an engraved glass tankard, to our Founder Chairman, Richard Chisnell, as he stepped down from the Board of Trustees after over a decade of dedicated service to our charity. Richard made a moving speech about how much 'fun and fellowship' he had enjoyed with the Friends, and reassured us that he and Maureen intended to continue as Friends in the years to come. There was a round of enthusiastic applause for Richard, who has given so much of his time and energy to us over the last ten years.



Officers presiding over the AGM; and the Chairman's presentation to Richard Chisnell.

After this, Adam Rattray, a College don, and also a Trustee of the Hospital of St Cross, gave an excellent talk entitled 'Because it is there – the British Mount Everest Expeditions 1921-1924'. He showed many evocative slides of the expeditionary teams, who demonstrated impressive courage in the face of the huge challenges of terrain

and climate, not to mention inadequate equipment, clothing and footwear. Adam had brought along some visual aids, so we were able to inspect for ourselves the (hideously heavy) oxygen tanks which the men had to strap on their backs, the boots they wore, and a pick of the type they would have used.



Adam Rattray, our speaker; the men on the mountain; and examples of typical climbing equipment used in the 1920s.

He concluded that even though these intrepid explorers may not have reached the summit of Mount Everest - although that is not yet proven - they achieved a great deal in terms of surveying the terrain, understanding the geology and flora of the region and realising the need for oxygen at such extreme altitude. They were fearless in their endeavours, as Adam explained brilliantly with many wonderful anecdotes.

Following this, we walked back to St Cross for our much-anticipated Platinum Jubilee tea in the Brethren's Hall. As shown below, the Master proposed the loyal toast and Ruth Hemming cut the wonderful celebratory cake, which had been especially made for the occasion by Helen Stevens. We all enjoyed the splendid tea, masterminded by Doreen Jenkins with a large team of helpers, and this rounded off a most successful afternoon.



*Above: The Master proposing the loyal toast (left) and Ruth Hemming cutting the special Jubilee cake (right).
Below centre: Doreen Jenkins (fifth from left) and her team of helpers who prepared and served our sumptuous Jubilee tea.
(With thanks to Richard Chisnell and Sally Heather for use of their photographs).*



Summer Outings

On 7th July 2022, a total of 29 Friends joined our guide Clare Dixon, on a coach trip of the western side of the Isle of Wight, following a successful trip to the eastern side some years ago. After the ferry crossing to Cowes, we took a scenic route across the island and Clare explained how the diverse geology of the island had created such a varied landscape. Having paid our respects to the chalk cliffs of Tennyson Down we headed north to the picturesque coastal town of Yarmouth, where we stopped for lunch. Some of us visited Yarmouth Castle, now in the care of English Heritage. Originally built as a fort by Henry VIII for defence against the Spanish, its structure changed over the years, but it was never really needed. Others walked along the Grade 2 listed timber pier which gave good views of the town and across the Solent.



Lunch stop in Yarmouth; and Clare telling Friends about the Marconi memorial at The Needles.

After lunch we returned to the south coast of the island where we picked our way through the extensive tourist development at The Needles to catch a glimpse of the lighthouse and The Needles themselves. Many had the impression that they had become smaller over the years - but whether from erosion or just aging memories it wasn't clear. There was also the Marconi monument marking the site where Marconi set up his equipment to demonstrate the practicality of radio transmission.



Brothers with the Master and his wife ; and Lysbeth and Jonathan Sleath with our guide, Clare Dixon, enjoying the afternoon sunshine on the Isle of Wight.

Our final stop was at Godshill where some climbed the steps to All Saints Church to admire the medieval Lily Crucifix medieval wall painting and many had a cup of tea or ice cream. Friends enjoyed the crossing back to Southampton in glorious sunshine, after a lovely day out with our excellent guide, Clare.



Friends relaxing at the end of a great day out.

A group of Friends led by Jonathan Sleath visited Houghton Lodge near Stockbridge on 16th August 2022. Jonathan recalled this visit as follows: ‘Houghton Lodge is less than half an hour's drive from Winchester but is a place that many of us had not visited before. Equipped with umbrellas and raincoats to cope with our first showery day after the drought, we were guided around the exterior and interior by the owner, Daniel Busk, who clearly took great pride in the property.



‘The building is a delightful example of the cottage orné style and was built at the end of the eighteenth century, possibly as a fishing lodge, since it overlooks the river Test. There are extensive gardens, including a large walled garden with many apple trees that were heavy with fruit, and we saw hens foraging amongst the trees. Finally we were provided with tea and excellent cake - almost as good as that on offer in the St Cross tea room!’



Autumn Events

On 14th October 2022, Friends enjoyed a rather unusual evening. After a delay of literally years because of Covid, we were delighted to welcome members of Hampshire Field Club’s Medieval Graffiti Project team to St Cross to tell us about their survey work at the Hospital of St Cross. Karen Wardley and Aldous Rees gave us a beautifully-illustrated talk, explaining how they had discovered, documented, and categorised a large number of marks made deliberately on the stonework and woodwork, in many different buildings at St Cross, including the Chapel, where the talk was given. They introduced us to the different categories of marks including apotropaic marks (better-known as witches’ marks) to protect the building, assembly marks drawn to aid construction, devotional (mainly Christian) symbols such as crosses and fishes, musical notation and even poems and faces. Some of the marks date back several hundreds of years but we were also shown some more modern examples.



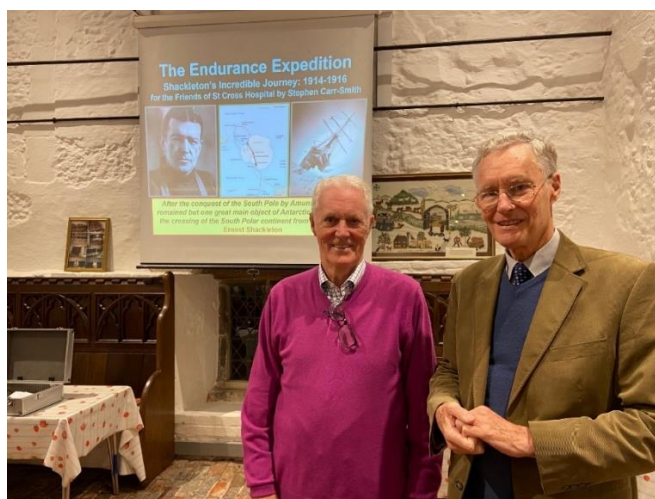
Karen Wardley and Aldous Rees; and the audience in St Cross Chapel, 14th October 2022.

The possible meaning and interpretation of the different types was explained where possible, although many marks remain enigmatic and will require further research. At the end of the evening, Karen, Aldous and several other members of the team – all volunteers - showed us some of the many important examples *in situ*. Without their lighting techniques it would be easy to walk past them, unaware of their existence, but those of us at the talk will now visit the buildings of St Cross with our eyes peeled and with a better understanding of what we are looking at. For more information about the work of the Medieval Graffiti Survey, or perhaps to volunteer to help the team, visit the website at www.hantsfieldclub.org.uk/medieval-graffiti.



Friends examining graffiti on the prayer desk - including a depiction of a highway robbery and a list of singing-men; an example of apotropaic graffiti on the north wall of the Chapel; and a member of the team explaining a mark, using a powerful torch.

On 25th November 2022 we held our second autumn lecture, given by Major-General Stephen Carr-Smith, about the extraordinary Endurance expedition led by Sir Ernest Shackleton between 1914 and 1916. Our Chairman wrote as follows: ‘What a dramatic and vivid lecture we were treated to! After the conquest of the South Pole by Amundsen, there remained but one great main object of Antarctic journeying - the crossing of the South Polar continent from sea to sea. The build-up to the expedition was difficult. Scott, Shackleton’s rival Antarctic explorer, continually denigrated Shackleton’s abilities, and sponsors were hard to find, so money was short. As a result equipment and provisions were only just adequate.

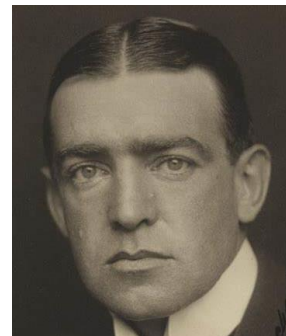


Major-General Stephen Carr-Smith with our Chairman.

‘They set off just as the First World War was starting, and with Churchill’s mandate to proceed despite the conflict. The weather was not the best in the Antarctic in the first months, and even the summer temperatures rarely exceeded -20°C. Their ship *Endurance* became trapped in the ice of the Weddell Sea before it was able to reach Vahsel Bay. It drifted northward, held in the pack ice, throughout the Antarctic winter of 1915. Eventually the ice crushed the ship, and it sank, stranding its complement of 28 men on the ice. After months spent in makeshift camps as the ice continued its northwards drift, the party used lifeboats that had been salvaged from

the ship to reach the inhospitable, uninhabited Elephant Island. Shackleton and five other members of the group then made an extraordinary 800-mile open-boat journey in the *James Caird* and sometimes in ferocious storms. But they managed to reach South Georgia, from where Shackleton was eventually able to arrange a rescue of the men who had remained on Elephant Island and to bring them home without loss of life. The remarkably preserved wreck of the *Endurance* was found on the ocean's floor in 2022.

'Major-General Carr-Smith's excellent slides, with many photographs from the expedition, illustrated the story brilliantly and we were all ears, as crisis after crisis occurred – and then were overcome. They didn't achieve their initial objective but, under Shackleton's inspired leadership, what they did is recognized as an epic feat of endurance.'



Endurance in the Antarctic ice; our rapt audience in the Hundred Men's Hall; and Ernest Shackleton.

Unfortunately our final lecture of the year had to be postponed but we look forward to bringing this to you in our future programme.

Two Winter Lunches

In November and December, we held two splendid winter lunches in the Hundred Men's Hall, and so popular were these events that they sold out very quickly. Our sincerest thanks go to Doreen Jenkins (shown in the centre of the top left photo below) and her team of helpers for providing us with these convivial occasions. The evident enjoyment of those who attended is illustrated in the photos below.



A Christmas Workshop

A happy group of Friends, including a lady who had travelled all the way from Essex, gathered in the Hundred Men's Hall in mid-December for festive wreath-making, our last event for 2022.



Under Sue Moreau's expert guidance, and with the aid of a glass or two of wine, some excellent Christmas wreaths and table decorations gradually took shape. Much fun was had by all and we were all surprised and delighted by the variety of arrangements which everyone created, as shown in these photographs.



Profile of the new Rector of St Faith's parish and Master of St Cross Hospital

Father Dominik Chmielewski was licensed by the Bishop of Basingstoke as the new Rector of the Parish of St Faith's on Sunday 4th September 2022, and he was installed as the Master of the Hospital of St Cross on Monday 5th December 2022.

Father Dominik is originally from Poland, and worked for many years as a stained glass artist and iconographer, designing and creating stained glass windows, icons and vestments for churches across the country. He read history at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and theology at the Evangelical School of Theology in Wroclaw and at the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw. He also has a theology MA from Durham



University. He served since 2012 as a pastoral leader and lay minister in Krakow and following his training for ordination at Ripon College Cuddesdon, Oxford, he became the Assistant Curate of St Nicholas, Arundel with Tortington and South Stoke, and then Assistant Curate of Rustington and Middleton-on-Sea in the Diocese of Chichester. Father Dominik is also the co-ordinator of the Winchester and Portsmouth Branch of the Prayer Book Society.



Choir and clergy in procession to the licensing of Father Dominik, 4th September 2022; and the Bishop of Basingstoke with Father Dominik after his installation as Master, 5th December 2022.

Dominik is married to Barbara and they have three children. They have lived in the UK for five years having moved here from Krakow in 2017. We look forward to enjoying the company of Dominik and his family at Friends' events in the coming year.



The installation of the new Master, 5th December 2022.

A chat with Ian, the groundsman at St Cross

Anyone who visits St Cross is immediately struck by the beauty of the grounds and the care and attention to detail manifested by those who look after them. So we thought it would be interesting to hear about the daily life of a member of the team. Jonathan Sleath, Trustee, submitted a few questions to the groundsman, Ian (depicted on the next page) and here are his interesting responses.

How did you start your career?

I started in engineering, using mills, lathes, mitre saws etc, from fabricating fishing rod stands to high end precision fasteners. I then moved into the metal and plastic supply industry. I began as a warehouseman, unloading and loading lorries, forklifting, using various machines to process the materials, then progressed to an office-based role as a warehouse administrator, sorting what task needed to be done to fulfil customer orders on time, and a lead role in quality assurance to supply the aerospace industry, oil and gas. I decided to change career, to work in horticulture, something I've always wanted to do. I began doing private work and realised I needed to learn the techniques required to maintain a garden. That's how I got involved with the National Trust.

What work did you do before coming to St Cross?

I worked as an assistant gardener for the National Trust at Uppark House and Garden at South Harting, West Sussex and also maintained half a dozen private gardens.

How is the work at St Cross different?

My role now is groundsman, so I spend most of my time maintaining the lawns and hedges during the growing season, then collecting leaves once autumn arrives. I also help out with the odd maintenance job, help to set up for events and move items around the site. My previous role was split into perhaps 20% border work, 30% lawn maintenance, brush-cutting and hedge-trimming and 10% woodland work. The remainder would be spent on propagation, machinery maintenance, visitor engagement and anything else that might be required.



What are your main responsibilities?

Assisting with unlocking and locking the site, being on call in the event of an emergency, fire, security etc., lawn maintenance, hedge cutting, leaf clearing, de-icing, and generally making sure the grounds are well maintained.



What do you especially like about the work here?

I would say the historical aspect of it. Although the role of groundsman has probably changed significantly over time, I like that there is a mention of the groundsman in the earliest reliable staff list which dates back to the 1390s (you can find that information in our guidebook by John Crook). I feel like I'm carrying on a long tradition of

maintaining the site and hope that when the next groundsman replaces me, I can look back and say I was a part of St Cross's history.

What is the most unusual task you have undertaken?

One that springs to mind recently is rescuing a Brother who couldn't get out of his bedroom due to a fault with a door handle. I climbed up a ladder to access his bedroom through the window. The window is very narrow, so I just managed to squeeze through. I knocked on the window to get the Brother's attention and politely asked if I could come in. After a brief conversation, I handed the Brother a radio (walkie-talkie) and my secateurs and proceeded head-first into the bedroom, over a wooden unit and onto the floor. We both got out through the bedroom door, so it was a successful rescue. Something to laugh about!



How much contact do you have with the Brothers?

I would say occasional contact, I'm normally busy going about my work. I respect their privacy but will always greet them in passing and they're always polite and friendly. We occasionally talk about our days and share the odd story.

How have you coped with the drought?

I take pride in achieving a well-maintained lawn. The grounds frame the buildings and hopefully give passers-by the impression of a tidy, well-kept site. I think there is nothing better than a lush green lawn. When I visit other gardens, I particularly enjoy seeing well maintained borders and lawns and clever design. I want anyone who visits St Cross to have that same experience. When the drought started to have an impact, firstly on the lawns and then on the borders, it felt like our efforts were being undone, and there was a sense of losing control. Grasses by their nature are drought-resistant so I was certain that the lawns would spring back once we got some rain. The one good thing was that there was no grass to cut for two months so I could help around the site with other things I wouldn't normally have had time for.



Are there any other particular challenges?

Stepping into this role was relatively easy due to my previous experience. I started in the middle of summer and hit the ground running. I found my feet and got to know the staff, Brothers, Friends of St Cross and folks from the parish. The main limitation was that there was only me to get the work done. In my previous role there was a

team of 25 volunteers over the week, and you could get a lot done with that kind of resource. I had to learn to work differently whilst keeping the standards as high as I could. St Cross is a much smaller site, but for a team of two (Gardener and Groundsman) I think we do a worthy job.

Is there anything special for the future you would like to do?

I would like to work on improving the soil structure beneath the lawns, to allow the grass to recover more quickly from the many events that we hold here at St Cross and any future droughts. There are methods to do this which allow the organisms in the soil to thrive and to fixate nitrogen, creating a healthy root zone for the grass. Also scarifying once a year to enable nutrients and oxygen to get down to where they're needed. We must be patient.....

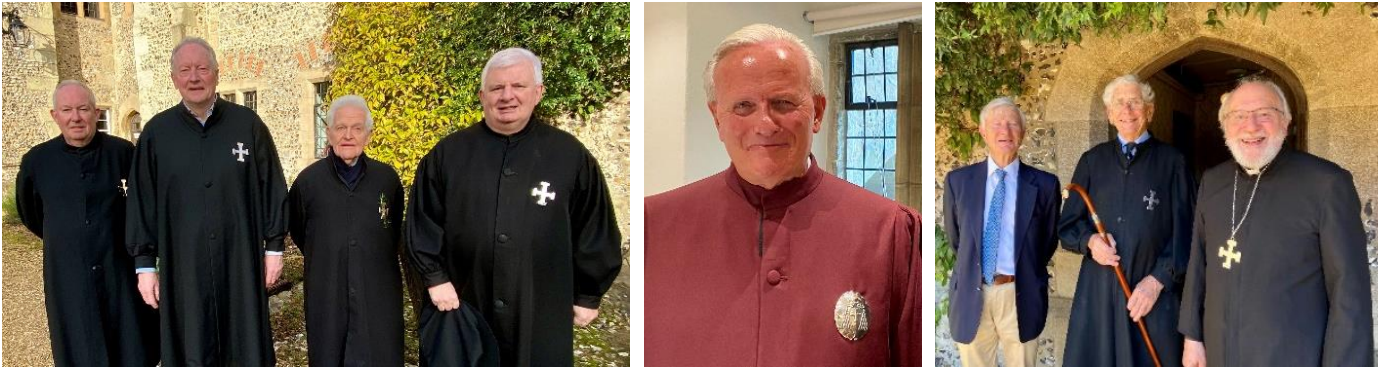


News from the Brothers – our Honorary Friends



The Master and Brothers, autumn 2022.

The Brothers were able to enjoy more activities in 2022 as the pandemic restrictions eased. Five new Brothers were gowned during the year, and we have been delighted to meet some of them at Friends' events. Two Brothers left during the year – Senior Brother John Hodges, who had lived at the Hospital for over 30 years, is now in a nursing home, and Brother Bob Howard-Jones, who had been at the Hospital for about ten years, left for a care home but sadly died recently (in January 2023). Brother David Kilmister became Senior Brother in September 2022, to fill the vacancy caused by Brother John Hodges' departure. Four Brothers have moved flats during the year so that work can start on a refurbishment programme, which it is hoped will eventually include all the flats at the Hospital.



Brothers Richard Smith, Jonathan Draper, Douglas Cox and Peter Brown gowned to the Hospital Foundation in 2022; Brother Jeremy Allerton, gowned to the Almshouse of Noble Poverty in 2022; and Brother David Kilmister, appointed Senior Brother, September 2022, standing between the Chairman of the Trustees and the Master.

There have also been a number of changes amongst the staff at the Hospital. Reverend Philip Krinks left as Priest in Charge of the Parish of St Faith in May 2022 to take up the post of Bishop's Chaplain to Bishop Debbie, whilst Reverend Terry Hemming retired as Master of the Hospital in the autumn. Both positions were filled by Father Dominik Chmielewski, whose profile appears on pages 15-16. Louise Salman replaced Louise Bainbridge as the Hospital Architect, whilst Lucy Wills, the Deputy Clerk, left at the end of the year.

To mark the departure of Terry and Ruth, and to thank them for their ministry at the Hospital, the Brothers gave them a farewell afternoon tea in the Hundred Men's Hall. Brother Bevis gave a speech and Terry was presented with a beautiful, engraved glass jug to mark the end of his ministry; and Terry and Ruth each received a personalized wine glass engraved with their name, as well as a little something to fill them with!



The retiring Master and his wife (centre) and the glass gifts (left and right) presented to them at their farewell tea, November 2022.

In June, the Brothers celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II with a special afternoon tea. Brother Bevis purchased a Jubilee flag which was flown on its own flagpole in the Quadrangle during the Bank Holiday weekend. At the tea, the Brothers presented engraved glasses to the Hospital staff for all the support they had provided during the pandemic, whilst the Chairman of the Trustees gave each of them an engraved sherry glass to mark the Jubilee. Brother Emeritus John Goodman received his Jubilee glass when he visited the Hospital on his 101st birthday in August.



Above: Brother Bevis Hillier in front of the Jubilee flag held up by Brother John Leathes and Brother David Kilmister; and the flag flying in the Quadrangle, May 2022.

Below: An engraved sherry glass commemorating the Jubilee; and the Master presenting a glass to Brother Emeritus John Hird, shown with his daughter Anita (right) and Avril Steele, the Warden (centre back).



In 2022, the Brothers certainly made up for the quieter years of the pandemic, with a number of outings and activities. The Social Committee became active once again and interesting visits were made to the Royal Logistics Corps Museum at Worthy Down, to Milestones Museum in Basingstoke, to the D-Day Museum at Portsmouth and to the Bombay Sapphire Gin Distillery at Laverstoke, whilst in August the Brothers were welcomed at Winchester Cathedral by Dean Catherine Ogle and Canon Andy Trenier for a Choral Evensong commemorating the Hospital Founder and twelfth century Bishop of Winchester, Henri du Blois, who is buried at the Cathedral. Several Brothers also joined the Friends' activities including the trip to the Isle of Wight (see photo on page 11).



Brothers' visits to the Royal Logistics Corps Museum, 4th February 2022; and to Bombay Sapphire Gin Distillery, Laverstoke, 26th September 2022.



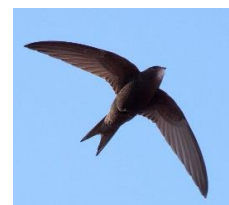
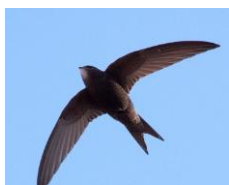
The Master and Brothers with Canon Precentor Andy Trenier and Dean Catherine Ogle in Winchester Cathedral Quire, 8th August 2022. (With thanks to Reverend Terry Hemming for the use of this photograph).

In the early months of 2022, the Brothers enjoyed afternoon tea at the home of retiring Hospital Trustee, Rosemary Andreae and her husband, whilst later in the year they visited the former Master in Gosport and the Chairman of the Trustees and his wife at their home. The Brothers also enjoyed excellent pub lunches at The Shoe at Exton, the John Barleycorn at Cadnam, and locally at the Queen Inn.



Brothers enjoying tea with retiring Hospital Trustee, Rosemary Andreae, February 2022; and visiting the home of the Chairman of the Trustees, Jonathan Cooke, June 2022.

Meanwhile the avian residents of the Hospital – the swifts who now live in 35 nest boxes around the site - became the subject of a short feature about the work of Hampshire Swifts, in the BBC evening programme ‘The One Show’ on 24th August 2022. Chris Packham, CBE, is shown below with Catriona Morley, Clerk to the Trustees during the filming in June.





Coronation Year Appeal

Our Patron, Alastair Bruce, reminded us at the summer party – and again at the New Year Reception in January 2023 - that as well as celebrating the wonderful heritage of the Hospital of St Cross, we should also be looking to the future and encouraging younger members of the community to support our charity. In this year of the King's Coronation, we would like to attract 'Coronation Friends' to support us, so please consider enrolling members of your family as Friends, perhaps treating them to a subscription as a birthday gift.



John Pringle, Jonathan Cooke, the Master and Alastair Bruce at the summer party, 13th May 2022.

In the same vein, and in the spirit of renewal and also volunteering, which King Charles III has stressed should be the focus of our Coronation Bank Holiday in May 2023, we would like to appeal for Friends to join us on the Board. Some of our Trustees, including our Chairman, have worked hard for the charity since it was founded in 2011 and whilst they are happy to continue, the Board would also welcome the energy and ideas which 'new blood' usually brings. So if you are interested, or know another Friend who is, please get in touch!

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