

**English
Catholic**



**History
Association**

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NEWSLETTER

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CONTENTS

News and Notes

Upcoming events

Visit reports

Articles

Future Programme

Back cover

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NEWSLETTER ARTICLES AND FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS

always welcome

Please send contributions to the Editor Mrs Sheila Mawhood, the ECHA Publicity Officer at the address on page 3. [By email please and if possible saved with file extension of .doc in Word, photos in .jpg format.

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NEWS & NOTES

- I apologise for the late arrival of your September newsletter. We had a change of speaker for the afternoon slot at our AGM, so I held fire to give you a few details. We are very fortunate that Dom Geoffrey Scott who is one of our Patrons and is the Abbot at Douai, is able to come and talk to us. I recall our visit to Douai a couple of years ago. A magnificent place and it was a very informative afternoon spent there. So please come to the AGM on 21st October.
- I have website news for you. Regarding our website administrator. Lynne Hunter Johnston, who has been South West Regional Organiser for some years now, has had to stand down as she has moved abroad for a period with her husband, James. She will be continuing to update our website due to the wonders of modern communications but we are seeking a new person to take over as Regional Organiser in the South West of England. Would any of our members be interested? If so, please be in touch with our Secretary, Mrs Angela Hodges.
- The Regional Co-ordinators are encouraged to suggest to the Committee possible venues for visits and possible speakers in their area and, ideally, to organise such visits and meetings. All necessary help would be given by the Committee.
- We have been contacted by a Benedictine Nun, Sister Beda Brooks OSB from the Abtei St Walburga in Eichstätt, Bavaria which is 100 miles north of Munich. Sister Beda has published a history of St Walburga (a Wessex kinswoman of St Boniface). St Walburga was born in Devon around 710. The publication is available from Minster Abbey (St Mildred's Abbey) In Thanet Kent. I have not been given any other details, such as the price but will attempt to give you more info in the December newsletter. She has also published a history of Minster Abbey.

UPCOMING EVENTS GUIDE

Saturday 21 October Day Conference and AGM St John the Evangelist Church in Bath.

Our morning will be Dr Giles Mercer, the author of the recently published biography of Bishop Brownlow. He will be presenting this time on St Alphege. Here again, to refresh your memory are some notes on this Saint, notes which Giles sent to us.

St Alphege: Saint of Bath and Saint for our Times

Alphege, born in Bath in 954, became a monk at Deerhurst in Gloucestershire and then at Bath, where he was a (much-visited) hermit on Lansdown and later abbot of the community in Bath.

His inclinations were towards the contemplative life but his abilities and leadership qualities meant he was needed for wider responsibility in the Church.

Made bishop of Winchester in 984 he led that diocese with determination, compassion, and courage for twenty years, after which he was translated to Canterbury at a time when England was being ravaged by Danish invasions.

Alphege was captured by the Danes and a ransom was demanded for him. He would not allow this to be paid, because he did not want the people to suffer further. For this he was killed brutally by Danes at Greenwich in 1012.

His life sheds light on reformed monasticism, on diocesan life, and on perennial issues of justice, faith, witness, and evangelisation. The cult of St Alphege, endorsed especially by St Anselm, was one of the greatest of the pre-Reformation period. Today his life and example provide inspiration across the Christian spectrum and beyond, but he deserves to be much better known.

After lunch, our Patron Dom Geoffrey Scott will present to us. As we go to press, the title of his presentation had not been advised.

Dom Geoffrey has been Abbot since 1998. He also acts as Librarian and Archivist and teaches Church history at Blackfriars Hall, Oxford. Currently he is also President of the Catholic Archives Society.

VISIT REPORTS

London - The Museum of the Order of St John in Clerkenwell and The Charterhouse, former Carthusian monastery. Saturday 8 July.

We were lucky that the worst of that now forgotten early summer heatwave had relented when we travelled to London on Saturday 8th July. It was pleasantly warm and sunny. The capital is a different animal on weekends with offices closed and the commuters at home. But the area round Farringdon Tube and Clerkenwell was unexpectedly quiet. Not a single tourist coach in sight. And the only tourists around seemed to be us, a group of the 20 or so making our way to the Museum of the Order of St John and its Priory Church. This part of London is home to the Royal Mail Mount Pleasant Sorting Office, the magnificent Smithfield Market and the offices of ASLEF, the train drivers' union. And several pubs, cafes and restaurants. When we turned into St John's Lane we saw, at the end of the road, the Gate - St John's Gate and Arch with the Order's red and white flag flying from a mast out the front.

The Order of St John. Some brief notes on its long history. The Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem also known as the Order of Saint John, Order of Hospitallers, Knights Hospitaller **or** Hospitallers, is the medieval **Catholic** Military Order that continued into the contemporary Sovereign Military Order of Malta. It was headquartered variously in Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta over the centuries and its headquarters are now in Rome.

The Clerkenwell Priory. "In the 1140s the Priory in Clerkenwell was set up as the English headquarters of the Order. When King Henry VIII split from the Catholic Church and established a new Anglican Church, the Order in England was dissolved and all its lands and wealth were seized by the Crown. The Order was restored briefly by Henry's Catholic daughter, Queen Mary, who granted it a Royal Charter. However, on the accession of her Protestant sister, Queen Elizabeth I, the Order in England was dissolved for good.

The buildings in Clerkenwell were put to different uses in the years that followed. During the sixteenth century, they were used as the offices of the Master of the Revels. Thirty of Shakespeare's plays were licensed here.

In the eighteenth century, the Gate was briefly used as a coffee house, run by Richard Hogarth, father of the artist William Hogarth. Dr Samuel Johnson was given his first job in London at St John's Gate, writing reports for The Gentleman's Magazine. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Gate was used as a pub, The

Old Jerusalem Tavern, where artists and writers, including Charles Dickens, used to meet.." *Notes from the Museum website.*

The modern Order of St John in England was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria in 1888. Our guide explained that the symbol of the Order, a white eight-pointed cross on a black background, is an international symbol of first aid. It is known as the logo of St John Ambulance, emblazoned on the sides of ambulances and on the uniforms of its highly trained volunteers. However, the eight-pointed cross was also worn on the robes of those first Brother Knights in the hospital in Jerusalem, and it has remained unaltered through the centuries, as an enduring emblem of humanitarian care, and of a charity that dates back almost 1000 years.

There was a gift shop inside in the reception area, the starting point of our tour of the site. **The Link Gallery**, our first port of call boasts a stone wall which is part of the original structure of The Gate and Arch, from 1504. The opposite wall, of glass, housed many and various items of the Order's collection. And that painting on the wall at the end of the Gallery? A Caravaggio - **The Cardsharps**. I see on the Museum website that the painting had been commissioned by a wealthy patron whilst Caravaggio was still in Rome. At a later point, fleeing Rome following an accusation of murder, the painter sought refuge with the Order of St John on Malta. And while a member of the Order he continued to produce memorable works of art.

As our tour progressed through the various floors of the Museum (by creaking wooden and some stone spiral staircases) we saw many other paintings, plus manuscripts, ceramics, carvings and furniture that was Maltese or Ottoman.. Many of their possessions have sadly never been properly identified or catalogued so our guide was at a loss sometimes, so tell us a great deal, if anything about their origins,

The magnificent Chapter Hall had rows of the portraits of many members of the Order of St John dating back to the 17th and 18^h centuries. Some crests were much older. A comment from Nigel Parker, our Westminster Diocese ECHA Co-ordinator, who organised the day's activities put a modern spin on the Order. Whereas most of the people staring down at us from their gilt frames in their wonderful robes seemed to be Royalty, the Nobility, the Aristocracy and Military, not all members these days come from such backgrounds. Nigel's father rose through the ranks and was invested as a Knight of the Venerable Order of St John after many decades of voluntary service in the St John Ambulance Brigade. The

Venerable Order is an Anglican foundation (not to be confused with the Catholic *Sovereign Order of the Knights of Malta*) but is open to all faiths. Nigel is also a member of the *Venerable Order*, though on the lowest rank of "Esquire" to his father and he was told by Museum staff that his membership will lapse on the death of his father, who is 89. Nigel's father became Catholic at the age of 80!

We left the Museum and walked a few hundred yards to the Priory Church of the Order of St John and its 12th Century Crypt. The church is on the northeast corner of the original 10 acre site. Long gone is the original round-naved Hospitaller church of the 12th century. In the wake of the Dissolution, the church was largely demolished, leaving only the chancel, side aisles and crypt. This battered remnant was rebuilt as a second parish church for Clerkenwell, which it remained until 1931, when it was given to the Order for its private services and investitures. Ravaged by fire during the Blitz of 1941, St John's Church was extensively reconstructed after the war.

Upstairs at street level, the church was decorated with flags, banners and paintings. A large bright airy space, often the venue these days for concerts and lectures. A different story in The Crypt, Romanesque and Gothic arches, memorial plaques, beautiful glass and an interesting tomb effigy.

A late sixteenth-century effigy identified as that of a Castilian Knight Hospitaller, Don Juan Ruiz de Vergara, who died at sea fighting the Turks near Marseilles (Ill. 161). Donated in 1915 by Sir Guy Laking, Bart, Keeper of the London Museum and a member of the Order, it had formerly belonged to Valladolid Cathedral. Dating from about 1575–80, the recumbent alabaster figure is attributed to Esteban Jordán, active in Valladolid at that time and later court-sculptor to Philip II.

Vergara is shown dressed in full plate armour, with the Order's eight-pointed cross on his breastplate and robe. His head rests on two finely carved cushions, which, with the lion and sleeping page at his feet, are characteristic of Spanish funeral effigies of the period. The base, in the form of a tomb-chest decorated with shields, was designed by C. M. O. Scott in 1916, when the effigy was brought to the church.

Notes from <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

And so to lunch. A few of us dined at a pub serving artisan pies. And excellent pies and ale at that.

We regrouped at the **The London Charterhouse a former Carthusian monastery.**

If you take a look at their website you will see that in January 2017 the Charterhouse opened its doors to the public for the first time since its foundation in 1348. And to add to the sense of occasion, our tour guide for the afternoon was the actor, Richard Franklin, who played Captain Mike Yates of U.N.I.T. (United Nations Intelligence Taskforce in Dr Who in the Jon Pertwee era.

We met our guide in a very modern conference room and were given a brief history of Charterhouse.

Early records show that In 1348, a 13-acre plot of land in *Spital Croft*, north of Long Lane was rented from the Master and Brethren of St. Bartholomew's Hospital for a graveyard and plague pit for victims of the Black death. A chapel and hermitage were constructed, renamed *New Church Haw*; but in 1371, this land was granted for the foundation of the London Charterhouse, a Carthusian Monastery.

Each of the twenty-five monks had his own small building and garden., Thomas More came to the monastery for spiritual recuperation. The name *Charterhouse* is derived as an Anglicisation of *La Grande Chartreuse*, whose order founded the monastery.

The monastery was closed in 1537, yet another victim of the Dissolution of the Monasteries. As it resisted dissolution, the monastery was treated harshly: The Prior John Houghton was hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn and ten monks were taken to the nearby Newgate Prison, nine of these men starved to death and the tenth was executed three years later at Tower Hill. They constitute the group known as the **Carthusian Martyrs**.

In May 1611 it came into the hands of Thomas Sutton (1532–1611) of Knaith, Lincs. He was appointed Master of Ordnance in Northern Parts, and acquired a fortune by the discovery of coal on two estates near Newcastle upon Tyne which he had leased. Later, upon moving to London, he carried on a commercial career. In 1611, the year of his death, he endowed a hospital on the site of the Charterhouse, calling it the Hospital of King James; and in his will he bequeathed money to maintain a chapel, hospital (almshouse) and school.

His will was hotly contested but upheld in court, and the foundation was finally constituted to afford a home for eighty male pensioners ("gentlemen by descent and in poverty, soldiers that have borne arms by sea or land, merchants decayed by piracy or shipwreck, or servants in household to the King or Queens Majesty"), and to educate forty boys.

From the outset, Charterhouse established a reputation for excellence in hospital care and treatment, thanks in part to Henry Levett M.D, an Oxford graduate who joined the school as physician in 1712. Levett was widely esteemed for his medical writings, including an early tract on the treatment of smallpox. Levett was buried in Charterhouse Chapel.

The school, Charterhouse School, was removed to new buildings near Godalming in Surrey in 1872.

Today. The Charterhouse has 13 residential flats and 3 houses that are leased at commercial rates to private tenants. The residents of the almshouse, both male and female, are known as 'Brothers'. This is a purely traditional term for those living in this community and acknowledges the past when there was a monastery on the site.

We were shown – and sat in the Great Hall where the Brothers sit together to eat their meals, then the Great Chamber where Queen Elizabeth I held court during the first days of her reign, Wash-house Court associated with the medieval monks of the Charterhouse and Master's Court which revealed the opulence of Lord North's Tudor mansion. Our tour ended in the magnificent gardens which have been designed in an English country garden style featuring roses, herbaceous borders, ancient mulberry trees and a small pond. There was a small coffee shop next door and a few of us retired there for coffee and cake and a chat with our guide Richard Franklin.

Ten out of ten to Nigel Parker for organising such an interesting and rewarding day in London.

Sheila Mawhood

ARTICLES

Luther and the English Reformation

Hardly an issue of our newsletter comes out with no reference to the events of the 16th Century which impacted on the Catholic History of England and reverberates still. It is right to reflect on the events that followed 31st Oct 1517 when an obscure German monk nailed his 95 theses on the door of Wittenburg's castle church. Not that that actually happened but it was probably the day when he sent his theses to his bishop. Besides mentioning the historical facts, which are well known anyway, it is necessary to examine the theological issues that became so controversial at that time and which still causes disunity among Christians.

The other personality to loom large is of course Henry VIIIth. Born in 1491 he became king in 1509 on the death of his elder brother. Note his young age, still a teenager! He married Catherine of Aragon a few months later. She had been the wife of his brother who had just died. Henry VIII was outwardly devout, hearing two or three Masses every day. However, he had a roving eye and no pretty woman escaped his attention. Besides making Catherine pregnant many times (only Mary survived to adulthood) he had many mistresses. He had Mary Boleyn before marrying her sister Anne. A priapic king indeed! But what increasingly pre-occupied him was the continuation of the Tudor dynasty. But he had nothing to do with the ideas Luther was expressing and wrote or co-wrote in 1521 *Assertio Septum Sacramentum* which so pleased Pope Leo X that he gave him the title 'Defender of Faith', a title the monarch still uses even when the faith referred to is the Catholic Faith!

Luther's original complaint was about the selling of indulgencies, the laxity of the clergy and the worldliness of the Bishops. And he was right. However he began to question the fundamental tenets of the Catholic Faith:- the Sacraments, Purgatory, the Mass, the real presense in the Eucharist and a little matter of 'justification by faith(alone)'. He also called into question the paramount position of the Pope. His ideas disseminated with the help of the new facility of printing, equivalent to the internet in our own times. Henry was loyal to his Faith until he was unable to secure the annulment of his marriage to Catherine. Becoming head of the Church in England would solve that problem. The Bishops would now do what he told them and increasingly to disobey put their lives in peril. Henry became harsher and more tyrannical and ruthless. Yet he still went to Mass everyday.

Who profited from the dissolution of the Monasteries? Henry mostly but also the Lords and Nobles of the land. Who suffered most? The ordinary prople. No medical help now from the Monastic Infirmarys, no food given freely and

generously to those who had none. So the portrayal that the overthrow of the Catholic Church was welcomed wholeheartedly by all the populace was, yes, 'fake' news. This has been shown conclusively by Eamon Duffy in *The Stripping of the Altars* and others over the last forty years. But William Cobbert, who was instrumental in the emergence Hansard, wrote a history of the Reformation between 1824 and 1827 deploring its effect on the ordinary person. The rich got richer and the poor poorer. Catholic emancipation came in 1829.

But what about Lutheran theology? Luther had no time for Aquinas and did not like academics. He regarded human nature as utterly corrupt and incapable of any good. He relied only on Scripture and what he himself meant by it. For him it was the Scriptures that gave us the Church while in fact the Church existed and functioned before any New Testament writings appeared. It is the Church that gave us the Scriptures. He did not accept Aquinas's 'transubstantiation' explanation of the real presence. The 'alone' put in his 'justification' theory is not there in Romans. The actual verse of Rom 3.28 reads, 'a person is justified by faith and not by what the Law tells him to do'. For a full exposition of 'justification' see *Alister E McGrath's An Introduction to Christian Theology pp 437 to 449*.

The Council of Trent rejected Luther's view of justification. Cardinal Pole who had originally accepted Luther's idea bowed to the will of the Council and missed being elected Pope by one vote. He was a relative of Henry. When Henry died Edward took over and made many of Luther's ideas part of the teachings of the Church of England. Mary did reverse things for a time but under Elizabeth I, a true daughter of her mother's (Anne Boleyn) Lutheranism, England became firmly Protestant. But it was Henry's break with Rome that started it. Much wrong was done on both sides. As many Catholics died for their Faith over the years as Mary stupidly put to death in her reign. An unfortunate and gruesome score-draw.

Henry Wansbrough in his book *The Use and Abuse of the Bible* suggests that had Luther been listened to properly and counselled wisely he could well have remained a Catholic. Lyndal Roper in her book *Martin Luther Renegade and Prophet* refers to Luther's grim legacy of hostility between the various Christian Churches. He fell out with the other reformers. He hated the Jews, another grim legacy, as this quote shows '*The Jews kiss, eat, drink and worship the Devil's excrement*'. His self loathing and chronic constipation did not leave him and he died fat and married. He was so convinced of his utter sinfulness yet had a curiously relaxed attitude to human sexuality.

For a deeper and thorough account of Henry VIII's part in all this see *G.W. Bernard's 'The King's Reformation. Henry VIII and the remaking of the English Church'*

At last after 500 years it is good to see that there is more co-operation and

understanding between the various branches of Christianity then ever before.

Christopher Bull

Pat Hazell

Patricia Hazell, a former ECHA member, died peacefully in Bristol on 16th August, aged 87 years.

Pat was a convert in her early 20's and, not one to do things by halves, had, within a few years, given up her teaching career and she became a nun in the Poor Clares at their convent near Hereford. She was, then, a redhead! - and would "fight her corner" in any "difference of opinion" with gusto!

I do not think the necessary disciplines of life in the convent would have come easily to her; anyway, after 20 years at the convent she decided that this was NOT God's calling for her and she re-entered "the world." (She did make regular visits in subsequent years to her former "sisters -in-religion" and even organised a coach trip for her fellow parishioners in Bristol to visit the Hereford convent.)

Her various jobs, back in the world, included at different times being housekeeper to several priests, most notable to me was that she had that role for some years to Monsignor William Mitchell who was then the Vicar-General of the Clifton Diocese. She was a frequent visitor to Downside Abbey and also visited Mount St. Bernard in Leicestershire. She made good friendships with a number of the monks who have all expressed sadness at learning of her passing.

She was never a car driver but, as an ECHA member, she attended at many of our visits. If a lift was not possible for her she was prepared to use the train where relevant; in this she was greatly helped by Alan Whaits, another Bristol member and retired railways employee, who would prepare for her "spot on" individualised timetables!

I knew Pat Hazell for 24 years as a fellow parishioner - and friend. We first met when she agreed to play the organ at our parish church for the wedding of our younger daughter. The world is the poorer for the passing of such a quirky, warm-hearted delightful lady.

Bill Patten

The Annual Martyr's Walk.

Each year in June there is the Martyr's Walk in honour of the brave men & women which have been made saints now.

This starts in the churchyard of the Anglican church, St. Sepulchre which is opposite the Old Bailey. The original Execution Bell is still kept in the church in a glass case in the south nave. At each church where we listened to a short talk about the events that took place, given by Joanna Bogle & prayers with the Jesuit Priest, Father Nicoletti.

For the condemned prisoners, on the night before being put to death. the executioner would ring his bell and call out "*All you that are in the condemned hole do lie, Prepare you for tomorrow you shall die. Watch all & pray, the hour is drawing near that you before the Almighty must appear. Examine well yourselves in time repent, that you may not to eternal flames be sent. And when St. Sepulchre's Bell in the morning tolls, the Lord above have mercy on your souls.*" The prisoner would be taken out from Newgate Prison & put on a cart for a long 2 hour journey to Tyburn Gallows. The Clerk would ring his bell & shout out "*You that are condemned to die, repent with lamentable tears, ask mercy of the Lord for the salvation of your souls.*"

We walk in their footsteps to the second church at Ely Place, where another short talk is given by Joanna & followed with prayers by Fr. Nicolette, & then onto St. Anselm's & St. Cecilia's church. After stopping & prayers are said once more, we follow on to St. Giles-in-the-Fields. At first it was a Leper Hospital but after the Dissolution it became a church under Henry VIII. Some Martyrs were buried here. We enter in to say prayers & sing a hymn & short talk once again. Then we continue to St. Patrick's, Soho Square where the same things take place again. Lastly we finish off at Adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Montmartre or more commonly known as Tyburn Convent. First we gather around "Traffic Island", Marble Arch, which is on the junction of Edgware Road and Bayswater Rd. On the ground a plaque is where the 3 sided Tyburn Gallows stood to hang three people at a time on. The words engraved on it read "The Site of the Tyburn Tree" with a cross in the middle of it. It was installed there first in 1964 & was restored & blessed & again in 2014.

In Tyburn Convent there was a special service called The Martyr's Service. While we waited for the last arrivals we sang a hymn called "Faith of Our Father." All the martyrs were individually called out of course. Some of the service was in English while other parts were in Latin (which I couldn't understand at all).

After the service finished, we all went downstairs for a late afternoon buffet. Pews are placed behind the buffet tables but there is never enough room as you can imagine. It's very friendly & everyone talks to everyone.

I am so proud that I was able to join in and go on the Tyburn Walk as I try to each year.

Alice Sanders

2017 PROGRAMME

- **OCTOBER Saturday 7 London Westminster Abbey.** Mass in the chapel of St Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. *Bookings from The Guild of Our Lady of Ransom, Walsingham.* Tel: 01328 820658. Booking is essential.
- **OCTOBER Saturday 21 Bath** Day Conference and AGM St John the Evangelist Church.
Morning Speaker Dr Giles Mercer:
St Alphege: Saint of Bath and Saint for our Times.
Afternoon speaker - ECHA Patron and Abbot of Douai, Rt. Rev. Dom Geoffrey Scott, OSB, MA, PhD, FSA, FRHist S.,
Title of presentation to be announced on the day.
Booking Form enclosed

