

Oranges & Lemons



COVER STORY: Friends' Annual Concert

The Friends of St Clement Danes

Donation welcome from non-subscribers
towards the cost of this magazine

Issue No. 43
Spring 2017

The Friends of St Clement Danes

Registered Charity No. 1048757

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O&L Bulletin

Izabela Seabrook (*Editor*) & Daniel Kettle Esq (*Manager*)

The Friends of St Clement Danes

Bulletin
No. 43
Spring 2017

 **ROYAL
AIR FORCE**
**St Clement
Danes Church**



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“Enabling the sacrifices of the past to support the challenges of the future”

Editorial Note

Iza Seabrook



Welcome to the spring issue of Oranges & Lemons. We're all looking forward to some warm sunshine this coming spring but do bear in mind the warmth you can find at St Clement Danes...come visit and say a prayer. The world needs it right now.

If you have articles or pictures you wish to submit for the next issue, please email me: iza.seabrook@gmail.com

THINGS TO DO

- **Tell your friends and neighbours about us**
- **Visit us whenever you are in London**
- **Pray for all who work and visit here**
- **Help out on one Sunday a year**
- **Become a guide to a group of visitors**

Please contact us: 020 7242 8282 or **stclementdanesh1@btconnect.com** or through the website if you can help out, especially on a Sunday; be a sidesman / woman, macebearer or read a lesson; we can support and encourage you in your new duties.

Chairman's Letter

Group Captain Mark D Heffron CMgr FCMI RAF



It is already spring of 2017 and welcome to the latest edition of Oranges & Lemons! A year ago I reported that we had, in the previous November, hosted our best ever Annual Concert. I also set the challenge: to take the event in November 2016 (with all players well established) to an even higher level, to appeal to an even wider audience. Everyone rose to that challenge and through a huge team effort the concert really was a massive success. More

people attended than ever before, we raised more money to assist in our work and most importantly we were able to give back to all who support the Friends, many of whom told me that “it just keeps getting better”. Thank you to everyone who assisted in making the evening so special and thank you for attending.

We also held our AGM on the afternoon of the concert and I was able to report an increase in membership numbers through the links to RAF Stations and through wider publicity. The rate of increase is still too slow, but we will work on that further this year. I also reported that over the course of 2016, 75% of our income was turned into grants (the majority of the remainder remaining in our funds!), but that we also need to fundraise if we are to tackle larger cost items for the church. All agreed to support us in the raising of funds for the vital work we do.

We also welcomed a new member to our Board of Trustees: Squadron Leader Lorna Hoban, who has agreed to take on the role

of Membership Secretary. Lorna is serving in the Ministry of Defence and is keen to continue the good work of encouraging more serving personnel to join the Friends. Wg Cdr Chris Hill (known affectionately as 'CJ') stepped down from this role. However, he remains with us on the Board where I intend to use his Friends knowledge! Thank you CJ for all you have done as only the second Membership Secretary we have had since the formation of the Friends!

Finally, may I thank you all for your support at the concert and throughout the year. I hope that your 2017 is prosperous and I am sure the Friends work will be too.

Trustees' Book

Located within the crypt at St Clement Danes is The Trustees' Book. The book contains the names of people who have died since leaving the Royal Air Force.

Names can be included at the request of family members of the deceased, for which a fee of £40 is payable.

To download the application for an entry in The Trustees' Book, please scroll to the foot of the following page within St Clement Danes website:

www.raf.mod.uk/stclementdanesh/friendsofscd/friendstrustees.cfm



From the Resident Chaplain

The Rev'd David Osborn RAF BD AKC PGCE



By now the worst of the winter storms should be over and we will all be looking forward to the spring and summer.

Much has been going on in the church over the past few months, most noticeably scaffolding has been erected to enable work to be carried out on the Gibbs part of the steeple. (That is the top, circular part of the tower which is slowly giving way – but then it is 300 years old.) The good news is that this has not affected the

ministry of the church or the number of pilgrims and visitors, if anything it has drawn attention to the church. Passers-by have called in to find out what is going on and have stayed to look at the church or join in with our worship.

Thanks to the generosity of the Friends we have been able to enhance the work of the church; just two examples to give you an idea: an 'A-frame' has been purchased to enable us to move the grand piano safely and a gold burse and veil has been acquired to match our gold vestments. (Just in case you are hazy about what a burse and veil set is, it is the coloured cloth and cover that goes over the eucharistic vessels on the altar.)

We all remain very grateful for the work and support of the Friends and I am sure you will be heartened to know that the church is in good spirits with much to look forward to in 2017.

COVER STORY: Friends' Annual Concert

Daniel Kettle



In today's unsettled world of seemingly unstinting change, be it for right or wrong, on Thursday 24 November 2016 it was reassuring to have our fantastic Friends' Annual Concert! The band, the choir and of course the unique setting of St Clement Danes Church make this a must-do event in the calendar.

296 (Stoke Newington) Squadron, Air Training Corps again kindly provided the guard of honour as people arrived to go into the Church. The concert itself comprised the Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment and the Choir of St Clement Danes to excellent effect. Flight Lieutenant Chris l'Anson impeccably



conducted the band and the talented Simon Over, Director of Music at St Clement Danes, ably conducted the choir.

We were treated to Jerusalem, When the Saints Go



Marching In, the Finale Organ Symphony and the Royal Air Force March Past amongst many other renowned pieces. We even ventured into a festive song with Good King Wenceslas, very apt, as the Church earlier that day had been adorned with a large and beautifully decorated Christmas tree!



The evening was enjoyed by everybody and well attended with all the pews full. Guests included Air Vice-Marshall David Stubbs - Chairman of the SCD Trust, The Venerable (Air Vice-Marshall) Chaffey - Chaplain-in-Chief and Mrs Opie - Treasurer and Board member of the

SCD Trust. For over two hours, including an interlude for drinks, the Church basked and bustled in a vibrant atmosphere of sound and music.



The event was ‘topped and tailed’ by a very warm welcome from Group Captain Mark Heffron – Chairman of the Friends of St Clement Danes – and, in closing, the always entertaining thoughts from our Resident Chaplain The Reverend David Osborn.

The Trustees of the Friends of St Clement Danes would like to give great thanks to everyone involved for making it another excellent concert. The ticket and refreshment donations made a substantial contribution to the success of the evening aiding the Friends to continue their good work in supporting the Church and its community.

The next Friends Annual Concert will be held on Thursday 30 November 2017, so please do enter the date in your diary now and tell your friends and family! We look forward to seeing you there for another superb evening of music and song.

Strange but True

Chris Hill, the outgoing Membership Secretary



By mid-1994 it had come to the then Chaplain in Chief's attention that the Chairman of the Friends, Air Commandant Dame Felicity Peake, had proposed the purchase of a computer. Being concerned at the proposed expenditure he contacted my Director at the Directorate of Communications and Information Systems to seek agreement for me to attend the next meeting of the Friends. My task was to professionally enquire 'what the computer was to be used for, and who was going to use it'.

Duly armed I not only attended the next meeting but was remitted to attend future meetings to ensure that if a computer was needed it was properly specified, particularly as most software was specialised two decades ago.

In 1995 came the sad news to the Friends that the then Membership Secretary, Alan Dockerill, had died. With the committee being small, and as the only member without a specific role, I became your Membership Secretary! Whilst I didn't acquire the 'quill pen' with the original Membership Secretary's records, I did acquire all the original ledgers and paper records. At this time all members' records ran from the date on which they joined, so the Membership Secretary sent annual reminders rather regularly and by snail-mail.

I had to improve things and firstly created a digital version of the original Friends headed paper and started the process of writing

standard renewal letters, firstly for single membership, then joint membership and then for annual renewals. A year later it was agreed that we should standardise the membership year as 1 July to 30 June. Fortunately this did not affect our life members, and we still have a couple of members who pay their annual membership by Standing Order and their dates have not changed.

Next, a whole raft of initiatives were embarked upon when we realised that we were not taking advantage of the Gift Aid opportunities available to charities. A rewrite of our Constitution was required and submitted to the Charity Commission for Registration on 21 August 1995, and soon afterwards we registered with HMRC for Gift Aid. Our next piece of work was linked to the production of Oranges & Lemons and gaining HMRC agreement that the magazine provided a business content e.g.: 'Notice of the AGM', 'AGM Agenda', 'AGM Minutes' or other business information in it. It would therefore not be classed as a member's benefit which might compromise our Gift Aid claim status.

In early 2000 we realised that we were not meeting the correct proportional representation at the AGM that our constitution required. After some tortuous interaction with the Charity Commission, a Special Resolution was agreed and voted on at an Extraordinary General Meeting, on 15 May 2005, where we changed the AGM attendance requirement. All is therefore in place and I have enjoyed being able to support the Friends over the past 21 years. I am truly delighted that our current Chairman has found a serving volunteer to take over the Membership Secretary role and who is also based in London; so a very warm welcome to Squadron Leader Lorna Hoban, from what I believe is, the second Membership Secretary to the third! Good luck for the future.

Oh, and by the way, the Friends still haven't found a need to buy a computer yet!

From the Registers

We are delighted to share in families' excitement when they come to St Clement Danes for a Baptism or Wedding.

Baptisms

Lucy Delphine Bowerman (4 September)
Isobel Dulcie Bowerman (4 September)
Thomas Martin Roden (4 September)
Rufus Oliver Hague (2 October)
Alfred Leo Alexander Lockwood (2 October)
Christabel Josephine Salt (16 October)
Bronte Rose Metcalfe (6 November)
Rory John Frazer (4 December)
Wilhelmina Tatum Jenkins (4 December)

Weddings

Simon Wesley Curtis & Pamela Gettings (2 September)
Andrew Ross Barton & Laura Amy Whiskerd (10 September)
Daniel John Hanscombe & Kim Michelle Butler (16 September)
Benjamin J Sinton House & Bryony M Isabel Wood (1 October)
Paul Andrew Grimes & Lyndsey Harrison (8 October)
Sean Keith Paul Reynolds & Lindy Elizabeth Cameron (15 October)
Barrie David Morris & Joanna Elizabeth Harle (28 October)

**Requests for Baptisms and Weddings should be made
to the Resident Chaplain**

Readings and Services*

Date	Service	First Reading	Second Reading	Third Reading
5 March Lent 1	Eucharist and Baptism	Genesis 2 verses 15-17 & Ch 3 verses 1-7	Romans 5 verses 12-19	Matthew 4 verses 1-11
12 March Central Flying School Colour Lay up	Morning Prayer	Genesis 12 verses 1-4a	John 3 verses 1-17	
19 March Lent 3	Eucharist	Exodus 17 verses 1-7	Romans 5 verses 1-11	John 4 verses 5-42
26 March Mothering Sunday	Matins	Exodus 2 verses 1-10	Luke 2 verses 33-35	
2 April Passion Sunday	RAF Formation Service			
9 April Palm Sunday	Eucharist	Isaiah 50 verses 4-9a	Philippians 2 verses 5-11	Passion according to Matthew
14 April Good Friday	Good Friday Liturgy	Isaiah 52.13-53.12	Hebrews 10.16-25	Passion according to St John
16 April Easter Sunday	Eucharist	Jeremiah 31 verses 1-6	Acts 10: 34-43	John 20: 1-18
23 April Easter 2	Matins	Acts 2 verses 14a & 22-32	John 20 verses 19-31	
30 April Easter 3	Eucharist	Zephaniah 3 verses 14-20	Acts 2 verses 14a & 36-41	Luke 24 verses 13-35

7 May Easter 4	Eucharist and Baptisms	Genesis 7	Acts 2 verses 42-47	John 10 verses 1-10
14 May Easter 5	Matins	Genesis 8 verses 1-19	John 14 verses 1-14	
21 May Easter 6 RAF Club Service	Eucharist	Genesis 8 verses 20-9 verse 17	Acts 17 verses 22-31	John 14 verses 15- 21
28 May Easter 7	Matins	Ezekiel 36 verses 24-28	John 17 verses 1-11	
4 June Pentecost	Eucharist and Baptisms	Numbers 11 verses 24-30	Acts 2 verses 1-21	John 20 verses 19- 23
11 June Trinity Sunday	Matins	Isaiah 40 verses 12-17 & 27-31	Matthew 28 verses 16-20	
18 June Trinity 1 Friends of SCD Service	Eucharist	Exodus 19 verses 2-8a	Romans 5 verses 1-8	Matthew 9 verses 35- 10 verse 8
25 June Trinity 2	Matins	Jeremiah 20 verses 7-13	Matthew 10; 24-39	
2 July Trinity 3	Eucharist and Baptism	Jeremiah 28 verses 5-9	Romans 6 verses 12-23	Matthew 10 verses 40- 42
9 July Trinity 4	Matins	Zechariah 9 verses 9-12	Matthew 11 verses 16-19 & 25-30	
16 July Trinity 5	Eucharist	Isaiah 55 verses 10-13	Romans 8 verses 1-11	Matthew 13 verses 1-9 & 18-23
23 July Trinity 6	Matins	Isaiah 44 verses 6-8	Matthew 13 verses 24-30 & 36-43	

30 July Trinity 7	Eucharist	1 Kings 3 verses 5-12	Romans 8 verses 26-39	Matthew 13 verses 31- 33 & 44-52
6 August The Trans- figuration	Eucharist and Baptism	Daniel 7 verses 9, 10, 13 & 14	2 Peter 1 verses 16-19	Luke 9 verses 28- 36
13 August Trinity 9	Matins	I Kings 19 verses 9-18	Matthew 14 verses 22-33	
20 August Trinity 10	Eucharist	Isaiah 56 verses 1 & 6-8	Romans 11 verses 1-2a & 29-32	Matthew 15 verses 21- 28
27 August Trinity 11	Matins	Isaiah 51 verses 1-6	Matthew 16 verses 13-20	
3 September Trinity 12	Eucharist and Baptism	Jeremiah 15 verses 15-21	Romans 12 verses 9-21	Matthew 16 verses 21- 28
10 September Harvest Thanksgiving	Matins	Deuteronomy 8 verses 7-18	Luke 12 verses 16-30	
17 September Battle of Britain	Battle of Britain Service			
24 September Trinity 15	Matins	Jonah 3 verses 10-4 verse 11	Matthew 20 verses 1-16	

*Correct as we go to press, but please check the website closer to the date or phone the church to confirm on 020 7242 8282.

All services start at 11am unless specified otherwise

Easter Lilies

As you may be aware it is our custom at St Clement Danes to decorate the church at Easter with lilies. Traditionally, these flowers are given in memory of loved ones who have died; and their names are recorded and remembered in church.

Should you wish to do so, you can make a donation towards the cost of the Easter Lilies.

Please send your donation in an envelope to:

The Resident Chaplain (Easter Lilies)
St Clement Danes Church
Strand
London
WC2R 1DH

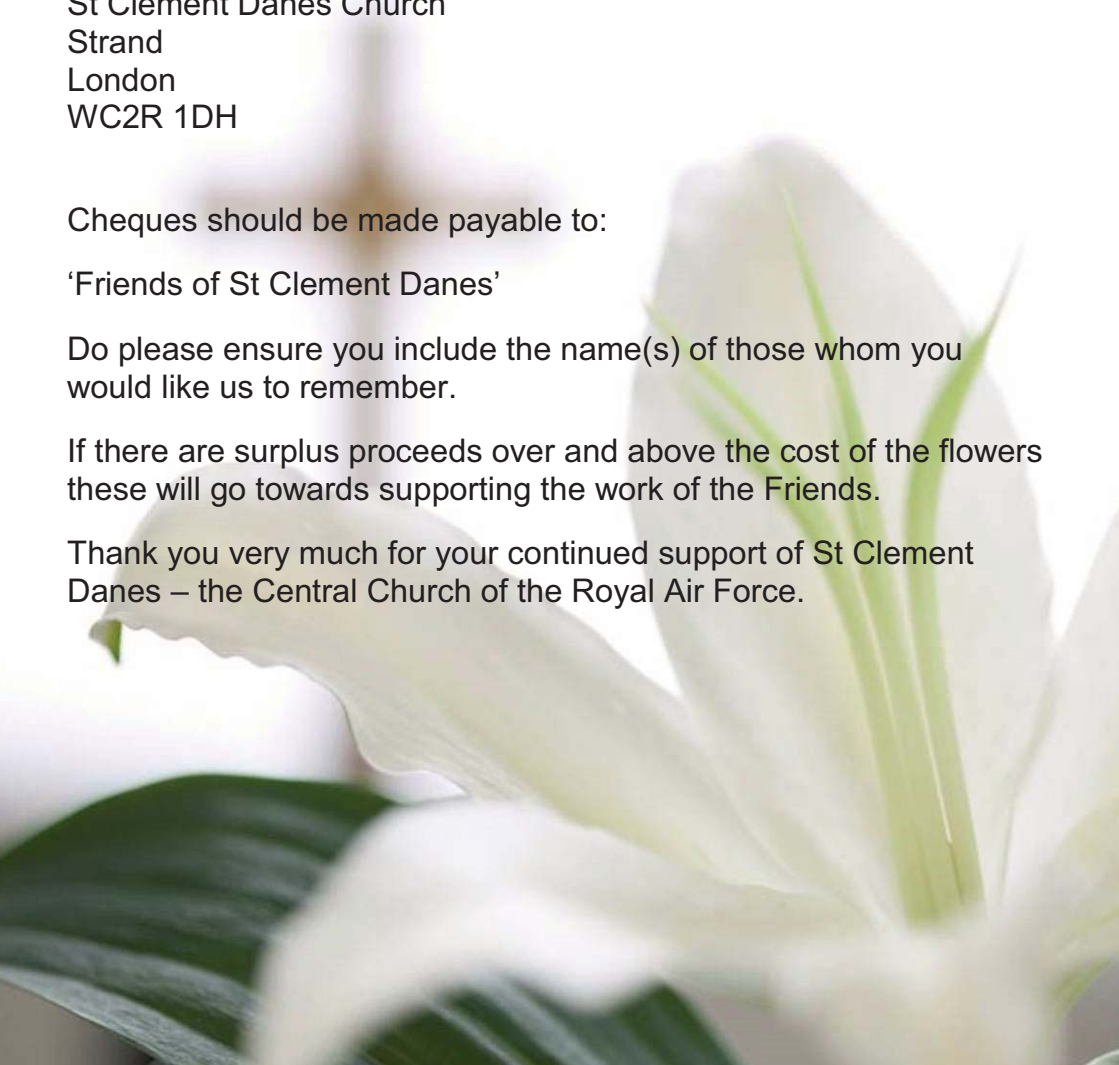
Cheques should be made payable to:

‘Friends of St Clement Danes’

Do please ensure you include the name(s) of those whom you would like us to remember.

If there are surplus proceeds over and above the cost of the flowers these will go towards supporting the work of the Friends.

Thank you very much for your continued support of St Clement Danes – the Central Church of the Royal Air Force.



Minutes of the AGM of the Friends of St Clement Danes, held in the Crypt Chapel

Thursday 24 November 2016

Present

Gp Capt Mark Heffron RAF – Chairman
Wg Cdr Di Bentley – Co-opted
Ms Christine Davies
Wg Cdr Chris Hill – Membership Secretary
Sqn Ldr Lorna Hoban
Mrs Mary Holtby
Gp Capt Peter Holtby
Sqn Ldr Sherry Jessup RAF – Council
Wg Cdr Tina Jessup RAF – Council
Mr Daniel Kettle – O&L Manager
Mr Peter Neville-Lewis – Council
Mr James McKinley
Wg Cdr Mick Meyer – Council
Revd David Osborn RAF – Resident Chaplain and Co-opted
Sqn Ldr Em Rogers RAF – Treasurer
Flt Lt Ian Perring RAFVR (T) – Council
Mr C C K Priebe – Secretary
Mr David Savage
Ms Peta Walmisley
Mr E Robin G Youle
Mrs Jennifer Youle

Apologies

Mr John Bayles
Mrs E Collas
Mr Mike Collas
Gp Capt Mark Day
Mr Robin Law
Revd Dr Giles Legood RAF – Council
Ven Canon Ray Pentland – President
Mr Roger Round – Council
Mr Barry Wallis

1. Prayer

The Resident Chaplain opened the AGM with a prayer.

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted.

3. Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman reported that the focus of the Friends Trustees this year has been on increasing membership numbers by reaching out to serving RAF personnel. To this end a network of representatives across all RAF Stations and Units has been established to raise the profile of the Friends and a schedule of subscription fees proposed for AGM approval, based on rank, to ensure membership is affordable. Membership numbers are increasing.

The relationship between the Friends and the main St Clement Danes Trust is strong. The Trust Chairman and Chaplain in Chief will both be attending this evening's Friends Annual Concert. An update on the activities of the Friends remains a standing agenda item at meetings of the main church Trust on which The Chairman of the Friends sits. Similarly, support from the RAF for the Friends is firm, including from the Chief of Air Staff as Patron.

Regrettably, owing to illness, Mr Roger Round, a current Trustee of the Friends, has had to step down from his role as Trustee. Thanks for his service will be offered at the appropriate time.

The Friends has been active in making grants to the church this year. Grants totalling £13,540 were made during the last financial year for items including: filing cabinets for music scores; an 'A-frame' to enable the grand piano to be moved around the church safely; a burse and veil for communion services; robes for the Director of Music and personal panic alarms for staff in the church.

Finally, the Chairman informed the meeting that the Band of the RAF Regiment would be performing in today's Friends Annual Concert alongside Simon Over, the new Director of Music, and the church choir. Following on from the success of last year's concert a brand new musical programme had been put together, for which it would be well worth attending.

4. Election of Officers and Trustees

The Chairman thanked Trustees for their service over the past year.

Mrs Jenny Youle proposed the election of the following Trustees for the coming year:

Gp Capt Mark Heffron RAF – Chairman
Ven Canon Ray Pentland – President
Wg Cdr Chris Hill
Sqn Ldr Lorna Hoban RAF – Membership Secretary
Sqn Ldr Sherry Jessup RAF – Joint Events Manager
Wg Cdr Tina Jessup RAF – Joint Events Manager
Mr Daniel Kettle – O&L Manager
Revd Dr Giles Legood RAF
Mr Peter Neville-Lewis
Wg Cdr Mick Meyer
Flt Lt Ian Perring RAFVR (T)
Mr Christopher Priebe – Secretary
Sqn Ldr Em Rogers RAF – Treasurer

Co-Opted

Wg Cdr Di Bentley
Revd David Osborn RAF – Resident Chaplain

The resolution was seconded by Ms Peta Walmisley and passed unanimously on a show of hands.

5. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last AGM had been made available via the Spring 2016 edition of O&L magazine and the Chairman asked if there were any questions. There being none, approval was proposed by Wg Cdr Chris Hill, seconded by Mr Peter Neville-Lewis and passed unanimously on a show of hands.

6. Treasurer's Report

Copies of the Receipts and Payments Account for the year to 30 June 2016 were distributed (see Appendix I).

The Treasurer detailed the various sources of cash inflows and outflows. Grants made in the year represented 75% of receipts. O&L publishing and distribution costs represented 20% of payments and administrative expenses 10%. Last year's Friends Annual Concert generated a profit of £70.

The 'Restricted Funds' column in the accounts relates to a donation made specifically to promote music at St Clement Danes. At the end of the accounting year to 30 June 2016, £1,500 of the original donation was available to carry forward.

In response to a question on the profitability of the Friends Annual Concert and where expenditure on the event is incurred, the Treasurer indicated that Concert costs included: refreshments, band meals, Director of Music and choir fees. The RAF Regiment Band provided their services for free as a donation to the Friends. Although not a money-spinner it was thought that the Concert generated much goodwill amongst Friends and was a key event in the Friends diary. For many Friends it marked the beginning of the Christmas season.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Wg Cdr Di Bentley, seconded by Gp Capt Peter Holtby and passed unanimously on a show of hands. Given the scale of Friends Receipts and Payments,

an independent audit was not required by the Charity Commission and not recommended by the Trustees, given costs involved.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

The Treasurer reported that as at 1 January 2016 membership numbers stood at 695 and 686 as of today's date. 16 new members joined the Friends, one life member was reinstated. 12 members passed away since the start of the year, 3 had 'gone away' and 11 had cancelled their subscription. Currently there are 406 life members, 3 honorary members, 4 corporate members and 273 paying annually. Of the latter category, 226 pay by direct debit, 22 by standing order and 29 by cash/cheque (including 4 overseas members).

The Membership Secretary explained that, as previously resolved in the AGM, subscription rates are reviewed every two years. Copies of the new Subscription Fee Schedule, as recommended by Trustees, were therefore distributed (see Appendix II).

Approval of the Schedule was proposed by Wg Cdr Chris Hill, seconded by Wg Cdr Di Bentley and passed unanimously on a show of hands.

The Chairman informed the AGM that the current Membership Secretary, Wg Cdr Chris Hill, would be stepping down from his role this meeting, to be replaced by Sqn Ldr Lorna Hoban. He would remain a Trustee of the Friends. He would also be able to assist the church through his role as Master of St Clement Danes Freemasons Lodge.

The Chairman thanked Wg Cdr Hill for his 21 years of service to the Friends as Membership Secretary, pointing out that he was only the second Membership Secretary in the long history of the Friends!

8. Any Other Business

The Chairman reported that repairs to the church bell tower were likely to take place shortly. The matter would be discussed tomorrow in a scheduled meeting of the Trustees of the main church Trust.

The two lavatories inside the church would be available for attendees of this evening's Annual Friends Concert to use.

Mrs Youle was delighted to see Padre Thomas, the principal individual responsible for setting up the Friends, featured in the Autumn 2016 edition of Oranges & Lemons Magazine.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 30 November 2017 at 4pm with the concert to be held that evening at 7pm.

C C K Priebe
Hon Secretary

Group Captain M D Heffron
Chairman

A POW Air Gunner (Part 2)

Albert D Gunn ACA

(from Scottish Saltire Aircrew Association)

After interrogation by the Germans, which included an attempt to get Albert to sign a form giving details about his Squadron and aircraft type (supposedly to obtain Red Cross parcels and with which he refused to comply), he was sent to Stalag IVB Prisoner of War



camp. He continues in his own words.

"It was dark as we approached Stalag IVB and the weather was very cold with slush on the ground. We could see dozens of figures at the wire, all shouting and waving, but could not understand what they were trying to convey to us by their signs. We were soon to find

out. We were marched into the de-lousing area which meant stripping completely and all the clothes were put through a chamber where they were exposed to chemicals which killed off unwelcome 'visitors'. We were ordered into a room with shower heads on the ceiling and had to wash thoroughly, which was very welcome, and then into the next room where warm air dried us off. Two Italian POWs were waiting to give us typhus vaccinations, which seemed to us very crude. One scratched your arm with what looked like a pen nib and the other daubed on some paste. I managed to dodge that particular operation which made some men quite ill. The Russian hairdresser you could not miss. He sat with his cutter and we all had our hair removed which, of course, you could not hide. The real horror came when the clothes came from de-lousing and I, like many others, found my flying boots missing, taken by the Germans for soldiers serving on the Russian front. That was what the shouting was all about when we entered the camp. The choice of footwear left to us was wooden soles with a piece of material to put your foot into - useless for the camp conditions.

The Stalag was situated on the east bank of the Elbe near a town called Muhlberg. It was a transit camp for working parties going out to work for the Germans, in theory, on non-military jobs. As aircrew were all sergeants or above we were not allowed to be used in this way. Being billeted with mainly army personnel, many of whom had been POWs for some time, led to quite a lot of friction as discipline in the RAF was much slacker. At morning roll-call, we tended to mess about, always being last to fall-in and often the guards had to go into the huts in search of late sleepers. This, of course, led to the whole parade being kept waiting in the cold for long periods.

For the first six months we had a fairly regular supply of Red Cross parcels, which was really a life saver. Usually, issued on a Monday, we were also allocated 50 cigarettes each and, as Jack was the only smoker in our group, we put 25 cigarettes into a pool to buy extra food and we each had 25 to spend as currency in the camp. Gerry and I usually bought a bar of chocolate which was contained in the Canadian parcels and, when available, a loaf of bread for 50 cigarettes out of the pool to be shared by the three of us.

The bread we tried to buy was smuggled into the camp by various people, mainly French prisoners who went out to work daily in Muhlberg. We also 'bought' from Russians who were employed in the never-ending job of pumping the 'dry' cesspit toilets into a large barrel-shaped container on wheels and pulling it into the countryside and spraying it over the fields as manure. They were known as 'Scheissen Torpedoes' and it was easy to realise that the camp could be located in the dark by the awful odour which surrounded it. We went off dealing with the Russians when we found out that they were smuggling in the bread suspended in the 'Torpedoes'. As all deals were done in the dark, one or two people were caught out by exchanging their cigarettes for a loaf and when they got back to camp, finding the inside had been scooped out and stuffed with a piece of rag leaving only the crust.

Life progressed through 1944 with, of course, the highlight being 'D' Day on the 6 June and our thoughts turned to being home by Christmas. We were kept up-to-date with the news each evening by a radio in the camp for which the Germans were constantly on the search, fortunately without success. The search team was led by a guard nicknamed Alpine Harry as he always carried a climbing axe.

He would choose some unfortunate's bunk and tear it apart in his futile search.



During the summer of 1944 an event took place which caused us some upheaval. A New Zealander, named Ward, had escaped from a camp in Italy and had joined a partisan group in the mountains. He was eventually captured by the Germans who considered him a

criminal and he had been charged with murder. He was due to stand trial at a civil court in Dresden which was about 20 miles from our camp. The bulk of the RAF prisoners were in a compound of eight huts and, on the morning Ward was due to go to Dresden, he was taken to the de-lousing chamber to be freshened up for his journey. The route from the punishment cell to the showers meant crossing the camp main road and as he returned with his guard, dozens of RAF prisoners surrounded him and, eventually, when the main guard was called out and order restored, Ward had disappeared.

One morning, roll-call was called as usual with the normal casual response until, on leaving the hut we found each hut surrounded by SS troops with machine guns covering the whole compound. The black uniforms and aggressive attitudes made us realise that this

was serious and we were instructed to parade with all our belongings ready to move out. We had to go before a group of Gestapo sitting at a table who checked us off against our photographs. We were then told to make our way to the far end of the camp near the main entrance and move into huts vacated by Dutch POWs. All the Germans' efforts were in vain as Ward was not found and, in fact, lived the rest of the time in captivity in the camp."

Albert continued to endure POW camp life with its ups and downs, the 'ups' being receipt of the occasional Red Cross parcel and 22 letters on his 20th birthday, and the 'downs' being discovery of an escape tunnel when it was collapsed by a tractor which fell into it, the need to sleep three in a side-by-side double bunk when 100 Americans were added to the occupancy of each hut and an attack



on the camp by two American 'Mustangs' killing four prisoners and injuring eight. On the 23 April 1945 a lone Russian army horseman rode into the camp heralding the replacement of

German guards by Russians. Albert continues his account of what then transpired.

"Despite our hopes of getting home quickly and countless rumours, nothing happened. On the 1 May the Russians put up some decorations to celebrate May Day and proceeded to have a party in the old guard block. Many of us took the opportunity to raid the office block and remove all our records which, in the case of the

RAF men, included photographs. The Russians were most upset and insisted that we all fill in new forms giving personal details. I often wonder what some poor Russian clerk made of it all, as nobody gave their real name or address in the UK as requested. Days went by with food being the prime concern, along with when we would leave the camp. Scrounging became a dangerous game. The Americans were moved out on the 2 May but by 4 May rations were raw potatoes and still no light or water in the camp.

On Sunday 6 May we left Stalag IVB at last at 2.30pm. We crossed to the west bank of the Elbe at Strehla and arrived at Riesa about 7.30 in the evening. We were astonished to be welcomed by the Germans with cold drinks and invitations to their homes, and our group of five peeled off into the home of a lady with a mentally handicapped daughter. The reason for the invitation became only too apparent when we saw how the Russian army of occupation conducted itself. Any woman of any age was fair game for the soldiers and the women had found that having an Allied serviceman in their house meant that a Russian would not enter.

A force of Russians with green bands on their caps moved into town and quickly asserted their authority over everyone. All Allied POWs were rounded up and billeted in an ex-German Panzer unit barracks; unfortunately without any beds and we had to sleep on the floor. Food was still scarce and we set off on the scrounge for provisions. Gerry and I found some allotments where we acquired some vegetables and Gerry used his country skills by obtaining a rabbit from a hutch in one of the gardens. Potatoes were found by some of the others and Jack located a cider factory, to which Cyril and I returned and obtained a jar of cider. The factory had two very large tanks where we assumed the cider was allowed to ferment

and when we arrived two Russian soldiers were sitting by the outlet valves trying to get cider to drink. One of the soldiers got impatient and riddled the tank with his sub-machine gun and we left them with cider pouring out of the tanks up to their knees and happily scooping it up and drinking it. The date was 8 May and we listened to Churchill giving his famous speech before settling down to our celebration dinner.

To say the dinner was unforgettable would be an understatement as I have never been so sick in my life. The rabbit was not cooked enough, the dehydrated potatoes were 'off ' and the cider was raw. Whatever the reason, I have never knowingly eaten rabbit again. To make things worse the Russians, who had now put a guard on our billets, celebrated VE Day by firing-off a large quantity of captured ammunition which was lying all over the place. They seemed to take great pleasure in firing at the barracks' windows which, in our miserable state, meant getting to the toilet was difficult."

It was the 23 May before a fleet of American army lorries arrived and transported Albert and his POW colleagues to an airfield at Halle, near Leipzig, where they were properly fed and accommodated until, two days later, 100 'Dakotas' arrived at the airfield to fly them to Brussels from where they were flown in 'Lancasters' to Oakley and thence by train to a tremendous reception at Cosford. Finally arriving at his home in Burntisland, Albert met a neighbour who told him "They are not expecting you." He was too polite to say other than "I'm sorry about that but I'm not going back!"



Photo credit: Iain Blake Photography on Facebook

News from 296 (Stoke Newington) Squadron Air Training Corps

Cadet Warrant Officer Jordann Webb

Welcome to the latest article on behalf of 296 (Stoke Newington) Squadron ATC. We hope the end of 2016 was accompanied by family and a well-earned rest and we would like to wish you a very Happy New Year for 2017.

We are saddened to inform you that after 26 years of service our Commanding Officer Flight Lieutenant Hatch RAF VR(T) has announced his retirement and is stepping down from his post.



Flt Lt Hatch is considered by the Cadets to be one of the greatest



and kindest Officers in London Wing, thanks to his participation on weekends away, annual camps and more

importantly our parade nights. Generations of young Air Cadets are familiar with the kind-hearted and dedicated volunteer who always managed to spark happiness amongst the Cadets (especially the cadet NCOs) with his selflessness and good humour.

The Squadron respects and is grateful for his long service to the boys and girls in Stoke Newington. His presence will be deeply missed and we would like to wish him the very best for the future.



Every cloud, though, has a silver lining and for the Squadron this is our new Commanding Officer who is not a stranger to St Clement Danes or the Cadets.

Flight Lieutenant Perring RAF VR(T) has now officially accepted the role of Commanding Officer of 296 (Stoke Newington) Sqn ATC.

Flight Lieutenant Perring has taught Cadets their First Class syllabus and filled the

posts of London Wing First Aid (Training) Officer and London Wing Radio Officer.

Flt Lt Perring is a Trustee of the Friends of St Clement Danes (since May 1996) and helps organise the Cadet participation in the Annual Friends Concert



with, usually, the Central Band of the RAF and the Choir of St Clement Danes. On behalf of all member of 296 (Stoke Newington) Sqn we wish him well in his new post.



In November the Squadron had two very important occasions. The first of which was kindly hosted by St Clement Danes as a service was held to bless our new Squadron Banner.

Weeks of drill and late night shoe-shining was necessary for this very memorable occasion. I myself had the honour of being the Banner Bearer which I shall never forget.

Friends and family of the Cadets attended the church service, followed by refreshments and quite

a few photos....

The Speaker for Hackney Council Cllr Sales kindly attended along with Lt Col Morriss the Deputy Lieutenant for The London Borough of Hackney. Plus Wing Commander Gale RAF VR(T) who is the Officer Commanding London Wing Air Training Corps.

The Service was conducted by Rev David Osborne, Resident Chaplain for St Clement Danes, along with the London Wing Chaplain Rev Martin Howse who kindly conducted the blessing. The Cadets and Staff were honoured by the support shown to the Squadron by all the guests who attended.

Our second November event was Remembrance Sunday and the Squadron attended three different parades on the day (which

involved quite a bit of rushing around London in the early hours of the morning).

We attended the parade at Bermondsey War Memorial at 11am with



our newly blessed Squadron Banner. Then we made our way to Stoke Newington Town Hall for another two minutes'

silence with Hackney Councillors in attendance. From there we marched through the streets of Stoke Newington showing the usual pomp and circumstance with a swing in our step and sharp striking of the ground.

Finally we ended up on Lavell Street (which is a short distance from the Squadron HQ) and slow-marched down the road where 13 cherry trees line the street in remembrance of the 13 Cadets from 296 (Stoke Newington) Squadron who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The Cadets ended 2016 with the usual Christmas Pizza night, dressed in their civilian clothes. We took time to reflect on the past year: enjoying and celebrating our achievements in the Cadets and other aspects of our lives. Christmas brings a chance to be kind and think of others in the season of peace. The Cadets would like to wish you a belated Happy Christmas and hope it was an occasion of joy as we look forward to a prosperous 2017.



Legacy Appeal

If St Clement Danes is as important to you as the thousands of people it remembers within its walls, we would ask you to consider leaving a gift in your Will for the future preservation and maintenance of this beautiful sanctuary.

More information is on our website: [**raf.mod.uk/stclementdaneshome**](http://raf.mod.uk/stclementdaneshome)

Application to become a Friend of St Clement Danes

Please complete and return to: The Friends of St Clement Danes,
Strand, London WC2R 1DH

Current Categories to join the Friends are:

Normal Membership by Direct Debit

Corporate Rates please contact the Membership Secretary at the church.

Serving RAF Personnel please contact your Station Representative

Membership renewals are made from 1 July each year. Part-year subscriptions may be made initially to cover an intermediate period.

Please tick the category that you are applying for:

- ☐ **I wish to join as a single member** and authorise a debit of £22pa**
- ☐ **We wish to join as joint members** and authorise a debit of £33pa**

*** From my account until further notice; I enclose a completed Direct Debit instruction (page 38)*

- ☐ I enclose a completed **Gift Aid Declaration** (turn page)

Name and Surname.....
RAF Rank (if applicable).....
Address.....
.....
.....Postcode.....
Telephone.....Email.....
Signature.....Date.....

GIFT AID DECLARATION

I would like The Friends of St Clement Danes to reclaim tax paid on all donations and subscriptions I have made to this charity since 6 April 2011 and any such future payments. I realise that I can only sign this Gift Aid certificate if I have paid enough in Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax to cover the amount that all charities that I donate to will reclaim for each tax year. Council Tax & VAT do not count and I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given. I am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less income tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donation in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

I know I can cancel this declaration at any time by advising The Friends of St Clement Danes.

Signature.....Date.....



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Please fill in the whole form and send it to: Hon Treasurer, The Friends of St Clement Danes, Strand, London, WC2R 1DH

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5. Reference Number
(Hon Treasurer to complete)

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6. Instruction to your Bank or Building Society
Please pay The Friends of St Clement Danes direct debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with The Friends of St Clement Danes and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

2. Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

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3. Branch Sort Code
(from the top right-hand corner of your cheque)

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Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.

Signature(s)

Date



Our mission is to encourage growth in the membership of the Friends of St Clement Danes through promotion of what St Clement Danes provides spiritually, socially and culturally.

Central Church of the Royal Air Force
Strand, London, WC2R 1DH
www.raf.mod.uk/stclementdaneshome



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