

Friends of St Cross Hospital Winchester

Registered charity number 1143173

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NEWSLETTER

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2012

Foreword by the Chairman and Treasurer

RICHARD CHISNELL | JOHN PRINGLE

On behalf of all the Friends Trustees, a very big thank you to all who have signed up as Friends. We are delighted with the response to the establishment of the Friends scheme, resulting in over 276 memberships between our launch in September 2011 and the end of February 2012. If we make allowance for the significant number of joint memberships, we have in excess of 400 Friends. This is a magnificent start and reflects the high esteem and affection in which the Hospital is held.

The Friends' first New Year Reception on Friday 6 January attracted in excess of 200 Friends, resulting in the need to use both the Brethren's Hall and the Hundred Men's Hall. Our inaugural Friends' Lecture, given by the well-known architectural and archaeological historian John Crook, was attended by more than 120 Friends on Friday 16 March. Your Trustees hope to see you at our first Friends' Day on Saturday 19 May, when we will hold our AGM, listen to a talk, take tea together and enjoy a Festival Evensong.

Our accounts for the year to 31 December 2011, which will be presented at the AGM, really only cover six months of activity, but they were pretty busy ones! Of our 276 Friends, nearly 30% have committed themselves to



Bishop John Baker gives a blessing at the launch of the Friends of St Cross Hospital Winchester



Friends enjoying the launch reception in the Brethren's Hall

membership for more than one year, a tremendous vote of confidence in our new charity and a great boost to our financial position. This will also keep administration to a minimum, for which we are most grateful. We have recently received the proceeds of our first Gift Aid claim (over £3,500), and there is more to come. Many of you have set up Standing Orders to renew your memberships automatically. May we ask those of you who paid by cheque to consider this when we send out our renewal notice? We will include a form in case you can agree to do this.

Arrangements for the first Friends Outing – to Christchurch Priory on Wednesday 20 June – are now complete and full details of this, and the Friends' Celebration Day on Sunday 15 July, will be distributed at the AGM and also posted on the Friends website (www.friendsofstcross.com). The Celebration Day promises to be very special, commemorating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the forthcoming London Olympics. Do come if you can and bring family members. It should be a day to remember.

Our objective, as you already know, is to support the Hospital Trustees as they concentrate on preserving our beloved St Cross Hospital for future generations, while at the same time having as much fun and friendly fellowship as we can squeeze into our busy diaries. We would welcome your comments and ideas at any time. We, as Trustees, act on your behalf so encouragement and constructive criticism will always be most welcome!

Thank you for your Friendship.

The Role of the Master of St Cross

REG SWEET

The office of Master of St Cross is one that dates back to the foundation of the Hospital in around 1135, and, for me, it was a huge privilege to be licensed as the present Master at the beginning of this year. Having been Chaplain here since 1999 and never expecting to be offered the post, I was extremely moved to find myself being invested with the silver cross that has been worn by so many Masters and to be installed in the Master's stall in the church.

Of course, my appointment has meant that the roles of Master and Priest-in-charge of the Parish of St Faith have been divided because, unlike previous Masters, I am unable to be a stipendiary priest due to my age. I am aware that some confusion has been caused by the separation of the two roles, and several people have asked whether it means that I will no longer be involved in the parish. I am delighted to say that I will be as much involved as ever, and that the new Priest-in-charge and I will share the ministry in much the same way as the Master and Chaplain did before.



The Bishop of Basingstoke installed Reg Sweet as Master of St Cross in 2011

My main focus as Master is the pastoral and spiritual care of the Brothers. This naturally means that on a daily basis I keep in close contact with the Brothers and the staff and try to ensure that any problems that crop up are sorted out and that the Brothers are content. As in any community, it is vital that difficulties are dealt with as soon as possible so that friction between individuals is kept to a minimum and the life of the community can flourish. In the past, the daily governance of the Hospital was also in the remit of the Master, but a few years ago the 'scheme' under which the Hospital was run was changed, with the result that authority for the community's daily running was placed in the hands of the Board of Trustees, of which the Master is a member; in practice, day-to-day administration is handled by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to the Trustees.

As Master I am responsible for the 'gowning' of new Brothers, a duty that I greatly enjoy. Gowning involves a service of investiture in the church, during which the new Brother makes promises to the Master, including 'obeying him in all his lawful and honest commands'! I then place him in his stall after he has been vested with his gown and presented with a Book of Common Prayer.

Being a member of the Board of Trustees, the Master attends the full meetings of the Board and also sits on the Welfare Committee. This enables him to keep the Board apprised of any areas of difficulty that the Brothers may be experiencing and to help to resolve any issues that may be presented. Under the new system, with the roles of Master and Priest-in-charge separated, it will be of fundamental importance that a good working relationship is developed between the two, and I am very optimistic that this will happen. The Priest-in-charge will also take on the role of Chaplain to the Hospital, and church services will continue to be shared, both on a daily basis and on Sundays.

As Master, I will continue to assist within the parish as needed.

It perhaps goes without saying that the ministries of the Master and the Priest-in-charge can only be effective when both priests are supported by all concerned, whether in the Hospital of St Cross or in the Parish of St Faith. I am extremely grateful to all who help, both with their prayers and in so many practical ways. May it ever continue so.

Joinery Repairs in the Brethren's Hall

LOUISE BAINBRIDGE

My role as consultant architect at St Cross involves advising the Trustees on the condition of the fabric of the Hospital and its church, recommending priorities for repair and developing proposals for improvements. My detailed surveys and schedules of work are discussed with all relevant parties before we obtain permissions and invite tenders. Once a contractor has been appointed, I make regular visits to check on progress, quality of workmanship, programme and costs. Whenever work might affect the historic fabric or require opening up that might result in findings of historical interest, we consult the archaeologist Dr John Crook.

I recently spent a morning looking closely at the staircase and panelling in the Brethren's Hall. Measuring and drawing are the best ways to understand how something was put together, to see what has been repaired and changed over the years, what has deteriorated and why, and what needs attention now. Such work is all the more interesting when put in the context of the history and significance of the place and the people who have used the building.



The sixteenth-century staircase in the Brethren's Hall was built for Bishop Fox



The lattice infill of moulded struts between the oak balustrades

The current staircase was built for Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester from 1501 to 1528. Bishop Fox is thought to have stayed occasionally at St Cross in later life, and this staircase enabled him to reach the Master's Lodgings, then in the Beaufort Tower and connecting through to the Porter's Lodge, more easily than the previous stairs. A new opening was made through the hall wall directly into the Beaufort Tower. The previous steps had joined the spiral stairs of the turret via a doorway that is now blocked but whose outline is just visible in the stonework of the south wall, and obvious on the turret side. The 'new' staircase cuts across the window recess, which itself had been moved in the 1440s, when the Beaufort Tower was built.

The oak balustrades, with a lattice infill of moulded struts and panelling to the side of the stone steps, are not the finest joinery of the period, but they are a remarkable survival of good, practical Tudor craftsmanship. Bishop Fox's emblem of a pelican is carved out of the top of the bottom post, now well worn but still recognisable. The upright and angled pieces of lattice are arranged one way round in the upper section, but reversed in the lower section. Has the woodwork always been limed? I wonder if the staircase was used by Philip II of Spain when he stayed at St Cross before his marriage to Mary Tudor in Winchester Cathedral in 1545? The staircase must have been in regular use by resident Masters until Abraham Markland converted the northeasterly part

of the Brothers' quarters into more commodious accommodation at the end of the seventeenth century. Today the staircase remains very much as it was depicted in nineteenth-century prints.

The panelling along the east wall is also seen in old prints; in 1851 it is shown with the triptych donated by Master Lockwood (now in the south chapel of the church) mounted in the middle. By the 1880s the triptych is mounted on top of the panelling, which had by then been reset in its current form, with cornice and bench seats supported between moulded ends, quite possibly designed by William Butterfield, who worked on the church in the 1860s.

On close inspection the effects of wear and tear and insect damage can be seen in the woodwork of the staircase and the panelling. Various repairs have been made over the centuries, some better than others. The boarding on the side of the stair is loose, and needs to be taken out to be re-supported. When this is done, accumulated debris will be collected and checked. Who knows what might have been dropped into the gap between the rail and the stone stairs over the years?

Several lattice struts have been replaced in the past, some with crude pine battens that are obvious candidates for renewal, others shaped from limed teak to replicate the oak originals. Were contrasting timbers used on purpose to demarcate repair work? A number of steel screws with round tops, now rusting, are definitely out of place.

In addition to repairs, we must consider safety in occasional use of the staircase. A flight of twenty-two treads of variable height does not meet today's standards. Reasonable improvements might be made however. For example, we might extend the handrail to the top of the stair with a demountable section that could be fitted whenever the door is opened. There is a socket in the stonework of a step near the top, so perhaps this has been thought of before?

The cornice of the eastern side of the panelling is loose, the bench end split and the broken section screwed to the staircase boarding. Of course, this all deserves sensitive and sympathetic treatment. I am now writing a Schedule of Works and recommending that careful repairs should be made by a specialist joiner in accordance with the principles of good conservation. It is important to retain as many of the original materials as possible, making new pieces fit the old without damage, and to record what has been done. I would like to think this staircase will still be there in another five hundred years!

Approaching St Cross

DENISE BAKER

In medieval times people travelling from Winchester to St Cross Hospital would have used the King's Way, from the King's Gate through the meadows and along the line of the present Back Street (once known as Nethlane or Frog Lane). This remains the most interesting approach to the Hospital today.

Standing at the junction of Back Street and Cripstead Lane, looking south towards the Hospital, you will see, on the left, the attractive timber-framed Old Farmhouse and, on the right, a terrace of Victorian cottages. The Old Farmhouse dates back to the fifteenth century, when as a medieval hall house it was one of ten local properties said to form part of the endowment of Cardinal Beaufort to St Cross Hospital. The cross-wing was built and the house improved in 1541 for a steward of St Cross, and a number of stewards lived there until the mid-eighteenth century, by which time the house had become run down and was used to house labourers. In the 1760s to 1806, the time of James Randall, a resident of St Cross who held a number of leases in the area, it was used as a 'barrack house' for troops mustered in Winchester. During the nineteenth century, still dilapidated, the house was divided into at first five and then four cottages, to be let to 'poor people'. Thus, in 1977, when St Cross Hospital sold



The Old Farmhouse and the rows of cottages in Back Street and Cripstead Lane

the property, much of the medieval and Tudor fabric was still in place and it was possible for the house to be transformed into its present attractive state.

The eight cottages on your right, extending up Cripstead Lane, are a rebuild of 1862, when Jesse Carter, a tile manufacturer and developer from Poole, bought the original five thatched cottages and the land behind them and converted them into the present row. In the late eighteenth century the five cottages belonged to Thomas Woods Knollys, later Lord Banbury, who kept careful records and noted, for example, that he had provided each tenant with two or three named apple trees. Knollys employed the wife of one of his tenants as a wet nurse for his son, although sadly the baby died of a convulsion.

Jesse Carter also built the row of flint cottages in Back Street. He sold both rows to Lord Northbrook in 1877 and they remained in the Baring family until 1926, when some were sold to the Winchester Estate Company and on to individual purchasers. Others remained tenanted property of the Baring family until they were sold by Alfred Pearsons at the Royal Hotel in 1965.

On the left of Back Street as you face south, opposite the flint cottages, are the St Cross allotments. Part of these was once gravel pits belonging to the Bishop of Winchester, although since medieval times they have been field or garden land. Pottery collected on one allotment over several years included small shards ranging in date from Roman and Saxon times to the Victorian era – evidence of the spread of mulch from the middens.

Moving south along Back Street, you will come to several 1960s and later bungalows on the right. In the front gardens of the first two, when drains were being dug, the site of a tenth-century Saxon weaver's cottage was uncovered. The cottage had burnt down and been deserted, and the loom weights were found in a row, just as they had fallen to the ground; further weights were piled up in the corner of the room. On the left, land for St Faith's Parish Hall, totalling 12 rods, was leased to the Parish of St Faith by the Master and Trustees of St Cross in 1904 and extended for a car park in 1965.

Like the Old Farmhouse, the next four houses on the left were part of the endowment of Cardinal Beaufort and belonged to St Cross from the fifteenth century. Long Meadow, the present number 3, is a combination of Cardinal Beaufort's endowment and a tenement adjoining its northern boundary that belonged, in the Commonwealth, to John Woodman. 'Mr' Woodman, a Winchester solicitor, was able to navigate the political minefield of that time, appearing to be a friend to both the Commonwealth and the Royalists. He is credited with helping to re-order the Cathedral records after the devastation of the Cathedral by Commonwealth soldiers, and yet he was also closely associated with John Lisle, a former M.P. for Winchester, who was one of the two Commissioners at the trial of Charles I and signed the King's death warrant. In 1649 Lisle was appointed Master of St Cross in place of John Lewis, who was exiled. In 1653 Lisle appointed John Woodman as Steward of St Cross and

presumably opened the way for him to own not only the tenement adjoining 3 Back Street, but also the present Brookside at the end of the street on the left. The present Long Meadow was almost certainly built by John Russell in the late eighteenth century, consolidating the site of Woodman's tenement with the leasehold house belonging to St Cross. The cellar may well date from Woodman's time. Russell was a wealthy man, as his will, drawn up in 1785 and proved in 1793, reveals. In addition to his legacies to family members, he asked that six poor men of the parish should carry him to church; the bearers were to be given half a crown each. He also asked that a half-gallon loaf should be given to every poor family in the parish. A memorial stone marking John Russell's grave, with those of other members of his family, can be found in the pavement of the south aisle of St Cross Church. The house was in the hands of the Leigh family from 1815 to 1878, when the freehold part of the property was sold to the Master and Brethren of St Cross. William Candy, a local farmer, was tenant from 1878, when the house was called Boxgrove. It came back into private hands in 1959.

For most of their existence, numbers 4 and 5 Back Street followed a similar pattern of leases and sub-letting to tenants. Number 4 was rebuilt in the early nineteenth century and number 5 probably at a similar time. Number 6 has a timber-framed rear wing that may date back to the sixteenth century. When, in 1969, it was offered for sale, a local artist described it as 'a derelict medieval barn', but it was carefully restored into a most desirable house.

Opposite stands Beaufort Villa, built in the first half of the nineteenth century in a large garden. In the eighteenth century, when it belonged to the Bishop of Winchester, the property appears to have comprised a field and a garden, with a small cottage and outbuildings, the value being in the agricultural land, but by 1850 an advertisement in the *Hampshire Chronicle* described 'A Freehold substantial brick-built residence in excellent repair, having parlour, kitchen, washhouse and four bedrooms, gig-house and stable and a supply of excellent water and a large productive garden, well stocked with fruit trees'. In 1894 William Drake Forder, a prominent citizen of St Cross and Winchester, bought the house and land and sold it on to St Cross at a time when the Hospital was increasing its property holdings.

The last house on the left, Brookside, is one of the most interesting in the area. Both its structure and surviving records indicate that a building stood on the site in the fourteenth century, when it may have been 'the house of the clerks' and associated with St Cross. John Crook's conjectural layout of 1401 places William Aley's house on the site. By 1597 the house was a property of the Queen, and still in 1615 of 'the King's Majesty'. Unfortunately no property records have been found for the fifteenth and earlier part of the sixteenth centuries, so this remains a matter for speculation. In 1653 the house was owned by 'the Commonwealth' and the tenant was John Woodman, Steward of St Cross, who, by 1662, is listed as the owner. The house remained freehold



Back Street looking north, with Brookside in the foreground

and was lived in by a succession of owner-occupiers, several of whom improved the building. William Stratton, owner from 1794 until 1809, rebuilt the front and rear sections. The internal doors and door-cases are still the early 1800s replacements. A later resident, after 1832, was John Crouch, originally a schoolmaster from Southampton, whose wife inherited property in St Cross. Crouch was a speculator, acquiring more property than he could afford, and had to sell up and move to Somerset. Just one son, who died young, lies in the ornate Crouch tomb in St Faith's Churchyard. Several owner-occupiers followed and in 1912 George Herbert Gifford, who had made a number of improvements, sold the property back to St Cross Hospital. It came back into private hands in 1969.

Opposite stands Harley House, another of the ten properties of Cardinal Beaufort's endowment. A complete set of leases exists from 1654 until 1867, after which time the Hospital let the house, or sometimes two houses, directly to tenants. Old photographs and late nineteenth-century paintings show that the house was once thatched.

During this short walk along Back Street we have sampled history from Saxon times to the present day – a fitting prelude to visiting the Hospital itself.

It is of course impossible in an article of this length to include all references, but I would be happy to share my sources with anyone who wishes to follow anything up

Brothers' News

BROTHER CLIVE McCLEESTER



December 2011 saw the gowning of two new Brothers. **Brother John Goodman** (*top far left*) was born in Devon and moved to Winchester in 1971. He spent some 30 years in the Royal Navy before becoming Bursar at St Swithun's School. His interests include hockey and chess, which he still teaches on a voluntary basis to primary schoolchildren in Winchester. **Brother Adrian Risdon** (*top centre*) was born in London. After The King's School, Canterbury, and Cambridge, John spent 30 years as one of a team of assistants to the blind poet John Heath-Stubbs (1918–2006). His passion is poetry. In January 2012 the Master gowned **Brother John Hird** (*top right*). John was born in Sheffield and moved to Winchester some 40 years ago. He trained as a teacher and, following National Service in the Royal Navy, taught in Buxton in Derbyshire, in the Cameron Highlands in Malaysia, in Berkshire as head of a village school, and finally as a Lecturer at King Alfred's College (now Winchester University). He retired in 1990.





January also saw the conversion of the Billiards Room into the **Brothers' Common Room**. The refurbishment was largely due to two generous gifts to the Brothers, the first in memory of the late Brother John Davies and the second from the family of Ryan Lim, who while studying at Winchester College regularly visited the Senior Brother. Thanks must go to all those involved in the room's renovation and to William Corbett, Chairman of Trustees, who made it happen!



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