

CONTACT OBITUARIES

For NCI's pensioners • annexe to issue no 71 • apr 2018

Obituaries note

You may know of former colleagues who have died who are not listed here: in which case please let the editor know (contact details on last page).

We learn of deaths from the Pensions Board, or press reports, or from family or friends. It is common for former staff not to be on the Pensions Board's ex-staff payroll: for example if they moved to another employer after working for the NCIs, or were ordained and their NCI previous service does not immediately show up when their death is notified to the Pensions Board, or if on retirement they did not get a Pensions Board pension but a lump sum which was then placed with a commercial pensions provider. So if your friend isn't here, please don't blame us – tell us instead!

Similarly, in a number of cases the news of the passing of those listed has come as this issue of *Contact* was being prepared, and it has not been possible to include tributes from many friends and colleagues. If you wish to record a memory or two of your own, by all means send them in for possible inclusion in a future issue.

The Very Revd Bob Jeffery



Bob Jeffery died on 21 December 2016, at the age of 88. From 1964 to 1968 he served as Assistant Secretary to the Church Assembly's Missionary and Ecumenism Council. From 1968 to 1971 he served as Secretary to the British Council of Churches' Department of Mission and Unity.

He had a varied parish ministry, and also served as Dean of Worcester and then as a Canon and Sub-Dean of Christ Church in Oxford. He returned to Church House as an active member of the General Synod, from 1983 to 1996: his obituary in the *Church Times* described him as "a Synod power", serving on the Standing and Business Committees. The *Church Times* described how at Synod he would often be found in the press gallery, "his mutton-chop whiskers a familiar sight", and he seemed to be in the know when it came to forthcoming events or appointments.

Copies of the full *Church Times* obituary are available from the editor on request.

Bernadette Kenny

Bernadette Kenny, Chief Executive of the Pensions Board, died suddenly in October 2017. A press release issued from Church House on 19 October read:

‘Bernadette joined the Pensions Board as Chief Executive in February 2011 after an extensive career in the Civil Service. During her six-and-a-half years in the role she saw through significant changes to the Pensions Board and the National Church Institutions (NCIs), ensuring they are well-placed to serve the Church for years to come.

Bernadette collapsed unexpectedly at home earlier this week. She leaves behind her husband and their three children. She was 60. The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, said: “Bernadette was a joyful Christian professional, winsome and always graciously magnanimous. “I give thanks to God for working with her. She will be sorely missed.”

Jonathan Spencer, Chair of the Church of England Pensions Board, said: “We are deeply saddened by the loss of Bernadette. We have lost more than a brilliant colleague, we have lost a force for good. Bernadette was always committed to improving the service we offered to the Board’s customers - retired clergy and lay church members. She was never one to duck a challenge.

“The issuance of £100m housing bond, changes to the retirement housing scheme, and innovative funding arrangements to de-risk the pension schemes are just a few examples of the legacy she leaves behind.

“Bernadette believed that things could always be improved for the people she worked for and with. She played a lead role in the culture change programme at the NCIs and was a champion of greater diversity and inclusion in the workplace, most recently helping to launch a network for

BAME colleagues. She also led a much more open and consultative relationship with the dioceses.

“On behalf of the Pensions Board and the National Church Institutions, we send our heartfelt condolences to her family and friends.”

Anyone wishing to send condolences can address them to c/o Lee Marshall, Chief of Staff, Church of England Pensions Board, Church House, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3PS, or by email to lee.marshall@churchofengland.org. We will ensure that these reach Bernadette’s family.

Bernadette was educated at Chichester High School for Girls and studied law at the University of Manchester. She qualified as a barrister before joining the Civil Service as a Government Legal Adviser and worked in a range of legal, policy and operational management roles before becoming Change Director at the then Department for Constitutional Affairs. She spent four months as interim Chief Executive of the Royal Parks before moving to HM Revenue and Customs as Director General, Personal Tax, in 2005.

The Church of England Pensions Board currently manages funds totalling £2.3 billion. It administers pension schemes with more than 38,000 members for more than 450 employers; assists around 25% of retiring clergy with retirement housing, and supports and maintains seven Christian retirement communities.”

The Church of England Pensions Board has announced the appointment of John Ball as its new Chief Executive. John is currently Chief Executive and Diocesan Secretary for the Diocese of Chelmsford and will take up his new role on 1 July.



Sheila Rhodes

Sheila Rhodes died in August 2017. She had worked in the Pensions Board’s Housing Department.

Mrs Josephine Stevens

Mrs Josephine Stevens, a Church Commissioners’ pensioner, passed away on 14 January 2018. She served from January 1988 to March 1996.

Jim Shelley



Jim Shelley CBE died on 18 January 2017 at the age of 84. He was the Secretary to the Church Commissioners from 1985 to 1992. He joined the Commissioners' staff in 1954, was Under-Secretary General from 1976 to 1981, and Assets Secretary from 1981 to 1985.

Jonathan Neil-Smith writes: "Rather like David Cameron and Brexit, Jim Shelley's reputation will forever be associated with the much reported £800m capital loss in the Commissioners' assets in the early 1990s. But due account needs to be taken of a long and distinguished career with the Church Commissioners, which Jim had joined as a junior member of staff in 1954. I first came across him when he was Assets Secretary in the early 1980s, before having the privilege of serving as his Private Secretary soon after Jim was appointed as the Commissioners' Secretary. I remember with considerable affection those years working closely with Jim (and his devoted PA, Sandy Meggs) in the Private Office on the then 'First Floor'.

Having been surrounded for many years by cautious civil servants from the 'Sir Humphrey' Whitehall school, Jim challenged those around him to more creative and imaginative ways of working, and was a classic 'can do' person. He was an eternal optimist, and this in the end probably proved his undoing when it came to some innovative investment decisions. But in his time the Church Commissioners did much to respond to the Church's desire for better stipends, housing and pensions for the clergy; and no record of his tenure as Secretary would be complete without acknowledging that.

Who's Who mentions Jim's love of 'country pursuits'. He was never happier than when in his beloved Hampshire countryside with his family. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time."

Maureen Webb writes: "Jim was Secretary when I joined the Commissioners and I frequently stood

in for Sandy Meggs in the Private Office. He was always a charming and jolly employer, who took care of his staff, especially when they made efforts to reach the office when storms had ravaged road and rail. He, himself, drove to work from Basingstoke with a chain saw in the boot so that nothing should deter him. He did not enjoy very good eyesight and I learned to speak to him in the Board corridor when still several feet away, otherwise he would not recognise me until we were in hand-shaking distance! The world will be a sadder place without him."

Ed Peacock writes: On my first day at Millbank in 1971 I was shown in to see Jim Shelley as the Principal of the Houses Dept in which I'd been placed. He asked me what University degree I'd got. I told him I'd got a second. There was a look on his face that I interpreted as disappointment, so I said that I'd been told it was a good second.

"You're talking to the distinguished holder of a third," was his reply. There was a twinkle in his eye that showed that his time at Oxford had indeed been well spent.

Desmond Day writes: "As it happened, I was never in the same Dept as Jim, so I have no 'societal' recollections of that kind. I remember however that he was promoted at quite an early stage to be the Principal in the Investments Dept, and I went to ask his advice about investing a small sum that I had to spare - probably thinking he would advise shares in a safe company and I would make a small fortune. Perhaps needless to say he sensibly said: "Put it in a Building Society" - and those were the days when one actually got some interest on such investments. Jim was kind and sensible in that way.

On a more general front, I remember the regular support he gave me when he was Under Secretary General at the time in the late '70s when I was Stipends Secretary and there was a restrictive government Incomes Policy, and a constant battle in the General Purposes Committee between John Smallwood (pro-increases) and David Hopkinson (broadly against). Jim was also very encouraging

Jim Shelley continued

about the Staff Training Committee, which I established and chaired in my final years at Millbank, but which didn't survive my departure!"

Martin Elengorn writes: "One recollection is a visit to Ripon diocese c 1970 when he was Houses Principal and I was an HEO. It was extremely foggy and we drove hazardly up the M1 with neither of us able to read any of the road signs, given our very poor eyesight. We arrived safely in Leeds, where the then Diocesan Secretary, Squadron-Leader Driver, was by no means pleased to see us and asked what exactly was the purpose of our visit.

We later had a very fine dinner in the still famous Box Tree restaurant at Ilkley with Michael Barnes, then Deputy Surveyor, who was visiting a nephew at Stoneyhurst. This was the time of the so-called Seventies Scheme when the Commissioners were providing substantial capital grants to help dioceses replace unsuitable personages. Unfortunately it was not a good time either for architecture or realising high proceeds from old houses ..."

Martin was one of those who attended Jim's funeral in Hampshire. He writes, "The funeral eulogy disclosed that he was a quite a gardener and keen on field sports. As you would expect, a 1662 service. A very small Victorian church but we were in an overflow and very cold canvas section with television screens. Lots of snowdrops in the country lanes. Grandchildren read the poems etc very clearly and confidently."

Pauline Druiff (formerly Wood)

Pauline Druiff (formerly Wood) died on 24 February. Pauline retired from Church House in 1989 after working for several years in the Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry (now the Archbishops' Council's Ministry Division) and then the Board for Social Responsibility (now Mission & Public Affairs).

Janet Lewis Jones

Janet Lewis Jones died on 13 May 2017 at the age of 67. She worked twice at Lambeth as Public Affairs Secretary. She came first to serve Archbishop Carey following the sudden death of John Lyttle, and so was on hand in the aftermath of Terry Waite's release from captivity.

She served as Secretary to the Turnbull Commission, which in 1995 produced the report *Working As One Body*, which in turn led to the creation of the NCI structure we know today. Janet was a hugely intelligent and able public servant and will have had much influence on that report. In that sense her legacy is all around us today.

She returned to Lambeth as Public Affairs Secretary in the time of Archbishop Williams.

Ed Peacock writes: "We were at Lambeth together in the 1990s. You could not but be impressed by her ability, and the approachability that went with it. From 2006 to 2010 she was a Trustee of the BBC, representing Wales, and I wrote to her once objecting to the millions of pounds paid to celebrities at the same time as the BBC was sacking literally hundreds of its journalists. (It was in the wake of the Jonathan Ross/Andrew Sachs brouhaha.) She wrote me a standard reply, but with a personal message that recognised that I'd recognise that it was a standard reply. We'd written enough of those from Lambeth!"

She served on a large range of public bodies. These included being a vice president of the British Board of Film Classification and a board member at the S4C TV channel.

Lesley Perry writes: "Janet Ann Lewis Jones died on 13th May, the day after her 67th birthday. Jan, as she was known to friends and family, had worked at Lambeth Palace twice, the first time in 1991 for Archbishop Carey, and again during Archbishop Rowan Williams' tenure.

Brecon Cathedral was packed on 23rd May as over 150 people joined Jan's family for her funeral. It

was a fitting tribute to her from her wide-ranging and eclectic body of friends and colleagues who spanned organisations as varied as the BBC Trust, Welsh Water and Lambeth Palace.

I first met Jan when she came to work for Dr Carey as interim Secretary for Public Affairs. She had come to Lambeth via a law degree which had led to an early career in Whitehall, and she was just beginning a stint as a self-employed consultant. Within the Church, Jan also became Secretary to the Turnbull Commission, and was responsible for the Report, 'Working as One Body'. It wasn't the last time Jan worked at Lambeth - she returned to another interim Public Affairs stint with Dr Williams. In between, she had served as the first Company Secretary for the newly listed Welsh Water plc, (where she was also later responsible for the de-privatisation of the company) and a number of other boards including the Strategic Rail Authority and British Waterways. She was also Commissioner for the Postal Services Commission, as well as being the first representative for Wales on the new BBC Trust from 2006 until 2010, and had been a Vice President of the University of Wales (Lampeter).

Jan's deep sense of public service extended to her pro-bono positions as well. In her early years, she was a Samaritan, and later for 15 years, a Trustee of the Baring Foundation which aims to improve the life of people experiencing disadvantage and discrimination. When she died, she had recently stepped down as a Trustee of the Maytree Trust, which helps people in suicidal crisis to reengage with life and restore hope, and as Chair of the Community Foundation in Wales where she had done much to build and raise its profile.

Despite the formidable abilities and intellect required to do just one of these jobs, let alone



several at one time, Jan was also one of the widest read people I know. She had, in 2012, completed an MA degree in Philosophy from Birkbeck and, just before she died, a BA in Fine Art from Hereford College of Arts. A third career as an artist beckoned, but sadly, although there are some examples of her artistically creative mind still around, the full extent of her creativity will remain unseen. Jan was one of the kindest and most generous people I know. The crowd at Brecon Cathedral were but the tip of an iceberg of friends who mourn her passing but will remember her with deep and abiding fondness.

This photo was on the cover of the form of service for the memorial service at St Martin's, Ludgate (in the shadow of St Paul's Cathedral) on 4 October. The family selected this one because, in her sister Catherine's words, "I don't think people were aware that she was also very good at many other things such as lambing, dry-stone walling and identifying animal tracks! She was a truly amazing, multi-faceted person. We chose the photograph of her looking a little scruffy for the service sheet to show a side of her that people were unaware of."

Mr Alan James

Alan passed away on Friday 23 February 2018, aged 83. He joined the Church Commissioners in 1954 and before his departure in 1971 served in Parsonages, Corn Rents, Minerals and Houses Departments.

Monica Elengorn

Monica Elengorn (née Hill) passed away on 19 March, aged 69. Monica, former wife of Martin, worked at the Church Commissioners from 1970 to 1978, serving in Estates Agricultural and Clergy Pay. She was a leading lady in the Deansbank Players.

Oswald William Hugh Clark CBE

This is the slightly abbreviated text of Brian Hanson's obituary of Oswald Clark that appeared in the Church Times on 3 February 2017. The full text can be read on the Church Times website, at www.churchtimes.co.uk, or on request from the editor of Contact (see back page for details)

Oswald Clark, former Chairman of the House of Laity of the General Synod, has died in his hundredth year. Oswald William Hugh Clark was born on 26 November 1917, the son of the Revd Hugh Clark and Mabel Clark.

After graduating from London University, he joined the London County Council and worked for the authority and its successor body, the Greater London Council, from 1937 until 1979 apart from his war service. He retired with the rank of Assistant Director General.

At the start of the Second World War Oswald Clark enlisted with the 2nd Derbyshire Yeomanry and served as part of the Eighth Army in the Middle East and N W Europe. His was the last intake to be trained to make a cavalry charge on horseback but most of the war he was to be in tanks, leaving with the rank of Major. He sustained leg injuries whilst on active service which were to trouble him for the rest of his life.

In 1948 Oswald Clark was elected to the House of Laity of the Church Assembly (later the General Synod) for Southwark Diocese until he retired in 1990. He held many offices including Chairmanship of the Standing Orders Committee from 1950 – 1990. He was a Church Commissioner for thirty years serving for half that time on the Board of Governors. He was elected Vice-Chairman of the House of Laity in 1970, becoming Chairman in 1979 until he lost office to David McClean in 1985. He was made CBE in 1978 for services to the Church of England.

In his synodical career Oswald Clark was recognised as a forceful speaker who didn't pull his punches. He was articulate and well informed, always courteous with a wicked sense of humour. He was brought up as a Prayer Book catholic,

being of the generation which thought of the Roman Catholic Church as "the Italian Mission down the road". He remained a staunch supporter of the Book of Common Prayer and never understood why some Anglo Catholics wanted to use the Roman Missal.



In Synod he opposed the Anglican/ Methodist Reunion Scheme supported by Archbishop Michael Ramsey. He saw the proposal concerning the conferring of Holy Orders on Methodist ministers as a fudge; his view prevailed in Synod and the Scheme was defeated. He kept a keen eye on liturgical revision but lost battles for the retention of the phrase "I believe" in the Creed and for all services only to have the Our Father in traditional language.

His opposition to women's ordination was on the ground that the Church of England did not have authority in Scripture and tradition to make such a change even though it had power from Parliament to do so. His voice was to be heard in every major debate on the subject throughout the eighties. However, always a man of principle, he took the decision not to seek re-election to the General Synod in 1990 (having reached the age of seventy) on the basis that clergy had to retire at that age. Two years later the final vote on women's ordination was narrowly carried in the House of Laity by 169 votes to 82; it only needed two laity to change sides for the two thirds majority to have been lost. It was said by members of the Catholic Group that if Oswald Clark had still been a member of the Synod, his oratory might have led to a different result. When he retired from Synod Oswald was given a standing ovation following Archbishop Runcie's words of thanks.

Oswald Clark worshipped at St Saviour's, Raynes

Park and the church of St Andrew by the Wardrobe in the City of London where he was parish clerk and churchwarden for many years. In later life he was invited to be in the first batch of students to study Canon Law at the University of Wales. He graduated LL M in 1994 when he was 77.

He was a licensed reader for 45 years and elected Master of the Parish Clerks Company in 1997 - 8. The City of London and its history was a great passion of Oswald and, for his work as a City

guide, he was made a Life Fellow of the Guild of Guide Lecturers in 1982. In his later years, from time to time a forthright letter from his pen would appear in the *Church Times*; although physically frail, he kept his mental faculties to the end.

The catholic cause and its place in the Church of England owes a great deal to Oswald's tenacity, his wisdom and his political acumen. May he rest in peace.

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Rachel Boulding

Rachel Boulding died on Easter Saturday 2017, aged 52, in hospital near her home in Sherborne. She was Deputy Editor of the *Church Times*. From 1997 to 2000 she had worked at Church House for Church House Publishing. She had cancer, but had continued to work for the *Church Times* until the last few days of her life.

After graduating from Pembroke College, Oxford, where she had read English Literature, she worked as a volunteer as a parish assistant in a deprived area of Sheffield, then worked as a researcher for the writer A N Wilson. From 1987 to 1997 she worked for SPCK in London. She was a commissioning editor there and, as Liturgy Editor, had a role in what her *Church Times* obituary calls "the continuing life" of the Alternative Service Book. This in turn led to her being recruited by Church House in 1997 to work on the ASB's successor, Common Worship. Her son Thomas was born during her time at Church House. In 2000 she was headhunted by the *Church Times*, for whom she had written TV and theatre reviews since 1992.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said, "The death of Rachel Boulding is a great loss to her family, friends and colleagues, for whom we pray. It is also a loss to the wider church. Rachel was a wonderful and faithful Christian doing a great job." The Bishop of Liverpool wrote, "May Rachel rest in peace — and may our free, intelligent, informed religious press continue to be her legacy."

Her book *Facing Death* was published by BRF earlier



this year, RRP £3.99. The BRF website <https://www.brfonline.org.uk/9780857465641/> describes it thus: "This book of 18 undated reflections draws comfort and encouragement from the Bible and from the author's own experience for those going through life-limiting illness and for their family and carers."

Copies of the full obituary published in the *Church Times* on 28 April 2017, and an extract from *Facing Death* published in the *Church Times* on 5 May 2017, are available on request from the editor of *Contact* (see back page).

Stephen Masters

News of Stephen Masters' death arrived in unusual fashion. In the summer of 2017 Andrew Nunn received a death notice stating, "I thought you might like to know that I have died following a battle with prostate cancer." Stephen worked in the Commissioners' and General Synod offices: at Church House as Private Secretary to the then Secretary-General, Derek Pattinson. He was then ordained, and Crockford's records his ministry after then: serving his title in Primrose Hill and Hornsey; Chaplain to the Bishop of Chichester; Vicar of St Michael's, Brighton; Chaplain to the Bishop of Lewes and curate at St Andrew's, Eastbourne. His final post was as Vicar of Alderney. He retired in 2016 and went to live in Eastbourne. He was 65.

Andrew Nunn writes: "I can't remember how I met him, but I do remember meeting Nigel, one of my partners until his untimely death, at one of Stephen's dinner parties. It was Stephen who suggested that I apply for a job at the Church Commissioners, and we briefly worked together in P&G Dept. Later he went to the General Synod Office where he was Derek Pattinson's Private Secretary (as later so was I). He then rather lost touch with reality and decided to be ordained. Crockford's will give the details – Primrose Hill, I think, as a curate, then Bishop Eric Kemp's Chaplain, and later, after a difficult patch, the Vicar of Alderney where I think he was very happy. Writing this I realise quite how enmeshed my life was with Stephen's. Though we were never close friends he was someone I kept touch with, albeit at a distance - birthday and Christmas cards and the occasional telephone call."

Lou Henderson writes: "I'm pretty sure that Stephen served at No 1 in Pastoral Dept in the late 70s. He was my immediate successor in P&G in 1981 - so Andrew Nunn would have been his clerk until his own promotion. Oddly enough, another Stephen - Ingham, with whom I worked in Redundant Churches Dept 1975-77 - was Vicar of Alderney when he died in 1999."

Richard Hopgood writes: "I was sorry to hear of

Stephen's death. I remember him as a rather solemn young man in Derek's private office, of a gentle and serious disposition, who did not seem to get either excited or perturbed by the dramas of Church House and the Synod. He was probably what Derek needed in his last years there."

Doris Kay writes: "During his time as Private Secretary to Derek Pattinson, Secretary-General of the General Synod, I worked as Derek's Personal Secretary. Stephen was very kind and helpful to me (the "new girl"!) when I started and showed me the ropes. I have fond memories of him but lost touch many years ago."

Ed Peacock writes: "The last time I met him was at the funeral of Denise Jones (see *Contact* 68), two years ago, when he was still Vicar of Alderney. I recall his explaining in typical fashion the, er, little local difficulties that had led to oversight for the Channel Islands being transferred after centuries with the Bishop of Winchester to that of the Bishop of Dover."

Tony Ramsey writes: "Stephen and I started our careers together in Benefice Payments, where he had arrived shortly before me after having read Classics at Durham. In those days, Ben Pay was regarded as something of 'an elephants' graveyard', but Stephen helped to change that reputation when he was quickly promoted to EO and went to Pastoral Dept. From there he moved to the First Floor (Parliamentary & General Department). In all three of these posts, his concern for accuracy, his meticulous attention to detail and his ultra-neat handwriting stood him well, and no doubt these were some of the qualities which caught the eye of Derek Pattinson and led to him being appointed Private Secretary to the Synod's Secretary-General. Whilst there, he once quipped that he was the third most important person in the Church of England (after the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Secretary-General) and, whilst that may have been an exaggeration, he undoubtedly excelled in the role and made a most significant contribution to the smooth running of the synodical machinery. His

successor, Derek Fullarton, described him as “a very hard act to follow”.

Stephen’s first desire, however, had always been to be ordained, and thus in 1985 he gave up what was undoubtedly a most promising administrative career and went to Mirfield Theological College. Following two curacies in London, he was appointed chaplain to the then Bishop of Chichester, Eric Kemp (and was, I suspect, one of very few people who could truthfully claim to have enjoyed such a role). After an incumbency in Brighton, he then moved to Alderney in the Channel Islands, where he was Vicar for 15 years. This was, perhaps, not as idyllic as it sounds: he once said to me “I can’t go anywhere without getting on a boat”!

He had been looking forward to his retirement in Eastbourne but, almost immediately, was diagnosed with prostate cancer which sadly proved to be terminal. His funeral, which was conducted by Bishop Nicholas Reade, was attended by several former colleagues from Millbank and Church House and reflected his own love of traditional Anglo-Catholic ritual.

In his younger days, Stephen had been a gifted tennis player, but he is more likely to be remembered as a generous dinner party host, where his supplies of fine wine and witty stories about bishops both seemed to be unlimited! It was indeed a privilege to have known him and worked with him.”

John Miles

John Miles died on 23 April 2017 at the age of 89. He had been the C of E’s Chief Information Officer at Church House and Press Secretary to Archbishops Ramsey, Coggan and Runcie between 1970 and 1990.

A journalist, he was for 13 years a publicity officer at the BBC, and went on to work for Thames Television. The notice of his passing in the *Church Times* of 28 April records that when taken on at Church House in 1970 his work included “special responsibility for the Archbishop of Canterbury’s press relations, picking up the pieces after the sacking of his predecessor.” One of the staff he took on while Chief Information Officer was Joy Meacham, the first woman press officer to the General Synod (whose obituary appeared in *Contact* 61 in 2010). In his book *Asking Around*, the playwright Sir David Hare, author of the C of E-based play *Racing Demon*, writes, “I would not have had such free access to the Church without the help of its press officer, John Miles.”

John travelled extensively overseas with his three Archbishops, carefully recording in his follow-up reports the press coverage these important visits

received. Archbishop Tutu recalls his helping Michael Ramsey practising a frown in a mirror before meeting the South African Prime Minister John Vorster, so as not to be photographed smiling in the apartheid leader’s presence. Archbishop Tutu said, “John was of great help to us on trips to London when we were lobbying the British public to impose sanctions against apartheid”.

Colin Podmore writes, “I remember him as a friendly presence on my corridor when I first started in Church House in 1988.”

The obituary of John that appeared in his local paper, the *Herts Advertiser*, can be found online at <http://www.hertsad.co.uk/news/tributes-to-harpenden-publicist-who-worked-with-three-archbishops-1-5008505> or in paper form on application to the editor of *Contact* (details on back page).



Francis Bassett

Francis Bassett died unexpectedly over the weekend of 18/19 November 2017. He was the Assistant Secretary of the Council for Christian Unity at Church House.

A statement issued on 20 November from William Nye, Secretary-General at Church House, read; "Francis was a valued, very long-standing team member who had worked within the NCI organisations for nearly 40 years. Francis worked in a number of teams in his long and loyal service, including See Houses, Pastoral, Clergy Payments, Estates Department, Bishops, General Synod Office and most recently the Council for Christian Unity. He has also been part of the staff teams that have supported various committees, advised Bishops, and contributed to the work of each department he was involved with. Many of us also knew Francis as a wonderfully talented musician who was involved in a very wide range of musical activities. He conducted the Deansbank Singers at Church House and was the Organist, as well as the Deanery Synod Representative, at St Barnabas' Church, Manor Park. He had previously held positions on the PCC, as a Parish Representative, and worked with various charities including Night Shelters for the homeless."

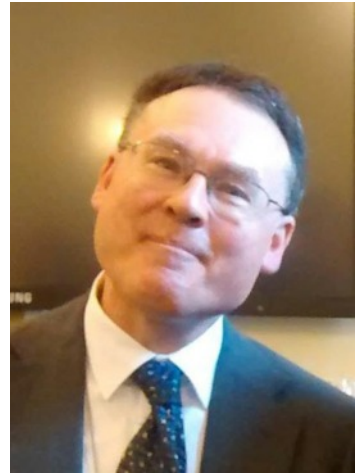
This will be a sad time for many people particularly for those in this team and those who have worked with him over the years. The Deansbank Singers are due to perform at St Matthew's Church on Thursday at 1pm, just around the corner from Church House on Great Peter Street. The concert will be dedicated to Francis in his memory."

The Pensioners' Committee have annually been grateful to Francis for playing the organ so well at the chapel service that begins our Reunion in May. He was also the contact for Newham Friends of the Earth, and Googling him brings up a courteous (of course) but strongly worded objection by him to Newham London Borough Council to a proposal for a combined Cycle Biofuel Electricity Generation plant at Beckton.

Stuart Froment writes, "I was deeply dismayed to hear of the passing of Francis Bassett. I will sorely miss him as will so many others. He was a good friend to everyone, an excellent musician, and committed to so many causes."

Ed Peacock writes, "Francis was a good friend. He and I had worked together at Millbank, and when he was at Church House, and after I'd left the NCIs' employ, he remembered me by inviting me to take on the part-time role of Secretary to the Mission Trust

Fund, from which grants were made to clergy and others engaged on mission-related trips or projects. My working for him meant the reversal of our roles when at Millbank – for others this could have been, er, interesting, but Francis was so good-natured that there was no difficulty at all. It was a pleasure."



Jeremy Worthen of the CCU writes, "Francis served for many years as an integral part of the staff team at the Council for Christian Unity, showing great dedication and a remarkable range of knowledge about ecumenical relations. It was work he cared about deeply, though we were well aware he was a man of many interests and varied gifts. He was always attentive to the needs of others and his gentle sense of humour regularly brightened the working day. We miss him very much."

Malcolm Brown of the Mission & Public Affairs Council writes, "When I first came to work at Church House, Francis was one of the staff I was urged to meet at an early stage. When I asked what he was involved with, I was told 'Everything, really'. Francis carried much of the institutional memory of this strange workplace, and yet he wore his wisdom very lightly, never pushing himself forward but always ready to share what he knew or to muck in on some thankless task."

When he died, he had just agreed to take on some of the administrative work supporting the planned Teaching Document on Human Sexuality – arranging a complex sequence of meeting dates involving some 15 bishops and their impossible diaries, as well as many others. I am sure this was never in his job description, but Francis was the quintessential safe pair of hands who could be relied on to get the job done without drama or fuss. A little of what made Church House special has died with him. May he rest in peace and rise in glory."



Michael Brown

Michael Brown, formerly of the Commissioners' staff, died recently.

Matt Chamberlain writes: "I remember him very fondly from my time in Clergy Payments in the late 1990s. I remember him as someone who never stopped smiling and never stopped offering to help, despite physical difficulty."

Colin Bullen writes: "Michael was very proud, indeed possessive, of his work in Benefice Payments. He did an amazing job for someone disabled in the way he was."

Tony Ramsey writes: "Michael was born in 1933 in north London, where his father was a vicar. Unfortunately, due to birth complications, he contracted meningitis which left him both with a spastic foot and profoundly deaf. He struggled gamely to cope with these disabilities and, after leaving school, came to work at the recently-formed Church Commissioners. He was placed in Benefice (later Clergy) Payments, where he spent most of his career. In 1990, when the new Unix system was about to be introduced, he agreed to move to a muniments role, where he served faithfully for several more years until the office - rather unkindly in my view - decided to make him redundant. Happily, the Chichester diocesan office came to the rescue, and he spent several years there engaged in general administrative duties, first as a paid member of staff and then (after retirement) as a volunteer. In recent years he suffered a series of strokes and died in November 2017.

When his father retired, Michael moved with his parents to Woodingdean, near Brighton, where he was involved in his local church and a local deaf club. He used to spend his holidays at various Christian centres, of which Lee Abbey in Devon was his favourite and where he was always touched by the warm welcome extended to him by the other guests.

I doubt whether those of us who are able to hear can ever truly appreciate what it is like to be deaf. At times, it was clearly frustrating for Michael, as indeed it could be for those who worked with him, but it seemed to me that Michael made a concerted and successful effort to cope with this very real difficulty and to make a positive contribution to the life of the office."

Liz Razzell

Mrs Violet Elizabeth (Liz) Razzell died in December 2017. She was a former member of the Church Commissioners' staff.

Tony Ramsey writes:

"Many Church Commissioners' staff will remember Liz from her long service in Houses Department.

As a result of a mishap earlier in her life, she had a leg injury, which resulted in her walking with a limp and subsequently required her to use, in turn, a walking stick, a frame, and eventually a wheelchair. Despite this significant handicap, she managed to remain cheerful, even nicknaming herself "Old Mother Razzell". Twenty years after she retired, she could still correctly recall all the English dioceses in alphabetical order!

Liz was well known for her love of hyperbole, so much so that it was often difficult to know where fact ended and fiction began! One undoubted fact, however, is that she devoted much of her retirement to supporting local causes, especially Papworth Hospital and the Citizens' Advice Bureau network. For this, she was awarded the British Empire Medal and was thrilled when it was presented to her by Sir Hugh Duberly, the then Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, who was also chairman of Ely DBF.

Following a short illness, Liz died last December aged 88. We offer our sympathy to Reg, her husband."

Phyllis Webbe

Mrs Phyllis Webbe passed away on 5 February 2018. She had worked for the Commissioners and may have been the last of the former staff of Queen Anne's Bounty.

Ed Peacock remembers that in the 2000s Phyllis was a faithful and a cheerful member of the Pensioners' Committee. Tony Batchelor writes, "When I joined the Church Commissioners as an Assistant Clerk aged 16 in Sept 1951 Phyllis was a member of Establishment Dept (now HR). She was married to Peter Webbe, also a deceased CC Pensioner, and is an aunt to David Blair a current pensioner."

Joan Fox

Mrs Joan Fox died in August 2016 at the age of 88. She was the widow of Chris Fox, the Head Gate-keeper and then Steward at Lambeth from 1978 to 1991 (see *Contact* 67 for his obituary). She was a well-liked member of the Lambeth community.

Daphne Vivienne Palmer

Daphne Vivienne Palmer, formerly of the Commissioners' staff, died on 21 January 2017.

Mr Victor Brown

Mr Victor Brown, former Deputy Official Architect at the Commissioners, passed away on 4 January 2017 at the age of 97. He had retired in 1979.

Ed Peacock writes: "I joined the Commissioners as a very junior person in 1971: in the Houses Dept we had to send plans for new vicarages to the Architects' Dept for their comments and suggested improvements, and I remember Mr Brown's signature on some of the responses. That was a responsible job, and there will be many clergy families living today in houses built in the 1960s and 1970s whose lives (even though won't know it!) are better than they would have been had it not been for the wise, practical advice of Victor Brown and his colleagues."

Mr John Bell

John Bell died on 23rd February 2017, and leaves a widow. He had 43 years and 104 days service, and completed his service in Newcastle.

The Rt Revd Michael Perham

Michael Perham, Bishop of Gloucester from 2004 to 2014, died on 17 April 2017 at the age of 69. He served as Secretary to the C of E's Doctrine Commission from 1979 to 1984. His obituary in the *Church Times* of 28 April records that

"becoming secretary to the Doctrine Commission, he learnt the importance of recording complex theological decisions meticulously, and its Chairman, Bishop John Taylor, recognised his gifts of clear-headed, strategic thinking and appointed Michael as his chaplain." He subsequently served as a member of the Doctrine Commission for over 15 years.

The full text of his obituary in the *Church Times* is available on request from the editor of *Contact* (see below for details).

The Revd Jim Duxbury

Jim Duxbury, a Church Commissioner appointed by the General Synod between 1978 and 1989, died on 11 July aged 84. In that time he was Vicar of Wellington, part of the then Telford New Town (Lichfield diocese), then of Padiham (Blackburn). At Millbank he served on the Houses and General Purposes Committees. He was an Hon Canon of Blackburn Cathedral from 1997 to 2001. He retired in 2001.

The Duke of Richmond & Gordon

Charles Henry Gordon Lennox died on 1 September, aged 87. Before he succeeded to his four (!) dukedoms in 1989, and when he was known as the Earl of March, he was a Commissioner appointed by the General Synod from 1963 to 1976, serving on the Board of Governors and the General Purposes Committee. He was a member of the Church Assembly and then the General Synod, representing the diocese of Chichester, from 1960 to 1980. He was Chairman of the Board for Mission and Unity from 1967 to 1977, and was Vice-Chairman of the Archbishop's Commission on Church and State from 1966 to 1970. He was also on the Central and Executive Committees of the World Council of Churches (from 1968 to 1975), and was involved with various diocesan bodies.

For NCIs' pensioners • annexe to issue no 71 • apr 2018

CONTACT

Remember our website!

<http://www.bullen.demon.co.uk/penindex.htm>
Thanks to Colin Bullen for managing it.

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