

CLOSE NEWS



JUNE 2026 · SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN · €2.50



► Presidential Visit

Catherine Connolly attends Guinness Choir concert in the Cathedral. *Page 10*

► Dean's Gift Day

Learn more about this year's appeal for the clock. *Page 25*



The Daily Offices & Holy Eucharist



Sunday

- 09:15 — **Eucharist** (*said in the Lady Chapel*)
- 11:15 — **Choral Eucharist** or **Choral Matins**
- 15:15 — **Choral Evensong**

Monday – Friday

- 09:00 — **Sung Matins** (*during school term*)
- 11:05 — **Eucharist** (*said in the Lady Chapel on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Feast Days*)
- 17:30 — **Choral Evensong** or **Evening Prayer**

Saturday

- 11:05 — **Eucharist** (*said in the Lady Chapel*)

IN THIS CATHEDRAL, the worship of Almighty God has been offered without interruption for generations. In word and sacrament, psalm and canticle, the Church's liturgy orders our common life and gives voice to what we believe. Here, the Scriptures are read, the Sacraments faithfully celebrated, and the prayer of the Church is offered day by day according to the rhythm of the Christian year. All are welcome to join us in an act of worship. Further service information appears on *Page 6*. Those unable to be present in person may join the Cathedral's worship online at spcd.ie/live.

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*Cover: The President of Ireland walking with the Dean, verged by Aaron Hoey; see page 10.
Left: The Cathedral, pictured from the park, in 1905.*



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Close News is the monthly newsletter of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. It is designed and printed in-house by Clark Brydon. Any views which may be expressed in the features, news reports, articles, letters, and reviews are not necessarily those of the Board and Chapter of the National Cathedral and Collegiate Church of Saint Patrick in Dublin.

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**The deadline for publication in the July/August issue of *Close News* will be:
Friday 26th June 2026**

The Dean Writes...



THE VERY REVD DR WILLIAM MORTON

HIGH ABOVE US in the Minot Tower, the clock of Saint Patrick's Cathedral has been keeping time in Dublin for generations.

The first reference to a clock in the tower is in 1509, making it one of the earliest public clocks in the city. The present clock, however, dates from around 1880, some fifteen years after the completion of the Guinness restoration of the Cathedral. Made by J. W. Benson of Ludgate Hill, London, it was described by Mr Julian Cosby, of *Cosby Fine Clock Restorations*, as probably 'one of Benson's finest'.

Through times of joy and sorrow, peace and conflict, prosperity and hardship, it has marked the passing hours for generations of Dubliners. In 2008, time stood still when the last major refurbishment was undertaken, and time is standing still again in preparation for further restoration in the coming months.

Few, however, see the clock's remarkable inner workings. Deep within

the tower, a complex arrangement of gears, wheels, weights, and levers continues the task for which it was designed over a century ago.

Amongst its secrets is an old penny (perhaps more than one!), carefully positioned within the mechanism. Small and unassuming, it has helped maintain the clock's accuracy for many years — a fitting reminder that great things are often sustained by small acts of care.

Like all things entrusted to our care, the clock now requires attention. The mechanism needs specialist conservation and repair, as do the two clock faces on the north and west sides, which have suffered from the elements — and age! Some numerals have faded and become difficult to read, and re-painting and re-lettering are now essential if the clock is to continue serving future generations.

As we prepare for the Dean's Gift Day Appeal 2026, for which the clock has been chosen as a most worthy subject,

I wish to acknowledge the remarkable dedication of those who have cared for it over many decades. Mr Julian Cosby devoted countless hours to its upkeep, assisted by friends of the Cathedral, including the late Mr Charlie Reede, well known in bell ringing circles, and the late Mr Tommy Wilson.

Since his appointment in 2000, the Dean's Vicar, Canon Charles Mullen, has carried that responsibility forward with equal dedication. Thousands of visitors admire the clock from below; few have climbed the 106 steps required to reach it, which Canon Charles has done for a quarter of a century.

Since 2018, Canon Charles has worked closely with specialists from the Cumbria Clock Company, whose technicians have guided and advised him with great expertise — often through WhatsApp. This partnership has united traditional craftsmanship and modern technology in the service of an historic timepiece that continues to fulfil its purpose high above the city.

Even the most carefully tended mechanism, however, eventually requires more extensive intervention. The estimated cost of the necessary works is approximately €80,000. By supporting the Dean's Gift

Day Appeal 2026, you will help to preserve one of Dublin's oldest public timekeepers and an important part of the Cathedral's living heritage.

Just as a single penny can help keep a clock accurate, so every gift — large or small — can help preserve this remarkable piece of Dublin's heritage. Together, we can ensure that it continues to mark the hours for generations to come.

More than a timepiece, it reminds us that time itself is a gift: precious, fleeting, and never to be taken for granted. Its steady rhythm calls us to reflection and reminds us that every generation is entrusted with what it has received.

After all, Saint Patrick's Cathedral has been keeping faith with Dublin for over 800 years. With your support, its historic clock will continue to serve the city it has watched over so faithfully.

We would be most grateful for your help in ensuring its clock keeps time.

Yours ever,

William

For more information about how you can support the DEAN'S GIFT DAY this year, see page 25.

Condolences

AS A CATHEDRAL community, we acknowledge with sadness recent bereavements. Your prayers would be appreciated for Welcome Desk Supervisor, Laura Lowe, on the death of her maternal grandfather, **James Kavanagh** (Cabra); for Maggie Greene, Accounts Assistant, on the death of her mother-in-law, **Margaret (Rita) Greene**; and to Stephen Storen and Dr David Chhieng on the death of a close friend, **Brian**. Your prayers would also be appreciated for Blaise Smith and his family in Kilkenny on the death of Blaise's wife, Orla. Blaise was a regular and frequent visitor to the Cathedral and to the Deanery when painting the Dean's portrait. We remember also The Honorable Rory Guinness and family on the death of his uncle **Andrew Smyley**, younger brother of the late Miranda Guinness. In extending our sincere condolences to all who have been bereaved, we assure them of our thoughts and prayers.

Services & Preachers

Sunday Services

Please see Page 2 for the full details of our normal pattern of daily worship.

DAY	SERVICES	CANON IN RESIDENCE
THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Sunday 7 th June	09:15 – Eucharist (<i>said</i>) 11:15 – Choral Eucharist 15:15 – Choral Evensong	REVD B. M. MCKAY <i>Prebendary of Clondalkin</i>
THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Sunday 14 th June	09:15 – Eucharist (<i>said</i>) 11:15 – Choral Matins 15:15 – Choral Evensong	REVD D. W. OXLEY <i>Prebendary of St Audoen's</i>
THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Sunday 21 st June	09:15 – Eucharist (<i>said</i>) 11:15 – Choral Eucharist 15:15 – Choral Evensong	REVD G. A. WHARTON <i>Prebendary of Dunlavin</i>
THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Sunday 28 th June	09:15 – Eucharist (<i>said</i>) 11:15 – Choral Matins 15:15 – Choral Evensong	REVD A. W. A. MAYES <i>Prebendary of Newcastle</i>

Saints & Celebrations

JUNE AND EARLY July bring before us figures whose witness helped to shape the life of the Church. **COLMAN OF DROMORE** (7th June), a sixth-century bishop, is remembered as the founder of the monastic community at Dromore and as a faithful pastor in the formative years of Irish Christianity. **COLUMBA OF IONA** (9th June), abbot and missionary, stands amongst the most influential of the Irish saints, carrying the Gospel from Ireland to Scotland and establishing Iona as a beacon of prayer, learning, and evangelism for generations. **BARNABAS** (11th June), companion of Saint Paul and known in the Acts of the Apostles as the 'son of encouragement', exemplifies generosity, reconciliation, and steadfast commitment to the Church's mission. **THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST** (24th June) is one of the few nativity feasts kept in the Christian calendar, marking the coming of the prophet who prepared the way for Christ and called people to repentance and renewal. **RICHARD FITZRALPH** (27th June), Archbishop of Armagh, is remembered as a distinguished scholar, preacher, and reformer whose ministry sought to uphold the integrity of the Church amidst the challenges of the fourteenth century. The month concludes with **PETER** (29th June), chief amongst the Apostles, whose confession of Christ and subsequent restoration speak of both the frailty and faithfulness of those called to lead God's people. **THOMAS THE APOSTLE** (3rd July), remembered for his honest questioning and profound confession of faith, reminds us that doubt, when brought before the risen Christ, can lead to deeper belief and devotion.



A Shot from the Canon

THE REVD CANON
CHARLES MULLEN

THE COMPLETION OF a time-consuming, complicated, demanding task brings a sense of achievement which is its own reward; something most of us have experienced. It might be helpful to regard Ascension Day in this light. Jesus didn't cling to equality with God, but emptied himself and found shelter in a stable. It's the ultimate riches-to-rags story. The Ascension Day reverses it: Jesus ascends to return to heaven, having redeemed his people and broken death's power. Because Jesus ascended, we ascend: the promise of ascending to the company of heaven sustains us in the complications and demands of life here below. CM

And our eyes at last shall see him

He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

*from a hymn
by Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-95)*

Services & Music List

*For an up-to-date and comprehensive list of forthcoming services,
scan the QR code or visit the monthly Worship page on our website.*





The Administrator Writes...

MR GAVAN WOODS

EACH YEAR, WE are required to forecast visitor numbers, particularly for budgeting purposes. It is not an exact science by any means. Now, across the tourism sector, we tend to map out three scenarios — low, medium and high — to hedge our bets and plan for each accordingly.

For 2026, the exercise proved especially difficult, given the ongoing wars and political uncertainties that formed the backdrop to our deliberations. It is with something of a surprise that the Cathedral is ahead, in terms of numbers, at the end of May compared to the same period last year. Difficult as it may be to credit, in 2026, we have experienced the busiest first five months since we opened our doors to visitors.

Given the importance of revenue from this source to the organisation, this is very positive news. North Americans remain our single biggest cohort of visitors, with the remainder largely originating from across the EU. Our marketing team has been active on the ground, working closely with Tourism Ireland across the world, and this has, no doubt, had a positive impact. The airlines have increased the number of routes, opening up direct flights to a number of new destinations, particularly

in the United States. We have worked hard to raise our profile in Canada, France, Spain, China, and Korea in recent years, and we intend to broaden the geographical spread of our visitors as much as possible to minimise overdependence on any one market, though this remains a difficult goal to achieve.

Though wars are, first and foremost, human tragedies, they also have other, lesser effects. The challenges faced by airlines are well-documented and will be exacerbated if the Iranian conflict and associated energy crisis do not end soon. Aer Lingus will undertake an exercise with management and staff this winter to reduce flights and possibly routes in 2027 to cut costs. The global events already discussed may prove to be long-tailed and act as a drag on our performance in the period ahead. Nonetheless, the indicators for this summer are strong, and we will endeavour to maximise our income to support the Cathedral's goals in the key months ahead.

If you wish to donate, you can scan here or visit: spcd.ie/support



Charitable and Community Fund Now Open!

Targeting support to assist people with recovery from addiction (alcohol and drugs)

WE ARE DELIGHTED to announce that applications are now being accepted for the distribution of funds accumulated in 2025 for the Charitable and Community Fund.

In recognition of the struggles the community are facing throughout the country when it comes to addiction and access to professional services for recovery, The Very Revd William Morton, Dean of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin said, 'We humbly extend a round of funds this year, targeting people in need of recovery services, in support of those who struggle with alcohol and drug addiction. We are acutely aware, and indeed witness daily, the impact of addiction in society, particularly on the most vulnerable people among us. We are grateful to the thousands of people who have visited our National Cathedral and, in an act of faith, have lit a candle and donated to our fund to support people in need. We are entrusted with the task of distributing the accumulated fund, which in 2025 exceeded €60,000! That's a lot of prayers and goodwill towards others. We thank God for their generosity and pray for

His blessing upon all who have contributed to the fund.'

Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin is at the heart of the city with a long history of worship, social justice, and compassion at the core of its daily operations. We welcome people from near and far to worship with us, visit, volunteer, participate, and support others through our work. As a result, we accumulate funds through the generosity of our pilgrims' donations, which go towards this Community and Charitable Fund. These funds are accumulated from the donations to the candle stands where people often pray, think of others, and donate to support 'People in Need'. The overarching theme this year is Recovery from Addiction (Alcohol and Drugs).

In this round of grants, Saint Patrick's Cathedral will allocate €10,000 to five organisations, €5,000 to one, and the remainder in €500 sums. Due to financial reporting obligations, we require organisations to be registered charities, and to be fully compliant with the charity regulator: fully registered, returns compliant, etc.

Closing date is 17:30 on Friday 19th June 2026. Late applications will not be accepted.

If you have any queries, please contact

KELLEY BERMINGHAM

Community & Safeguarding Officer
community@stpatrikscathedral.ie

To apply, scan the QR code and complete the form online:





President Visits Cathedral for Guinness Choir Concert

ON THURSDAY 7th May 2026, The Guinness Choir performed the premiere of ‘The City of Our Dreaming’ in the Cathedral. This work had been specially commissioned by The Guinness Choir to celebrate the choir’s 75th Anniversary. Based on an original poem by renowned poet Paula Meehan and composed by Irish composer Seán Doherty, this is a celebration of Dublin City, of how creativity and memory shape our understanding of place, a poetic and choral map of belonging.

As Brendan Finan wrote in the *Journal of Music Ireland*, ‘Doherty knows how to write for an amateur choir, how to give them music that is challenging, rewarding, and that amplifies their strongest qualities. The Guinness Choir sounded their best throughout this work, and while I’m sure their careful practice

was a major contributor, the quality of the choral writing helped too.’

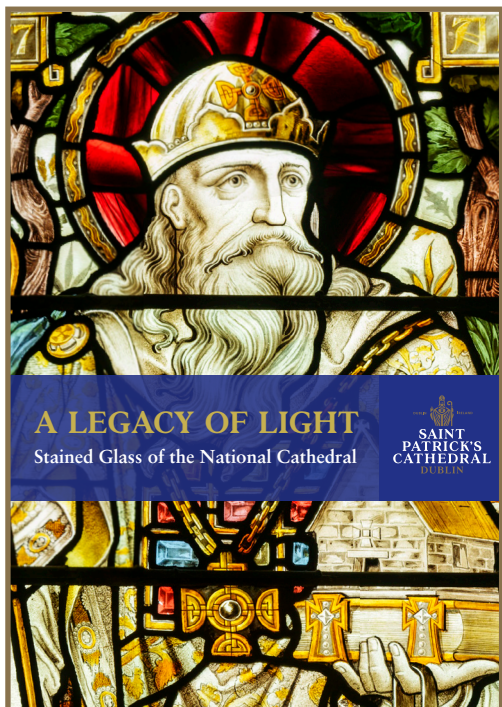
The concert was a highlight event within the *Culture Date with Dublin 8* Festival and included a special appearance by well known Dublin musician Bren Berry.

Ciarán Kelly conducted the Choir, with David Leigh on the piano, and Katie Mercer on the violin. The audience numbered well over 600.

As Finan wrote: ‘Moreover, from what I’ve seen of the Liberties, there is an enviable and powerful sense of support for homegrown artists, so celebration of this organisation, which began as a staff choir at the Guinness Brewery in 1951 as the St James’s Gate Musical Society, is fitting.’

*Story and photos
from the Guinness Choir’s website.*

Stained Glass Book Review



WRITTEN BY AARON Hoey and Jack Cassidy, this large book on the stained glass of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, is a most unusual production in that it is not a guide but a supplement to the existing guide (with photographs by David Lawrence) which I wrote nearly a quarter of a century ago. It was a pleasant surprise to be asked to review it, knowing that the two publications will place Saint Patrick's Cathedral amongst the few cathedrals and churches worldwide which have provided a comprehensive iconographic list and high-quality photographs of their stained glass. With superb photography by Tristan Hutchinson, this book will be welcomed by Irish enthusiasts of ecclesiastical stained glass.

Many visitors to historic churches and cathedrals such as Saint Patrick's

primarily want to gain an impression of the architecture and ambience. If they do not join an organised tour, they may pause to look at one or two windows, a couple of monuments, the organ, and any other outstanding features. A general printed guide is useful for them. There is, however, a minority of visitors with a particular interest in items such as organs, monuments, or stained glass. Such a visitor is always delighted to find a printed specific guide.

A Legacy of Light is not designed to be carried around — it is arranged thematically, and the reader would have to criss-cross the cathedral whilst following a theme. It will, however, give great pleasure to those who buy it for subsequent perusal — though it is a pity that this new book has numbered the windows from the west, whilst the guide numbered them from the east.

The large format gives the reader a sense of standing in front of the windows in all their glory and drama so that, for instance, the brutality of the martyrdom of St Stephen (page 15) is shocking to look at, while in the St Columba window (page 55), the tender depiction of the angel of Iona receiving the doves sent by the angel of Ireland is moving. Likewise, the delicious gradations of green in Erin's apparel in the Balfe window (page 20) can be fully appreciated, and details which are not visible from the floor of the cathedral become clear, amongst them a shield-shaped fragment of glass from the ruins of Ypres Cathedral (page 31) in a memorial window to three brothers who died in the First World War, two of them at Ypres.

This book focuses on the visual, and keeps text to a minimum. This approach suffices in windows depicting biblical scenes or well-known saints. However,

it falls short in the case of the Iveagh window (pages 16 and 17), of which the description is ‘Charity, the central figure in blue, comforts a child and stands with the suffering people of all nations’. This window, in the north transept, is dramatic and dominant. From experience, however, I know that very few viewers can make sense of it — it would help if they knew that the artist, Alexander Strachan, having drawn the original design, couldn’t decide whether the central figure represented Christ or Charity. That ambiguity carries on into the final work.

This publication is a brave initiative by the cathedral and might well be followed by shorter books on the monuments and the organ. It will appeal primarily to international visitors, who

constitute the majority of tourists at the cathedral. It would also make a beautiful present for family and friends abroad who have an interest in the National Cathedral.

This review, written by Leslie Whiteside, was published in the June issue of the Church of Ireland Gazette. Read this and an article written by Gavan Woods on conservation.

***A Legacy of Light:
Stained Glass of the National Cathedral
is available to purchase from the
Cathedral Shop today.***

Read this month’s *Gazette* online at coigazette.ie

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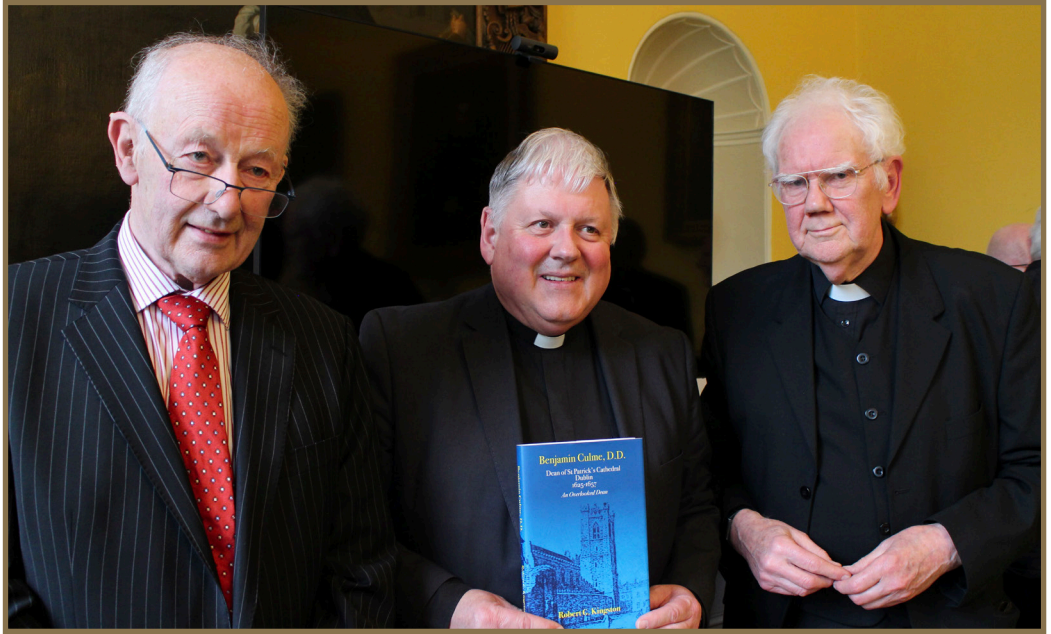
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New Book Turns Spotlight on Forgotten Dean

A FORMER, ALMOST forgotten Dean of the Cathedral, 'is overlooked no longer' thanks to the publication of a new book almost 400 years after his tenure ended. Launching the book on Benjamin Culme, the current Dean said that the author's patient scholarship and careful research had brought Culme back into the light.

Benjamin Culme, DD, Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin 1625-1657: An Overlooked Dean by The Reverend Robert Kingston was launched in the Deanery on Tuesday 19th May. The book, which appears to be the first to be written about Dean Culme, who served as Dean for 32 years during the turbulent period leading up to the Cromwellian takeover, is published by Hinds and is available on their website at www.hinds.ie.

Standing in the Dining Room of the Deanery, Dean Morton observed that if Dean Culme didn't live in the exact building, he lived on the same site, and it

was fitting to gather there for the launch. He said history was alive and well and told the packed room that only that morning the cathedral had received a letter addressed to another former dean, Dean Jonathan Swift.

'A good book informs us, challenges us, inspires fresh interest, stimulates further scholarship, corrects misconceptions and helps us understand why history and the lives of the individuals within it took the course they did,' he stated. 'Ablly researched and written, this book is a delight. Robert is known and admired and over many years of faithful ministry has combined pastoral wisdom with the instincts of a meticulous historian. During his time in Virginia, County Cavan, where Benjamin Culme was said to have served, Robert began to research the life of a churchman who had all but disappeared from memory.'

Dean Morton said that Culme was not a household name and left behind no satirical legacy, as Jonathan Swift did, nor did he achieve lasting fame. But he

guided the Cathedral through years of extraordinary upheaval, and his memorial described him as ‘patient in adversity’. He suggested that the book was a significant contribution to the history of the Cathedral and a moving tribute to the enduring power of steady and faithful service, showing that no life devoted to faithful service is ever lost.

Revd Robert Kingston, who is currently Chaplain of The Mageough in Dublin, said the book was the culmination of extensive research. He urged readers not to think of it as serious scholarship. ‘I regard it as being an account of a fascinating treasure hunt, all of which began with Jim Hartin, who taught history in the [Divinity] Hostel,’ he explained.

In 1985, Robert served in Virginia. As the registrar of Kilmore Diocese, he had all the subscription lists, none of which mentioned Benjamin Culme. However, George Hill, historian of the Plantation time in the early 1700s, had Culme down as the first Rector of Virginia.

‘That led me on to doing a parish history, which sat until retirement. Then it occurred to me that all through my life I had been crossing Culme’s path, or he’d been crossing mine. I was in Mallow – he

found his wife in the Mallow area. In the other parishes, there was always some hint of connection with him,’ he commented.

The author thanked Ross Hinds for taking a chance on his book and his wife for encouraging him to seek publication, Dean Morton, Albert Fenton, and the Friends of Saint Patrick’s for their support, along with the book’s designer and all who supported the launch.

‘When I started to look at this about 12 years ago, I went to Ray Refausse in the [RCB] Library and asked him for information on Culme. He came back to me and said there was nothing about Culme. I said great, that’s the sort of history I like to write about: nobody to contradict me if I am wrong. I’m hoping that within another year or two, there will be books on Culme profoundly disagreeing with every word I’ve written. I feel that I will have made it if that happens — history is not something fixed, it is something that develops in our understanding. The important thing is to start where people were at and the situations they were in to see the decisions they had to make,’ he concluded.

Story and photos by Lynne Glanville.





In Conversation with Cathy Scuffil

Recently retired South Central Area Dublin City Historian in Residence

Cathy, where are you from?

I AM FROM Dolphin's Barn, with my roots going right back to the Blackpitt Liberties and Temple Bar. My father's family were artisans from the Blackpitts, with crafts such as painting, signwriting, gold-leafing (especially in churches), and pub decoration – all about 'Drink & Religion'!

Tell me your fondest memory of growing up in 'the Barn'?

Community, people, lifelong neighbours, and friends. The sense of support and celebration when you achieve anything, everyone cheered you on. A gorgeous sense of togetherness. I cling to this and look for this every day, and it can still be found today. I was at the church for Saint Patrick's Day, and there were about 10 of us gathered outside afterwards. There were all generations in the mix, and comments

like 'your mammy would be proud' — reminders that you are known, cared about, and remembered as the neighbour's child — even at my age. People I have known all my life as 'Mr X and Mrs Y' — that mark of respect is still held. There is huge security in that, especially with me as an only child — I know I am never on my own.

Tell me about your mother?

My mum was a Hesse — a Palatine — not the Switzer's line, but the German version of the Huguenots. She grew up in the Temple Bar area, spending lots of time with her grandmother in Amiens Street, with her brother — her culinary skills were honed there. She was very academic and got a scholarship through Irish to go on and do bookkeeping working for Lipton's (bacon shops). O'Meara's from Limerick ran them, and she was based in the Grafton Street outlet — butter from the block and

sugar from the bag, measured by eye. She could tell a tally from watching and knew figures by heart. She was some woman.

And your dad?

My Dad was a Scuffil and was known as a grainer for his skilful painting of a door. He always said that the preparation was more important than the job itself. If he was varnishing or painting, he would lay down paper to prevent dust from rising and was meticulous about his work. He ended up working in Dublin Corporation for the last part of his career, and he was called upon regularly. I still have all his graining cloths, rubbers, and combs (metal prongs of varying sizes to create the patterns). Scumbling and drawing with oil over the base coat were specialist jobs, and he worked on so many church doors. My favourite one is in Ranelagh, and I still have some of his grained doors in my home — 37 years after he passed.

Where did you work before becoming Dublin City Historian in Residence?

I worked in the Blood Transfusion Service — I joined them in the 1980s, when the choice was to emigrate or get a job and stay in it. It was a steady job, but with no promotion, so I began to volunteer. I volunteered to be a secretary of a local history group, which I set up. I was helped by Alistair Smeaton, the Senior Librarian in Dolphin's Barn. I think his family was connected to the Smeatons, who were involved in the building of the canals. I then gained experience as a secretary, which I added to my CV and helped me develop skills in managing meetings and related tasks. We produced a book in 1993, *By the Sign of The Dolphin*, with the printer ELO Press on Reuben Avenue (neighbours), and this remains the reference book for Dolphin's Barn. It has been scanned and is available from South

Dublin County Council after over 3,000 copies were printed. We were credited with keeping the Dolphin's Barn Post Office open because so many people bought and posted copies of the book all over the world! They were inundated with packages going out! It was done on a typewriter, with a limit of 4 colour plates and a colour cover. Boles's Chemist features on the cover, and it is filled with bite-sized pieces of local history that stretch from Slí Dála (Way of the Assemblies from Saint Patrick's Cathedral towards Crumlin to Limerick) to the widening of Cork Street.

What drew you into a passion for history?

I love history and have a curiosity about places, people, and things. I get that from my Dad, who had stories about every place we passed. We never took a journey that wasn't full of stories and sharing. When we have a close community, we stand into the stories of our spaces, and the people in them. Educational opportunities came through work — I completed an honours degree in Business and Management, part-time whilst working. There were opportunities to secure grants, and workforce upgrading was achieved through educational advancement. There was no money for college when I was growing up. I was awarded an honours degree from Tallaght and specialised in tourism. I was able to compare the health services to the tourism sector based on records, bookings, laundry, food, accommodation, etc. There are so many things in common between the two industries. In every essay, I knew where to focus. I loved the heritage aspect and went on to do the Lord Mayor's Certificate in Local History, which led to my Master's in Local History at NUI Maynooth, now called Maynooth University. I was doing it part-time, and my mom was in poor health. I was working near home, so I was able to check in on her at lunch and on the

way to college. The challenge was over the weekend, and I turned to the online census as a primary source for my research, which enabled me to work remotely: maybe the first remote working thesis! My Professor, the late Ray Gillespie, was very supportive when I found the solution and enabled me to use this approach. He was so lovely. I focused on the South Circular Road and analysed the 1911 census — who lived there and how they lived. The book, published by the Maynooth Series, was titled *The South Circular Road, Dublin, on the eve of the First World War*. It won the Silver Medal from the Old Dublin Society, and I graduated with a 1.1.

Loss and Gain

After my lovely mam died, John, my now-husband, asked me what I wanted to do. I decided to leave the health service, and then I applied to the Historian in Residence scheme, and I was with them for eight fantastic years. I was assigned to the South-Central Area, Dublin City Council, and, much like the approach Alistair and I took, it comes back to knowing your space, people, and solutions, and then finding a way to make it happen with grit. The definition of resilience.

I was involved in setting up the Liberties Weavers — a series of talks on weaving and textiles that sparked community demand, with 80 people on the waiting list and no equipment available. Eventually, DCC gave us the Timber Yard, and the Solas Project helped create hooks on the walls, with the members serving as the loom. Now they have looms, exhibitions, and ambitions. They brought an exhibition

to The Deanery Mews recently as part of the *Culture Date with Dublin 8*.

Four groups I worked with won Pride of Place awards: Flanagan's Fields, Ballyfermot 70, Liberties Cultural Association, and The Liberties Weavers. I am very proud of working with these communities to help them reflect, anchor where we are, and plan for the future.

The Historian in Residence chapter is now closed for me, and the word got out that I am available. I laugh about retirement as I have never been busier, with the phone hopping for history sessions. I continue to teach on the Lord Mayor's Certificate in Local Studies, as part of Dublin City's Lifelong Learning. These are based in Pearse Street Library, and there were 110 applicants for 16 places last year! It runs for seven months. I find it very rewarding, and I see people going in all kinds of directions — some go back to college, and it eases their way into it; some start blogging or researching specific interests and become experts in those areas. People get so much from learning the methods for research, the avenues to go down, and by the time Christmas rolls around, you can see people flourishing!

Tell me how you would like people to remember you?

I most want to be remembered as being approachable, always there, and that although people thought that I was doing things for them, actually, they were doing it for themselves.

Interview by Kelley Bermingham.

If you would like to support the Cathedral's mission and work, please consider donating securely online.

You can scan the QR code or visit: spcd.ie/support





The Liberties Weavers Pop Up Exhibition

AS PART OF the local festival *Culture Date with Dublin 8*, the Deanery Mews recently hosted The Liberties Weavers pop up textile museum, celebrating the rich weaving traditions of The Liberties.

Amongst the highlights were examples of exquisite jacquard silk weaving created by the late Paddy Breathnach of

Hamilton Street, one of Dublin's master weavers.

Pictured (above) are Paddy's great grandson, Macdara Ferris, and his father Tom Ferris, holding artefacts generously donated by the Breathnach family to the Heritage Weavers collection.

Kelley Bermingham

Verger Appointed Assistant Manager

THE CATHEDRAL IS pleased to announce the appointment of Aaron Hoey, currently Cathedral Verger, as Assistant Cathedral Manager.

Aaron's initial interaction with the Cathedral was during his postgraduate studies in Early Modern History. He came to visit the famous and imposing Boyle Monument, whilst researching 17th century funerary monuments. During that visit, he didn't just discover old stone monuments, but a place rich in history, surrounded by a lively community of visitors and worshippers alike, national and international, all drawn to this one place. Aaron later joined the Retail Team in 2018 and was appointed a Cathedral

Verger within the same year. Most recently, Aaron has been a part of the publication of a book on the Cathedral's stained glass.



With his recent appointment as Assistant Manager, Aaron looks forward to the coming weeks and months, supporting the great work of the Cathedral team, working with colleagues in a new capacity, and making a meaningful contribution to the rich and diverse life of the Cathedral.



Princess Grace Irish Library Visit

WHEN PEOPLE HEAR the name Grace Kelly or Princess Grace, they think of a beautiful, blonde, Oscar-winning actress, who starred in some of the most iconic movies of the 1950s, including *Rear Window*, *To Catch a Thief*, and *High Society*. Having only seen clips of *Rear Window* as a child, I was not aware of this actress, who later became Princess of the Principality of Monaco. My introduction to this woman came from the 2007 pop song 'Grace Kelly' by MIKA, and later, from the vaults of EPIC, The Irish Emigration Museum, where I worked as a tour guide. Fast forward to September 2024, I moved to Limerick City to pursue my master's degree in History. At first, I was not sure what topic to pursue for my dissertation, but in the end, I decided to base it on Princess Grace's 1961 state visit to Ireland.

Whilst not as well-known as the US presidential visits to Ireland, e.g., John

F. Kennedy in 1963 or Barack Obama in 2011, the 1961 visit of the Grimaldi family was the first state visit by a monarch to the newly formed Republic of Ireland. British monarchs had been visiting the island on and off throughout Irish history; this, however, was a royal the Irish could get behind, primarily because she was one of our own. The Princess's paternal grandparents (John Henry Kelly and Mary Anne Costello) were both from County Mayo and left Ireland after the Great Famine. The family settled in Philadelphia, and the Kellys became a successful Irish-American family, achieving acclaim in sport and the arts. But when Grace Kelly married Prince Rainier in 1956, it was one of the most-watched events in early television history.

The visit of the Grimaldi family was both official and private; the couple visited locations such as the national stud and Dublin Castle, but most significantly,

the Kelly homestead, which her grandfather had lived in before leaving Ireland. It was a deeply moving experience for the Princess, so much so that biographer James Spada described her visit to Mayo as 'a spiritual odyssey'. The Princess even purchased her ancestral home in 1976 with the intention of making it into a holiday home. But sadly, Princess Grace died in a car accident in 1982, and the cottage today is in a ruinous condition.

Whilst writing my dissertation, I began working at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, and I was amazed to find the figure of Saint Patrick had connections to the Princess. Her middle name was Patricia, the female version of Patrick, an obvious nod to her Irish roots. Saint Patrick was also included in her wedding ceremony, as the prayer he is said to have recited as he travelled to Ireland was read aloud during the service. And most notably, the Princess climbed Croagh Patrick, becoming the first royal to partake in this historic Christian ritual during her visit to County Mayo. Additionally, one of the Cathedral's volunteers and a fellow Princess Grace fan, Anne Mulligan, remembers seeing the Princess during her 1979 poetry recital tour, which she performed alongside English actor John Westbrook. This sold-out event was held down the road from the Cathedral, in Trinity College's Edmund Burke Hall, where Anne remembered the audience was motionless and highly attentive as they watched the performance.

When I visited the Kelly cottage in July 2025 as part of my research, I would never have guessed that I would be participating in a talk on the Princess's Irish heritage in the Princess Grace Irish



Library in Monaco less than a year later. The library was founded in 1984 and houses the Princess's vast collection of Irish literature, Irish music collection and souvenirs given to her during her 1961 visit. It is a functioning library which holds various events throughout the year, celebrating Irish culture. The event I was invited to participate in was a three-way between Pierre Joannon, the Former Consul General of Ireland to the South of France, and Peter K. Murphy, the former American diplomat. Both these men knew the Princess, and both discussed her Irish heritage with her during the latter part of her life. The talk was sold out and was attended by the Princess's granddaughter, Princess Alexandra of Hanover. Despite my nerves, the evening was a great success, and a recording of the talk will be available on the library's website soon.

William Harrison Jnr

William is currently a Retail Assistant in the Cathedral Shop, having previously worked as a Cathedral Assistant and Guide at the Welcome Desk.

PIPEWORKS

*International Organ
and Choral Festival*

JUNE 10TH-21ST 2026



Wednesday 10th June | 20:00

The opening concert of the Pipeworks festival brings together the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, organist Stephen Farr, the Pipeworks Festival Chorus, and soloists Felicity Haywood, Sarah Thursfield, Rory Lynch and Eoghan Desmond. Conducted by Artistic Director David Leigh.

Friday 12th June | 20:00

Widely regarded as one of the finest organists of his generation, Stephen Farr brings a richly varied programme to this Celebrity Organ Recital, spanning Bach, Franck, and Alain alongside 20th and 21st century striking voices including James MacMillan and Judith Weir.

Book tickets at stpattrickscathedral.ie/events

Cad é an scéal? / What's the story?



Monthly Irish-language gathering

On the first Saturday of each month enjoy conversation in Irish or English, along with music, song, poetry and plenty of craic.

Register at stpattrickscathedral.ie/events



Drop-In Family Workshops

Monday 6th July | 11:00 – 13:00

SUMMER MOSAICS

Create colourful summer-inspired art in this family workshop.

Recommended for aged 4+

**Tuesday 7th & Wednesday 22nd July
14:00 – 16:00**

MUSIC WORKSHOP

Experience the wooden, one-octave organ designed for young technologists.

Recommended for aged 6+

Wednesday 8th July | 11:00 – 13:00

OIL PASTEL ART WORKSHOP

Discover how art can feel a little like magic with oil pastel and watercolour paint.

Recommended for aged 4+

Friday 24th July | 10:00 – 15:00

CHILDREN'S SKETCHING COMPETITION (AGES 5-12)

Young artists will be able to explore the Cathedral, choose their favourite view, and create their own artwork using the materials provided at our creative station.

Thursday 9th July | 11:00 – 13:00

STAINED GLASS WINDOW WORKSHOP

Young artists will create stained glass-style window bookmarks to take home.

Recommended for aged 6+

**Friday 10th & Monday 20th July
11:00 – 13:00**

PRINTMAKING WORKSHOP

Enjoy one of our most popular activities: the Foam Printing Workshop.

Recommended for aged 6+

Thursday 23rd July | 11:00 – 13:00

MEDIEVAL CALLIGRAPHY WORKSHOP

Discover how paper, ink, and quills were made in the past.

Recommended for aged 8+

The Dean's Gift Day

EACH YEAR THE Dean's Gift Day Appeal focuses on a particular part of the Cathedral's fabric that requires attention. The subject of this year's appeal is something that many people use every day — even take for granted — yet is an important part of the city's streetscape: the Minot Tower Clock. The estimated cost of the necessary works is approximately €80,000.

This year, the Dean's Gift Day will be held in the Cathedral on:

Saturday 20th June
from 11:30 until 13:00.

More information about the the clock can be found in the Dean's letter on page 4.

If you would like to support the appeal in advance of Gift Day, you can donate by:

CHEQUE — please forward your cheque, made payable to 'Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin' to Dean's Gift Day Appeal, ^o Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Saint Patrick's Close, Dublin D08 H6X3.

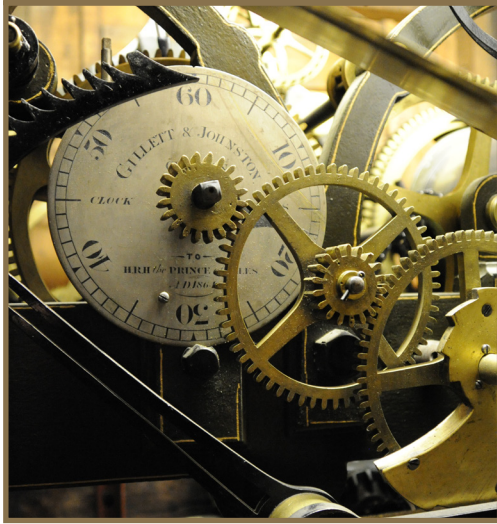
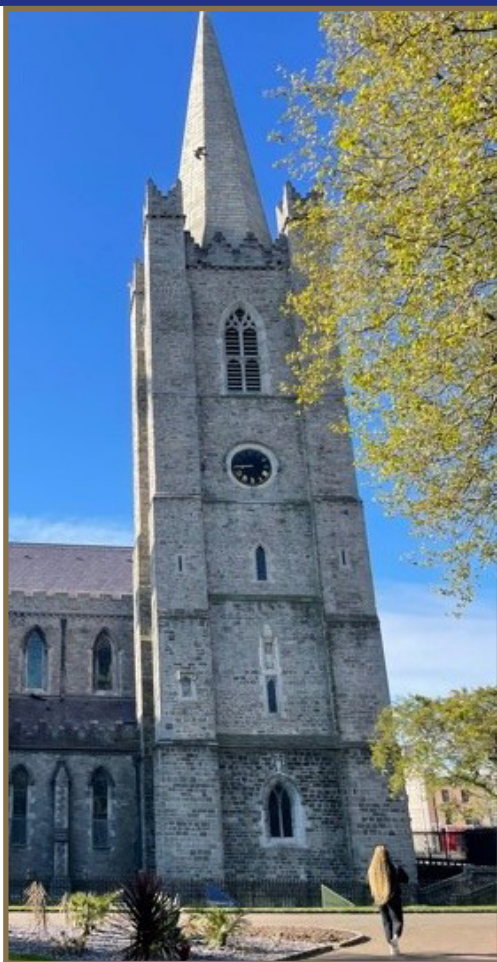
WEBSITE — through the following link stpatrikscathedral.ie/deans-gift-day

EFT — directly to the Cathedral's bank account. Please reference '*Gift Day*' when making an EFT payment to IBAN:

IE57 BOFI 9000 1727 4671 45

QR CODE — scan below to be taken to a secure online donation platform, where you can donate by card.

Thank you in advance
for your generosity.



Who's Who?



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**The Revd Canon
Charles Mullen**
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Will Us Well

WHEN MAKING OR amending your will, please consider including a legacy bequest to the Cathedral. If you are interested in supporting us in this way, let your solicitor or will-writer know that you wish to make provision for the Cathedral in your will. For more information, please contact the Cathedral Administrator, Mr Gavan Woods: adminstrator@stpatrickscathedral.ie

Safeguarding

THE CATHEDRAL'S SAFEGUARDING Policy can be viewed on our website. If you have a general enquiry or any concern relating to safeguarding at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, please contact the Safeguarding Officer:

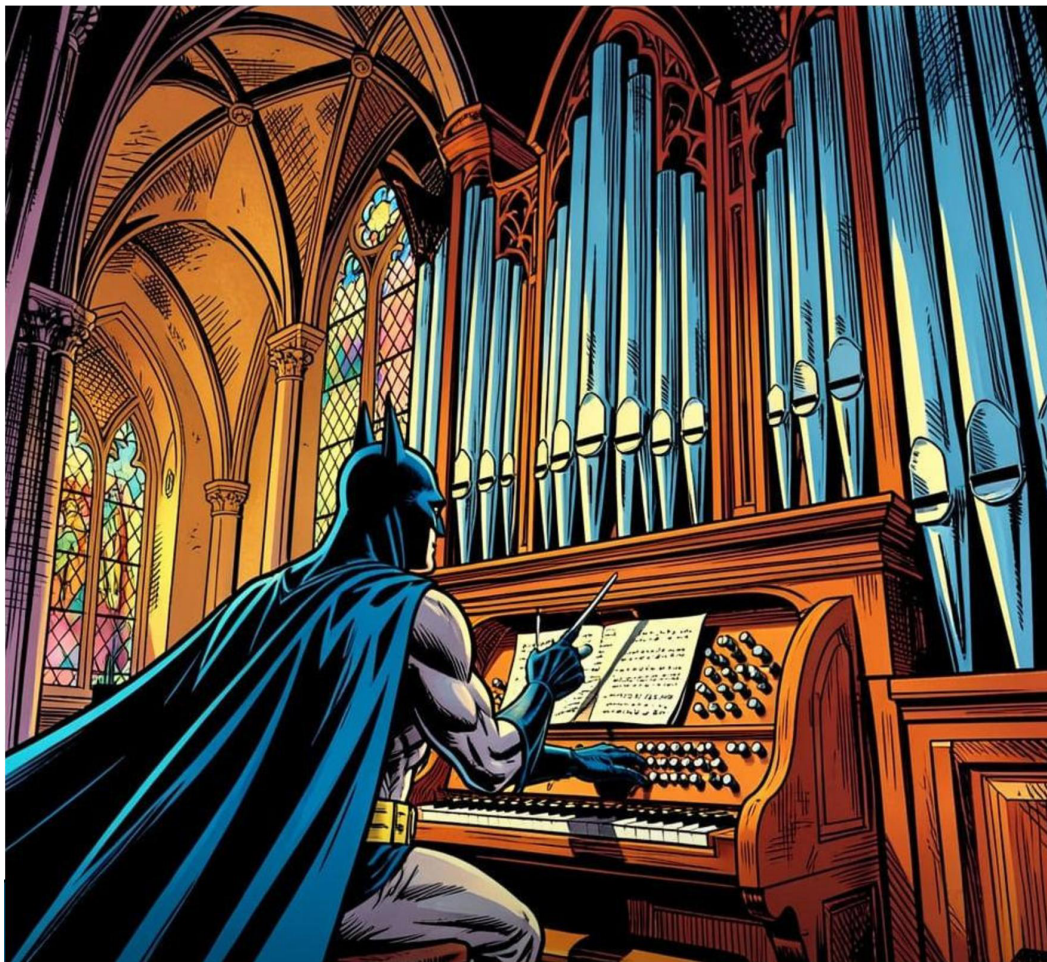
Ms Kelley Bermingham

COMMUNITY & SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

safeguarding@stpatrickscathedral.ie

+353 (0) 86 103 0931

If you recognise a safeguarding emergency in which a child or vulnerable adult is in danger, Tusla Child and Family Agency can be contacted on +353 (0) 1 856 6856.



SAVE THE DATE

THE WONDROUS MACHINE: COMIC CON SPECIAL!

Saturday 4 July at 7.30pm | St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin

ICONIC SCORES FROM THE *MARVEL*, *DC* & *STAR WARS* UNIVERSES
and much more performed on the Cathedral's mighty Willis Organ

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