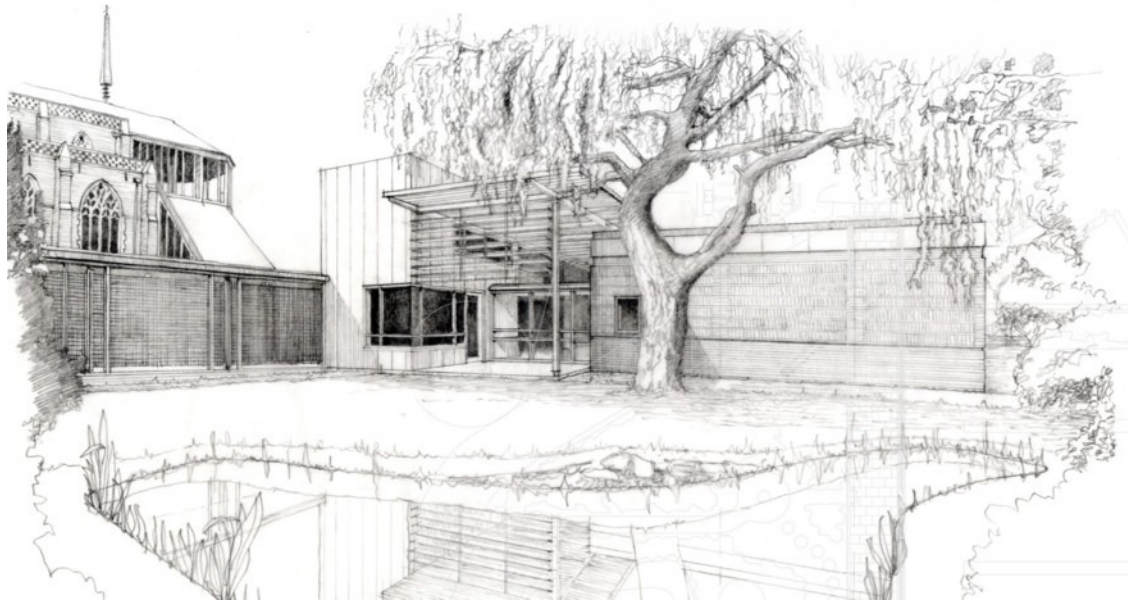


DOUAI ABBEY

NEWSLETTER

Library makes good progress



An architect's sketch of the library from the rock garden, with reflection in the enlarged pond.

Good progress has been made by the contractors building the library, and we are looking towards a completion date in April. Then the building will have to be allowed six months to dry out before books can be put into it.

The main structure has been complete for several weeks now, much of the scaffolding has come down and most recent work has been inside, plastering, electrical and engineering fittings.

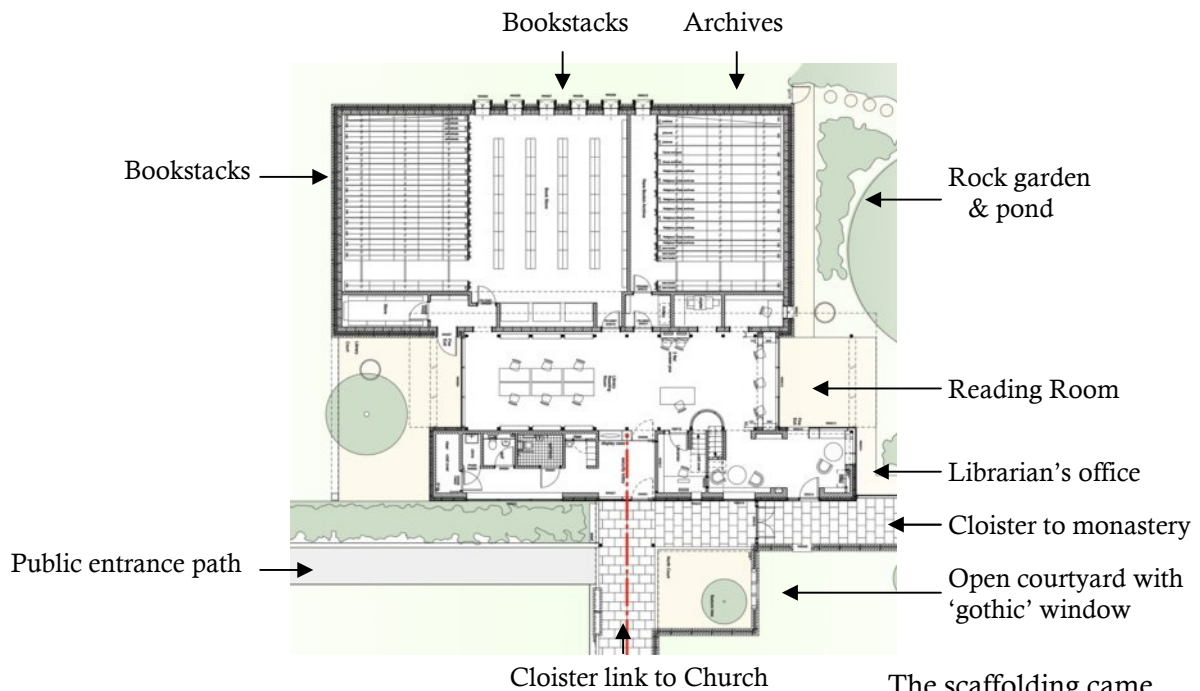
When the scaffolding came down, some

people expressed surprise that the tallest block, housing the entrance, offices and technical plant, was entirely clad in metal. We shall need to get used to it and await landscaping around it, before it can be appreciated as the architect envisioned it.

Overleaf is the plan of the library and a couple of recent photographs

After this there will be a few more projects to build, not least a proper sacristy, before we can claim to have a complete monastery.◇

Plan of the library



The scaffolding came down in the weeks before Christmas, which enabled us to see how the library looks. The photo on the left was taken from the roof of the Abbey Church, after the snowfall on December 18. In the foreground is the covered walk to the north door of the Abbey Church, and on the right the cloister leading to the monastery. The metal building will contain the entrance, the librarian's office and workroom, the plant for temperature and humidity control and the washrooms. The reading room is the section behind, which protrudes a little, and at the rear are the book stacks, the rare book room and the archive room. On the extreme right can be seen the rock garden pond, which has been enlarged and deepened to collect all the rain water from the roof.◇

Community Notes

Fr Abbot

In September Fr Abbot conducted the archivists from the Catholic Archive Society around the National Archives in Paris, to show them items of English Catholic interest. Thence he travelled to Douai, in order to take part in the celebrations of Our Lady's 'cordon' around the city of Valenciennes. In November he preached at his old college, St Edmund's College, in Cambridge and in October gave a talk

continued in the next column

Forthcoming events

Dec 31 Concert of Contemporary Christmas Music 15.30*

Jan 9 First profession of Br Damian. 11.30

Jan 30 Concert by Berkshire Maestros 19.45 *

Feb 6 Healing Workshop 09.45 °

Feb 14 Concert by Bartholemew Consort 19.45 *

Feb 16 - 19 Retreat 'Pancakes & Ashes' °

Feb 19 - 21 Retreat 'Managing Conflict' °

Feb 22 Talk 1 - Easter Triduum 19.30 °

Feb 26 - 28 Retreat 'Preparing for Easter' °

Mar 1 Talk 2 - Easter Triduum 19.30 °

Mar 6 Day of Recollection 09.45 °

Mar 6 Concert Reading Choral Society
Monteverdi's Vespers 19.45 *

Mar 15 Talk 3 - Easter Triduum 19.30 °

Mar 20 Concert Ionian Singers 09.45 *

Mar 22 Feast of St Benedict Mass 12.00

Mar 23 - 26 IGR 'Quo vadis' 12.30 °

Mar 29 Talk 4 - Easter Triduum 19.30 °

Apr 1 - 4 Easter Triduum Retreat °

Apr 2 Maundy Thursday Mass 20.00

Apr 2 Good Friday Liturgy 15.00

Apr 2 Good Friday Service of Music &
Reflections 20.00

Apr 3 Easter Vigil 22.00

Apr 24 Plainchant Workshop 09.45 °

Apr 24 Concert Arion Orchestra 19.45 *

Apr 28 Healing Workshop 09.45 °

Apr 30 - May 2 Retreat 'Depression' °

Apr 30 - May 3 Retreat 'Lectio Divina' °

° = apply douaiabbey@aol.com

* = apply boxoffice@cornexchangenew.co.uk

on 19th century monastic architecture to the *Friends of Reading Abbey* in Reading Town Hall.

On St Michael's Day, the abbot attended the Golden Jubilee celebrations of St Michael's church, Tadley, which had been built by Fr Michael Young OSB when Tadley was still part of our Woolhampton parish. The Mass centre in Tadley had been started during the Second World War, when Aldermaston Common was an American airbase. After the war, the Mass centre continued for the construction workers of the Aldermaston Atomic Research Establishment, which replaced the airbase on the Common. Later Tadley became a separate parish and has since been ministered to by the diocese.

On the Feast of Christ the King, Fr Abbot presided at Mass and preached on the occasion of the golden jubilee of the opening of Christ the King church in Reading. This was to commemorate the fact that our former abbot, Sylvester Mooney, had opened the church fifty years ago, at a time when the bishop of Portsmouth was indisposed

Abbot Edmund

Our confrere, Edmund, abbot of St Pauls-without-the-Walls, Rome, was installed as an honorary canon of St Paul's Cathedral, London. Frs Hugh and Oliver were present, Fr Abbot being in France at the time.

Fr Dermot

In November Fr Dermot flew to India, to give a talk at the Second World Leaders Forum which was being held in Mumbai. On his return he gave a talk at the Tavistock Clinic in London. Earlier he had attended a meeting of the British Association for the Study of Religion at Durham. In September he gave a paper at the Catholic Social Teaching Conference at the Catholic University, Eichstatt-Ingolstadt, Germany. And earlier in the month he had led a

continued on the next page.

Community Notes continued.

MONOS workshop at Launde Abbey, Leicestershire on *A Benedictine Spirituality of Work*. In December Fr Dermot led a day for a group of army chaplains who met at Douai.

Fr Alban

will have a sabbatical during January and February, which he will spend on an intensive course on the Rule of St Benedict under Sr Dr Aquinata Böckmann OSB. The course will take place at the Casa Santo Spiritu, Rome, the Generalate of the Missionary Benedictine Sisters of Tutzing.

Br Christopher

Early in December Br Christopher was awarded MA in Christian Spirituality from Heythrop College, University of London. At the degree awarding ceremony at Imperial College two of our oblate novices Richard Guion and Fodhla McGrane were also awarded MAs. In November Br Christopher led a small pilgrimage to Rome, during which he climbed the *Scala Sancta* on his knees.

Br Damian

Novice Damian Banks has been accepted for first profession by the community gathered in chapter. The profession is scheduled for 11.30 on Saturday January 9.

Maison St-Benoît

Br David Hayes of Quarr left

the Maison St-Benoît in July, and we welcome in his place Fr Larry Brown of Clear Creek Priory, Oklahoma who joined Fr Peter there in December. Abbot Finbar hopes to remain at Quarr until Summer 2011.

History Symposium

The English Benedictine History symposium was held here in the Bl Hugh Faringdon Conference Centre on September 3. The topic was Augustine Baker, the English Benedictine seventeenth-century mystic. From the community Fr Abbot and Fr Alban together with ex-Br Placid gave papers.

Monastic Musicians

The annual Monastic Musician Meeting was held here, after a gap of many years. The keynote speaker was Michelle Moran, who had been a lay participant at the synod of bishops in Rome last year on the topic of Word of God. The musical directors were Martin Baker, Master of the Music at Westminster Cathedral and David Bednall of Bristol Cathedral and University. The topic was music for the new texts of the Mass. Each music director composed music for the Mass on one of the days. The meeting was well attended and the guesthouse was completely full.

Advent Service

The annual Advent Service of Music and Reflections on the 4th Sunday of Advent is always popular with people coming from as far away as London to attend. Unfortunately this year ice and snow prevented many from coming. The texts of the reflections will be published on our website.

Co-workers

We were sad to learn that Virginia Kilburn died on December 16. She had started as receptionist at Douai when Fr James Donovan was bursar in 1987. Later she moved to the accounts department. She had worked at Douai, with a short break, until ill health forced her to retire in 2007. Please pray for her.

Also pray for our former cook Catherine Dalton and Chris Warren, former secretary, both of whom are ill.

Guesthouse

The guesthouse and conference centre have been busier than ever, despite (or perhaps because of) the recession. Many of our retreats have been fully booked well in advance and spaces for 2010 are filling up.◊

Douai Abbey Newsletter is published at Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton, Reading, Berks, RG7 5TQ. Phone: 0118 971 5300 Fax: 0118 971 5303 E-mail douaiabbey@aol.com Web site: <http://www.douaiabbey.org.uk> No 36 22 12 09. Registered charity no 236962