

INTRODUCTION

By *Gil Whale, Editor*

This special edition of *Catena* reflects the Centenary celebrations, and the *zeitgeist* behind them, which began with the Manchester Conference in May 2008 and ended a year later at the Harrogate Conference.

It records most of the events which took place during the Association's *annus mirabilis* and it is profoundly to be hoped that this edition will be read as avidly in 2028, 2058, 2108, or any other year, as it will surely be on its publication in 2009. This edition is a labour of love; and praise, honour and thanks are due to those who have contributed to making it possible:

- Peter Bleakley (RIP), the first Managing Director of Catenian Publications Ltd (CPL), who was one of those with the original vision and idea of producing a special Centenary edition of *Catena*.
- Past Grand President Mike O'Malley, Chairman of CPL, who throughout the process of gestation has been a source of continuing support and encouragement, particularly with regard to his liaison with Grand Council.
- Grand Council for their approval of and support for the project.
- Peter Rand, current Managing Director of CPL, who succeeded Peter Bleakley and, virtually seamlessly, carried on his inspirational work with this edition.
- Sue Whale, who has been her usual hard-working, skilled and knowledgeable "midwife" throughout.
- David Connolly, son of David of City of Lichfield Circle, for his excellent design work.
- Edgar Prescott of Vale of Evesham Circle for his invaluable assistance in the printing and distribution.
- All who have contributed in so many ways to the production and launch of this publication.



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In Peter Lane's 1982 History of the Association, the predecessor of James Hagerty's Centenary History which is featured in this edition, there appear lines taken from the Book of Ecclesiasticus, written 200 years before the birth of Our Lord, which have a deep resonance even now:

*Next let us praise illustrious men,
Our ancestors in their successive generations....
Some wielded authority... others were intelligent advisers.
Others directed the people by their advice....
Others composed musical melodies,...
Others were rich and powerful...
Some of them left a name behind them,
So that their praises are still sung.
While others have left no memory,
And disappeared...as though they had never been...
But...in their descendants there remains
A rich inheritance born of them.
Their descendants stand by the covenants
And, thanks to them, so do their children's children.
Their offspring will last forever,
Their glory will not fade.*

It is to be hoped that all Catenians and their families read this Centenary edition with fond memories of a momentous year, a year in which most of them took part in some form or another. It is a further hope that future generations will also peruse it with interest, nostalgia and a Proustian "remembrance of things past."

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City of Lichfield (313) and Manchester (1) Circles