**The Exeter Cathedral Throwover**

(*see newsletters from 1982/3/4 for detailed progress of the throwover ‘journey’*).

In November 1981 the Dean and representatives of the chapter of Exeter Cathedral, having heard of the, yet to be finished, St Nicholas Priory project, requested an Altar Throwover for the Cathedral.

This was to be ‘thrown over’ a portable altar to be placed in the Nave for services when the High Altar is not used (church festivals and other special occasions). It was to be colourful as it needed to be highly visible during the service. It needed to be large enough to cover all 4 sides and the top of the altar, draping at the four corners. It would be funded by the Cathedral.

Fleeces (lustrous teeswater and Devon masham) were prepared, dyed, spun for the tapestry panels. An underlying loom-woven cloth was overlaid with 6 frame-woven panels. The newsletter record that only ‘the best’ weavers were selected to undertake the woven panels!

Mary Yallop wove the underlying cloth whilst 30 spinners, 6 dyers, 20 weavers and one frame maker completed the tapestry panels designed by Pat Johns.

The Throwover was dedicated on December 8th 1984 and was in place on Christmas day that year.

The 3 panels on the West side represent the Trinity; the centre panel being the cross from which rays of light stream outwards. The left panel is the creation, with Adam and Eve surrounded by the rest of the Creator’s works. The right panel is the Holy Spirit, bringing the fire of purification and judgement.

On the east side the panels represent St Peter, the cathedral’s patron. The central panel the rock on which the church was founded; water is gushing from it as it did for the Israelites in the wilderness and as Jesus promised, the cleansing and healing water of baptism. The left hand panel a splendid cock crows over a key which seems to have been dropped or thrown away, in the background are the crosses on calvary. The right hand panel represents Peters’ restoration and the meal at the lakeside. The fish are John Dorys and, since bread if difficult to weave convincingly, it is represented by sheaves of corn; so suggesting both the harvest of the Gospel and the Eucharest.

(*the photographs we have show the St Peter panels only*).

