



St Helen's Church  
Ashby-de-la-Zouch

# Heritage Project eNews

No. 4 April 2018



## Visit to St Wilfrid's, Barrow on Trent



St Wilfrid's Church, Barrow on Trent, is a Grade 1 listed 12th Century church with strong links to the Knights Hospitallers, the forerunners of St John Ambulance. The black habit and distinctive 8 pointed cross of the Knights Hospitallers is echoed in the uniform and emblem of St John Ambulance to this day.

Members of St Wilfrid's Heritage Team visited our Community Heritage Centre towards the end of February, to look at what we've been doing and to seek advice on the next stage of their own Heritage Lottery bid. They told us they had an Open Afternoon planned for Saturday 10th March and some of us decided to go along.

Barrow is a small village beside the River Trent, accessed from the Ticknall-Derby Road by turning left immediately after the Crewe and Harpur public house. The Church is mentioned in the Domesday Book. It is now known as St Wilfrid, but has been previously dedicated to St Helen and also to St Luke. The present building dates from the mid 12th-century and holds many clues in its stonework to past features. One particularly fascinating feature is the circa 13th Century alabaster effigy of a priest in vestments, which is carved in an unusual 'looped' style. There is a carving in a similar style in Durham Cathedral, which may be the work of the same hand.



We spent an interesting couple of hours exploring St Wilfrid's and, of course, enjoying tea and cake. We've just heard that they have been successful in securing HLF funding for their project. There is more information in the 'news' section of the Diocese of Derby website.

Julie Starkey

The next meeting of the Research Group is **Tuesday 1st May at 2.30 pm**, in the Hildersham Room. If you are interested in joining us, either come along on the day or contact Julie Starkey.

## Heritage Talks

The final talk of our first season took place on Monday 5th March, when Dr Susan Brown talked about the Life and Legacy of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.

Plans are well in hand for next winter's programme, which will run at 7.30 pm on the first Monday of every month between October and March.

Just to give you a taster, we can tell you that Moira Ackers of the Church Monuments Society will talk about Richard Parker and the Burton alabastermen. (Richard Parker was the creator of the fine 16th Century table tomb in the Hastings Chapel).

Rebecca Gregory will be coming to talk about place names and musician Peter Rose will talk - and play - on the history of the violin in church music.

Other talks are currently being finalised, but put the dates in your diaries to ensure you don't miss anything!

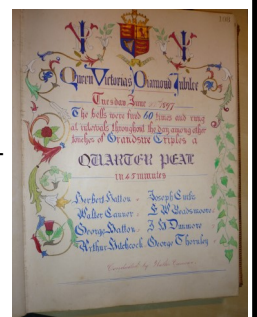
## Peal Book copied & Calligraphy underway

Our historic Bell Ringing Peal Book has now been copied and we are waiting for a facsimile to be produced to go on permanent display in the Church.

Calligraphy in the Peal Book stopped in the early 20th Century, but we are delighted to say that calligrapher Sheila Smith is currently working on writing up more recent peals.

These will also be available for everyone to view.

More news on this soon.



## St George's Chapel, Windsor - the Ashby Connection

The eyes of the world will be on St George's Chapel, Windsor next month, the venue for the Royal Wedding. Ashby has a double connection to St George's Chapel. It was built by Edward IV as the chapel for the Knights of the Garter and William, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Hastings, was made a Garter Knight by Edward. Although Lord Hastings rebuilt St Helen's, he himself is buried in his Chantry Chapel in St George's Chapel, next to Edward IV in death, as he was in life. How did this come about?



William's father, Sir Leonard Hastings of Kirby Muxloe, was a Yorkist supporter during the Wars of the Roses and William became a member of the Duke of York's household. After the Duke of York's death at the Battle of Wakefield in 1460 his son, Edward, became head of the family. In 1461 he deposed the Lancastrian King, Henry VI, to become Edward IV. He created Lord Hastings a Knight of the Garter and made extensive grants to him, including the Manor and Lordship of Ashby. In 1462 Lord Hastings married Katherine Neville, the sister of the Earl of Warwick, the "Kingmaker".

The Earl of Warwick was attempting to negotiate a marriage for Edward to a member of the French royal family when Edward secretly married Elizabeth Woodville. Warwick, together with the Duke of Clarence, (Edward IV's brother) changed sides to support Henry VI. Edward was forced to go into exile, accompanied by his other brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and Lord Hastings. They returned and in 1471 defeated the Earl of Warwick at Barnet and Margaret of Anjou (Henry VI's wife) and Prince Edward (his son) at Tewksbury. In both battles Edward IV commanded the centre of the Yorkist army, the Duke of Gloucester the right flank and Lord Hastings the left flank.

With the country at peace, Lord Hastings rebuilt St Helen's and converted the existing manor house into a castle. But his fortunes were to change again in 1483 when Edward IV died unexpectedly at the age of 40. His son and heir, Edward V, (he and his brother were "the Princes in the Tower") was only 12 and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was appointed Protector. Richard decided to make a bid to become King himself. It is thought that he saw Lord Hastings as a barrier to his plans because he assumed William would support Edward V, the son of his close friend. Richard accused William of treason and William was executed without trial.

*Ian Scruton*

## Church Lighting update



Another major phase of our Heritage Project has now been completed with the commissioning of our new lighting system. The lights installed in the Chancel, Hastings Chapel and around the periphery of the Nave have brought parts of the church to life, allowing us to see clearly (sometimes for the first time) many features of the church. In particular the ceilings of both the Chancel and Hastings Chapel are a joy to behold (although the lights have shown up some future work we need to plan).

The LED lighting is easily controlled and dim-able, allowing lighting to suit the mood required in the church. The system also has a default setting which means it comes on automatically to welcome any visitors to the building. The lighting is low maintenance and concealed; all important factors in a building of our size and character.

It's important to remember the lighting installed is just phase 1 of a three phase plan. We have done as much as the HLF funding would allow (and a little bit more). The team is now actively pursuing grants to enable the system to be completed.



*Simon Starkey*



# Francis Rawdon-Hastings,

## 1<sup>st</sup> Marquess of Hastings

In the Hastings Chapel, to the right of the Hastings monument, is a memorial to Francis Rawdon-Hastings. He was the grandson of Selina.

Born Francis Rawdon in 1754 in N. Ireland, he attended Harrow School and Oxford University. Francis Rawdon inherited the area of Ashby Woulds from his uncle in 1789 and took the family name of Hastings. In 1793 he inherited his father's property in Ireland and the title of Earl of Moira.

He served with British forces for years during the American War of Independence, fighting in a number of well-known battles such as Bunker Hill. In 1794 he took part in the French Revolutionary Wars

He took the additional surname 'Hastings' in 1790 in compliance with the will of his maternal uncle, Francis Hastings, 10th Earl of Huntingdon, there being no other heir to the title.



Francis was Governor-General of India from 1813 to 1823.



*Francis Rawdon Hastings, painted when Governor General of India, by Joshua Reynolds*

He was well-known in London society of the time; he was Fellow of the Royal Society and Grand Master of Masons. He was also a close friend of the Prince Regent.

He was also an associate of Sir Stamford Raffles, enabling him to establish a fortified post eastward of the Straits of Malacca and so placed as to wedge open the gateway to the China seas.

It was even rumoured briefly that Rawdon (then Lord Moira) would replace Pitt as Prime Minister

In politics, Sir Francis was regarded as being brave, talented and loyal but also somewhat foolish. Many people thought that the Prince of Wales took advantage of his weaknesses and played a major part in his later financial difficulties. His friendship with the prince also made him unpopular with King George III and is thought to have damaged his reputation and political career.

Sir Francis had large debts and was often in need of money. He sold off his estates in Ireland and parts of his estates in Leicestershire but was determined to keep Ashby Woulds where he hoped that coal mining and iron making would restore his fortunes. He built Moira Furnace, but it was never the success that he wished for.

*Continued overleaf ...*

## Francis Rawdon-Hastings (continued)

It is a hint at how well-known – and lampooned - he was at the time, that he features in a number of cartoons by well known political caricaturist James Gillray. In total, he sat for 46 portraits, including one by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The character of Rawdon Crawley in William Makepeace Thackeray's novel *Vanity Fair* is named after him.

He died 1826 near Naples, where he was buried; but true to his wishes, his wife, Flora, took his hand back to Britain where it was buried with her at Loudon Kirk in Ayrshire.



### Ode to Lord Moira by James Gillray

*Lord Moira seated in chair adorned with tricolours, addressing Horne Tooke and other customers of coffee-house on the slaying of children by French troops, represented among grey clouds above; monkey dressed in French uniform writing behind him, with barrel of whisky and empty bottles in the foreground at r. c.1800*

Anne Heaton



*A Hint to Young Officers by James Gillray*

## Heritage Wednesdays and Saturdays

The Community Heritage Centre is now open between 10.30 am and 4 pm every Wednesday and Saturday. Have a word with Llynda or use our 'sign up' site to choose your volunteering dates online. Llynda's contact details are on the back page of this newsletter.

## Heritage Project News, from our Heritage Officer, Llynda Baugh

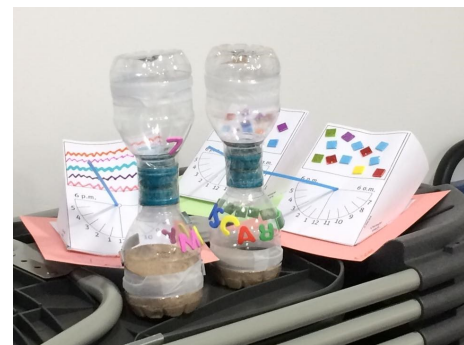
### Easter Holiday Fun

We had two great days over the Easter school holidays making crafts that related to the church and its history.

On the first day we made heraldic shields and stained glass windows. We were joined by Sheila Smith, our calligraphy expert, and over 80 people came along.



The following week, we made sand timers and sundials, with a similar number of people attending. These family days really are popular and we have a such a nice time welcoming our multi age visitors.





# Heritage Project News, from our Heritage Officer, Llynda Baugh

## Group Talks

I've been out to talk to a couple of local groups about what we are doing within the project and I always take our handling box to show our archaeological finds. If anyone reading this is a member of a group and would like to book me to speak, please let me know.

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## Working with Schools

I am busily putting together our offer for schools and working on a schools project with the castle. If anyone would like to find out more about the volunteering opportunities connected with this, please have a chat with me.

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## St Helen's Back in Time



*Our pilgrim comes to life*

We had great fun working with **Pudding Bag Productions** and **Ashby C of E Primary School** to make a film about the characters and happenings in the church. Over 90 children took part in the plotting, planning and performing involved and a lot of grownups acted and worked behind the scenes. Thank you to all.

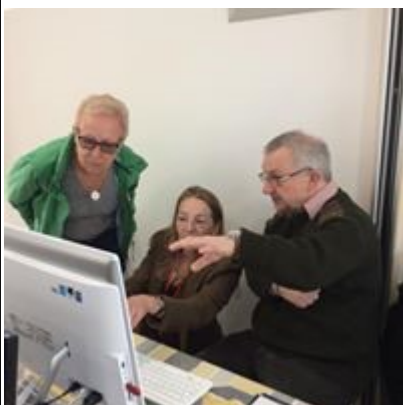
You can see the film on our website:  
[www.sthelensheritage.co.uk](http://www.sthelensheritage.co.uk)



*Pupils talk with a stonemason, who is working on the 19th Century Church extension.*

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## Sharing your Stories



Last week, we held a story sharing day in conjunction with **A Century of Stories**. People came along and told us of their own and their families' connections with the church. There was an opportunity to look up family history too, with expert Dr John Sutton who came along for the day. We also made another film that is just being edited.

Oh, and someone metal detected the garden!



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## Workshops - 24th May to 2nd June

We have a number of taster workshops available over the Arts Festival period which can be booked and paid for on our website. We also have a full day Illuminated Calligraphy workshop on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June where you can make a beautifully decorated letter that you can take home and frame. This would be a lovely gift for a new baby or for a friend or relative. More details and booking on our website. Details are also in our activities leaflet or you can contact us by email or phone.

## Heritage Project News, from our Heritage Officer, Llynda Baugh

### The First 50 Exhibition

The next thing we are working towards is the exhibition of the soldiers, made locally by schools and artists, who represent the first fifty volunteers to land in France at the beginning of World War I. They will arrive at 6.00 pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May and we will need some help unloading and carrying them into the church. They are not heavy but are life size, so a bit bulky. We will also need help during the afternoon of Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> May, when they leave. Please let me know if you can help so we can get them in place quickly. While they are with us, we would like to have welcomers in the church as we are expecting a good number of visitors to come and see them. We are also encouraging groups and schools to book to see the soldiers and listen to a short talk about them. They will be here for the Arts Festival Weekend too 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> May. Help will be needed with refreshments throughout the exhibition, so can anyone help serve refreshments between 10.30 and 4.00 on each of those days or be a welcomer in the church? All of the funds raised during this period go into Heritage Project funds.



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#### Community Play

Plans are afoot for a Community Play to take place in the church at the end of the project (May/June 2019). If anyone might be interested in a little acting part or in writing a short play related to the church and project, please get in touch.

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#### Heritage e-news - next issue

The next Heritage e-news will be published on Thursday 19th July. All contributions to Julie Starkey by Monday 16th July please.