



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

# Heritage Project eNews

No. 12 October 2019



## Bible and Peal Book Restoration



We are delighted that our three large Bibles, donated to the church by the Countess of Loudoun, and our Peal Book have just come back from being restored by Sycamore Bookbinding of Nottingham.

The Bibles are bound in goatskin leather, which has been repaired and refurbished, before being dressed and polished. The endpapers have been removed and replaced with new acid free paper and all the leaves have been flattened, cleaned and repaired.

The Peal Book has been similarly restored and the oversized tissue leaves which were protecting the illuminated pages have been trimmed to size and more securely inserted into the book.

All of the books are now protected by sturdy archival drop back boxes, covered in black Heritage buckram and lined with acid free paper. The titles of the books have been tooled into the spines and lids of the boxes.

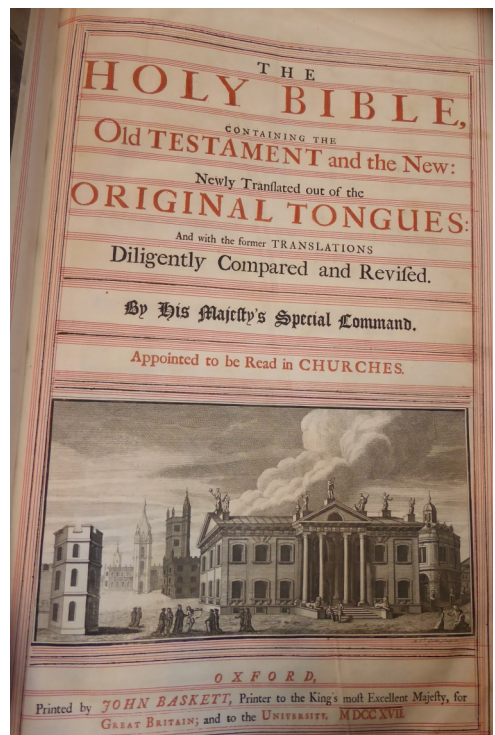
The work was paid for from conservation funding within our Heritage Project Grant and will ensure the books are in good condition for future generations.

Before their restoration, the books were tucked away in the Priest Room, in less than ideal conditions. We need to find a new home for them now and we hope to give people the opportunity to view them whenever possible.

*Above: fine tooling on the spine of one of our bibles.*

*Below: the restored Peal Book inside its new protective box.*

*Right: Frontispiece from one of our bibles, with the date 1717.*



## Since our last newsletter ...



**St Helen's Heritage Project**  
4 Church Yard, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leics, LE65 1AA

# Hello Heritage Open Days

A display on charities at St. Helen's Church through-out the centuries

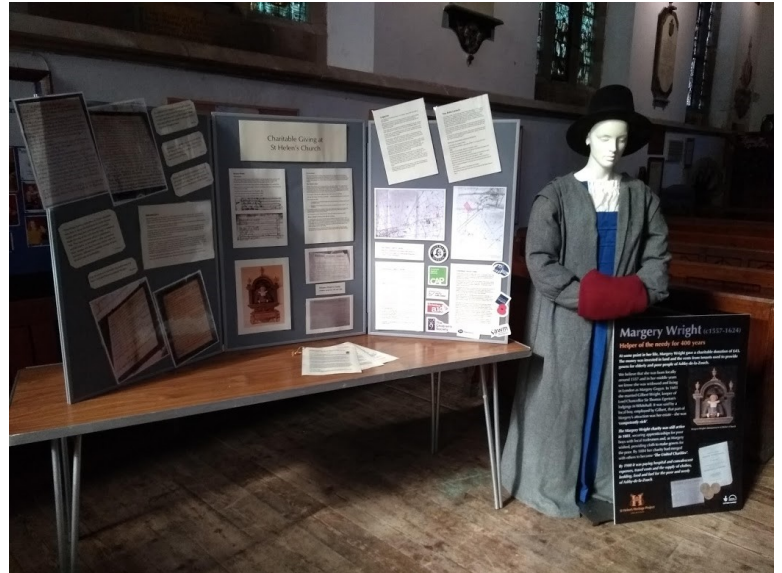
**Free Entry 10 am - 2 pm**

Come and explore our amazing 15th Century church and learn about the people & charities that have helped support our community

**Saturday 14th September 2019**  
Bell ringers will be ringing a full peal between 10 am - 1 pm

**Saturday 21st September 2019**  
We will be opening up the ground floor bell chamber for viewing the charity and bell peal boards

Facebook.com/sthelensheritage  
www.sthelensheritage.co.uk



During September, we took part in National 'Heritage Open Days,' with an exhibition on charities through the centuries at St Helen's in both Church & Heritage Centre.

The Church exhibition also offered a rare opportunity to see our Charity Boards, which hang in the Bell Tower ringing room.

If you missed it, you can still see the exhibition in the Heritage Centre.



At October half term, the Heritage Centre was full of happy children taking part in our annual 'Big Draw.'

## Our Browsing Book

The eagle eyed among you may have spotted an A3 ring bound book in the Hastings Chapel. It represents many hours of research, photography, painstaking collation of information and graphic design.

The idea of a Browsing Book for St Helen's goes back to the very beginning of our relationship with 'Heritage Now,' the consortium of heritage experts who worked with us to create our logo, make films, devise vis box tours and put interpretation on the walls of our Heritage Centre. A Browsing Book was mentioned in their tender document and, once we had

chosen to work with them on our project, a group of us travelled to St Andrew's Church in Epworth, Lincolnshire, to look at interpretation they had created there - including a Browsing Book.

Our project moved on. The Heritage Centre was built, decorated and furnished. Films were made, photographs were taken and interpretation panels went up on the walls. We worked hard to recruit volunteers and put on a programme of activities. For a while, the Browsing Book was pushed to the back of our minds as other things took priority.

By December 2018, many elements of our project were nearing completion and we took a close look at what we still wanted to do and, crucially, how much money we had left to do it with. An item that came high on the 'to do' list was the Browsing Book, for which we had a specific grant .

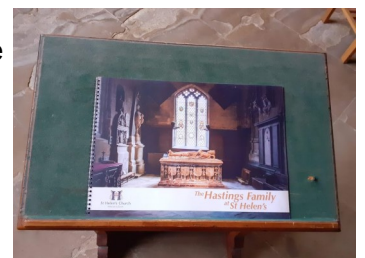
Helen Smith and I sat down to discuss the form the book should take. It was to be A3 size, glossy and robust. It was to be about the Hastings family and the Chapel which bears their name. It would sit in the Chapel for visitors to see and be brought down into the main body of the church for visitors unable to climb up into the Chancel. It should be informative but simply written, with more photos than text, and should tell the story of the Chapel and the family.

The first two pages cover the Chapel's centrepiece, the Hastings Tomb; the people it portrays and the man who carved it. Pages 4 & 5 introduce members of the Hastings family with strong royal connections, and there are many of them, including a prominent preacher and a would-be queen. Pages 6 & 7 tell of Theophilus, the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl, and his wife Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, bringing out the story of Selina's profound Christian faith and her key role in the early Methodist movement. Page 8 looks at some more recent members of the Hastings family and page 9 explains some of the hatchments on the walls and the vaults beneath the Chapel. Finally, there is a look at the medieval stained glass which was gifted by Lord and Lady Donington early last century to adorn the Chapel's windows.

Of course, Helen and I could not produce this wonderful book on our own. For that, we needed the creativity of Mike Foster, the graphic artist who produced all the wonderful displays in the Heritage Centre for us. I put together the words and a portfolio of photographs and Mike worked his magic putting it all together. Martin Vaughan, another generous helper, took the photo which graces the front cover of the book and a new photo of Francis and Katherine, against the backdrop of the screen that inspired our Heritage logo, which appears at the bottom of page 4.

We were very short of funds by the time Mike set to work on the book and, because he'd enjoyed working with us, he generously offered to do the work for the grant funding we had, which meant he was actually working at a loss. Without his generosity, this wonderful book would not be gracing the Hastings Chapel now. Do pop into church and have a look.

**Julie Starkey**



## Heritage Talk Series 2019-2020

First Monday in the month at 7.30pm, Hastings Hall, St Helen's Community Heritage Centre

£3 including light refreshments

### Vikings!

Our new series of Heritage Talks started magnificently, with an audience of over 70 people to hear Dr Rebecca Gregory of Nottingham University talk about Vikings in the East Midlands.

Her research was bang up to date, including new information about a recently discovered site near Foremark.



### Future talks ...

November 4th            Roger Willson            Viewing the stained glass at St Helen's in the context of an appreciation of Victorian glass

*There's so much Victorian stained glass in our churches that it's easy to overlook or underestimate it. Roger's talk will encourage us to take a closer look at it in order to develop our understanding and appreciation.*

December 2nd            David Budge            Medieval pottery found on our site. Who made it and what was it used for?

*David was part of the team from Mercian Archaeological Services who ran our 'Finding the Vaults' community project. He returns to talk about medieval pottery found on our site - its age, how it was made, who made it and what it was used for.*

January 6th            Peter Liddle OBE            Medieval Pilgrimage to and from Leicestershire

*A welcome return visit from Peter, who identified many pilgrim souvenirs during his time with the County Museum Service. He'll be talking about medieval pilgrimage in England, with particular reference to where Leicestershire people travelled on pilgrimage.*

February 3rd            Steve Woodward            'Pushing up the daisies: the flora & fauna of churchyards'

*Steve has visited all Leicestershire & Rutland churchyards, searching for the plants and animals that find sanctuary within them. His wide ranging talk will cover everything from spiders to celandines, mosses to mining bees, peregrines to polypodies! Come and learn more about what's under your feet.*

March 2<sup>nd</sup>            Research Group            Hot Off The Press 2! New finds by our very own research team

*Our research is ongoing. More information shortly.*



## Events coming up ...

### Events for adults, children and families

Saturday 26th October 10 am - 1 pm - **Autumn Fayre**

A great place to get in some early shopping for Christmas.

Refreshments available.

Saturday 30th November - **Festival of Angels** in Church and Heritage Centre. (see page 5)

Saturday 7th December 10 am - 1 pm - **Pomander making** workshop (see page 5)

### Autumn Concert Series

Friday 8th November - 7.30 pm - **8ctave**. Tickets £10, from the Parish Office or on the door.

### Special Services in Church

Sunday 3rd November - 6 pm - **A Time to Remember** - service to remember loved ones who have passed away.

Sunday 10th November - 9.30 am - **Remembrance Service** in Church followed by Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in town.

Sunday 1st December - 6.30 pm - **Advent Carol Service**

Sunday 8th December - 3.30 pm - **Christingle Service**

Sunday 22nd December - 6.30 pm - **Christmas Carol Service**

### Exhibition - Ashby Camera Club

During December, why not visit the Heritage Centre to see Ashby Camera Club's latest exhibition of photos taken in the Church?

## Guided Tours & Talks

If you belong to, or know of, a group of people who would like a tour of the Church, or a talk about the Church and Heritage Centre, please contact Sharn for details.

We offer tours at a time to suit your group. Refreshments include tea or coffee with delicious home made cake or cheese and wine.

Our volunteers will also come out to talk to your group.

## Festive Gathering for Volunteers

Once again the festive season has crept up on us and it's time for our Christmas get-together!

This will be on **Saturday December 14th** from 11am to 12 noon in the Hastings Hall, to say thank you for all your help and hard work over the past year.

Festive refreshments provided.

Please let Sharn or Eileen know if you will be attending.



## How to find out about our Project

Our website: [www.sthelensheritage.co.uk](http://www.sthelensheritage.co.uk) Our Facebook page: **St Helen's Heritage Ashby de la Zouch**