



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

Heritage Project eNews

No. 16 July 2022



Since our last newsletter ...

Since our last newsletter, we have been enjoying more in-person events at St Helen's.

CONCERTS

We held a successful Advent Concert Series in November and December 2021, when we hosted three very different concerts. We welcomed *Tesseræ*, a quartet of women's voices, in November and hosted international pianist Jill Crossland and the inaugural concert of newly formed Ashby String Orchestra in December.



DECORATIONS

Following the success of our children's glass workshop last summer, we were delighted to welcome back Carla Harris in December to lead two Christmas tree decoration workshops.

POPPIES



You may remember that we placed balls of red wool and poppy patterns in church last summer and invited local people to knit or crochet poppies for our 'Poppy Fall' display in November. We were overwhelmed by the response and a group of people got together early in November to attach hundreds of hand made poppies to a net, which was hung on the north wall of the church as a tribute to those who have fought and lost their lives in conflict.

FILMS

Good friends to St Helen's, Pudding Bag Productions, were back with us in February 2022 to film two plays in the church. "*Comrades in Arms*" was first performed live in St Helen's in the Summer of 2018. "*Dinner at St Helen's*" is a brand new play by Wendy Freer, involving some of the characters from monuments around the church. Both were premiered at the Lyric Rooms in May and can be seen again in our Heritage Centre this winter as part of our Heritage Talks series.



Research News

Hastings Chapel Monuments ...

Ian Scruton continues his research into monuments in the Hastings Chapel.

His latest piece, "One of Gibbons' More Attractive Works", is Monument of the Month on the Church Monuments Society website this July.

Ian writes about a detailed discussion between Theophilus, 7th Earl of Huntingdon, and Grinling Gibbons regarding the design of the Earl's monument, which is on the west wall of the Hastings Chapel.

You can read the article by following this link: <https://churchmonumentsociety.org/monument-of-the-month/one-of-gibbons-more-attractive-works>

The 17th Century monument is shown here.



... and clergy through the centuries

Julie Starkey is focusing her research on vicars of St Helen's. Articles are being published monthly in St Helen's Magazine and are then added to St Helen's website.

Recently researched clergy include John Prior, who created a ground breaking map of Leicestershire, and 19th Century vicars William McDouall and Marmaduke Vavasour.

Current research is following a particularly turbulent period at the end of the 16th century, when our 'Names of Incumbents' board is inaccurate as vicars and 'lecturers' become confused and incumbents come and go in a volatile period for the Church of England.

Articles about our clergy over the centuries can be found by following this link:

https://sthelens.churchinsight.com/Groups/362493/Our_Clergy.aspx

Summer Concerts at St Helen's

Saturday 9th July at 5.30 pm - St Helen's Choir & Friends Annual Summer Concert.
Back after 3 years absence! Free entry. Refreshments available.

Sunday 10th July at 7 pm - Ashby String Orchestra Summer Concert.
Free entry. Retiring collection.

Events Coming up

Festival of Archaeology 2022

We are delighted to be taking part in this year's Festival of Archaeology.

Guided Tours of the Church - Friday 8th July at 2 pm & Tuesday 26th July at 10 am and 2 pm.

Come and join our knowledgeable guides to learn more about the fascinating history of St Helen's. Tours will start in the Heritage Centre before moving across to the church. A chance to look at our interpretation panels afterwards, to chat with your guide and to enjoy refreshments.

Tours are free but donations are welcome.

Booking preferred via email: sthelensheritage@gmail.com



St Helen's Community Heritage Centre

Festival of Archaeology
Family Archaeology Workshop

Monday 25th July 9am - 12 noon

Fun activities for children

- Suitable for KS1 & KS2 from age 3+
- Archaeology Dig Boxes
- Drop in sessions - no need to book
- Cost £3 per child
- Refreshments available

(For other Festival of Archaeology activities see website)

Facebook: St Helen's Ashby de la Zouch
Email: sthelensashby@gmail.com
Website: sthelensashby.net

Family Archaeology Workshop - Monday 25th July - 9am-12noon

Fun activities for children from 3 to 11 years in our Heritage Centre and garden.

Archaeology dig boxes, handling boxes, medieval tents & dressing up clothes. Drop in sessions between the above times. £3 per child. Refreshments available. No need to book.

Check out other Festival of Archaeology events across Leicestershire & Rutland and in other parts of the UK at:

<https://leicsfieldworkers.org/festival-of-archaeology/>

and

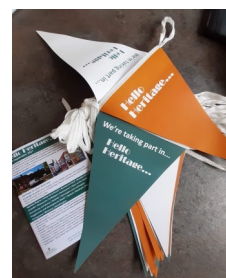
<https://www.archaeologyuk.org/festival.html>

Advance Notice of Heritage Open Days - Hello Heritage

Saturday 10th September

Plans are in full swing for this year's Heritage Open Days in September. We're also taking part in North West Leicestershire's 'Hello Heritage' and are excited to display this year's information board, on the topic of 'Astounding Inventions' which will hang on the church gates from 3rd-18th September.

Our own event is planned for Saturday 10th September. More details about this soon.



Heritage Talks Series 2022-23

We are excited to say that our Heritage Talks series is back in person in the Heritage Centre this Autumn and Winter. Talks will be on **Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm** and entry is £3, including light refreshments.

September 27th - Peter Liddle - DISCOVERING THE RUTLAND ROMAN VILLA.

A high status Roman villa was discovered in Rutland in 2021. Peter Liddle MBE, former County Archaeologist for Leicestershire, will describe the project and the finding of a dramatic mosaic showing scenes from the Siege of Troy.

October 25th - Dr Wendy Freer - DINNER AT ST HELEN'S and COMRADES IN ARMS.

Wendy is the founder of Pudding Bag Productions, a voluntary community heritage group, started in 2013. Their main interest is in making historical drama films, but they also make documentary films for other organisations and have made several for and about St Helen's. The two films showing this evening were filmed in the church in February 2022.

November 22nd - Anne Heaton & Julie Starkey - A THOUSAND YEARS OF THE ENGLISH PARISH CHURCH AND SOME OF ITS VICARS

Churches have been at the heart of the system of parishes in England for well over a thousand years. These magnificent buildings are repositories of history, heritage and art and have witnessed huge periods of change, something which continues today. A church has been on the site of St Helen's for most of this time and its story will be used to illustrate tonight's talk.

January 24th - Mike Hawkes - GRAFFITI IN MEDIEVAL CHURCHES - IS THE WRITING ON THE WALL?

Mike studied archaeology at the University of Leicester. He is Archaeological Advisor to the Dioceses of Leicester and of Southwell and Nottingham. He also works as a freelance archaeological illustrator and is involved with a project looking at early medieval parish formation in the Kingdom of Mercia.

February 28th - Rachel Askew - CATHOLIC RESISTANCE & SUBTERFUGE AT BREEDON

How did the Shirley family flaunt their Catholic faith in a fervently Protestant age? Join Dr Rachel Askew, Heritage Officer at Breedon Priory Church, as she explores the church's 16th & 17th century monuments.

March 28th - Peter Ackers - RELIGIOUS NONCONFORMITY & THE EARLY LEICESTER LABOUR MOVEMENT

Leicester was a major stronghold of the Churches of Christ. Peter, Emeritus Professor in the History of Industrial Relations at Loughborough University, will talk about their influence in the Boot & Shoe worker co-operative movement, as well as the Great War conscientious objection movement.

Contact us

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