

# THE FRIENDS OF WILTSHIRE CHURCHES



Westbury War Memorial

Annual Report 2018

[www.wiltshirehistoricchurchestrust.org.uk](http://www.wiltshirehistoricchurchestrust.org.uk)

# The Friends Of Wiltshire Churches

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Mrs Sarah Rose Troughton, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire

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Mr Jeremy Groom  
Mr Michael Hodges  
Mr Luke Hughes  
Brigadier Nigel Jackson (Secretary of the WHCT)  
The Ven Alan Jeans  
Mrs Caroline Keevil  
Mrs Clare Miles  
Mr John Osborne  
Mr Mark Robinson  
Mr Christopher Rogers  
Mr Neil Skelton  
Mr Geoffrey Till

## New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who joined during 2018:

Mr & Mrs Martyn Allez (Stoford)  
Mr & Mrs Martin Butt (East Grafton)  
Mr Bryan Castle (Marlborough)  
Maj General & Mrs Patrick Cordingley (West Dean)  
Mr Simon Courtauld (Etchilhampton)  
Ms Eileen Dew (Westbury)  
Mr & Mrs David Edwards (Wilton)  
Mr Patrick Eyre (Fyfield)  
The Ven Dr Sue Groom (Devizes)  
Mr & Mrs David Gyle-Thompson (Little Somerford)  
Mr Jeremy Hallett (Lockeridge)  
Lady Julia Hiscox (Oare)  
Mrs Hilary Hugh-Jones (Semley)  
Prof & Mrs James Malone-Lee (Tisbury)  
Dr & Mrs Alan Maryon-Davis (Tisbury)  
The Rev Gay Maynard (Corsley)  
Ms Harriet Tupper (Chippenham)

## Future Events

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### **Saturday 9 February 2019**

Winter Lecture Series "Horace Walpole and the 'Gothick' Revival" by Christopher Rogers, at Market Lavington Community Hall at 3pm.

### **Saturday 30 March 2019**

Annual General Meeting, followed by the Annual Guest Lecture on "Revising Pevsner in Wiltshire with special reference to its churches" to be given by Julian Orbach, at Salisbury Museum at 3pm.

### **Saturday 13 April 2019**

Proposed tour of churches in the Chalke Valley to be led by Brian Woodruffe.

### **Saturday 18 May 2019**

Proposed tour of churches around Malmesbury to be led by Edward Buchan.

### **Sunday 9 June 2019**

Summer party and choral evensong.

### **Saturday 6 July 2019**

Proposed tour of churches around Edington and Lavington to be led by John Osborne.

### **Saturday 14 September 2019**

Annual Ride & Stride.

### **Saturday 21 September 2019**

The monuments of Salisbury Cathedral to be led by Michael Hodges.

Further details of all these events will be announced in due course.

## Website News

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Over the past year we have continued to update the website, [www.wiltshirehistoricchurchestrust.org.uk](http://www.wiltshirehistoricchurchestrust.org.uk), with new pictures and other content that instantly shares the contribution of the Trust and Friends. You can easily browse the website menus and pages to find out about the Trust, its Grants to Wiltshire churches, the annual Ride & Stride event and all about the Friends and their activities. The Church Trails map remains a firm favourite for visitors to Wiltshire and this now has a link to the Wiltshire churches pages in the National Churches Trust Explore Churches website. We hope that this broad coverage of our churches and linkage to the NCT will stimulate wider interest in our beautiful churches and their history.

We always appreciate feedback on the website and constructive comments on how it could be improved. Please 'Contact Us' through the website.

## Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust Grants

The following grants were awarded by the Trustees in June 2018:

Church	Project	£ Grant
St Andrew, Nunton	Roof	£5000
St Michael, Tidcombe	Roof, masonry	£6000 + NCT £10000
St Mary, West Dean	Roof and guttering	£1000
St Peter, Kington Langley	Vestry stone roof	£1500
Malmesbury URC	Tower and Balcony	£2000
St Michael and All Angels, Figheldean	Tower	£1000
St Mary, Shrewton	Tower	£750
Holy Trinity, Trowbridge	Wall stonework	£2000
St Thomas and St Edmund Salisbury	South Cleresory stonework	£2000
St Mary, Luckington	Porch ceiling	£500
St Mary, Broughton Gifford	Door restoration	£500
All Saints, Burbage	Dias and floor	£1500
St Mary, Upton Scudamore	Memorial repairs	£500
St Peter, Penhill	Heating	£1000
St James, Bratton	Water supply and kitchenette	£2000
St Peter and St Paul, Great Somerford	Toilet, kitchen and water	£2000

TOTAL: £39,250.00 plus £10,000 NCT Partnership Grant

The following grants were awarded by the Trustees in November 2018

Church	Project	£ Grant
St Mary, Great Bedwyn	Roof and guttering	£2000
St Peter and St Paul, Heytesbury	Chancel roof and associated fabric	£2000

<b>Church</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>£ Grant</b>
St Francis, Salisbury	Roof	£1800
St Mary, Orcheston	Roof replacement	£2000
St Mary, Potterne	Roof, walls, rainwater goods	£2000
All Saints, Marden	Roof and wall	£2000
St Augustine, Even Swindon	Roof and masonry	£1000
St Cosmos and St Damian, Sherrington	Roof and masonry	£1000
St John, Pewsey	Roof, guttering and masonry	£1000
St Nicholas, Wilsford	Tower window grids and heating	£1000
St Paul, Salisbury	Belltower and guttering	£2000
Holy Rood, Rodbourne	Tower roof and floor	£600
St John the Baptist, West Ashton	Guttering and soffit/facia	£1000
All Saints, Maiden Bradley	Wall masonry and floor	£2000
St George, Ogbourne St George	Walls	£1000
St Mary, Codford St Mary	Stone and mortar	£1000
St James, Dauntsey	Historic stained glass windows	£1000
St John, Chirton	Historic window	£1000
St Margaret, Chilmark	Historic stained glass windows	£500
St James, Cherhill	Heating	£1500
St Michael and All Angels, Lyneham	Heating	£500
St Thomas a Becket, Box	Kitchenette and Toilet	£1000
All Saints, Garsdon	Kitchenette, Toilet and hospitality area	£1000
St Laurence, Downton	Roof alarm	£3000

TOTAL: £34,900.00

**2018 TOTAL: £74,150.00 plus £10,000**

# News Round

by Martin Knight

It is with great pleasure that I report on another very satisfactory year for the Friends. As most of our activities take place outside, the fine summer added a great deal of gloss to our enjoyment. We raised much needed funds from our tours, lectures and the summer party. These, together with the magnificent total achieved by Ride and Stride, and matching grants from the National Churches Trust, enabled us to distribute £74,000 to help our beautiful churches. It was particularly pleasing to receive a partnership grant from the NCT that enabled us to give a total of £16,000 to St Michael's Tidcombe which was some compensation for subsequently having had their lead roof stolen.

Our church tours continue to form the backbone of our activities and, with only one exception, were conducted on the most beautiful days. Indeed, we spent much of the July tour searching for cover from the blazing sun. These are the most enjoyable events where the participants can not only appreciate the history and architecture of the churches but can also enjoy a convivial time with other Friends. The tours covered churches around Collingbourne, Imber and Salisbury Plain, Bradford-on-Avon and south Gloucestershire. Once again, I would especially like to thank our tour leaders who invest so much of their time in providing us with such professional and interesting guiding. Full reports of these tours can

be found in the main body of this report.

The last Sunday in June saw us bathed in brilliant sunshine and 100 Friends (apologies to those who did not make the cut) were able to enjoy choral evensong at Lydiard Tregoze, one of the county's most exceptional churches, which has been involved in a huge restoration project. We were very grateful to the Rev Captain Clive Deverell for conducting the service and to the Dodecantus choir for their beautiful singing. We then enjoyed supper in the splendour of Lydiard Park House, a rare opportunity, for which we are very grateful to Swindon Council. Once again, Diana Matthews-Duncan masterminded the evening and to whom I am very grateful for making it the outstanding success it was.

The AGM was conducted on 17 March at Market Lavington Hall. In recognition of the centenary of the ending of WW1, Dr Timothy Connor gave a thoroughly researched and fascinating lecture on the monuments of the war for which we were most indebted. On the subject of monuments, Michael Hodges has done a huge amount of work researching the church monuments of the county. He delivered a lecture on the subject in February and has since produced a booklet, profits from which will go to the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust. We are once again very grateful for all the work he does

in support of the Trust. Reports of both the above lectures will be found in the body of this report.

The national Ride & Stride event was again administered for the county by Charles Graham and raised the magnificent sum of £60,000. We still look for a successor to take over from Charles and we would be pleased to hear from anyone who is interested. In the meantime, our grateful thanks go to Charles and all the riders and striders who performed so magnificently.

Financially, the Trust continues to be in a healthy position, bolstered by a very significant donation from the Hartham

Church Charitable Trust and a generous legacy from Mrs McKechnie-Jarvis, a former Friend. On the people front, it is with great pleasure that we welcome the new Dean of Salisbury, the Very Rev Nicholas Papadopoulos, to join our team of vice-presidents, in place of the Right Rev June Osborne, the new Bishop of Llandaff; and Geoffrey Till who has joined the committee of the Friends.

Finally, my grateful thanks go to Kt Keevil Whitehead and Caroline Keevil for masterminding the design and production of this Report whilst also juggling with a new addition to the family.



St Mary's Church, Lydiard Tregoze from the south of the park

# Report on the Annual General Meeting and Annual Lecture held in Market Lavington Community Hall

Saturday, 17th March, 2018

by David Evans

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## Annual General Meeting

The Meeting, attended by about 55 Friends and their guests, was first addressed by Sarah Troughton, Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire and President of the Friends. She expressed her thanks both to the Trustees of the WHCT and to the Friends, especially their office-holders, for the valuable work that they do.

The Chairman, Martin Knight, then welcomed the members of the audience, especially the invited members of the British Legion and the speaker, Dr Timothy Connor. In his review of the year 2017, he made special mention of: the first winter lecture, on stained glass in Wiltshire, given by Brian Woodruffe; the successful Summer Event at Trafalgar House, organised by Diana Matthews-Duncan, hosted by Michael Wade and preceded by evensong, at which Bishop Edward of Ramsbury preached a notable sermon; the four very successful church tours, for which we owe a debt of gratitude to the tour-leaders; the splendidly produced Annual Report, for which we are indebted to Caroline Keevil and her daughter; and Nigel Jackson's expertise with IT, without which Tim Connor's lecture would have been spoilt. Martin urged Friends attending church

tours to take photos and send them to him in order to improve the illustrations in the Annual Report. He also asked for every effort to be put into promoting Ride & Stride, this year due to take place on September 8th, since the proceeds are such a major part of WHCT's income.

The Treasurer, Peter Smith, then gave his report. He noted that the Friends had raised slightly more money than in 2016. Two very generous donations were partly responsible; the proceeds of the winter lecture and the continuing stream of income from Brian Woodruffe's book also contributed to this happy result. Peter also mentioned the generous donation by Marion Gordon-Finlayson of the proceeds from the play *The Third Policeman*, put on in her garden. Money raised by the Friends, together with about £53,000 brought in by Ride & Stride, enabled the WHCT to pay out 28 grants totalling £79,000, a great help to hard-pressed parishes trying to keep their churches in good order. In future they will be assisted also by the income generated by the generous donation from the Hartham Church Charitable Trust of £100,000.

Martin announced the date of the next AGM as March 30th 2019. He then introduced the afternoon's



speaker, Dr Connor, who had agreed to speak about war memorials in this centenary year after the First World War.

## Dr Connor's Lecture on War Memorials

Dr Connor began by setting the issue of war memorials in their wider context. He pointed out that all civilisations have shown care for their dead, but that in the circumstances of the battlefield it has often been difficult to show such care.

Apparently, the names of those killed at the Battle of Marathon were preserved for 700 years, but for most of history ordinary soldiers killed in battle could expect only a mass grave. By the mid-19th century some people were beginning to wonder how dead soldiers could be compensated for the inevitably squalid circumstances of their death in the midst of battle.

The unprecedented death toll of the First World War raised this issue in a particularly acute form. One result was the great public monuments in London. Lutyens' Cenotaph in Whitehall set an important precedent in its starkness and simplicity. It was intended to form the climax of a processional route and to be the focus of ceremony, as it still is every Armistice Day. Charles Jagger's Royal Artillery Memorial, by contrast, is not abstract, but it is stark and geometrical, with the howitzer pointing up at an acute angle from the plinth. The dead soldier, sculpted in bronze, on one side of the monument

was considered by many critics too brutal a reference to the reality of war.

Mourners after the First World War did not feel that a few national monuments were adequate compensation to the dead for their sacrifice.



A regimental memorial in Salisbury Cathedral

Dr Connor showed a selection of memorials from around the country, including some from Wiltshire. Some of them recall the dead of a village, some the masters and alumni of a specific school, as at Warminster, some the workers for a specific company, like the memorial on Paddington Station to the dead workers of the GWR, many, no doubt, from Swindon. The Paddington memorial takes the form of an impressive statue and at Semley there is a rare equestrian monument. Much more commonly, memorials are

crowned by a cross, with its obvious connotations of sacrifice, but, incongruously, within the cross there is often a sword. The ubiquitous feature of the memorials of the First World War is the presence of names. Dr Connor pointed out that in no previous war would it have been possible to draw up lists of the names of those who perished in battle. It was possible in 1914-8 because of the 10 million index cards of the War Office, products of the huge 19th century expansion of the bureaucracies of the European states. It was therefore possible for those at home to keep in touch with brothers and sons at the front while they lived and to learn of their fate when they died.

On the whole, British memorials were austere and simple. The simple sword within a cross at Calne is typical. Some memorials show the persistence of imagery derived from knightly ideals in vogue in the 19th century.

Dr Connor showed a few depictions of St Michael and St George in commemorative stained glass windows. It would be interesting, Dr Connor suggested, to compare the British memorials with those of other countries. He had time only to suggest a comparison with those of France. French memorials tend to use more figure sculpture; they are less wary of showing suffering, perhaps because in a Catholic country the depiction of Christ as the Man of Sorrows is more common; and perhaps French memorials were more influenced by recent artistic developments.

Finally, Dr Connor looked to the future. Will future memorials focus more on the role of women or the suffering of animals? And what exactly will people in the future want war memorials to do for them? One of the many virtues of the talk was that it did not claim to answer every question, but stimulated us to further thought.



Oddfellows Lodge memorial, Devizes

# Winter Lecture Series

## Church Monuments in Wiltshire from St. Osmund to Sir Nikolaus Pevsner

Given by Michael Hodges  
Saturday 10th February 2018

by Diana Beattie, OBE, FSA

In the deep Midwinter, Michael Hodges treated the Friends to a very well researched illustrated lecture on church monuments, delivered in the Hinton Hall by St. John the Baptist, Tisbury.

He started with a slide of Anglo-Saxon carved stones at Ramsbury, the town where the diocese covering Wiltshire and Berkshire was based from 909 until 1075, when it was moved to Old Sarum.

To quote from Michael's lecture "The greatest span of monumental activity in England was the long period between 1300 and 1800. It was typified by the erection of large monuments comprising effigies and other figures often in elaborate architectural settings. A vast amount of money, materials and artistic effort was expended during this period on the production of funerary monuments for the dead. At almost every period monuments had a close affinity with contemporary styles in architecture, which they reflected in their designs. The effigies in particular are very valuable in the study of armour and dress. Monuments in general and effigies in particular are of course of the greatest importance in the history of English sculpture." And Michael points

out that the majority of sculptors historically could not have survived without the continuing demand for monuments with effigies and other figures.

Michael's next slides took us to Salisbury Cathedral where the coffin lid of St. Osmund (died 1099) was brought to the new Cathedral in 1226.

Michael showed us early tombs of almost a dozen bishops and gave us a fascinating resumé of their lives. These tombs could be the subject of a most interesting tour for the Friends next year!

Michael then cantered through some of the knights who lie cross legged in churches throughout the county, and once again he gave us some fascinating research on their lives.



Lydiard Tregoze

Michael introduced the Renaissance with the monument at Lacock of Sir William Sharington. He describes this as one of the finest pieces of mid 16th Century decoration in England.

A notable monumental brass survives in Tisbury to Laurence Hyde (1590). Michael's research discovered that Laurence Hyde was the grandfather of Edward Hyde, First Earl of Clarendon, whose daughter married to James II was the mother of Queen Mary of William and Mary fame, and Queen Anne.

Very few monuments commemorate women, but Lady Frances Devereux, Duchess of Somerset, daughter of the Earl of Essex, (died 1674) is an exception. She is shown in Great Bedwyn Church as a bust with two jolly dancing putti, wearing a bodice with elaborate clasps and pearls in her hair.

Another interesting monument of 1786 in white marble is in Clyffe Pypard Church to the carpenter Thomas Spackman by John Deval Junior. Michael told us "He stands on a marble orange base in an eloquent pose with a long flowing mantle. Below to his left and right are two children reading and writing. The monument displays plenty of tools of the carpenter's trade. The inscription tells us that he left £1,000 in 3% annuities to pay for a master to teach reading, writing and arithmetic to the poor of the parish."

There is a monument by John Flaxman (1755-1826) the leading English neo-classical sculptor in Ashton

Keynes. In the 19th Century we have an example of the work of Alfred Gilbert, best known for his statue of Eros in Piccadilly Circus, in Longbridge Deverill Church. Representing the 20th Century, there is an example of the work of both Eric Gill and of Rex Whistler in Wilsford Church in the Woodford Valley. Finally, Michael showed us the handsome tomb of Sir Anthony Eden in Alvediston churchyard, and the monument to Sir Nikolaus Pevsner who lies in Clyffe Pypard churchyard with his wife Lola.

This was a very dense and interesting lecture, illustrated with 94 slides and with a great deal of background history. I certainly think the subject deserves a further visit perhaps to Salisbury Cathedral and Wilton Parish Church where the Friends can study monuments in greater depth.



Thomas Spackman monument, St Peter's church, Clyffe Pypard

# Tour of churches - Ludgershall, Collingbourne Kingston, East Grafton and Tidcombe

Led by Brian Woodruffe

Saturday 14th April 2018

by Geoffrey Till

On a grey, misty, depressing morning with no hint of the glories to come, about 20 enthusiasts gathered at **Ludgershall St James** on 14th April for a local tour led by Brian Woodruffe.



Churchwarden's initials high up on the tower

The tower dominates the view from outside; built originally in the 14th Century, it collapsed and had to be rebuilt in the 1660s. Part of the reason for this was the extensive use of flint and rather crumbly mortar. Then and later, Brian pointed out to us that building uses of several types of limestones and sometimes even sarsen, which is generally much less susceptible to this kind of wear. The effect at Ludgershall, he said, might strike some as 'a bit of a mess' but to others as charmingly domestic. Inside, there were some Norman heads to be seen, a rather sinister 'Green man' with oak leaves peeling from his mouth, and the remains of the original

stairs that once led to a rood loft spanning the chancel. Brian introduced us to what was to be a theme of the day - the demanding costs of building maintenance for sometimes very small congregations. Local people's devotion to their churches varied from the very simple, the provision of a splendid chest in 1693 its date proudly displayed, to the very grand - in this case the spectacular Renaissance canopied tomb of Sir Richard and Lady Brydges. Boldly repainted in acrylic, its colours struck some as on the garish side and this kind of 'restoration' by the Pilgrim Trust in the 1970s probably would not be allowed these days.

Pevsner described it 'as one of the most important of its date in England.' The tomb struck a strong contrast with the equally grandiose monument to the Pile family at our second church -



Lead work on chest

**St Mary, Collingbourne Kingston**, which if anything was on the under-restored side with modern metal supports holding up the top of the tomb, and some dust and cobwebs in its more inaccessible corners. What Sir Gabriel Pile and his lady (1629) gazing sternly out over the congregation would have made of it is hard to say.

Their church was larger than Ludgershall, more solid, had a welcoming lady on a pillar opposite the South door and an array of impressive 12th Century arcading and was not suffering too much from being 'extremely refreshed' in the 19th Century. Outside the sun had appeared, lighting up the primroses on the springy grass of the churchyard.



St Gabriel Pile and his lady at Collingbourne Kingston

Heartened by this, we made our way in the usual convoy of cars (all gamely following the one in front) through meandering lanes to the Swan at Wilton for a most welcome sit down, lunch and chat. Next on the agenda was something completely different, **St Nicholas, East Grafton**. This was built in 1844 for a new parish hacked out from the nearby over-sized Great Bedwyn parish. The architect was

Thomas Benjamin Ferrey who plainly set out to create a Victorian version of the Romanesque church architecture of so many of the churches in France that inspired him. And so inside and out were treated to a spectacular display of rounded 'Norman' arches, solid circular columns, and on the western end of the outside, even some intricate interlaced arcading. The sheer quality of the workmanship stood out. A contemporary print inside showed how boldly the new church would have dominated the scene.



East Grafton as soon as it was built 1844

Inside the 'feel' was distinctly French with Victorian characteristics such as the apse richly decorated by Thomas Willement and a southern doorway so tall it looked more Saxon than Norman.



The Apse at East Grafton

The lych-gate to the churchyard had an arch that reminded us that the poor Reverend George Augustus Montgomery from Bemerton was killed when inspecting the church as it was being built by the fall of some of the churches most unusual stone vaulting. Fortunately the church seems quite secure now.

One couldn't say that quite so confidently of the last church on our tour, **St Michael's Tidcombe**, a quite charming little church tucked away in some of the remotest parts of the county and approached that afternoon in warm sunshine across a carpet of primroses, celandine and violets. Another product of flint and rubble, with some counter-productive Victorian cementing that simply spread the damp around. The local congregation have a job on their hands but the welcoming smell of the special polish being used suggested that all would be well. Early 14th Century Decorated in the main, it had a chancel longer than the nave, the remains of an Easter sepulchre, a Jacobean pulpit, a massive plain Norman font, and a couple of piscinas under characteristic sharply pointed, or ogee, decorated arches. Being such an expert on church glass, Brian



Stained glass at St Michael's Tidcombe

enthralled us with an account of the '4th figure of the Crucifixion', the enigmatic Mary Magdalene and drew our attention to how differently she was portrayed at Tidcombe with the rather bland version in the south aisle contrasting with O'Connor's strong representation in the East window - even with a window bar across her face!

None of these four churches have made it into the standard works of John Betjeman or Simon Jenkins and even the old Methuen Red Guide is pretty dismissive - East Grafton being written off in my 1917 version just as 'modern.' The fact that our county is evidently capable of producing such delightful churches of the second division shows how lucky we are and how much we need to preserve them. We were lucky too in our guide and thanked Brian for all his hard work in giving us such a splendid day. The church's setting was a delight, with the downs behind and the Manor House just through the as yet leafless trees. It was to there that we made our way to tea and cake, courtesy of Katherine Jellicoe and also to meet the jolly Rev Jo Reid, cheerful despite having five other churches to look after as well.



St Michael's Tidcombe

# Tour of churches around Salisbury Plain

led by Neil Skelton

Saturday 2nd June 2018

by Mark Robinson

Wiltshire Churches have been blessed this summer by some wonderful weather but when I arrived in Tilshead at the church of **St. Thomas à Becket** I knew at once that we were in for a special day. As I walked up the path to the main door of the church some were already busy inspecting the church yard and its grave stones and on entering it was wonderful to see so many of our "friends" present.

Built around 1100, one cannot help being impressed by the precision of this particular church. I was curious as to why this church was named after the former Archbishop of Canterbury, who met such a tragic end. None of my researches during or since our visit have found the answer. On the wall is a list of the Vicars of Tilshead from 1291 to present, one of whom served for nearly 60 years starting with William IV in 1836 and covering nearly the entire reign of Queen Victoria. I hoped his sermons were not too repetitive or the congregation would have known them by heart! The church had an extensive programme of repairs in 2011 which rather explains its pristine condition, but then this beautiful Grade 1 building deserves to be properly cared for, which it clearly is. There was much to observe in this flint and stone church, including the early English central tower, the chancel and the Norman font.



The Angel at Tilshead

Hard as it was to tear ourselves away, we had to move on to **St. Peter's, Great Cheverell** and once again we encountered a Grade 1 building which was listed in 1962. Here there was much to observe and clearly work has been done over the ages to ensure the building is in the fine condition in which we found it. The church is faced with limestone ashlar, although the oldest part from around the 11th century is of limestone and flint. The nave and west tower are circa 14th century and in the 15th the tower was raised and the south porch added. The Victorians, as one might expect, had their part to play and restoration was carried out in 1868 including re-roofing of the chancel, rebuilding of the chancel arch and the addition of the north vestry.





St Peter's, Great Cheverell

The octagonal font is from the 13th century and the clock tower carries six bells, the earliest being from the 15th century and three from the 18th. This is just a sample of the treats that were in store but again time was not on our side and The Duke in Bratton beckoned.

At lunch there was much to talk about and this turned out to be a convivial occasion although service was not delayed and we ran to schedule. We knew there were more treats in store in the afternoon and were not disappointed. We moved on to **St. James, Bratton**. This is accessed by walking up a sloping path, which many of us did although some drove up and found they could park close to the church.

The church is on the hill behind Bratton Castle, where Alfred reportedly defeated the Danes. But then this was a day when history was all around the beautiful churches we

came to see. St. James is II\* listed of 14th century origins, although like so many others there may have been an earlier church on the site. The Victorians again played their part and the chancel was rebuilt in the mid-eighteen hundreds by George Gilbert Scott, with further restoration by T.H. Wyatt in 1860. It is a compact structure and the tower is rectangular, which is fairly unusual. There is a window by Alexander Gibbs of London circa 1860. Although the font is 15th century, the bowl is Norman but was re-cut in the 18th. The tower vaulting is worthy of inspection. There is also a Baptist chapel. It was built in 1734, and Pevsner describes it as externally a gem. It is also Grade II\* listed.



St James, Bratton

Once again time marched on and we repaired to vehicles to penetrate MoD boundaries on Salisbury Plain where we had special permission to visit **St. Giles', Imber** the village with no post

code. To achieve this we had to travel in convoy and waited at a military barrier for all cars to catch up. A lady was walking with her dogs and asked me if the church was open. I explained we were going there with special permission. She then told me that the flora and fauna were special and only there because the public were excluded from the area except on special occasions. I was able to observe this haven as our convoy moved slowly towards St. Giles' church, which is redundant but in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. It is open to the public on certain agreed days, holds an annual Service of Remembrance and a Christmas carol service. Its condition is helped by contributions which its visitors make.



Graffiti at Imber

Imber is known as the ghost village as all its buildings are uninhabited and used for military training purposes. Standing resplendent among abandonment, this 13th Century church and 14th century tower with five pinnacles is a delight to visit. Entering is a bit of a shock as the church is without its fittings and the tables inside make you feel as if you should be signing up for something or other. But the architecture is fine



Bell changes painted on the tower wall at Imber and worthy of appreciation, as are the remains of medieval wall paintings of the Seven Deadly Sins and 17th century bell ringing changes painted on the north wall of the tower. The churchyard, which slopes down to towards the village has 17th and 18th tomb chests worthy of inspection.

As we returned to our cars in late afternoon sunshine, the chatter among participants was a tribute to a well organised day which had been well supported and enjoyed. and for which our very grateful thanks go to Neil Skelton.



Door arch at Imber

# Tour of churches around Bradford-on-Avon

led by John Osborne  
Saturday 7th July 2018

by Martin Knight

On another beautiful summer's day, lovers of the BBC Poldark series were truly rewarded by starting off this tour by visiting the 'home of Caroline and her doctor husband Dwight', or in real terms, Great Chalfield Manor. Here we were kindly entertained with coffee and a brief introduction to the Manor by Robert Floyd whose home it is. It is a stunning location and the beautiful pink roses were still blooming in spite of their fight against the hot dry summer. We learnt how Thomas Tropnell had built the Manor as it now stands and admired the fine great hall and fireplace in front of which many film scenes had been made.

**All Saints Church** is a gem, also built

by Thomas Tropnell and Robert described how it was probably once used as a community centre. It has been lovingly cared for and maintained over the years and a new stained glass window reflecting the local landscape by Andrew Taylor and dedicated to members of Robert's family was installed some 20 years ago. We also admired the pretty medieval style painted organ case which is next on the list for restoration.

We then set off for Bradford-on-Avon which was thriving with visitors and its market. It was a real treat to be able to visit **Holy Trinity** which has been closed until recently for major refurbishment.



Holy Trinity church, Bradford-on-Avon

We were greeted by the Rector, Joanna Abecassis, and quickly realised that we were competing with the Trowbridge Symphony Orchestra for whom the church had been prepared for their concert that evening.

A large amount of money has been spent on the re-ordering project which has been regarded as a huge success, giving a much greater feeling of space and light to the church, typified by the new pale oak seating (comfortable too). The stone floor has also been restored. We understand that the project was largely financed by the sale of a portrait of Christ originally thought to be by Luis de Morales and subsequently found to be by Quentin Matsys. A copy of the picture hangs in the north aisle.



John Osborne at All Saints church, Great Chalfield

John pointed out many of the fine features of the church which included the medieval 14th C decorated style East window, two large well decorated tombs, and the medieval painting of the Virgin Mary being

taught how to write which was uncovered by the Victorians. There were many other monuments including one to Thomas Horton (also at Westwood) and a brass showing an Elizabethan woman's costume (unfortunately covered by furniture due to the impending concert). We also noted the unusual banding round the western aisle pillars.

We emerged from the cool interior out into the heat again and gathered a few paces to the north of Holy Trinity beside the Saxon church of

### **St Laurence.**



St Laurence church, Bradford-on-Avon

This is an extraordinary survival. William of Malmesbury, the medieval chronicler, mentions such a church dated in 715. Is this it? Probably not because the style is late Saxon (of which there are very few left in this country). It was 'lost' for 8 centuries and rediscovered by Rector Jones of Holy Trinity in 1850s. It had been used as a school. It has a lack of

proportion in its style; very tall compared to its width. It has blank arcading at the top and two missing porches. We enjoyed its simplicity inside and its small chancel arch. The altar is made up of a collection of fragments from Christ Church.

We went our various ways to find lunch and much needed liquid refreshment in Bradford. A few miles south of Bradford we found Wingfield and the church of **St Mary**, lying in a beautiful secluded position.

It is somewhat of a scattered parish with no real centre but still boasts a pub and a school.

John pointed that on our way here we might have noticed the entrance to a Manor House which was the home of Shrapnel (of munitions fame) who also had a monument in Holy Trinity.

The church at Wingfield is mainly Perpendicular style and the rest is 18th C. It has interior furnishings of box pews and a 3 decker pulpit. The most interesting features are the medieval poppyhead pews illustrating the beginning of the Gothic revival in the late 18th C. Outside we admired some good table top tombs. Overall it is a very rare 18th C rebuild of the nave and furniture which demonstrated the style and money in the parish.

We retraced our steps to visit Westwood and the church of **St Mary the Virgin**.

This is situated beautifully next to the 15th C Manor which is in very good order and well worth visiting when it is open.

The church is mainly 15th C but there are indications of something earlier. The priest's door with decorations/

scratch marks was a very obvious feature where there had clearly been a re-use of stone, probably during the 19th C restoration. Thomas Horton, whose monument we had noted at Holy Trinity, lived in the Manor in 1400/1500s. He built the tower at the top of which there was good panelling to be seen. An interesting feature was the cupola at the top of the tower staircase which we found, inside, was mirrored in the top of the font. We also noted the extraordinary carved creatures trying to climb down from the top of tower.

Inside we found high quality Perpendicular style with medieval glass, painting and a superb ceiling in the lady chapel. John then asked us to gather round the east window which had beautiful medieval stained glass and a figure of Christ depicting great suffering and the instruments of the Passion. Some of the red glass appears to be from a later period.

After such a wonderful tour on such a scorching day, we adjourned to the church hall where we were treated to much needed tea and delicious cake. Our very grateful thanks to John for organising such a wonderful day and imparting so much of his vast knowledge to us.



St Mary the Virgin, Westwood

# Tour of churches around the Stroud Area, South Gloucestershire

Led by Christopher Rogers  
Saturday 8th September 2018

by Clare Miles

In recent years occasional sorties over the Wiltshire border have featured in the Friends' programme of summer excursions. For the early autumn Christopher Rogers planned an intriguing itinerary in the South Cotswolds of Gloucestershire. We were first directed to the village of **Duntisbourne Rous**, north-west of Cirencester. A path beyond an almost concealed tilted lychgate led us to the **Church of St. Michael**, sited above a hidden valley. Christopher stressed the remarkable unaltered state of this simple small building. Evidence of its Saxon origins could be detected in the exterior stonework. The Normans added a chancel with a crypt below to support it on the steep decline of the site. Preserved in the interior is a medieval timber roof and a Norman chancel arch. The chancel's wall paintings and a font date from the 13th century and show simple foliate motifs. Furnishings of subsequent centuries survive as does a quaint Victorian miniature organ. Essential restoration work occurred in the 1930s.



Misericord, Duntisbourne Rous



Church of St. Michael, Duntisbourne Rous.

We then climbed Chalford Hill to visit the Roman Catholic **Church of St. Mary of the Angels, Brownshill**, a small, austere building with a roof of stone slates and simple bellcote. It was designed by W. Douglas Caroe, architect to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Construction occurred in 1930-37 in a simplified Romanesque style. It features an aisleless barrel-vaulted interior and shallow apse enclosed by a chevron carved arch. A wooden gallery, fine woodwork and wrought iron fittings have the marks of the Arts and Crafts Movement which flourished in the Cotswolds in the early 20th century. Modern style stained glass was added in the 1940s. The church served

Templewood, a religious community founded in 1927 by two nurses who dedicated themselves to a ministry of spiritual healing for servicemen suffering from mental illness in the aftermath of the First World War. Between 1951 and 2006 the church was associated with the Dominican Order; thereafter it came into the hands of the charity The Friends of Friendless Churches.



Church of St. Mary of the Angels, Brownhill

After lunch at The Ram in Bussage, we headed south to the ancient 'cloth' town of **Minchinhampton** to visit the parish **Church of Holy Trinity**, with a distinctive truncated spire. Traces of its Norman structure were destroyed in 1842 when the 14th century nave was demolished and replaced in the plain Perpendicular style of the period. Of the surviving Decorated Gothic transepts and crossing, the star feature is the beautiful, large southern window with rose tracery. In the 1860s the chancel was altered by William Butterfield who designed double tracery for the east window. A beam, rood and screens were early 20th century additions. In 2014-15 the floor was replaced to provide underfloor heating and flexible seating. The church endured turbulent events over

the centuries but today it offers a light, unencumbered and calm place of worship.



Church of Holy Trinity, Minchinhampton

From Minchinhampton Common we came to **All Saints Church, Selsley**, in the hills south of Stroud. This small limestone building has a lofty tower with a steep saddleback roof. In 1851, Samuel Marling, a local cloth mill owner, donated land for the construction of a church in the village. He appointed the architect, George Frederick Bodley. This commission coincided with Bodley's work in the French influenced Gothic Revival of his early church building career. A polygonal apse, bold windows and a wealth of fine quality and imaginative detail in the stone and woodwork fittings, illustrate the sophistication of this project with its

touch of the lily. The church's glory is the comprehensive scheme for stained glass windows commissioned by Bodley in 1861 from Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co, established that year by William Morris with the Pre-Raphaelite artists and designer-craftsmen in his circle. Bodley, Philip Webb, the architect co-ordinator of the scheme, and 4 artists including Morris, all shared an enthusiasm for the arts of the early Middle Ages.



Baby Prince, detail of Stained Glass at Selsley

The depictions of biblical stories and symbols in the 17 windows were stylistically original for the times in their naturalism and vivid colour.



Annunciation window in the chancel of Selsley church

Christopher Rogers recognised the pride in this church taken by its devoted members some of whom welcomed us and kindly served tea and cake. The Chairman, Martin Knight, thanked Christopher for researching and presenting a highly rewarding tour.



All Saints Church, Selsley



## Ride+Stride

Saturday 8th September 2018

by Charles Graham

*"Church crawling is the richest of pleasures" (John Betjeman).*

A sentiment which I am sure is endorsed by the 340 cyclists and walkers (plus one eight-year-old horse-rider) who turned out on September 8th in support of Wiltshire's churches. The added bonus with Ride+Stride is that of enjoying Wiltshire's green and pleasant countryside, as well as getting a friendly welcome at a number of churches.

As usual there have been some notable achievements. One of the smallest parishes in the county, Tidcombe, raised over £4,000 (only, a week or two later, to suffer the cruel misfortune of losing the lead from the church roof). St James, Bratton continue to set an example, with more than 40 participants ensuring their stranglehold on the Brooke Cup. The Junior Group Cup was won for the second year running by the nine



Walters/Perry clan from Bratton

youngsters from St Mary's, Grittleton, while twin seven-year-old boys from Salisbury Cathedral School cycled 20 miles to 15 churches, raising £1,100. One enterprising couple took R+S across the Channel, cycling to 40 churches in the Vendée region and raising nearly £2,000 for their churches in Bremhill and Seend.



Wallace Twins at St Thomas's Salisbury

It is often the smaller parishes that raise the most money: the villages of Compton Chamberlayne, Garsdon, Lydiard Tregoze, Mildenhall, Preshute and Shalbourne all topped the £1000 mark. Salisbury Cathedral did well, but otherwise it would be good to see the big town churches getting more involved.



Ride+Stride in the Vendée

One regular irritation for participants is that they arrive at a church to find it locked. This is fortunately not a widespread problem, but why do only a quarter of Wiltshire's churches have members who take part in Ride+Stride

when it is a pleasurable activity and a relatively easy way to raise money for one's church? Old age need not be an excuse – walking to one or two churches counts as participation, (and mobility scooters are permitted). This year there were at least a dozen participants aged over 80, one of whom cycled to 11 churches.

Now the good news: for the first time since the financial crisis of 2008, we have raised over £50,000, which with the addition of Gift Aid should take us past £60,000. Many congratulations to all who contributed.

I hope we can do even better next year on Saturday 14th September. As you may know, I have been hoping for someone to emerge who can take over from me and give fresh impetus to the role of Administrator. Could that be you or someone you know? It is a rewarding job.



Enford Team

# Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust Treasurer's report

For the year ended 31st March 2018

by Peter Smith, Hon. Treasurer

The net assets of the Trust increased to £388k as at 31st March 2018 (£295k, 2017) with the additional investment in March of £100k from the grant given by Hartham Church Charitable Trust.

The gross income of the Trust for the year was just over £99,000 (£94k, 2017).

The Friends made a profit of £24,400 for the year (£24k, 2017). This comprised £13,000 from Membership Fees and Gift Aid; £5800 (after expenses) from fund raising activities; £4200 from donations; £672 from ongoing sales of Brian Woodruffe's book "The Parish Churches of Wiltshire"; and

£945 from the sale of Christmas Cards.

The Trust's other significant income was raised by Ride & Stride - £55,000; Investments - £10,000; and Parish Donations - £4,400.

The WHCT awarded 37 grants totalling £74,500 for the year to 31st March 2018.

Full details of the Audited Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018 are available for viewing online at the Charity Commission website ([www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)) by entering the WHCT's Registered Charity Number 1075598.

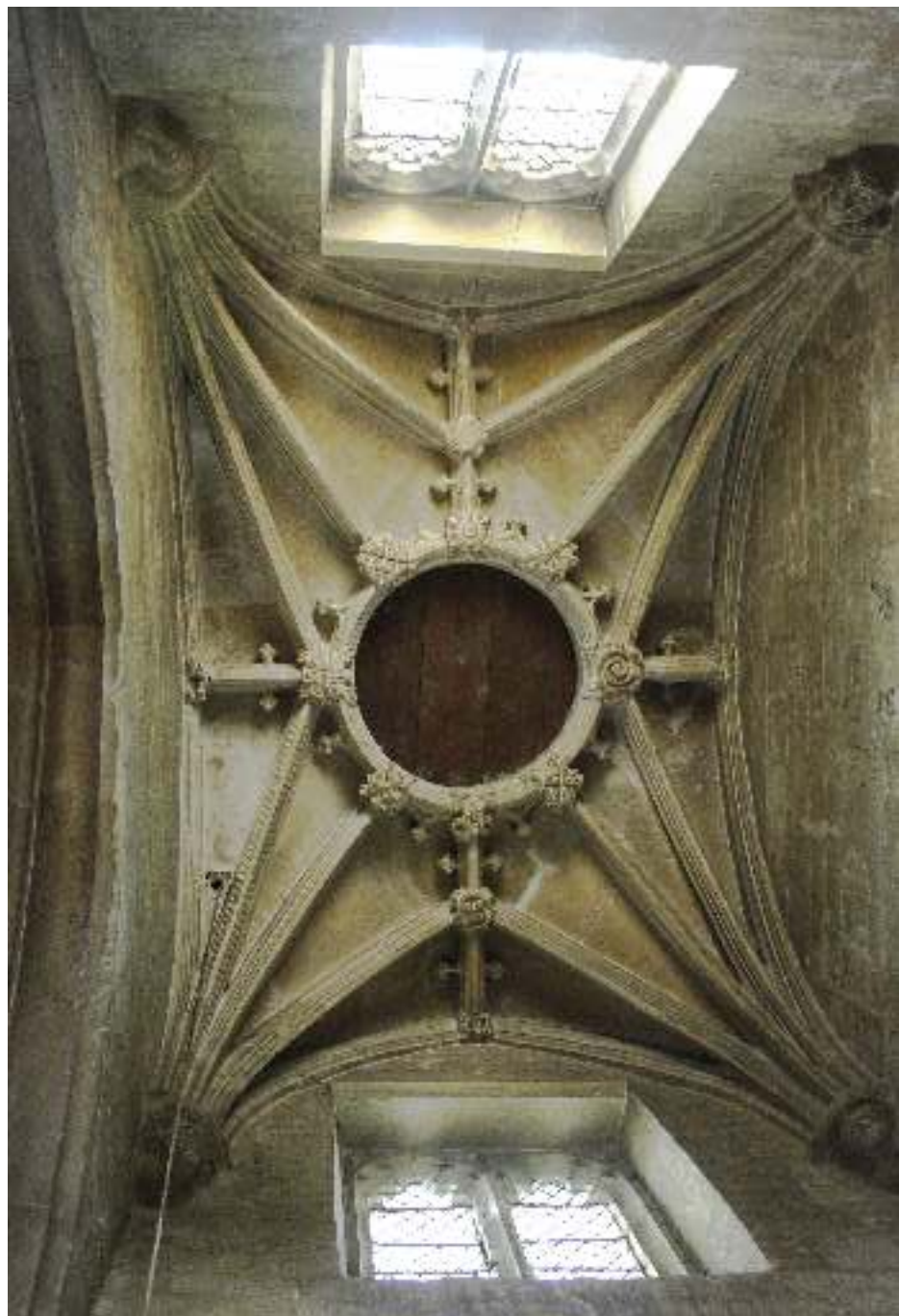


Detail over the Chancel Arch at St Mary's, Lydiard Tregoze

Thank you to all those who supplied images for this report - Geoffrey Till, Charles Graham, Clare Miles, Paul Gardner, Michael Hodges, John Price and Tim Connor.

## Legacies

Please remember the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust in your Will.  
The Registered Charity number of the WHCT is 1075598.



St James, Bratton