

Buildwas Church 300 Restoration Project Newsletter

www.buildwaschurchrestoration.org

Issue 1, June 2019

Welcome to the first edition of our new look newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading our latest articles and updates on our exciting renovation project. Plus, if you wish to be informed of our upcoming fundraising events as well as general and special church services, you've come to the right place. Please read on for details of our upcoming jumble sale, summer fete and Summer Sounds Night!

LATEST NEWS: Work begins on new church website. In an attempt to raise the profile of the church, a new web domain has been purchased and a new site designed by Nigel Bowen. The site includes information about the Church 300 project; historical and upcoming event information; a news page and an online donation facility. There are also regularly updated Facebook pages for the church and the Save our Church group, and, of course, a new monthly newsletter.

See below for more information about our upcoming events, and sign up to our email alerts on our website, at www.buildwaschurchrestoration.org to be kept up to date when new events are announced.

Buildwas Holy Trinity Church Timetable

General services are held every 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sunday at 3.00pm for 1 hour.
We also hold special services at Easter and Christmas,
as well as baptisms, marriages and funerals.

For more details visit our church website at www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4667/
and our Facebook page [@buildwaschurch](https://www.facebook.com/buildwaschurch)

Upcoming fundraising events



Summer Sounds Night at BUILDWAS VILLAGE HALL, in aid of Buildwas Church 300 Restoration Project and general church funds. **Saturday, 15th June 7.30pm - 11.00pm**. Live music of a variety of styles, from local musicians. Bar, raffle, quiz. **Tickets only £5 each**. Call **01952 432497** or **07870 883238** to book, or visit Eventbrite to buy online (note there is an additional charge for ordering online): <https://summersoundsnight.eventbrite.co.uk>



Buildwas Church 300 Restoration Project:

A Timeline Of Our Journey To Seek Funding

The Buildwas Church 300 Restoration Project, so christened because the year 2020 will mark Holy Trinity's tricentenary, is our own local attempt to apply for external funding to rebuild something beautiful: our local community church, in the interests of our faith, our heritage and the community of Buildwas, past, present and future.

We've all heard of the recent events surrounding Notre Dame: millions have been pledged to help rebuild such a building of beauty. Though all around the country, churches at the heart of communities require rebuilding, albeit on a smaller scale, but lack vital funding to make this possible. Buildwas church is no exception.

Here, in a timeline, we document the story of the incredible feats of community efforts so far:



Image source: Alamy.com

November 2017: discussions begin on how to raise the sum of £70,000 to repair church tower, and formation of Save Our Church group. With water leaking into the west end of the building, the untended tower will eventually collapse and be lost forever, should funding not be secured. A 'Save Our Church' group was formed, consisting of local residents and members of the congregation, to discuss how much-needed cash could be raised. It is decided that the best approach to raise the monies would be to apply for a Heritage Lottery Funding grant.

February 2018: professional Heritage Project Manager, Sula Baugh, is appointed to advise on funding applications. Sheila Baugh's wealth of past experience enables her to offer the best approach to applications and to assist in filling in the extensive application form, to apply for lottery funding.

Following consultation with Sula's expert help and the pooling of ideas from the rest of the team, it is decided that a whole host of subsidiary, church-related projects and activities must be launched/carried out by community volunteers. This will demonstrate an active and thriving church; strengthen the general appeal of the application and also to meet the objectives set out by the Lottery funding body.

The objectives included such things as: a need to demonstrate how the history and heritage of the church would be researched and documented; the ways in which these findings would be shared with the wider community, as well as how the knowledge and skills of local people would be increased by the project and how they would become involved.

An action plan was drafted in order to ensure such objectives were met, and consisted of a series of points. The seeking of increased publicity for Buildwas Church, particularly in tourism brochures and literature, was one priority, as well as the development of a new website and an increased social media presence. The provision of volunteer-guided tours around the church, to impart historical information, is also proposed, as well as providing the local community with assistance in genealogical research, and encouraging the use of the church as a community venue. The active seeking of sponsorship and donation of materials for the renovations and facilitating gardening and landscaping of church grounds, by volunteers, has also been stipulated.



April 2018: Patrick Smitheman of Harwoods, Broseley, discovers family links with church and pays a visit. Patrick, who runs Harwoods Estate Agency in Broseley, is a descendant of the notable Smitheman family. His ancestors include the landlord of the Coalbrookdale Company and the builder of the Madeley Court Hotel. Patrick was delighted to discover that there are several memorial tablets honouring his family in the church, as well as a family vault in the graveyard.

Patrick made a visit to the church and met with the Secretary of the Buildwas Church 300 Project Secretary, Nigel Bowen, who assisted him in looking through church records, to find out more details about his ancestors. There was much delight for Patrick himself in discovering his heritage, as well as within the community, as his visit would strengthen our future grant applications.

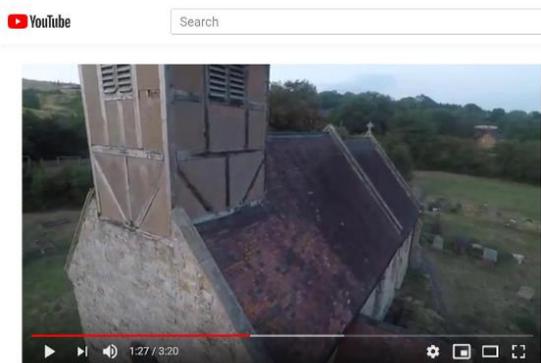


May 2018: RAF Flight Ops Trainee Cadets visit Buildwas Church to carry out landscaping and gardening of grounds. In a spectacular show of community spirit, ten cadets from RAF Shawbury spent a day in the grounds clearing the pathways, pruning bushes and trees and removing ivy from walls and gravestones, making a huge difference to the external appearance of the church.

Church Warden, Juliet Bowen, and residents Tim Pratt and Jill Grainger also assisted with groundwork, and other residents pulled together to ensure the correct equipment was supplied. Rich Whitehead helped to secure the very generous free loan of tools from Brandon Tool Hire, and warden, Stuart Ratcliffe, kindly lent his tractor and trailer for transporting waste.

A fantastic event to raise the profile of our church, we all agree!

July 2018: Buildwas Fete and Bakes and Blooms Competition Last summer saw the ever-popular Buildwas Fete return to the field behind the church. Guests enjoyed live music and belly dancing; live screening of the World Cup, as well as a host of popular stalls selling various luxury items and refreshments. The Bakes and Blooms Competition was held on the day, with entries displayed inside the church. Proceeds from the Fete and competition entry fees, as well as from refreshments, were in aid of the church restoration fund and Buildwas Village Hall, and the whole event showed a strong and enthusiastic sense of support from the local community.



September 2018: completion of funding application. Detailed discussions, administration, form filling and research, and even drone photographs of existing damage to the church tower being kindly taken by local community member, Tim Pratt, all took place around this time, in pursuit of completing the application.

September 2018: HLF application submitted to the selection panel. This application was for consideration of an award of £70,000 for repair of the tower; to install an internal tea point and for external renovations (including gravestone and other external repairs).

November 2018: first Heritage Lottery Fund application unsuccessful, but with good feedback. Sadly, after several weeks of waiting, the team learned that the first application had been unsuccessful. This, however, was partly expected at such an early stage, as applications are very competitive, and it is usual for organisations to apply several times before funding is secured.

Feedback from the funding body was very positive, stating that the bid was of good quality and that the heritage of the church was of significant import, but that lack of outstanding match-funding represented a risk. Due also to a great demand for funding at that time, they were forced to turn away applicants of merit.

Buildwas Church, then, can still feel positive about the possibility of gaining funding in the future, and now has the advantage of time to create a long-standing portfolio of evidence to show local support and interest in the church, particularly via our popular fundraising events, and to meet a set of specific objectives set out by the funding body.

November 2018: church jumble sale. A giant jumble sale in aid of the restoration fund was hosted at the village hall, which was packed to the rafters with an Aladdin's Cave of second-hand items.

A whopping 100kg of unsold clothes were taken to the 'rag man' afterwards, also contributing to the total. The event was all made possible thanks to the generosity of local people in donating items and in helping to man the stalls and to set up/take down the event.



December 2018: Christmas Fayre. Our well-loved Christmas Fayre was a success in 2018. This event boasted stalls selling handmade cards and textile goods; pictures; candles; vases; fancy bottles and decorations to name but a few. Jill Grainger compiled a recipe book featuring favourite recipes submitted by local residents, and these too were sold in aid of church funds. A good selection of homemade cakes and teas and coffees were also available. The Fayre and jumble sale combined made a total of £800!

December 2018: carol singing in Buildwas and Pool View. Christmas is when our working church really comes into its own: two carol singing events were held on two consecutive nights around the Buildwas area. Both events saw a team of residents, church wardens, and vicar, Peter Shaw, wrapped up warm as they sang door-to-door, in aid of Lingen Davies Cancer Fund.



December 2018: Carol Service. The Carol service saw a great turnout this year, and featured live music from local duo Nigel and Marie, as part of the event. Revd Andy Ackroyd took the service, as beautiful Christmas decorative sprays and a traditional tree added to the festive and very special ambience. There were even candy canes for the congregation, on leaving the church!

December 2018: Christingle Service. Schoolchildren from Buildwas Academy made their own Christingle lanterns and attended a traditional Christingle service at Buildwas Church, service taken by Revd. Andy Ackroyd.



December 2018: Christmas Eve Carol Service. There was a good attendance at the Christmas Eve carol service held at 11.00pm

Michelle Holford designs new logo for the Buildwas Church 300 Restoration Project

Professional designer Michelle Holford designed a modern and attractive new logo for the project, to be used in all marketing materials and official correspondence.

www.facebook.com/michelle.holford.design

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The Buildwas Church 300 Restoration Project

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The current building for Holy Trinity Buildwas dates from 1720 and replaced a medieval church. We'll be celebrating our church tricentenary in 2020.

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Woollen Burials at Buildwas Church

One of the most curious facts about Buildwas Church, and one that serves to reinforce the extent of its age, is that there are a number of 'woollen burials' in the churchyard. These burials are so termed because the deceased were buried, by force of law, in woollen shrouds.

On March 25th, 1667, the Burying in Woollen Acts 1666–80, were enforced by Parliament. These Acts stated that all deceased persons were to be buried in woollen shrouds, rather than the popular, traditional linen.

'What might bring about such a bizarre law?' you might ask. Around the time the Acts were introduced, the Bubonic Plague was rife. England experienced an unprecedented amount of deaths, which further increased the demand for shrouds and subsequently, the importation of linen from France: England's main economic rival. In fact, linen became the country's second biggest import after groceries.

Due in addition to its reasonable cost, making it accessible to the poor; its suitability for bleaching, and its heritage as being the material in which Jesus Christ himself was shrouded, its popularity was increased still further. The problem, was that this was extremely poor news for England's woollen trade.

In an attempt to redress the balance, the government forcibly insisted that woollen shrouds were used instead.

So forceful were the laws, that after some in society failed to comply, stronger sanctions were introduced for non-compliance, in the form of a five pound fine, certainly enough to deter the average man from flouting the regulations. An affidavit was also required (this being a sworn statement of oath being made by a relative of the deceased, in front of an authorised person), stating that the law would be complied with.

Church registers, including those at Buildwas, state the type of shroud in which the bodies were buried, and this, of course, provides an insight into the wealth and status of the person, which may otherwise have remained unknown. The destitute were exempt from woollen burials, as they were unable to afford the shrouds, so were buried naked, and church records would be marked to reflect this. Those, however, who were buried with the shroud would be marked by the term 'affidavit'.

There may be linen burials from this era; however, it is likely that these were performed by the very rich who could afford to pay the fine and have a shroud of their own choosing.

These strange Acts were repealed without ceremony in 1863, once the economy of England became more reliant on other commodities with which to trade. One wonders how many lie in Buildwas graveyard, disgruntled by this most unpopular law?

Thank you for reading!