

Living History

NEWSLETTER March 2013

Firstly an apology from your editor for not printing the December Articles with Headings. In this Issue we have 2 Articles; “The Icon Paintings” by Robert Chitham & “The Parish Clock” by Ian Mortimer.

The Old Cottage



This Wattle & Daub cottage is currently the subject of a Planning Application and this has caused much concern to many residents and other groups. The proposal is to demolish the cottage and build five “modern” dwellings on this site, currently the developer has appealed to the Sec of State.

World War One

We are involved in a nation wide project to mark 90 years since the start of WW1; we are particularly interested in anecdotes, memories & souvenirs that reflect life around our parish. If you have any item that could be used in displays etc please contact Ron Shaw on 780770.

Rain & Floods

We continue to receive more than our fair share of rain but local residents have now improved the flow of the Brook through the village and Welsh Water are carrying out maintenance and inspection work to the sewers. Further upstream repair work and improvements have been made to the Dams in Fish Pool Valley, let us hope we will not be flooded again.



Subscriptions for 2013

Next years subscriptions are now due, please contact Audrey Bott on 780489 or leave them at the shop for her attention.

Copyright

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Date of Next Meeting

Will be on Thursday 25th April at 7.30pm in the C'tee Room of the Village Hall.

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The Icon Paintings:

*“An icon is a window on God,
We look into it, and are looked at.
These Icon-paintings teach us God’s story, Saint Leonard’s story,
the story of our community,
and our own story.”**

* Quotation from the short booklet which summarises the iconography of the paintings, and has been produced to be sold in the church.



The painting of these Icons was a response to a suggestion made by Kathy Priddis at the formal rededication of the Church of Saint Leonard, Yarpole, in January 2010 after its re-ordering. Kathy Priddis, wife of the Bishop of Hereford, is a professional portrait painter with an international reputation. The project took the form of a Lent devotional course in 2012 under her inspiration and leadership, and took the form of similar projects she has conducted in the past.

The course was carried on over six weekly morning sessions. During the first session, the painters were introduced to the project, discussed the size and content of the proposed panels, and were asked to make abstract drawings in charcoal on paper. From within these with a good deal of help we then derived a number of stylised figure shapes intended to represent the prisoners. Kathy took away these very basic drawings and used her particular skills to translate them into three line compositions on prepared white panels. These panels were to show centrally the Virgin and Child against a background of Saint Leonard's churchyard, to the right Saint Leonard our Patron Saint and to the left the release of prisoners – whose patron saint he also is.

During the five subsequent sessions we divided into three groups, and painted the panels that Kathy had outlined, using a restricted palette of acrylic colours and incorporating some metallic shades. Progress was surprisingly rapid, and the painters grew in confidence as the images emerged. The work was completed within the programme Kathy had devised, and the remarkable thing was the degree of collaboration between painters accustomed to their own individual styles of working, and hence the homogeneous results.

The Icons were painted by parishioners:

Anne Clarke	Kate Harding
Hilary North	Marilyn Comrie
Avis Denny	Helen Collins
Rita Shaw	Morwenna Lloyd
Janet Chitham	Robert Chitham

Kate Chitham of Biddenden, Kent provided the lettered panel quoting from Wesley's famous hymn "My chains fell off, my heart was free", and William Chitham of Manchester constructed the frame.

Compiled by Robert Chitham (March 2013)

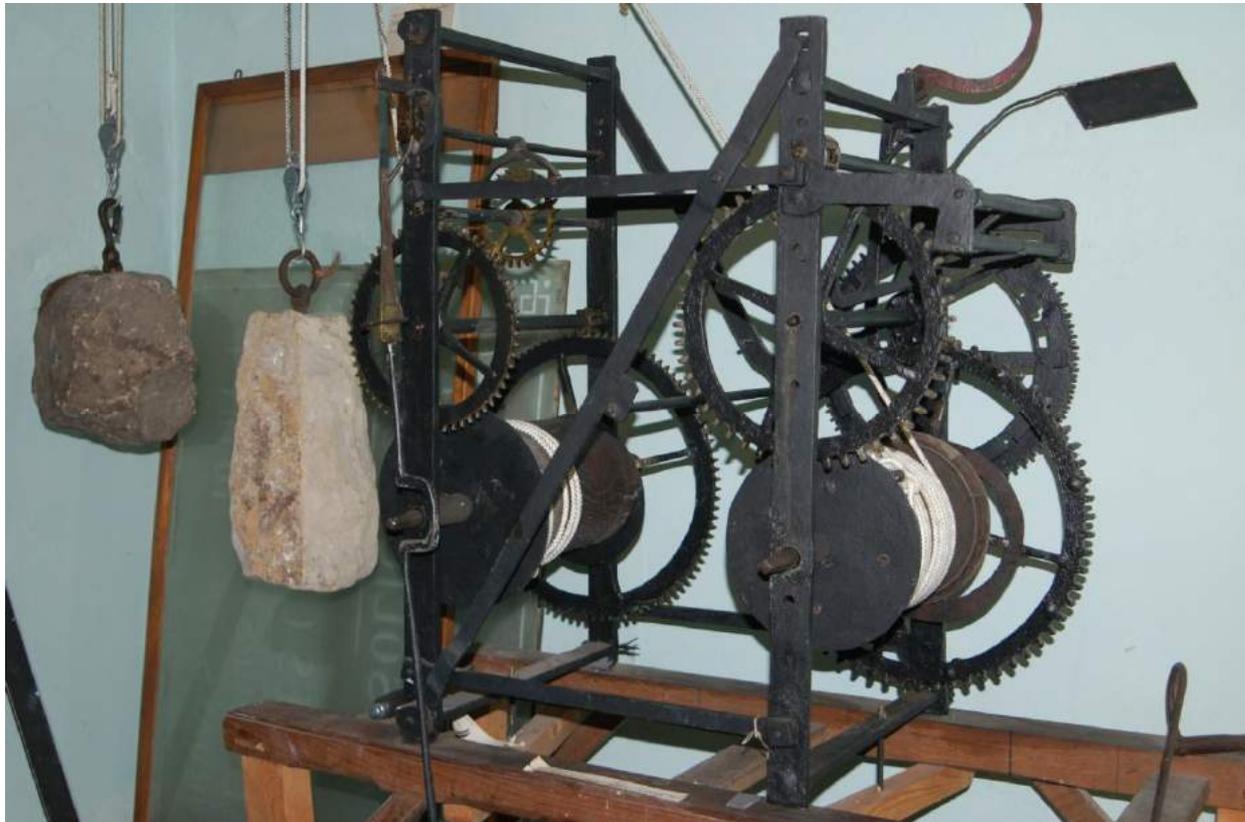
The Parish Clock:

“The curfew tolls the knell of parting day”

This, the first line of Gray's Elogy reminds us that, before clocks were common-place, everyone relied on church bells for managing the cycle of the activities of the day, with the evening curfew bell being rung at 8pm, ('curfew', from the Norman-French for 'covering the fire', to minimise the risk of wood and thatch structures catching fire.)

And so, it was natural when, in the 17th century, tower (or turret) clocks (from the Latin 'clocca' meaning a bell) became widely available, that they would be installed in church towers.

And yes, there was indeed a clock in the Yarpole Bell Tower. It is probable that the clock in the Yarpole Bell Tower would have looked something, if not exactly, like this, having no hands nor face and only striking (chiming) the hour.



This is the old clock (circa 1700) which was removed from Aymestrey church in 1874 and which is now on display in Leominster Museum.

Proof of the clock's existence is to be found in the church records.
Extract from St.Leonard's Church Accounts:-

<u>1785:-</u>	<i>Pulley for the clock</i>	6.
	<i>Cutting a stone and lead for the clock</i>	8.
	<i>Maintaining clock maker's man</i>	8.
	<i>Putting the clock to strike</i>	2. 6.
<u>1791:-</u>	<i>Paid Mr. Rogers for cleaning the church clock</i>	8. 0.

The clock would have been driven by two stone clock-weights, one for 'timing' and one for 'chiming'.

This clock-weight was discovered when the bell tower was cleared in 2006:-

Length = approx. 300mm (1ft.);
Weight - approx 40 Kilo (90lbs)



So far we have not found any record of the reason why the clock was removed; the most likely explanation is that in the upheaval of the Restoration of the church by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1874, the clock, probably in disrepair, was removed when the bell tower was re-modelled to provide a small meeting room and store.

Compiled by Ian Mortimer (March 2013) with acknowledgements to Gill Brace and Eileen Minton for transcribing the old church accounts which had been originally extracted by the late George Thomas.