

Where there's a will, there's a way

I don't know if things have changed but when we were young there always seemed to be a saying we could use to suit most occasions, or situations.

"A stitch in time, a rolling stone, he who laughs last, where there's a will, save the pennies, a bird in the hand, it's a wise man, etc. etc."



So how can we relate some of these sayings to our situation at Holy Cross? I am thinking specifically of our Old Church and its current problems. Erosion and wear and tear is threatening the well being of this valuable heritage site, perhaps a stitch in time may have prevented this.

The love of money maybe the root of all evil, (1 Timothy 6: 10) and the lack of it has prevented us from attending to vital maintenance issues, but we now have to "bite the bullet" and go ahead with the necessary restoration works at an estimated cost of £50,000 (Fifty Thousand pounds).

We have been saving our pennies, but nowhere near enough.

The will to keep the Old Church in good working order has never been lacking, and over the years previous Building Committees and Parochial Church Councils have struggled with the problems and restrictions associated with a Grade 1 listed building because we cannot just climb up a ladder and start replacing the roof, or change the existing rainwater gutters, and we cannot make good the masonry that is so badly eroding.

All of these things have to be checked first by our appointed Architect whose recommendations have to be processed by any number of vested interests before we can get on with the job.

Then we face the problem of every individual, family or organisation, which is, can we afford it?

Well, there is a way, because there's a will, or, in this case, the Joan Draycott Legacy.

Joan Draycott left the sum of £50,000 solely towards the upkeep of the fabric of the Old Church which we have used following good Victorian principles, so that much of the original Capital still remains.

Our dilemma now is, "you can't have your cake, and eat it".

We are now committed to proceeding with these high priority works which means that the coffers will then be bare, which is a tricky situation because we must have sufficient reserves in hand for emergencies. This was recognised at the last PCC meeting when it was recommended that we launch another appeal for funds to offset some of the costs we are facing.

Traditionally, we call on the generosity and imagination of the congregation, but we also need to reach out to the local, and the wider community to make them aware of this appeal. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

I can hear many of you groaning at the prospect of another fund raising appeal, especially as we have only just broken even on our original Access Project.

Nevertheless, it's Onward Christian Soldiers. We do have much experience in this field now, so, together with fresh blood, fresh ideas, fresh motivation, we can get this appeal up and running.

There is good news! Three members of the congregation have proposed to form a high-powered fund-raising group, aiming at seeking out grants and grant-making bodies to find as much support as possible. The group consists of Rosemary Abernethy, Annabel Radville and Melanie Brown, and thanks are due to them for coming forward with the idea. Other fund-raising will be inevitable, so if you have any ideas, please speak to Lorna Churn or myself, otherwise we will have to speak to you, and remember one has to "cut one's cloth according to one's means".

Peter Scully

Below you will see two photographs which show the kind of serious issues which are affecting the buildings.



Here you see one of the buttresses, on the north east side of the Old Church. The photograph is part of the last Quinquennial Report and shows damage to the buttress.

Here you see a recent photograph of the same buttress and how the damage has worsened to the point where part of the stone has simply fallen away and now lies on the ground just by the grave of Rector Edward Betham.

The works in and around the Old Church will mean it will be closed from Monday 19th July until Friday 13th August, at least, depending on progress and what else is found when the works get under way.

