



Grateful Thanks and New Faces

There have been changes afoot at the Trust over the past few months. Faithful servants are taking a rest and new faces have emerged to carry on the sterling work. Joan Hughes, who has been both Treasurer and Secretary over the past few years, has decided to take a back seat. She will still be a loyal trustee however, but we felt we should make a public declaration of our appreciation of her tireless work to date. continued on back page.../...

The Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust invite you to share

**'An Ecclesiastical Adventure
at St. Gregory, Tredington'
Monday, 23rd May at 6pm**

We are delighted to host an evening of discovery at one of the most fascinating churches in our



Diocese. Clive Fewins, prolific journalist and author of 'The Church Explorers Handbook', will lead us around the building, telling the story of how our parish churches have evolved over the centuries. Be prepared to be entertained, delighted and amazed!

Tickets are £7.50, including wine and light refreshments. All proceeds to the Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust. Please e-mail [Jane Webster \(ejane@lilley2.plus.com\)](mailto:ejane@lilley2.plus.com) to order tickets, which will be sent out in April.

Notice of AGM: 23rd May, 2011 at St Gregory, Tredington at 5pm

Following on from our visit to Berkswell last year we will be taking the AGM out on the road. This year we will be in Tredington at St Gregory's and the business will be carried out before we welcome guests to an evening of discovery in the company of Clive Fewins, pictured below. All are invited to attend.

The Agenda, Report and Accounts will be published on the website in due course and hard copies will be available on request.

Sir John Owen

It is with great sadness that we have to report the news of the death, on 9th December, of one of our most long standing trustees. Fellow trustees, Will Hawkes and Dr Charles Brown, pay tribute to him.

"The death of Sir John Owen has deprived the Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust of an outstanding



trustee. He joined the Trust over a decade ago after a lifetime of distinction in the law, and worked tirelessly for our cause. As Dean of the Arches he rose to the top of the Anglican ecclesiastical system and his Christian upbringing and lifelong advocacy of his faith were central to his keen interest in church buildings and their parishioners. At the time of his death he was the Churchwarden of St James the Great at Idlicote, his local parish church.

"Despite his eminence in his profession he was a man of great modesty; always ready to allow others to express their views before he contributed to discussion; and then helping us reach a sound conclusion with perception, common sense and humour. Those of us who fought their way through deep snow to his funeral service at St Edmund in Shipston on Stour, were moved by the contributions in his memory. It felt wholly appropriate that laughter played such a part in remembering a man of impressive and varied parts, who was never afraid to take an original and unexpected line if it led to a sensible solution of a problem.

"In addition to being a Trustee, Sir John was a keen member of the Ride & Stride group and used his energies to help us significantly to increase our funds for the repair of our county's churches. We will miss him, and our sympathies are with his wife, Valerie, and the family."

A memorial service to celebrate Sir John's life will take place at Coventry Cathedral at 3pm on Thursday 24th March."

Making a Difference

The CWHCT are committed to giving grants to all kinds of repair projects. Often a small amount of money can make a big difference to those volunteers in our churches who work so hard to find large sums to allow them to keep the roof on and the rain out. The Trust recently gave grants to two churches, both in North Warwickshire. Jeanette Sutton, the long standing Churchwarden at St Mary Astley, sent this grateful message to us.



"Village churches of historic interest are such special places of worship. St Mary the Virgin in Astley is one such building and it contains many treasures. The medieval wall paintings on the walls of the Nave and Chancel have endured many years of damp conditions, which meant that these wonderful paintings were very nearly destroyed and lost completely.

"Funding conservation on this scale became a great challenge for Astley PCC, but with financial help from organisations such as the Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust, the wall paintings have now been conserved for generations to come. The local congregation who attends Sunday services no longer have to look at the decay and can enjoy the joy of worship in this beautiful church, appreciating the wonders of this building once more"

Sylvia Whittington, at St Edith's in Monks Kirby, who also applied to the Trust, responded:

"The renovation work to the baptistry windows in St. Edith's Church, Monks Kirby was made possible by grants from various agencies and our own fund raising. We needed to find £74,000.

The £1,500 generously given by Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust raised our morale again after we learnt that we could no longer claim back VAT on architect fees. We're very grateful to the trustees and looking forward to 'showing off' the renovated windows



Grant Application Update



The [WCHCT web site](#) now contains a new entry providing application forms for churches seeking additional financial support to tackle necessary structural works.

The WCHCT has recently entered into a Partnership agreement with The National Churches Trust (NCT) to assist in identifying churches in need and recommend an allocation of up to £20,000 during 2011. The maximum any church can be granted is £10,000. The County Trust will appoint a Fund Granting Committee to ensure applications are expedited as they also require sign off by NCT centrally.

Full details are contained on both WCHCT and NCT web sites. There are conditions to applications but this sum of money, taken with the fantastic achievements of our Ride and Striders in raising monies, will triple the total sums available for distribution this current year. How fantastic is that!?

Tours for Motorists

We already have a track record in designing cycle tours around our churches and we recently turned our thoughts to developing routes for motorists off the back of a new partnership between County Trusts, the National Churches Trust (NCT) and the AA.



WCHCT joined the NCT and The Automobile Association in designing 'drive and visit' routes for motorists wanting to spend a day or two visiting the wonderful historic churches of Warwickshire. This project, being replicated throughout England, will produce a new guide for motorists who are interested in exploring the magnificent historic legacy our churches hold for us.

There are many existing county guides or national descriptions of our churches but this new production will be the first guide aimed particularly at motorists. Interest in this new development has already excited the tourist bodies in South Warwickshire. The new publication will feature six clusters of churches, ranging from the South to the North of the County. We'll pass on further information when details of publication dates are available.

A Snapshot of Ride and Stride 2010

Yet again armies of cyclists ventured out on a fair day in September to raise money for the Trust and for their own churches - 117 participants in all including lots of youngsters. The numbers of churches agreeing to be open is high – we estimate around 85% of all churches and chapels were open on the day. There are still some who remain closed but mainly for good reasons like a wedding or an event.

This year there were some surprises. Two dogs took part – one of which was called Ralph! He was walking for Hartshill Methodist Chapel. And the tractor party led by the Peebles family were on hand in the Barcheston area. Our Patron, Bishop Christopher, supported us again on his bicycle, so a real cross section of participants.

There were those who visited impressive numbers of churches in one day, among them Rev Dr Richard Hare, the Team Rector from All Saints Bedworth in North Warwickshire, who managed 30, and Dr John Bennet of Long Compton, who took in 27. The most visited church was Wolford with 31 closely followed by the Ettington Friends Meeting House with 30 riders and striders.

So all in all a great day. Please encourage all those who took part to register again – it is such a fun way to raise funds for your church and for other churches and chapels in our County.

How much did we raise?

Riders and striders across the county raised a staggering £15,000 (including Gift Aid) - a higher figure than last year. This is a trend we are determined to maintain as we begin our planning for 2011. We thank all of them, including the sponsored dogs, very much. Ride 'n Stride is our main fundraiser and with this kind of growing support we shall be able to make more grants to the historic churches of Warwickshire seeking help from outside their communities to conserve their buildings.

The 2011 event will take place on Saturday 10th September and there are so many fabulous churches to visit by bicycle or on foot. There are even several different circular routes that have been devised. Your route could be as short or as long as you like. Why not have a go this year! Full details of the 2011 Ride will be sent out in mid June and will also then be available on our website. Contact Will Hawkes for any other Ride queries.

Match Funding

We owe special thanks to the companies that offered match funding to their employees taking part in the 2010 Ride 'n Stride. We are very grateful to both the companies and individuals

concerned for these significant additional donations to our funds, doubling the amounts the individuals raised for us. Match funding is a way of an individual increasing the funds they have raised for a charity. Some employers offer this incentive to their employees, usually through the HMRC Payroll Giving scheme. Further information is available on the HMRC website.

Champion Fundraiser for 2010

Alec Ross lives in Stretton on Dunsmore and, being a keen cyclist, he agreed to take part in the 2010 Ride and Stride on behalf of his local church, All Saints. Alec works for UK Mail plc and they agreed to match the amount he made, enabling him to raise a staggering £1100 for WCHCT. We send Alec our thanks and congratulations on his brilliant achievement! We asked Alec to share some thoughts so here is a snapshot of his day back in September:



“I had a warm welcome at so many churches, as well as tea, coffee, home-made cake and biscuits and squash. Particular mention must go to St Leonard’s, Birdingbury with a choice of four types of biscuit! I met some lovely people on my journey. Especially memorable stops were Bishops Itchington and Hunningham. Less happy to relate were the sorry sights of Radford Semele and All Saints, Leamington Hastings, both shrouded in scaffolding following arson attacks.

“I occasionally encountered other cyclists, but they were few and far between. Perhaps I chose a less popular route, but it was one that I could highly recommend and would encourage more cyclists to take on the challenge next year. You can see photos of some of the churches I visited [here](#) - most of them feature the bike!

“In all in was a great day out with a good pub lunch in the White Hart in Ufton, 45 miles of rain-free cycling, 23 churches and £1100 raised for the charity.”

New for the 2011 Ride 'n Stride



The trust is becoming a member of Just Giving, so that 2011 Riders and striders can have the option of registering to receive sponsorship online. Some riders have been asking for us to do this for a while and it will make administration easier for everyone but we do want to emphasise that this is only an option and we are more than happy to continue to receive sponsorship monies by cheque or bank transfer.

Grateful thanks and new faces

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Will Hawkes and Charles Brown have contributed these words:

"Joan has been such a central and vigorous supporter of the Trust for so many years. Everything that Joan has turned her hand to, and there were many of these, she saw through with thoroughness and determination. She even made sure that her Deanery came up to scratch and beat all others in the amount of money it raised for the sponsored cycle Ride!

"More recently the Trust has had some problems in keeping things moving, following the retirement of our long-serving Treasurer and the sudden departure of our Secretary. Few Trustees would wish to take on such demands at short notice, but Joan foresaw the difficulties of an interregnum and willingly offered to become a portmanteau Secretary cum Treasurer until replacements could be found.

"Our spirits at that point seemed low - income was diminishing and there were few applications for grant aid from the churches - but such was the extent of Joan's vision, energy and dedication that she encouraged us through this bad patch and on to firmer ground. Her contribution to our present well being was therefore critical, and we owe her a huge debt of gratitude for this and for so much else."

Joan is a hard act to follow but, filling her shoes as Treasurer, we welcome Lesley Read, pictured below.



"I live in the Stratford area and am a chartered accountant working with small businesses locally.

I have extensive experience of working with charities, both in my professional life and in volunteer roles, and have spent several years as a member of the finance committee of a national charity.

"I am looking forward to playing a part in the work of the Trust in the conservation and restoration of our county's churches and chapels, and feel strongly that these buildings should remain living places and accessible to all for the enjoyment of future generations."



We are also very glad to welcome John Scouller with us as a trustee. John has already been co-opted onto the Bike Ride sub committee - he is a keen cyclist - and brings plenty of local knowledge and ideas from his recent role, before his early retirement, as Head of Economy & Development for Warwickshire County Council. John is also a Treasurer at St James's, Styvechale in Coventry so he knows at first hand what it feels like to keep the roof on a place of worship.

John chairs an Advisory Panel for WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Trust) the environmental body who administer grants in our region on behalf of Landfill Operators. These tax credits are invested in community projects in areas in close proximity to Landfill Sites. Rather impressively John can also trace family connections with the Gilbert-Scott family, so he can claim that a passion for church buildings is well and truly in his blood.

The Warwickshire and Coventry Historic Churches Trust

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Please go to

www.warwickshirechurches.org.uk for further information about the Trust