



April 2018

Dear Members

I am pleased to be writing my first newsletter to you all. I want in particular to tell you about this year's events and to update you on our scheme to help churches with the cost of installing roof alarms.

I must also tell you about our work to ensure that the Trust will be compliant with changes in the law on how we keep and use information such as your name and contact details (the "General Data Protection Regulations"). We shall not be changing in any way how we use your information, and we have always taken care to keep it secure. Sending you the occasional newsletter like this and telling you about the events that we provide for you is a routine service to members, and we shall not need to trouble you for specific consent for that. However, we must now revise the Privacy Policy on our website to describe in detail how we keep and use your data and to set out your rights under the new laws. That will be done by June, and I would encourage you to look at it then. Should you have any queries, it will tell you how you can raise them with us. I'll remind you next time I write.

This year's events

As is our custom, there will be tours, talks and special guest lectures, and they promise to be interesting and enjoyable. Online booking for the first three events will open on April 11th: please go to the OHCT website <https://www.ohct.org.uk> and click on 'EVENTS' at the top of the page. If any of you prefer not to use the online system, then do contact Clare Fox on that date or soon after (by email: events@ohct.org.uk, or phone 01844 279716 or 07941717687). The number of places on these events is necessarily limited, so please book at the first possible opportunity: we can do no better than allocate places on a first-come, first-served basis.

May 18th & 19th – Ironstone Churches

David Warr writes: "This year I thought it would be nice to see some churches in the north of the County and in particular those churches in the Ironstone Benefice. They are all built of iron-rich limestone quarried locally. We shall be visiting: -

HORTON: ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

Set in the middle of the delightful village of Hornton, which gives its name to the local ironstone. Notable for its wall-paintings: the Black Prince as St. George, and the famous 'Doom' (Last Judgement) still survive.

HORLEY: ST ETHELDREDA

Stands on a hilltop overlooking the village. Three fine early English doorways; large wall-painting of St Christopher, with earliest depiction of rod and line anglers in this country, fishing by the light of the stars.

HANWELL: ST PETER

Picturesque setting overlooking Hanwell Castle with its redbrick tower from Tudor period; carved stone figures on capitals in nave; unusual and unique carved stone friezes on exterior of chancel depicting medieval bestiary.

WROXTON: ALL SAINTS

Set in the delightful thatched village of Wroxton with its former abbey; lavishly carved chancel depicting Abraham and Isaac.

Lunch is arranged at the Rose and Crown at Ratley.

Please note that this tour will involve some walking and a need to negotiate steps and uneven ground, and so it may not be suitable for all.

The Spring tours tend to be popular, and therefore I shall be doing one on Friday 18th May and a repeat on Saturday 19th May, each with 25 places - so don't forget to save the day and book early. Once booked you will

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be sent joining instructions. I'm very much looking forward to guiding you round this fascinating corner of the county."

June 2nd – Talk on stained glass and its conservation with visits to the glass in three Oxford colleges

Sarah Brown, Director of the York Glaziers Trust, the oldest and largest specialist stained glass conservation studio in Britain, gave us a talk last year which was a tremendous success, but it was heavily oversubscribed. We are delighted that she is able to return for a repeat talk which will be illustrated this year by visiting the stained glass in the chapels of New College, Wadham and Balliol.

The day will start in New College at 10:00, and, after visiting the chapel, we shall walk up Holywell Street to Wadham for coffee and for Sarah's talk. There'll be a buffet lunch - with a glass of wine for those who wish - in Wadham's 17C Hall, followed by a visit to Wadham Chapel and then to Balliol.

Those with reduced mobility who prefer to avoid walking between the Colleges are welcome to join the event in Wadham from 11:00 till 2:00.

1st July – Summer Lecture in Wolfson College: Professor Nigel Saul

The Endless Joy of Variety: Social and Geographical Difference in the English Medieval Parish Church

Professor Saul will look at the effects of geological and geographical variety in England, with special reference to Oxfordshire. He will examine variations in wealth across the county, the significance of a major centre of building activity in Oxford, and the influence of chantry foundations and lordship in the late Middle Ages.

Professor Saul is Emeritus Professor of Mediaeval History at Royal Holloway College, University of London, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and a Trustee of the Victoria County History. He is a past President of the Monumental Brass Society, and is author of *Richard 2nd, English Church Monuments*, and *Lordship and Faith*.

The lecture will be followed by a drinks reception, which we hope will be outside with fine summer weather and a view over the river.

The Annual General Meeting, the Blenheim Lecture and Autumn tours

I shall write to you about these in June, but you might like to note for your diaries that this year's AGM will take place in St Andrew's Church, Chinnor on 28th July, and our Blenheim Lecture, which will be on Queen Victoria, will be given by A. N. Wilson on 17th October. We are looking to arrange other events for August and September.

Church Roof Alarms

The price of lead is currently high, and great damage and expense continues to be caused by thieves stripping church roofs. Every month, though, we hear of cases in the county where the thieves have fled without doing damage after having set off a roof alarm. The OHCT set up a special fund in 2016, with a simple application procedure, from which we have now spent some £65,000 in grants. Roof alarms are so easy and cost-effective a way to protect churches, we are aiming to continue the scheme with further funding throughout this year. Is your church protected? Could we help? To apply, contact Eluned Hallas by email: data@ohct.org.uk.

Looking forward to meeting you during the year

