

St Peter's Wormleighton - Notes for July 2018

When we grow older the only thing that seems to move faster is the passage of time. We all have a finite lifespan and I, anyway, am seemingly hurtling down the last piece of track leading to that final destination and finding that the speed at which I can take actions and do things I becoming increasingly slower so that the demands on my time seem to become ever more pressing. Happily, the one thing of which there seems to be no shortage, however, is a vast number of jokes about elderly people and perhaps it is a sign of the make-up of the present generation of (very) senior citizens that we have at least retained our sense of humour. At any stage in life, the ability not to take oneself too seriously is surely a positive attribute of any person's character.

Certainly the small team of worthy souls, who attempt to keep St Peter's church alive and in running order against seemingly insurmountable odds, do try to inject a high degree of humour into all of the activities that are part and parcel of ensuring that the massive contributions made by the forebears of our ancient church over 900 or so are not just neglected and then, God forbid, forgotten. There is, I think still in the English people's make-up, a desire to support the idea of "pride of place". Generally speaking, visitors to our country are amazed at the way in which most English people tend for their gardens and grow flowers, vegetables and fruit and do so not really for any financial gain, but as "something that the British people do". A visit to the USA for example will show that Americans tend to certainly spend time and money on their lawns or "yards" as they are called but don't really indulge in other horticultural activities to any great extent, although of course there are honourable exceptions. I think and hope that the small population of Wormleighton now take some pride in their church and will do so in the future. Actually keeping our churchyard in a reasonable condition is left to the small flock of sheep that eat the grass there rather than to any fancy machinery. Our pathways through the churchyard are in rather poor condition and some action will be taken shortly, we hope, to restore these to a more acceptable condition. Unfortunately, the presence of the sheep does have its downside from the point of view of keeping the paths clean and one could say that the sheep are "messy eaters"! But these Jacob's sheep are so much part of the make-up of St Peter's church and allowances must be made and we are happy to have them!

Having renewed the roof and in particular the outside of the tower, our focus will switch to the interior of the tower where toilets and washing facilities are to be installed with some minimal catering installations. Work is expected to start on this in August of this year.

Our focus is now turning to the subject of our three bells which are installed in the tower, but which are currently only capable of being "chimed" as opposed to being fully rung. What must be borne in mind is the fact that a church with only three bells is not really of much interest for campanologists (bell-ringers) and to excite any interest in our bells being rung regularly, we would probably need to install three more bells. We are currently investigating possible sources of finance for such a venture, which could be seen as a logical development and part of our commitment to have our church used for community-related activities rather than purely for church services, weddings and funerals. Perhaps we are being over-ambitious, but we have climbed bigger mountains than this one!

As part of our need to strengthen our PCC, we are heartened by the news that the Spencer Family's ancient Tudor Manor House (or rather one wing of what was the huge original house that was 4 times the size of Althorp but was "torched" by the Royalists in 1645!) is now being restored and converted into two dwelling houses, which should be completed this coming autumn. With the loss of two of our longest-standing members of the PCC in the form of Charles and Jane Williams, who have moved after 34 years in our village, we are urgently seeking some worthy and hopefully younger replacements to become leaders in our ongoing St Peter's survival course. Maybe there is a Richard De Vere in the offing to liven up proceedings or even an Audrey Forbes-Hamilton! We never seem to know exactly what the Lord will provide for us as his unworthy servants!

Jeremy Wheeler