
Southwell & Nottingham Diocese
**CHURCH HISTORY
& OPEN CHURCHES
PROJECTS**

NEWSLETTER No 14: October 2011



Entries on site and entries received since March 2011

Since our celebration event in March of this year, when we marked, among other things, the 100th full entry going up on site, we have received and published on-line quite a few more. Here is the list, with many thanks to everyone who has worked on these entries:

Forest Town St Alban was the first to go up after Thurgarton (the 100th). Whatton St John of Beverley and Boughton St Matthew followed [pictured above]. Stapleford St Helen will go “live” next week.

Received by the Editors and now in line to be added to the site (in no particular order) are: Ruddington St Peter, Flawford St Peter, Nottingham St Mark, Nottingham St Matthew, Harby with Swinethorpe All Saints, Arnold St Mary, Epperstone Holy Cross, South Leverton All Saints and Kirkby-in-Ashfield St Wilfrid.

The Editors are currently working on: Radford St Peter, West Markham (Markham Clinton) All Saints and Kingston-on-Soar St Winifred.

Half-a-dozen or more “front page” introductory entries have also been added since March 2011, with over more 40 coming soon.

CHP Newsletter
September 2011

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Enclosed:

- Volunteers' timesheet

<http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk>

*Photos of Whatton & Boughton above
with thanks to Geoff Buxton*

Reports From the Last Two Researchers' Training Sessions at Dunham House

“Reading Your Church Part 1” (November 2010)

The first in our three-part series on ‘reading your parish church’ examined the period from the late Saxon through to the Reformation in the early C16th. Styles of windows, doors, and architectural moulding were presented which allow a rough (or sometimes more accurate) dating guide. Next the archaeological context of features was presented which illustrated how to phase various areas of churches; examples included the construction of aisles, lengthening and rebuilding of walls, alteration of openings, and heightening of towers. Styles of stone carving were looked at which showed the evolution from Norman to late medieval, and illustrations examined how this may be used as an aid to both dating specific features as well as looking into phases of construction. Styles of fittings such as screens and fonts were presented, again helping with dating but also identifying liturgical use and changes. Roofs, bellframes, mural paintings, and glass form a special set of features which may also be dated stylistically. Examples of the use of remote sensing were shown to illustrate what may be achieved using modern technology.

9th April 2011

Over fifty people attended the training session at Southwell on Saturday 9 April. Nick Harding welcomed attendees and gave an update on

progress, and spoke about the tourism and education strands of the project; the latest church trails leaflet and the Open Churches Weekends.

“Reading Your Church Part 2”

Chris Brooke gave the first talk. He said it is possible to discover how the Victorians put churches together by studying the fabric. After the Reformation it was a popular misconception that all church building stopped: new build did come to a halt, but ongoing projects which were begun in the early 1500s were often then completed. There are only a few examples of early post-Reformation churches in Nottinghamshire, one being the tower at Kirklington, which is possibly late Elizabethan/early James I, and probably the county’s earliest example of a post-Reformation church. Another is St Nicholas Nottingham, which was completely rebuilt 1671-8, when church building underwent a resurgence. Post-Reformation there were four distinct periods of church building:

- Rebuilding by Wren and contemporaries post-1666;
- Fifty New Churches Act 1711- concentrated on London in particular;
- Commissioners’ Churches 1818-56: Parliament granted money to build new churches in response to rapidly increasing urbanization and consequently a swelling



- population;
- A High Victorian restoration phase between 1850s-90s, and in particular the 1870s. Few churches in Nottinghamshire were untouched, and this period probably has the most impact on our research.

During the Civil War only two churches were built in the country, at Staunton Harold and Berwick-on-Tweed. Later in Nottinghamshire churches were built at West Stockwith (1722), Rempstone (1771), Ollerton (1780) and Ossington (1782). Typically, they were classical in form and simple in plan with box-form interiors and flat ceilings. With no elaborate arcades or arches, the style turned away from elaborate Gothic, towards a simpler form of Romanesque.

“...many churches from the 17th century onwards were built in brick...”

Depending upon the budget and whether a stonemason could be afforded, many churches from the 17th century onwards were built in brick, which had become cheap and plentiful. There were broadly three brick styles: English bond, Flemish bond and Stretcher bond. Up to 1760 English bond, consisting of a row of stretchers followed by a row of headers, was very popular. Flemish bond was fancier in appearance, having alternate stretchers and headers. Stretcher bond, which is plain without any headers, is in vogue today. These styles are decorative only and do not add strength to the construction. There were also several bastard bond walls, i.e. a mixture of various styles with no formula. If researchers come across this they should describe it, i.e. how many bands of each. The brick size has varied over the centuries; in 1784 a Brick Tax made a 3” brick more economic, whereas when the tax was abolished in 1811 thinner bricks were used.

The Church Building Commission 1818-56 provided new churches for the expanding population. They were built to a budget, the Commissioners looking to save on costs, with

local architects often building the churches. As a result of the 1st parliamentary grant, Nottingham St Paul was built 1821-13 (since demolished); and by the 2nd parliamentary grant, Hyson Green St Paul (1843), Nottingham Leenside St John the Baptist (1843-4), Mansfield St John (1854-6), New Radford Christ Church (1844-5), Sneinton St Stephen (1837-9), and Brinsley were built.

After this building improved due to rich patrons both in rural and urban areas eg Daybrook St Paul, Carlton on Trent St Mary which were built in the more elaborate Gothic style, as in the medieval period.

Thanks are due to Augustus Pugin (1812-52), a Roman Catholic who studied medieval English styles. He wrote two treatises in 1841 and studied three periods of church building which he described as Early English, Decorated Period (true English), and Perpendicular. His treatises argued that the Early English style was naive, that by the Perpendicular period building had become decadent, and that true Christian archaeology was in the Decorated Period. He criticized contemporary architects for not following the true English style. In Nottinghamshire he influenced the building of several churches, but he himself built only one, Nottingham, St Barnabas (the present RC cathedral).

Dr Brooke advised researchers to look for the following, both in complete builds and restored churches:

Stained glass - check if this has a date or maker.
 Archaeological evidence in the fabric
 Sharpness of appearance – i.e. medieval tracery will be weathered, Victorian less worn. Sharper tooling marks indicates Victorian stonework. In the 12th century stone was cut using a stone axe and chopped into blocks, leaving deep scoring lines. In the 13th to 15th centuries bolster chisels were in more common use, producing less deep lines. By the 19th century very fine lines were produced and also machine-cut stone was used, resulting in very faint but very regular scoring. Sometimes original stonework was recut so tooling marks should be checked.

Look at wall texts and paintings, though there is little evidence of these in Nottinghamshire.

Research

Damaged paintings may be enhanced using remote sensing. Texts are often biblical – researchers should consult the clergy on the team, or check information available free on the internet (e.g. use a programme such as e-Sword which provides a search facility on the King James Bible: available free at: <http://www.e-sword.net/>)

Victorians often copied monuments and glass in the medieval form, and often romanticized these.

Search out architects plans for restoration if possible, and compare with evidence of restoration. Evidence may be held in the RIBA library in London.



Prof. John Beckett speaking about Laxton church

John Beckett then spoke about St Michael's church, Laxton, a Victorian restoration of a medieval church. He said the church in the medieval period was central to the community, and held in higher importance than churches were later on. After the Reformation not only did new church building cease, but churches began to be neglected. Effigies were moved around and churches were not used in the same way as in the past, and they often became dilapidated.

In 1790 Throsby, revising Thoroton's *Antiquities of Nottinghamshire*, commented that by the 1630s Laxton's south chapel was used as a school, and in 1660s there were major defects in the walls and porches. He said the north aisle was 'the foulest man every saw...the floor and old stones completely covered with coals, coal stock, cinders, firewood, broken glass, and dog's dung. Under the arch was an old tomb so covered in dust that I found it impossible to sketch it...?'

The churchwardens in 1790s spent £43 on plumbing and glazing, and in 1837 £6 10s. on whitewashing. The vicar noted that the church was extremely dirty. In 1843 the archdeacon said the church was in a poor state of repair.

In 1854 Sir Stephen Glynn drew up a record of mid-19th century churches. He said Laxton was a fine church but neglected and decaying, and the south chapel had been walled off, possibly being used as a school.

The Victorian desire to restore and reform churches was not just as a result of the High Church Movement, but also groups of people wished to restore. The 2nd countess Manvers was keen that churches where the Earl had the advowson should be in good condition. In 1859 a special meeting was called. The Earl proposed a drastic remodelling of the church and churchyard in view of its dilapidated state, and to build a new church not exceeding £2,000, retaining portions of the original. The motion was accepted and a faculty obtained on 2 June 1859 to take down and rebuild it. Manvers, responsible for the chancel, agreed to put £2,000 up to do the whole building, and the parishioners were to deal with the graveyard and fencing. TC Hine was employed to design the new church.

The tower was removed and the church underwent major restoration, its length being shortened and stone reused on the rest of the church. It was also reordered, with new pews and floors. The flat roof was changed to an apex made of slate and the tower rebuilt. He replaced the de Everingham chapel with a smaller one. In 1902 the vicar, the Revd Collinson, wrote that the new building was smaller due to the church now having less importance in the community. In 1860 it was rededicated by the Bishop of Lincoln. The Earl also built a new village school.

Faculties up to 1837 are held at the Borthwick Institute, York. Those from 18370-54 are held at Lincolnshire Archives Office, and post-1884 are in the Diocesan Archives at Nottinghamshire Archives Office. 'The Builder' publication, held at the RIBA in London, also holds details of architects.

To close our session on Saturday 9th of April, David Harper then spoke about the website, noting there are now 100 full entries and 35 introductory pages on the site, with another six full entries to add. He referred researchers to the Resources section, which lists Glynn's index of notebooks, Bishop Herring's visitation reports, Lincoln faculties index, Southwell Diocesan Magazine index, and general interest websites.

After a question and answer session, over fifty attenders were treated to an excellent lunch, and the session came to a close at around 1pm.

Janice Avery

For a copy of the PowerPoints used to illustrate these talks please contact Heather.Sirrel@southwell.anglican.org

Newcomers' Briefing Session – 8th September (7pm) – Dunham House

Over recent weeks we have had 18 new people express interest in researching a church for the project! We thought it would therefore be useful to arrange a “newcomers’ briefing session”.

For practical reasons we held two sessions, one on Thursday 8th of September at Dunham House in Southwell, and a smaller-scale version on the 22nd of September for those who couldn't make it on the 8th.

We had 8 people along to these two evenings in total and can confirm that research is now underway for: Nottingham St Nicolas, Scofton St John, Halloughton St James, Cossall St Catherine, Normanton-on-Trent St Matthew, Broughton in Sulney (Upper Broughton) St Luke, and Ollerton St Paulinus.

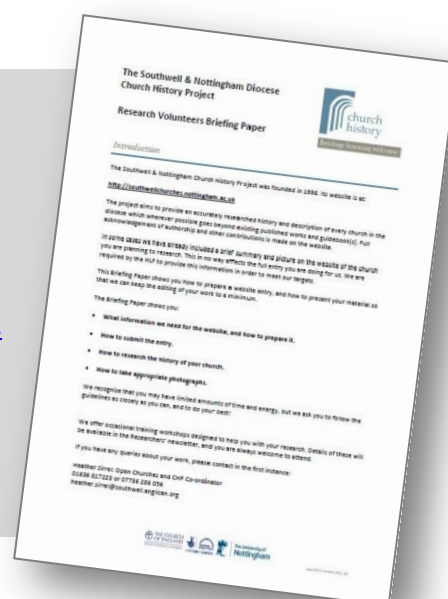
Research is also underway for Worksop Priory, Laneham, St Peter, Gamston St Luke, Ordsall (Retford) St Alban, and Skegby St Andrew which is being worked on by the project's youngest researcher to date – 17-year-old Joshua Keeling.

Briefing Paper Revision

The Project Briefing Paper has again been revised with what we feel are some very helpful amendments. It is now available on the resources section of the website:

<http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/main/hresources.php>

“Hard copies” will be available at the next researchers training day (details overleaf) or at request from Heather Sirrel, email: Heather.Sirrel@southwell.anglican.org or phone: 01636 817223



Next Researchers' Training Day: 19th November 2011, Ravenshead

This is our next regular training day for all researchers – whether new or seasoned, there will be something for everyone.

The main part of this training day will be spent completing the chronological sweep we began two sessions ago by looking at 20th century churches.

Please complete and return the reply slip at the end of this newsletter (or email us) by Friday, 11th of November at the latest, whether or not you intend to join this session.

Draft Programme (timings approximate)

9.30am: Coffee and biscuits

**10.00am: Welcome
CHP Project Update**

10.10am: How to read your church – Part 3 on 20th Century churches.

Session 1: Talk by Prof. John Beckett on the pattern of church building in the county since the 1890s and why there are as many churches as there are in this period.

11.00am: Break

11.15am: How to read your Church – Part 3 on 20th Century churches.

Session 2: Talk by Dr. Christopher Brooke on some of the churches built in this period, including the Vernon Royle churches.

12.00pm: Report on recent progress with the website – Rev Dr David Harper

12.10pm: Questions & Answers

12.30pm: Buffet lunch; and an opportunity to discuss specific points with the Team.

1.15pm: Close

Car parking will be available at the venue: St Peter's church, Sheepwalk Lane, Ravenshead, Nottingham, NG15 9FD.
Directions: The church can be found halfway along Sheepwalk Lane opposite the western end of Church Drive. (Sheepwalk Lane can be accessed from Longdale Lane or the B6020.)
<http://stpetersravenshead.co.uk/>



Ongoing Support for Researchers

We now have a network of support for our Church History Researchers in order to help you with what can sometimes be a daunting task.

Those of you who are working on an entry at the moment will probably have had at least one phone call in the last 12 months either from Heather or from Anita Maunsell, David Turner, Dee Ashton, Elizabeth Jones or Sue Clayton, who have all kindly agreed to be on the team offering support to other researchers.

Some common problems we are addressing include:

- Helping researchers to ‘read’ their church building and learn how it has evolved by looking at the stonework and architecture
- Helping those who have trouble accessing the church for whatever reason
- Helping researchers access the Archives and offering ‘first-timers’ guidance on how to use them
- Helping those who need putting in touch with experts, for example, clock, bells or glass specialists
- Helping researchers who have collated sufficient information, but are daunted by how best to write and present their material



Remember to check your briefing document as a first port of call, but also remember that help is here if you need it – please don’t be silent if there is something you are stuck with.

For more information contact Heather Sirrel via email: Heather.Sirrel@southwell.anglican.org or phone: 07736286056

Pilot One-To-One “Writing Up” Assistance

In response to what we have found to be quite a common situation – where researchers have collated extensive sources and got all sorts of information together but are perhaps struggling to distil it all down and write it up into an entry – we are arranging a pilot “writing up” session offering you the chance to have one-to-one attention from one of our Editors who will help you with your entry. If this is something you would find useful please email Heather Sirrel, attaching a sample of your work so far and we will be in touch to arrange a mutually convenient date and time.

Can You Lend a Hand...?

At the Church History Project base in the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham’s offices (Dunham House) we are having a major clear out and reshuffle prior to work commencing on a new office building for the Diocese. We have been sorting through a filing cabinet of Church History Project completed entries and other items (we have already been in touch with some of you about returning items).

Over the coming weeks we would really appreciate some volunteer help scanning items such as photographs and maps. If you can offer any time please contact Heather on:

email: heather.sirrel@southwell.anglican.org main telephone number: 07736286056 or desk phone: 01636 817223



heritage learning welcome

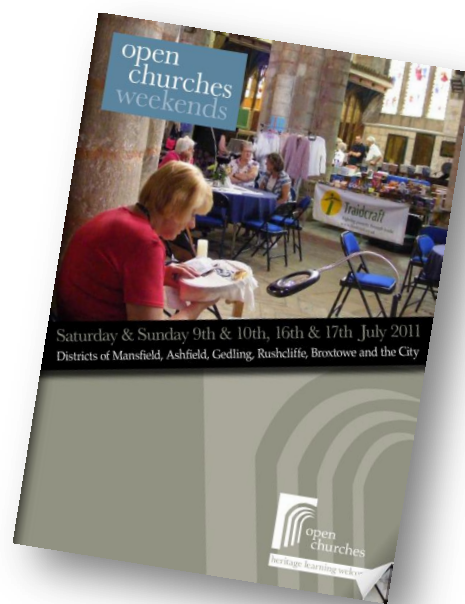
As many of you will know, the Church History Project is not just about research. The research feeds our work in two other areas in an offshoot known as the Open Churches Project: Tourism & Education...

Tourism

Report on Open Weekends

more than seventy churches across the Mansfield, Ashfield, Gedling, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and City Districts of Nottinghamshire opened their doors to visitors on the 9th & 10th or 16th & 17th of July 2011. Many thanks to all involved.

Many churches hosted events such as tower tours, historical displays, arts and crafts, plant stalls and prayer/meditation stations. These attractions, plus the beauty of the buildings themselves, proved on the whole really successful in drawing visitors in.



Looking Ahead to 2012

We are already looking ahead to next year and, in response to several enquiries, have already set the dates so that those of you who may wish to plan around the Open Weekends can do so: Next year we will be holding the Open Churches Weekends **across the whole diocese, over two weekends** and letting churches **choose** which weekend they would like to open – or *both*.

The dates will be **July 14th & 15th** and **21st & 22nd**.

Keep an eye on <http://www.nottsopechurches.org.uk/tourism-OCWE'12.html> for further details

New Guide Leaflets Published

The primary aim of the Open Churches Project is to produce various publications, including individual church guides, using the completed research from the CHP website. It is hoped that through such publications we can help raise awareness of the local heritage value of these buildings, and encourage partnerships between church communities and a wider audience.

We have so far published 17 guide leaflets for individual churches. These are available on our website and in each of the churches – for free! If you represent a church that would benefit from such a leaflet, please contact us to discuss it.



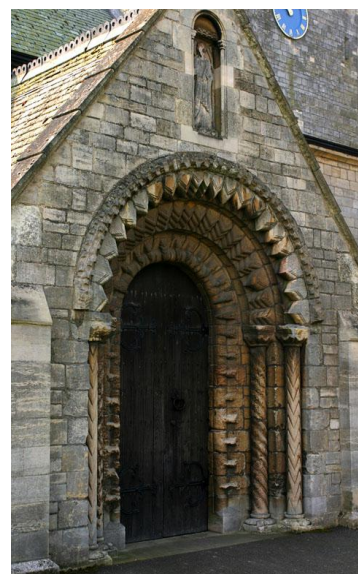
New Trail Leaflet Published

The Open Churches Project has also published various 'trail' leaflets linking together churches with a common theme.

Our trail leaflets aim to cover a wide range of popular or specialist themes. The latest one, published in March of this year, looks at churches in Nottinghamshire with Medieval Stained Glass.

We are currently researching and writing the next, which will follow churches along the route of the Old Great North Road. Look out for this and others by keeping an eye on the website. To order copies contact Heather Sirrel.

www.nottsopechurches.org.uk



The Old Great North Road trail stretches from Balderton (north doorway pictured above) all the way up to Austerfield (carved Norman 'tympanum' pictured below)



Education

Primary Pack

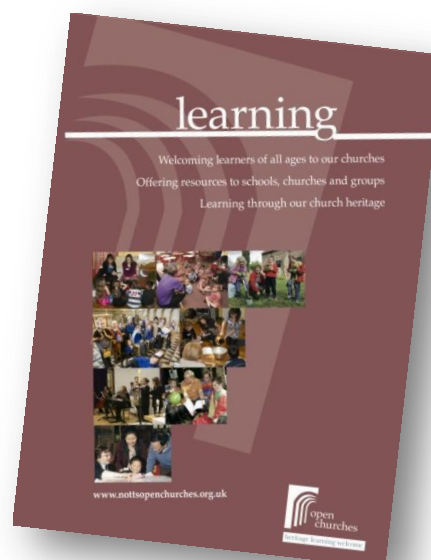
The Education strand of the project is developing quality materials for churches to use with a wide variety of ages and groups, particularly schools and other education establishments, to help to OPEN OUR CHURCHES to schools and children.

For centuries the church has been at the centre of its community so there is much that children can learn about history, customs, traditions, lifestyles and beliefs – all by visiting their local church! We think their experience will be even better if, instead of their visit being lead by their usual teacher, they are welcomed in by members of the congregation.

A team well versed in Education *and* Church life

have developed resources for several topics on the school curriculum, so that church members can offer something that will be useful to the school and is in a format that is easy to present – even with no prior experience of working with children.

The Primary Pack (i.e. intended for the 3-11 age range) is the first to be completed and includes a series of 20 [check] activity sheets developed from information on the CHP website – information *you* researched! It retains historical facts/points of interest within churches at the forefront, whilst also showing the church to be living and current community.



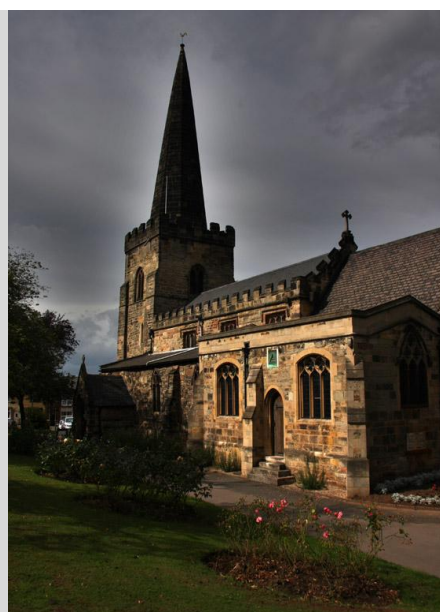
The pack is supported by pages on our website. A page of additional resources is being constantly updated with items such as extra activities and downloadable sheets, plus ideas and sheets developed by local churches.

We can offer training and support for all church volunteers who are interested in using the packs.

DVD, Secondary Materials & Other Plans

The next steps for the Education strand include:

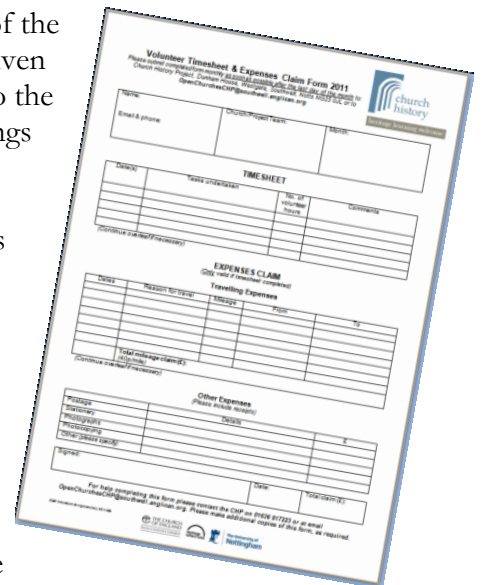
- Producing high quality education packs for churches to use with secondary schools.
- The design and production of a 12 / 15 minute DVD for all schools in Nottinghamshire to enhance the Education Pack and visits to churches.
- Designing specific activities for approximately 70 churches.
- Producing specific guidance and activities to enhance the packs for use with voluntary groups for children and young people (church groups, scouts, guides, young farmers, etc).
- Adding child-friendly links on the current CHP website or, alternatively, developing a micro-site specifically for children.



St Helen's Church, Stapleford, features in the Education DVD, which is currently being filmed and edited ready for release in December.

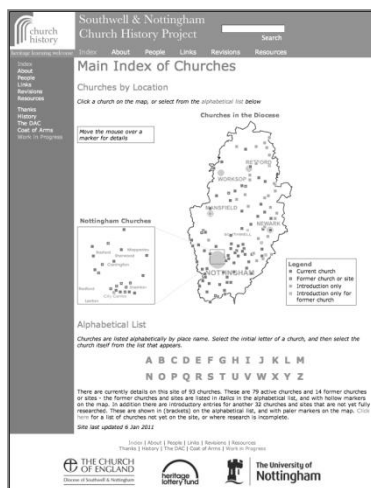
We Couldn't do it Without You!

As you may know, the Heritage Lottery Fund calculates the success of the project partly in terms of the number of volunteer hours which are given to the work. For example, over 2010 the time that volunteers put into the Project allowed us to claim over £35,000. This money is used for things like the Open Churches Weekends, producing guide leaflets for churches, enabling training sessions to take place for researchers and welcomers, etc. It is therefore vital that we have a record of the hours that all our volunteers give; and we would ask you to help us by continuing to keep a note of the time you spend on your work, completing the monthly timesheets and sending them to Heather Sirrel on a regular basis. **We are really grateful for the time you give to the Project.**



Run out of timesheets? Please see <http://www.nottsopenchurches.org.uk/volunteers/page.html> or contact Heather if you would like to have an electronic version of the timesheet to send back by email. Heather.Sirrel@southwell.anglican.org

The New Website



Do take a look (if you haven't already) at the new Church History Project website, which remains at the same address:

<http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk>

We are very grateful to The Reverend Dr David Harper for all his hard work redesigning it and giving it a fresh look.



Complementary pages about our work in Tourism and Education can now be found by clicking on the logo at the top left hand corner, or by going straight to this address:

www.nottsopenchurches.org.uk



Reply slip



**RESEARCHERS' TRAINING DAY
SATURDAY 19th NOVEMBER 2011, 9:30am
ST. PETER'S CHURCH, RAVENSHEAD**

Please complete and return this slip by Friday, 11th of November 2011 at the latest to Heather Sirrel, Southwell & Nottingham CHP, 8 Westgate, Southwell, Notts, NG25 0JL, or email Heather.Sirrel@southwell.anglican.org, or telephone 07736 286 056.

I will/will not [please delete as appropriate] be attending the researchers' training day on 19th of November 2011 at St Peter's Church in Ravenshead (full address and directions are on page 6 of the newsletter).

Name: _____ tel no: _____ email: _____

Church/church site you are currently researching (if applicable):

If you are part of a research group, number attending (if applicable):

Approx. date you expect to submit your research (if applicable):

Would you be willing to research a further entry (once your current research is complete)? Yes/no

Do you wish to continue to receive newsletters? Yes/no