

Oxfordshire FAMILY HISTORIAN



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The Society's website can be found at: www.ofhs.org.uk

Front cover:

Hunting Scene, Bear Hotel, Woodstock

Part of a hunting scene depicted in the archway leading into the old carriage entrance once belonging to the King's Arms in Woodstock, but since the eighteenth century incorporated into the Bear Hotel, a 13th century inn.

Photo by Sue Honoré.



Oxfordshire FAMILY HISTORIAN

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SOCIETY OBJECTIVES

1. to advance public education in family history and genealogy primarily within the county of Oxford
2. to collect, index, co-ordinate, publish and make accessible in the interests of genealogy any documents or records relating to the county
3. to promote the preservation of such documents or records
4. to encourage the study of genealogy
5. to assist educationally by lectures or otherwise in record research
6. to co-operate with Family History and other Societies with similar interests.

The Constitution of the Society is lodged with the Charity Commissioners and a copy is available from the Society's web site or, upon receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, from the Secretary.



OFHS Registered Charity Number 275891

Subscriptions are renewable annually on 1 January except that those joining during Oct, Nov, Dec have their membership carried forward through the following year.

Membership renewal forms are distributed with the December journal.

UK members: Individual £9.00, Family £10.00

Overseas members (incl. postage) £12.00

Cheques drawn in sterling and made out to Oxfordshire Family History Society should be sent to the Membership Secretary (see the Who's Who at the back of this Journal).

Australian members may pay via the Society's agent (member 2202) Mrs Barbara Geeves, 8 Sailing Lane, Mornington, Victoria 3931, Australia
Email: agent-au@ofhs.org.uk

Membership details are kept on computer and are used for Society activities only.

Contributions to Future Editions

The *Oxfordshire Family Historian* is published three times each year with cover dates of April, August and December. Items for consideration should be submitted to the editor. The earlier an item is received, the greater the chance of inclusion in the next issue. The deadline for the August 2013 issue is 15 May 2013. Urgent and short items may be submitted up to 1 June 2013.

The Editor reserves the right to edit, abridge, reject, or defer to a future date, all material submitted for publication. It is the contributor's responsibility to ensure that material submitted does not breach copyright laws. Contributions remain the copyright of OFHS and the authors jointly. The observations and opinions expressed in the articles and notices in the journal are those of their authors and not necessarily those of the Society.

From the Editor

At last, I have made it to the editor's seat. I would like to thank Wendy Archer and all the other volunteers who produced the last two journals while I was overwhelmed with my main job through 2012. Tony Hadland is an extremely hard act to follow as editor and there is no way I could emulate his skill or devote so much time to this job, so we are hoping to continue with the team effort which was started last year. Rosemary Bailey is laying out the journal and we will rely on other members to help us. If anyone wants to volunteer to be a reporter for some of the monthly OFHS talks, for example, then please contact me. Of course, we are keen to see as many of you as possible write interesting articles which intrigue and inform our members.

There seems to be a common theme of 'mystery' to the articles in this edition

of the journal, with several of the authors trying to solve family history challenges. Maybe you can help them? In addition, if you have hit your own family history brick wall, or just have a long-standing Oxfordshire family, please read the article by Richard Merry about our new Oxfordshire DNA project. There is a competition, sponsored by the OFHS, where two members will win a free DNA test, so please enter.

What do you like about the journal? Where could it improve? Do you have a fascinating story of an Oxfordshire family or place? Do you have an Oxfordshire family going back into at least the nineteenth century and would like to win a DNA test? Then put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sue Honoré
OFHS JOURNAL EDITOR

From the Membership Secretary

As I write this in early January, I am pleased to say that more than two-thirds of you have already renewed your subscriptions for 2013. My postman has been weighed down with large numbers of renewal letters every day, but still maintains a cheery outlook.

Despite the recession and increase in information available via the internet, your Society maintains a healthy membership base and currently has more than 1800 members. As you might expect, the bulk of them are based in the UK, although there is a strong contingent of 10% who live abroad.

Some 16% of you pay via the internet and almost 40% of you have arranged to pay your subscription by

bank Standing Order. I (and my postman) thank those of you who have decided to use these methods. I'd like also to thank those of you who have included messages of thanks and good tidings with their renewal cheques.

If, at any time, you are unsure of your payment method, or how to change to standing order, please contact me to ask. Please also continue to send me your 'Names of Interest', or updates to them, preferably using the form on the Society website, and don't forget to advise me of any changes of address, whether postal or email. Thank you.

Denise Lambkin
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

From the Executive Committee Table

by Wendy Archer

Some of the matters discussed by the Executive Committee in October to January 2013 are reported below.

Editorship of the journal

As members will have seen, Sue Honoré is now active as Editor.

Scanning of parish registers

Scanning of the parish registers has continued well, with ~160 registers being scanned each fortnight. We have currently accrued about 7Tb of high resolution images, and are delighted with the progress of the project.

Other projects

The project to transcribe the Oxford City Cemeteries registers has involved about a dozen members. We are about two thirds of the way through the project.

The ‘wills library’ on our website has now exceeded 51,900 names mentioned (an impressive addition of 10,000 names since this time last year), with 4,380 documents on-line. Offers of more documents would be welcomed.

Register transcription continues, both from photographs and scans of the registers, carried out outside Oxfordshire, and direct from the registers, at Oxfordshire History Centre. Rekeying of old transcripts is also progressing.

As mentioned on p6, Appleton MIs were photographically recorded and transcribed and have been published on CD. Several teams have worked

elsewhere in Oxfordshire, with their contribution to the county’s family history records much appreciated.

There was further discussion of the OFHS Oxfordshire DNA project. More details are given elsewhere in this journal.

Open Day

Our Open Day having been a well attended and much enjoyed event, we have booked at Woodstock again, for 5 October 2013.

2014 conference

The society, with sponsorship from the Federation of Family History Societies, is planning a day conference at Woodstock on 28 June 2014, to have a primarily military theme. We hope to welcome many members to the day.

Oxford outreach

We currently have advisors at the Oxford Central Library at Westgate on four days a week, and a team also helps at the Oxfordshire History Centre. Our visitors come from across England and beyond. Help has also been available at our Holford Centre.

Sales

For the last few years, Hugh Kearsey, with the help of his wife Jean, has kindly dealt with CD orders placed through our shopping cart on the internet, with Jean packaging the orders, and then Hugh cycling into Minchinhampton to the Post

Office – and back up the hill! He has now relinquished that role, handing internet sales to Judith Wildsmith, who has henceforth dealt with postal orders. The committee expressed their thanks to Hugh and Jean, who notched up 3,500 orders posted out.

Computer Group Panel

Over the last decade, the computer group panel has met periodically to consider future meetings of the society, and other ways in which they might optimise their help to the society. Les Binns has been the computer group panel chairman over this period, kindly also being panel meeting host, but he resigned the post in the autumn to take up other interests. The committee expressed its grateful thanks to Les for his commitment to the panel over this period. Alan Simpson has now taken the role of chairman, and the committee wishes him well.

Carl Boardman

In recognition and appreciation of his work at Oxfordshire Record Office, and, latterly, Oxfordshire History Centre, both at Oxfordshire County Council offices and then at St Luke's Church, Cowley, the committee decided to offer Carl Boardman, Archives Services Manager, a Vice-Presidency of the society on the occasion of his retirement. We were delighted to receive Carl's acceptance of the post/honour.

Holford Centre

Our lease on our research centre at Stanton St John, the Holford Centre, expires at the end of May 2014. The executive committee held a focussed

committee meeting to discuss our future plans with regard to the Centre. It currently is used for various functions – offering help from our team of experts to visitors twice a month, primarily by using both OFHS and internet resources, housing our excellent library, our book and CD sales stock and other society possessions such as supplies needed for fairs. However, it has the disadvantage of being remote from Oxford, and is not conveniently accessible by public transport. We have been very aware of the fact that attendance at the help days has dropped considerably in the last couple of years with the wider availability of internet resources, both from home and in the county libraries. Furthermore, the library has, sadly, been very little used. A new lease would involve several years' commitment, and so we considered in detail the various uses we make of the Holford Centre, extrapolating those uses forward.

As Trustees, we look to make the best use of society funds.

The committee were unanimous in deciding that we would not renew the lease in 2014. We currently offer help several days a week at Oxfordshire History Centre (where we have our own room) and Central Library, Westgate, and plan to continue to do so. We will disperse the library in the best way for the society. Book and CD sales will continue, using alternative storage. This will result in a saving of several thousand pounds a year for the Society with no significant loss of service to the members.

Wendy Archer
CHAIRMAN

The OFHS Wills Library

The Wills Library is still flourishing. The Open Day in October was fruitful: a member arrived with a dozen or so wills (since topped up by email), another brought a Marks'n'Sparks carrier bagful (my present task), and a long-time contributor brought three thick folders (which I haven't yet dared to investigate).

At the time of writing we have over 4,430 wills and associated documents online for your use, plus hundreds of inventories, affidavits etc. which may be included with a will. Some 52,500 persons are indexed as appearing in those documents – though the true number must be fewer, as people may appear several times in different wills. We have almost 200 contributors, many sending in just one or two wills, a few

offering hundreds. We are grateful to all of them. If you haven't found the Library yet, it's at wills.oxfordshirefhs.org.uk. Have a look – you never know what you might find.

Copies of wills are obtainable from OHC and (online) from TNA, also via various websites.

Wills can be the most tremendous help in sorting out trees, especially where PRs are patchy or non-existent.

At first sight the older ones may appear to be written in Sanskrit, but if you need help with transcription, we can offer that. Free of charge, of course. Just contact wills@ofhs.org.uk.

Dave Beames
WILLS LIBRARY CO-ORDINATOR
dave.beames@ntlworld.com
wills@ofhs.org.uk

Update from the Churchyards

As I write this in early January, with a dusting of snow on the ground, it is hard to think that by the time you are reading it, spring should be well on the way and we shall be dusting off our trusty transcribing tools for another season. Surely it cannot rain as much as it did last year!

As predicted, in my last report, The Appleton CD (OXF-MI-APT) was ready before Christmas and there is not too much work for the 'western' team to complete at Stanton Harcourt when the season starts.

Despite the weather, the 'northern'

team led by Eve Magee completed work on-site by the end of the year and this CD is now in preparation ready for checking. We hope to have it complete by the spring, possibly even by the time you read this. It will be identified as OXF-MI-DED and will be announced on the society's web site as soon as it is available. The team are then planning to move on to South Newington for this season's transcribing, working in conjunction with some enthusiasts from the parish who have already produced an excellent plan of the graveyard.

Sheila Tree's article in the December

2012 issue of Oxfordshire Family Historian, has described the progress made by the team at Cowley St James and that will be continuing to completion in 2013.

Mary Steele, of the recently reformed Littlemore History Society, has been photographing and transcribing memorials at St Mary & St Nicholas church and is hoping to persuade more volunteers from that society to join her this year. We at OFHS are providing help and advice with plan making and reading difficult stones and the intention is to ultimately produce a CD in our standard format.

The Chalgrove group mentioned in my last report are similarly under way and intending resuming work this year.

Again the plan is to produce the finished result as a CD.

As ever, all these groups are eager to have more volunteers and if you have a little time to spare during the coming year, they would welcome you with open arms. Either contact the local group leader, or email me at the address below and I will put you in touch. Likewise if you have thoughts of recording in your own local churchyard and would like advice, help and support do please contact me. There are lots of Oxfordshire churchyards still waiting to be recorded!

*Alan Simpson
MI COORDINATOR
mis@ofhs.org.uk*

Computer Group News

As you will know from the news from the Executive Committee Table, after many years at the helm of the Computer Group, Les Binns has decided it is time for him to step down and it has fallen to me to attempt to fill his shoes. We are all enormously grateful to Les for all the effort he has put into the group and wish him well now he is spending more time with his family in Bath.

When the OFHS Computer Group was formed, computers were a relatively new innovation as far as family historians were concerned. Few members used them and even less had home access to the internet; our emphasis was very much on the basics and getting members started. All this has changed now, so it is appropriate to ask

the question: ‘What do you, the OFHS members, want of your computer group in 2013?’ Indeed, do you still want a computer group?

In the past, our main ‘visible’ activities have been supplying computer help desks before the society’s monthly meetings and at the annual Open Day, and organising computer-specific meetings every two months. Behind the scenes we provide computer support for the Search Service, Holford Centre etc. The help desks seem well supported and there seems no reason to change these. However the bi-monthly computer group meetings have attracted only a small audience of late. Is this because we are providing the wrong topics or speakers, or is there simply no longer a need for

Scene Around

them? We need your feedback.

Then again, these activities are only available to the relatively small fraction of the membership who live close to Oxford or visit our Open Day. Are there things we should be doing for the rest of you, who live further away, either by articles in the Oxfordshire Family Historian or by pieces on the OFHS website? In which case, is there anything specifically 'Oxford' we could offer, when answers to almost any general interest computer topics can

already be found with search engines such as Google?

If you are reading this, and have access to the internet, please send an email to computers@ofhs.org.uk and tell us what you think. Otherwise, why not write to me at the address below? We need to know what you want.

*Alan Simpson (3960)
Forest Farmhouse, Old Road, Shotover
Hill, Headington OXFORD OX3 8TA*

News from the Victoria County History

Having published two new volumes in two concurrent years, the Oxfordshire VCH is now focusing on Ewelme Hundred in the Chilterns, due for publication in 2015/16 as Volume 18 of the Oxfordshire series.

New drafts of three of the parishes in that area were added to the VCH website just before Christmas. Two of the parishes (Cuxham and Easington) are tiny – Easington, at 235 acres, was the smallest rural ancient parish in historic Oxfordshire. Like Radcot in our recently published West Oxfordshire volume, however, their historical interest is entirely disproportionate to their size. Cuxham was owned from 1271 by Merton College, whose superb archives tell us a great deal about the changing village layout, the people, and local agriculture. Easington has an interesting story to tell about late medieval depopulation and reorganisation as two main farms, and despite its small size, it had its own rector as late as 1864.

Prominent families included those of GREGORY and GREENWOOD, together with incomers such as the Lincolnshire farmer William MOFFATT.

The other new addition is a draft of Great Haseley parish, which at over 3,000 acres was at the opposite extreme, and actually contained four separate places: Great and Little Haseley, Latchford, and Rycote. Throughout, there was a contrast between the large open-field villages at the Haseleys, and the much smaller hamlets at Latchford and Rycote, which were substantially depopulated in the late Middle Ages and were inclosed for sheep farming at an early date. The most famous inhabitants included Sir John WILLIAMS (who probably built the great Tudor mansion at Rycote), but the draft contains information on numerous farmers, labourers, and lesser landowners, including members of the BEALE, BOWLDY, GOOD and TAYLER

Scene Around

families, to name but a few.

The addition of those parish histories means that half of the fourteen parishes to be included in the volume are now available on the website. Work on the others – Benson, Berrick Salome, Brightwell Baldwin, Chalgrove, Ewelme, Newington, and Warpsgrove – is under way, and more drafts will be made available during 2013. Meanwhile, as reported last time, planning is afoot for a volume on the Wychwood Forest area, to be started within a couple of years for eventual publication as Volume 19. That will leave just four further volumes needed to complete the Oxfordshire series – a sizeable task, but hopefully a manageable one if we can maintain our current momentum.

The prerequisite for that is, of course, the need to maintain our current funding! The very generous support of the OFHS is gratefully acknowledged, but even so the fundraising work of the

VCH Oxfordshire Trust remains more crucial than ever. Donors great and small are listed in the volumes to which they have contributed (unless they prefer to remain anonymous), and other benefits include a newsletter, the annual Christmas lecture and party, and other occasional events and book launches. Contact details are given below.

VCH websites:

[www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/
counties/oxfordshire](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/oxfordshire) (background and
work in progress)

www.british-history.ac.uk (published
volumes online)

**For information on Trust
fundraising,** contact Liam Tiller
(Treasurer), East House, Roke,
Wallingford OX10 6JB; 01491 839618;
LiamTiller@waitrose.com.

For information on VCH research,
email simon.townley@history.ox.ac.uk.

Simon Townley
OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY EDITOR
VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY

News from Oxfordshire History Centre

Oxfordshire History Centre (OHC) has, in December 2012, marked a significant milestone along its journey, with the retirement of History Services Manager, Carl Boardman.

Carl's departure marks what we trust is the final strand of the package of staffing cuts of the past three years, and is a great loss to the service. Over 27 years of service, Carl has made an enormous contribution to the care of Oxfordshire County Council's archive collections, and to widening public access to them.

The two landmarks which stand out in his Oxfordshire career are his successful bid to the Heritage Lottery fund to develop a new and purpose-built county record office in St Luke's Church, Cowley, in 2000, releasing the

To see pages 10-69 of this journal, please join Oxfordshire Family History Society and get a printed copy of the Oxfordshire Family Historian three times each year.

Useful Addresses

OFHS Research Centre:

The Holford Centre, School Lane
Stanton St John, OXFORD, OX33 1ET
Tel: 01865 358151
See www.ofhs.org.uk for opening details
Helpline: 01628 485013
Email: help@ofhs.org.uk

Oxfordshire Central Library:

Westgate, OXFORD, OX1 1DJ
Open 09:00–19:00 Mon, Tue, Wed
Thu; 09:00–17:30 Fri, Sat
Closed Sun and Public Holidays
Web: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordcentrallibrary

Tel: 01865 815509

Provides a self-service selection of local and family history books, and access to a range of computer-based resources.

Local Studies Centres at other Libraries:

Abingdon 01235 520374
Banbury 01295 262282
Didcot 01235 813103
Henley 01491 575278
Wantage 01235 762291
Witney 01993 703659
Web: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries

Oxfordshire History Centre:

St Luke's Church, Temple Road, Cowley, OXFORD, OX4 2HT
Tel: 01865 398200
Email: oxhist@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Web: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshirehistory
Open 10:00–17:00 Tue,
09:00–17:00 Wed–Sat
Closed Mon, Sun, Public Holidays and
Bank Holiday weekends

Telephone numbers are shown for UK callers. From elsewhere replace the initial 0 by +44

Berkshire Record Office

9 Coley Avenue, READING, RG1 6AF
Open 09:00–17:00 Tue, Wed
09:00–21:00 Thu
09:00–16:30 Fri
Tel: 0118 937 5132
Email: arch@reading.gov.uk
Web: www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk

Society of Genealogists (SoG):

14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Road, LONDON, EC1M 7BA
Open 10:00–18:00 Tue, Wed, Sat
10:00–20:00 Thu
Tel: 020 7251 8799
Web: www.sog.org.uk

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Family History Centre:

280 The Meadoway, Tilehurst, READING, RG30 4PE
Tel: 0118 941 0211
Web: www.rfhc.org.uk

The National Archives (TNA):

Ruskin Avenue, Kew, RICHMOND, TW9 4DU
Open 09:00–19:00 Tue, Thu
09:00–17:00 Wed, Fri & Sat
Tel: 020 8876 3444
Web: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS):

PO Box 8857, LUTTERWORTH, LE17 9BJ
Tel: 01455 203133
Email: info@ffhs.org.uk
Web: www.ffhs.org.uk

Guild of One-Name Studies:

c/o Hon Sec, Box G, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Road, LONDON, EC1M 7BA, Tel: 0800 011 2182
Email: guild@one-name.org
Web: www.one-name.org

Who's Who in Oxfordshire FHS

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Dr Wendy Archer, see inside front cover
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Birth Brief Index:

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– birth-briefs@ofhs.org.uk

Book Reviews:

Books (or other items) for review should be sent to the editor – see inside front cover
– book-reviews@ofhs.org.uk

Bookstall Co-ordinator:

c/o Research Centre – see below
– book-sales@ofhs.org.uk

CD and Microfiche Sales – by post:

Miss Wildsmith
85 Downside Road, Headington, OXFORD, OX3 8JJ

CD and Microfiche Sales – email enquiries:

– cd-sales@ofhs.org.uk, fiche-sales@ofhs.org.uk

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Link and Photo Link Secretary:

Task shared by volunteers at the Holford Centre.

Members' Interests & Membership Secretary:

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Monumental Inscriptions:

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Programme Co-ordinator:

Paul Gaskell – see Publicity Officer

Project Co-ordinator and Parish Register**Transcription Project:**

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Minchinhampton, STROUD, GL6 9EE
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– 01865 880792

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– webmaster@ofhs.org.uk

Wills Library Co-ordinator:

Dave Beames,
162 Black Road, MACCLESFIELD, SK11 7LF
– wills@ofhs.org.uk

Diary Dates

For more dates, especially the many events hosted by the Society of Genealogists in London, see the joint GENUKI/FFHS event calendar at www.geneva.weald.org.uk. Events in bold will have an OFHS presence.

April 2013		Jun 1	Exeter Hall, Kidlington, OXF, OxPast 2013
Apr 24	'Genealogy, How Much Can You Do From Home?' talk by Alan Simpson at Dorchester on Thames Historical Society	Jun 24	Exeter Hall, Kidlington, OXF
			OFHS AGM
		Jun 25	SoG, London Annual General meeting
May 2013		July 2013	
May 4	Gloucester, GLS Gloucestershire FHS Family History Fair	Jul 6	Reading, BRK Reading Family History Centre Open Day
May 11	Haywards Heath, SSX 40th Anniversary Family History Fair General Meeting		This is the first year OFHS will have a stand at this event, please do visit us!
June 2013		Jul 27	Aylesbury, BKM Buckinghamshire Family History Society Open Day
Jun 1	Sheffield, SYK Sheffield & District Family History Society Fair		

BUCKS Family History Society Open Day

Saturday 27 July 2013, 10am to 4pm
The Grange School, Wendover Way,
AYLESBURY, HP21 7NH

Research facilities will include the Bucks names database, and Parish Register, People, and Places libraries. Sales of Parish Register transcripts and other research aids. Expert advice; guest societies and local heritage groups; suppliers of data CDs,

maps, software, archival materials and more. Admission is free, with free parking at the venue.

Further information, including a full list of those attending, can be found at www.bucksfhs.org.uk.

Meetings at Exeter Hall

Oxford Road, Kidlington OX5 1AB

General meetings take place in the large hall.

Library, bookstall and computer advice from 19:15. Talks start at 20:00.

Computer meetings (*) usually take place in the small hall.

Doors open at 19:15. Talks start at 19:30.

8 April 2013*

The Camera Never Lies ... or does it?

Alan Simpson

22 April 2013

London Ancestors

Howard Benbrook

20 May 2013 (third Monday of the month)

The Duke and the Miner's Daughter:

the fascinating truth behind a Forest of Dean family myth

Tony Hadland

3 June 2013*

The View from the Past -

The online photographic archives of English Heritage

Mike Evans

24 June 2013

AGM followed by The Pulker One-Name Study

Dr Wendy Archer

22 July 2013

Imagining who they were!

Geoff Bremble

5 August 2013*

Beginning Blogging - with WordPress

Malcolm Austen

23 September 2013

Joining the dots and bringing it all together - connecting up normal genealogical research, origins of surnames, and DNA

Anthony Adolph

Back cover:

St Mary Magdalene, Woodstock

Corbels carved at the top of pillars in the church of

St Mary Magdalene, Park Street, Woodstock. The church has undergone many changes since the erection of the original building in the 12th century. A Norman doorway is still present along with a 15th century carved rood screen.

Photo by Sue Honoré.

