

Volunteering with STRADFAS

Volunteers Lunch

In June, we held a thank-you lunch for our Volunteers at Judith Dorricott's house. Thankfully the weather was lovely and the committee enjoyed meeting the many volunteers who had worked over the last year in such diverse areas as church recording, researching archives, conserving Victorian embroidery, creating Elizabethan dresses for Hall's Croft, running textile workshops and making cross-stitch cushions.

We were especially pleased that the team who have been working on textile conservation for over twenty years could attend, as they are not taking on any more projects. The four ladies were all presented with flowers. Our thanks to Judith for hosting this event.



Our STRADFAS volunteers

Heritage Volunteers



Gay Gott

NADFAS is very much about conservation and education and the volunteers from STRADFAS have a history from the start of the society of working with many local organisations. We have an excellent archive of photographs to prove this! Volunteers have worked in local houses, churches and museums in many different ways over the years and continue to do so.

Recently the expert textile conservation team have been working on restoring two late Victorian banners from Ladbroke church which have some beautiful embroidery. The banners were rather damaged by exposure to light and work has taken three years so far; one banner is back in use in the church but the other is still not completed although it should be finished this year.

This specialist team have decided not to take on any more projects but will advise and support the new team taking over. To continue the church work a team will be working at Mickleton Church repairing some of the vestments and also making a new burse and veil for the church's use.

In 2010 some cross stitch cushions were made for the choir stalls at Holy Trinity to celebrate the church's 800th anniversary. Now more cushions are being worked for the clergy seats and these should be in place during 2017.

For the first time STRADFAS volunteers have worked at Compton Verney. In the year of Capability Brown's Tercentenary, researchers have been working with staff from Compton Verney to discover information about Brown's landscape work there with



Dresses for Hall's Croft

particular reference to local workers and suppliers. This collaboration has also led to a STRADFAS day of Special Interest at Compton Verney.

Over the years STRADFAS has had strong links with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. In 2016 a project was completed for Hall's Croft in which mannequins were dressed in the outfits and underclothes Shakespeare's daughter Susanna, and her own daughter Elizabeth would have worn. The dresses are in a specially dyed raw silk and the underclothes in

undyed calico. The sewing team worked closely with the designer from Hall's Croft and the clothes are now displayed in the bedroom.

Later in the year a project was started at Anne Hathaway's Cottage to replace the bed hangings and coverlet for the

Hathaway bed, which has been in the family for hundreds of years, as well as hangings for another bed upstairs. These hangings are being made in a wool style fabric (guaranteed not to attract moths) and decorated with slips, which are pieces of linen embroidered with flowers of the times. In Anne Hathaway's time the women of the family would have worked on these slips in their leisure time.



Needlework by Heritage Volunteers

Our connection with Warwick Museum has continued. The work resulting from the knitting project in the summer of 2015, which is a set of knitted representations of museum artefacts, has not yet been displayed but should be in place in February 2017 when the refurbishment of the museum is completed.



Hanging Toys at the Market Hall, Warwick

Once again STRADFAS was asked to run a workshop for the Museum in November 2016. The theme of the workshop was "Making Traditional Christmas Decorations" and our team came up with original ideas for traditional decorations which can be made in a single afternoon.

Whenever we are asked to do a project, there are always members who are willing to share their talents and expertise and sometimes learn new skills. If you are interested in volunteering in any way please do let us know.



Working on a banner for Ladbroke Church

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Church Recorders



Jean Vaudeau

The Church Recording group is now into its second year of working in St Michael and All Angels Church at Claverdon. Most of the recording has been completed but there will now be a period of rechecking, cross

referencing and photography, and finally constructing all the facts and figures into the prescribed NADFAS and V & A format.

The Church is mentioned in the Domesday Book {AD 1086}. It has undergone many changes

and has acquired a variety of interesting furnishings which we record in accurate detail and clear, concise language.

The largest item in the Church is the monument and tomb of Thomas Spencer situated in the chancel. The carvings and inscription contain a wealth of information, factual, symbolic and even in one case misleading. The male and female cherubs have a charm of their own, so it is a pity we cannot see them in their original coloured state. The 20th century East window was designed by C.E.Kempe and signed with his wheatsheaf mark.



Stained glass angel



Altar frontal

Church Trails



Judith Dorricott

Church Trails, designed for children, are popular around the country but for the STRADFAS committee it is a new venture. This is rather like a quiz sheet, and is full of photographs, diagrams and drawings designed to capture children's interest when they visit a church.

By looking for different articles and answering the questions, the trail helps the children discover the rich heritage of a church, such as its architecture, carvings and furnishings, stained glass and paintings and memorials.



The old font

Once the proposed trail is completed, tested and approved by NADFAS it is available in church and also put on the Church's website so that parents with children or school parties can use it to enhance their visits. Naturally the trail has an accompanying sheet of answers for adults!

Our first Church Trail is for Holy Trinity Church in Stratford, and includes such varied activities as drawing the sanctuary knocker and copying the words written on Shakespeare's gravestone.



The Sanctuary knocker

Young Arts 2015-2016



Anne Maguire

Encouraging and inspiring young people to have an interest in The Arts at a early age has always been an important part of the NADFAS ethos. Although many groups and schools wish to encourage this interest, a lack of funding imposes severe restrictions on what can be done. As one of the larger Societies, STRADFAS is in a position to offer help, which it does readily.

The Shakespeare Hospice has again received a donation to provide for bereaved children, who seem to be helped by engaging with The Arts. Together with match-funding from other societies, the young people decide what they want to do. Last year saw a giant caterpillar being created during their Easter break from school.

The Young Carers, who have been recipients of funds in the past, have again been given money to allow these young people, who have so little free time, to use their artistic talents.

Like The Young Carers, The Armonico Consort, which has been helped in the past, was assisted with funding, to enable pupils from a local school, to take part, as members of The Academy Choir, in a concert at The Royal Albert Hall.

Two schools in the area have received help towards projects. St.Gregory's had decided that part of the school grounds needed a 'face-lift' and to the that end had engaged with



Flowers created by young people at the Shakespeare Hospice

Escape Arts to see what could be done. Years 1 and 2 designed and made ceramic butterflies, which now adorn the wall above the school garden.

Our latest donation is to Claverdon Primary School, where it is hoped to create a semi-permanent art work in the school foyer.



Colin the Caterpillar created by young people at the Shakespeare Hospice