

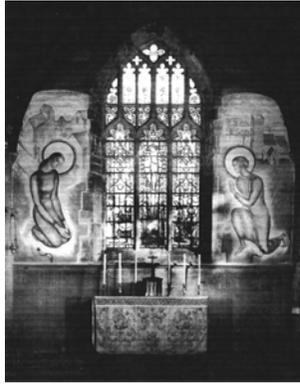
Evelyn Gibbs' Murals

Until 1972 there was a beautiful East window of stained glass that may have come from All Saints Church, Strelley. In 1946 two murals were painted to either side of the East Window. They depicted 'The Annunciation', the Angel Gabriel on the right and The Blessed Virgin Mary to the left, painted in the



Evelyn Gibbs and Claude Price working on the paintings in 1946

medieval tradition against a local background, featuring St Martin's Church and the old Church Farm. They were painted by Evelyn Gibbs, her sketches selected from a number of submissions by the then Vicar, Father Marshall. Sadly during the 1972 extensions to the church the new, low pine ceiling cut across the old chancel obscuring Evelyn Gibbs'



View of the east wall c. late 1940s

wall paintings and the Victorian barrel vault ceiling. The east window was bricked up and the stained glass was subsequently lost or broken. However in 2011 the church plans to raise funds to restore the wall paintings and reveal the old chancel barrel vault ceiling.



Detail from what remains of the paintings today

Welcome to the church of St Martin of Tours Bilborough

The church of St Martin of Tours was built upon the site of an Anglo-Saxon settlement and parts of the church date back to the mid 14th century. Its early origins can be seen in the square-headed traceried windows in nave and chancel. The tower was built later, around 1450. In 1680 the church was purchased by Ralph Edge Esq together with the rest of the Strelley Estate and it remained in the family's possession until 1927 when Patronage for the church passed to the Society for the Maintenance of the Faith.

Restoration work was carried out in 1833 and again between 1887-9 under the architect, J E Newbury.

In the early 1950s the population in Bilborough and Strelley increased dramatically as the new council estates were built around the church. As a result the small, single aisled, medieval church was inadequate for the growing congregation but it wasn't until 1972 that the church was finally extended. The north chancel wall was demolished (where a Victorian vestry had previously been added)



and a large modern church with additional community rooms, toilets and kitchen facilities was built onto the medieval building. The architect of the new church was the brother of the then Rector, Father Derek Shewring, his name was Colin Shewring, the dedication of the new church took place on Monday 20th November 1972.

In 2011, thanks in large part to English Heritage/ Heritage Lottery Fund together with other grant making bodies, urgent repairs were carried out on the medieval church, ensuring that this beautiful space can continue to be used for worship and special occasions. Repairs included new internal plaster, new electrics, new drainage, re-pointing of the tower and replacement of the old tower parapet.



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Many thanks to Hilary Wheat and John Day for the material used in this leaflet and to Dr Chris Brooke for photographs.



Old church

3 Evidence of a Gallery

In 'Walks Round Nottingham' published in 1835 the author notes, 'there is a commodious singers gallery' at St Martin's but sadly during the later restoration work the medieval minstrels' gallery was removed. It is interesting to note that the sills of the windows at the west end of the nave are higher than the other windows and this would have been to accommodate the gallery.

The old box pews were also removed and replaced by the open ones which are still in the church today.

The old lath and plaster ceiling was also removed by the Victorians and replaced with oak timbers in the nave and a more decorative carved ceiling in the chancel.

2 South Porch

Original 14th century carvings adorn the exterior of the porch. The head shown here is most likely to depict King Edward III.



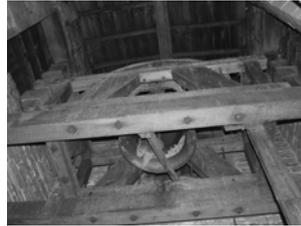
4 Bell

The original single bell, dating from 1681, was taken in part exchange by Taylors of Loughborough for a new one in 1888. An allowance of £10 12s 0d was made for the old bell making the cost of the new one £26 9s 4d plus £8 10s 0d for carriage and fitting.



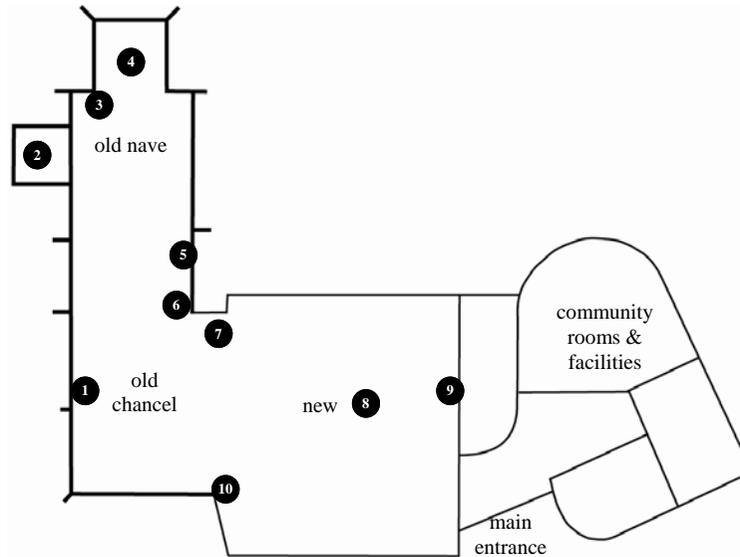
1 Helwys Memorial

In 1590 Sir Edmund Helwys of Broxtowe Hall and his daughter were buried in the church. (Sir Edmund's son, Thomas Helwys, was one of the co-founders of the Baptist religion.) There was originally a tomb in the Chancel area but this was destroyed during the Victorian renovations and the marble tombstone was placed on the North Chancel wall. During the building work in 1972 this was moved to the South Chancel wall to make way for the modern extension.



5 North arch

A blocked arch, visible on the exterior north side of the nave, may have once opened into an aisle or a chapel.



6 Crucifix

The crucifix above the pulpit in the medieval church is rumoured to have been made by an Italian prisoner of war. The words on the cross are in French but translate as follows:

"You who cry come to this God because he cries
You who suffer come to him because he cares
You who tremble come to him because he smiles
You who wander come to him because he lives here".

7 Font

In the 1970s the font was moved from the south corner of the old nave and placed in a bed of pebbles - to signify the shoreline before immersion in the baptismal waters - at the front of the new church.

The font's base probably dates from c1400 but the bowl may be a later restoration one from c1661.

8 Modern Extension

The extension was built with money from the sale of the old church hall and the land on which it stood at the top of St Martin's Road. £10,000 was given by the Church

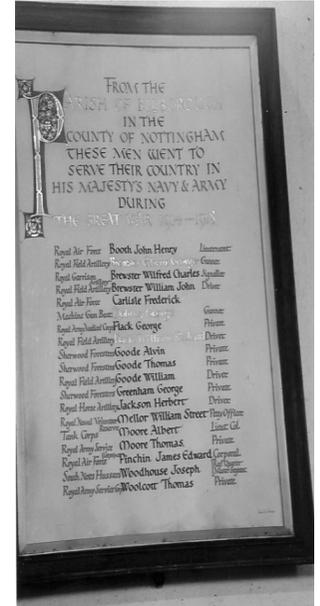
Commissioners from the sale of this land and the congregation raised £2,500.

The curved walls of the new church were designed to give 'a building which had to be erected for a very small amount of money a more pleasing character'.



10 Organ

The pipe organ was a gift from Beeston Parish Church for the new church.



9 Roll of Honour

The roll of honour lists those men from Bilborough who served in the first world war. Shown in gold lettering are those who died in service:

Edwin George Brewster died on the 20th of September 1918, aged 23, and is buried at the Chauny Cemetery in Aisne, France.

Richard William Flack died on the 2nd of December 1915, aged 19, and is buried at Hill 10 Cemetery in Turkey.

George Dobney of the Machine Gun Corps died on the 29th of August 1918, aged 20. He is named on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial in Pas de Calais, France.