



Friends of St Andrew's Church
Stratton, Cornwall

Newsletter Autumn 2022

Volume 14 Issue 2





The Editor's Point of View ~

Stratton and St Andrew's viewed from Chynoweth

Cover photographs and magazine print realisation by

David Goodwin JP

Val Barker writes ~

It seems that we have had a very busy time recently and each time the Newsletter is coming due I promise myself that I will get it out to you all in a timely manner but, yet again, I have failed dismally. I hope the wait will have been worth it!

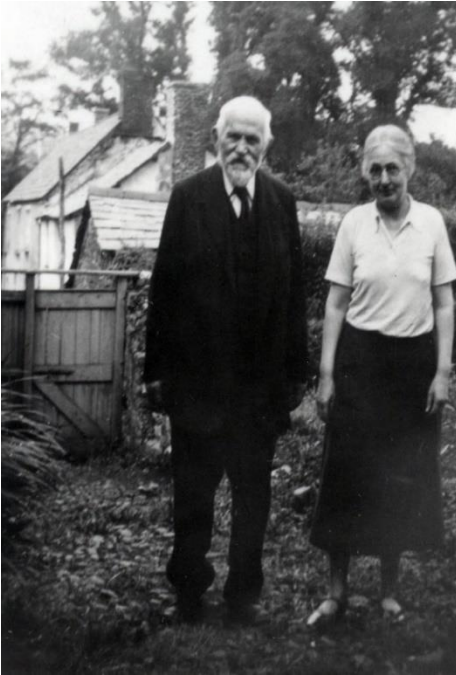
We have all been terribly saddened by the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September and apart from the TV coverage and all that entailed, Stratton and its people did her proud during the mourning period that followed the announcement that she had died. There were several trips up and down the tower steps hoisting and lowering the Union Flag (luckily we had just purchased a new one); the altars had been prepared with black frontals, symbolic flowers, the book of condolence and photographs of the Queen; the special services of thanksgiving and reflection were very well attended and the bell ringers came to the fore again as they communicated to the community at large, so poignantly and effectively, with the half-muffled peals.

Here at St Andrew's we continue to give thanks, in our prayers, for the life of HM Queen Elizabeth II, for her faith and her dedication to duty. We ask blessings on the King, all the Royal Family and our Nation as we mourn her death and pray that her example may continue to inspire us.

In this newsletter, I have included a bit of Stratton social and family history this time as well as the usual updates and letters and it was good to be able to feed off the reaction I had received from the last edition. It is encouraging to get information and input from the membership. Thank you to those who wrote - including a

letter from Theresa Abbots after the Flower Festival in May this year ...

“What a beautiful Flower Festival in St. Andrew’s last weekend. Steve and I both enjoyed it. It was lovely to meet up with old friends not seen for some time amongst those gorgeous flowers.



After our conversation I thought you may like to see a photo I have of Mr and Mrs Rattenbury taken in the garden of our house. Daisy Barton was one of the daughters of Mr Barton the schoolmaster. When he died she inherited the house then called Red Brick House, for obvious reasons. She married Mr Rattenbury in a quiet private ceremony in Stratton.

They lived very happily in the house as we have continued to do but as you know it’s now named Rattenbury House, as it seemed appropriate to remember them seeing we look out onto the gardens where the old shop stood. I remember it so well.

I hope that they both like what we’ve done to the garden over the years. The house in the background is in Corner Gardens.”

For those unfamiliar with the commercial aspects of old Stratton, here is a page of adverts from C1884 in which you will see the Rattenbury shop advertised. It stood opposite the Tree Inn until demolished mid 1960s.

A. GUIDE TO N. CORNWALL
1884

TREE HOTEL, STRATTON, CORNWALL.

Commercial Hotel & Posting House

TOURISTS AND COMMERCIAL GENTLEMEN WILL FIND THIS ESTABLISHMENT REplete WITH EVERY COMFORT.

~~~~~  
**HORSES & AND & CARRIAGES**

Sent to all parts on receipt of letter or telegram.

Within easy distance of Bude, Killhampton, Widemouth Bay, Comb Valley, Poughill, Marhamchurch, &c.

**W. J. PRIDHAM, PROPRIETOR.**

.....

## RATTENBURY SON, Watchmakers & Jewellers, STRATTON.

Gold and Silver Watches, Chains, Necklets, Locketts, Brooches, Ear-rings, and other Jewellery. Wedding and Fancy Rings, Electro-goods, Cutlery, Opera-glasses, Spectacles, Pipes, Pouches, Brushes of all kinds, Carpet Bags, Fancy Soaps, Scents, Toys, General and Fancy Goods. Fishing Tackle.

.....  
**TRADE CARDS.**

**S. A. OLDE,**—Saddle and Harness Manufactory,  
STRATTON.

Home-made extra strong Saddles. Repairs promptly attended to.

**J. W. HART,**—Aerated Water Manufacturer,  
→\* STRATTON. \*←



## **Stratton Fountain?**

In the last newsletter I wrote a piece about the Stratton Fountain and received this comment from Jonathan Howlett in Scotland: -

“Now as for the fountain I have to say that looking closely at the two images I am of the opinion that the one in Shute Gardens (The Triangle, Bude) is NOT the one in Stratton Church Square as if you look closely the profile of the main basin is steeper in the Shute Garden’s one and I think there are differences in the base section too. It may be a local 'myth' but somewhere the tradition is possibly off track. Best would be a visit to Shute gardens with the photograph from the Worden Archives and make a good visual comparison. Sorry to be a damp squib on this one!!”.

*Well ... you can't win them all. Thank You Jonathan. Ed.*





Later in the newsletter you will find an article from Simon, our Churchwarden, all about the wall repairs which we are so pleased about. FoStA were able to cover the costs with a grant which is thanks to all of you and your constant and unfailing generosity. I should also like to thank our Fabric Chairman, Alan McIntosh, for his part in the work. He gave many hours working with the



mini-digger preparing the ground and tidying up afterwards at no cost to FoStA or the church and we are grateful.

As usual, at this time of year, we are fundraising by offering calendars and Christmas cards for sale and again my thanks go to David Goodwin, our Webmaster, for organising this. It is no small task and it is always done with great care and attention to detail as we have all come to expect. As September was drawing to a close I was already getting enquiries for next year's calendar. You will find an order form for cards and calendars with this newsletter and they are also advertised on the website at [www.fosta.org.uk](http://www.fosta.org.uk) Please do support us if you can.

We are all really looking forward to the Patronal Festival, at the end of November when, as well as the usual gift-

offering aspect of the day, one of our members is organising a Craft Fayre for church funds. It is particularly exciting as it is several years since we have been able to hold one and it adds such a celebratory feeling to the whole weekend which culminates with the Patronal Mass and thanksgiving. Maybe some of you will be able to join us?

So, as ever, it just remains for me to say a huge thank you to you all, for your friendship, your interest and support and for your amazing generosity. Where would St Andrew's be without you all?

With best of wishes,

*Val*



## **Churchyard Wall Repairs ~**

One year ago I reported on problems with some of the stone walls in the churchyard and the repairs that would be needed. Since then the work has been carried out in two stages and I can now report that it is complete.

The first repair work carried out was for the section of wall close to the gate into Sanctuary Lane. This had been damaged by a dead horse-chestnut tree which was leaning into the wall causing a section to collapse, as shown in this photograph taken before work started.



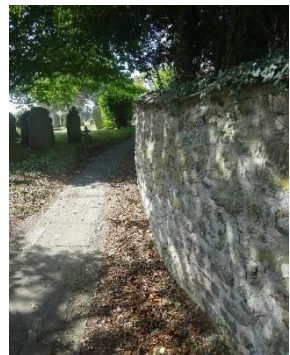


The dead tree, along with its roots, was removed, which allowed the gap in the stone wall to be built up and repairs carried out each side as required. During this work a further inspection of the wall in this area was made and the wall immediately by the Sanctuary Lane gate was found to be bulging, with cracks opening up. We were advised that this was due to the build up of earth over the years on the churchyard side which resulted in the wall acting as a retaining wall, which it was not built for. The ground level in the churchyard was therefore reduced, the earth being spread over nearby dips and hollows, and then the wall repaired as necessary. The results of the repairs are shown below.



As reported last time, it is still hoped to plant a sapling in this part of the churchyard, to replace the dead tree, but planted an appropriate distance from the wall to avoid future problems.

The second stage of the wall repair work was for the stone wall by the path from the Diddies Road gate. The damage here was caused by four trees and a build up of ground level in the adjacent garden, all of which had put significant pressure on the wall causing it to lean into the churchyard with a number of cracks opening up as the wall had distorted.



Before any work to the wall could be done, it was necessary to meet with the neighbour to discuss the problem with their trees. The neighbour agreed to have the trees removed, following which the ground level in their garden adjacent to the wall was reduced by approximately two to three feet. The footpath was closed during this time and in fact the disturbance caused by the work being carried out did result in a section of the wall collapsing into the churchyard.



With the work in the neighbouring garden complete it was possible to repair the wall, which involved completely taking down a 4 metre section and rebuilding it, with additional strengthening to the base to provide extra stability. The finished wall is shown on the next page and can be compared with the photograph taken before work started.



There were also some interesting historical finds amongst the rubble of the churchard wall after it had been taken down. Several pieces of what appear to be old stone statues. The engraving on the bottom indicate that the statues were of St Andrew and Simon of Cyrene. See photographs over page. One of the upper pieces clearly shows that one of the figures was holding a book. It is not known how old the pieces are or when they were built into the wall. A further careful check through the remaining rubble is to be made to see if any further pieces can be found, following which it is proposed to display the pieces inside the church.



Photographs of the broken old stone statues

The FoStA Committee made grants to the PCC totalling £9500 to enable all the above works to go ahead, and the PCC have expressed their thanks to FoStA and the unfailing generosity of the FoStA membership who made this possible.

One of our FoStA members, Mr John Bilsland, has already offered to make a cabinet to house these relics in due course. We are grateful to him for volunteering his skills.

*Ed.*



## **Dates for Your Diary ~**

Sat 26<sup>th</sup> November St Andrew's GIFT DAY and Craft Fayre from 10am until 4pm.

Sun 27<sup>th</sup> November St Andrew's PARISH MASS at 9.30am

The online monthly calendar is kept up to date by our Webmaster with services and events so do check for further details at [www.fosta.org.uk](http://www.fosta.org.uk)

## **Items for Sale ~**

Please remember to visit the online FoStA Shop.



## **St Christina's Church, Stratton?**

A good neighbour nearby was having a bit of a clear out recently and came across some books and papers relating to Stratton and St Andrew's church. Of particular interest was an old Blue Book Guide for Cornwall for the 1958 holiday season. The description begins in a way we are all familiar with:

"...the glory of the place is its magnificent church, highly placed at the head of the town, and dated from the fourteenth century. It has a fine barrelled roof, many quaint old carvings, and a splendid peel of bells... In this church is the tomb in which lies buried the great Sir John Arundel (1561), with his two wives, seven daughters, and three sons, whose names are all pierced in rather a singular manner."

However, it was this passage which surprised me and aroused my curiosity:

"Some doubt still exists as to its Patron Saint. Some say it is dedicated to St Andrew, but others maintain that it is St Christina"

So it seems that as recently as the 1950s a debate was still raging as to who really was the Patron Saint of Stratton parish church. It had certainly been known as St Andrew's throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An entry in the National Gazetteer for 1868 tells us some interesting facts about Stratton:

"STRATTON, a parish, post, and market town in the hundred of Stratton, county Cornwall, 18 miles N.W. of Launceston, and 223 from London. It is situated near the Bride [Bude] canal, on the coast, and contains the village and seaport of Bride [Bude]. It is a petty sessions town and a polling place for the E. division of the county. Courts



baron are held once a year. The Poor-law Union embraces 11 parishes or places, for which a union poorhouse was erected in 1856. This parish is productive of dunstone, and there are cliffs 400 feet in height. About half a mile to the W. of the town are the remains of Binkhammy [Binamy] Castle, surrounded by a deep fosse. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of Exeter, value £201. The Wesleyans and Wesleyan Association Methodists also have chapels. Market day is Tuesday. Fairs are held on 19th May, 8th November, and 11th December."

And of the church itself:

"The church, dedicated to St. Andrew, is old, and contains effigies of Ranulph de Blanchminster, and a brass of Sir J. Arundell, of Efford. The parochial charities produce about £115 per annum. There are National and infant schools."

The Gazetteer, however, makes no mention of St Christina. It seems the origins of her patronage are much further in the past and may have been at the original consecration. Bishop Lacy of Exeter's register of 1430 (at which time Stratton church would have been maybe 200 years old) states unequivocally that the Patron is St Christina.



But that assertion opens up yet another difficulty. There are two St Christinas and they even have the same saints' day: 24<sup>th</sup> July.

Christina the Astonishing (Christina Mirabilis) see left, would have been very much 'of the moment' as she died on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1224, having miraculously risen

from her first 'death' at the age of 21. It is possible that she was beatified by public acclamation during her lifetime but

in any event she has been recognised as a saint by the church since the 12<sup>th</sup> century.



The other candidate is Christina of Bolsena (also Christina of Tyre) (died 295AD) who was a Christian Virgin Martyr and venerated in Bolsena (Italy) from the fourth century. However, her history is very vague and a settled version of her life and martyrdom did not emerge until the ninth century.

Since then she has been progressively downgraded in the General Roman Catholic Calendar where she slipped first from 'veneration' to 'commemoration' and now she is only 'memorialised'.

I will leave you to draw your own conclusion as to which Christina it was but the fact remains that St Andrew's was St Christina's, probably for hundreds of years.

*David Goodwin JP*

*Comments please. Ed.*



**FoStA Newsletter is published by**

**St Andrew's Church, Stratton, Cornwall EX23 9DW**

Members are sent a copy by post and  
a PDF version is available on the FoStA web site -

[www.fosta.org.uk](http://www.fosta.org.uk)

**Rector**

The Revd Teresa Folland  
5 Cormorant Close, Bude. EX23 8FJ

Tel: 01288 352599 e-mail:

[teresa.folland@gmail.com](mailto:teresa.folland@gmail.com)

**Newsletter Editor:**

Mrs Val Barker

Chynoweth, Bowden, Stratton, Bude EX23 9BH

Tel: 01288 353435 e-mail:

[memsec@fosta.org.uk](mailto:memsec@fosta.org.uk)