

## Society for Church Archaeology Programme

Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2024, Folk of Gloucester

9.30-10.00	<b>Registration</b>
10.00-10.10	<b>Welcome</b>
10.10-10.30	<i>Buried Treasure: telling the hidden stories of the past to today's audiences</i> (Louise Hampson)
10.30-10.50	<i>St. Collen's Heritage Project (Llangollen):The duality in the practice of reordering medieval churches</i> (Suzanne Evans and Duncan Sanderson)
10.50-11.10	<i>'If walls could talk' – repopulating Breedon Priory Church, Leicestershire</i> (Rachel Askew)
11.10-11.25	Q and A with Speakers
<b>11.25-12.00</b>	<b>Refreshment Break</b>
12.00-12.20	<i>Holy Trinity, Minchampton : a biographical approach</i> (Chiz Harward)
12.20 -12.40	<i>200 years of scholarship at St Mary's Church, Deerhurst: past, present and future research directions</i> (Michael Hare)
12.40 – 12.50	Q and A with Speakers
<b>12.50 – 13.45</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>13.45 - 14.30</b>	<b>AGM</b>
14.30-14.50	<i>'Stones Shout Out': a project by Bangor Diocese</i> (Andrew Davidson)
14.50-15.10	<b>The archaeology of historic burial management in cathedrals</b> (Adam Daubney)
15.10 – 15.30	<b>Church Archaeology and Research Frameworks</b> (Glenn Cahilly-Bretzin and Ruth Nugent)
15.30 – 16.00	Q and A with Speakers / Closing Remarks
19.00	<b>Conference Dinner</b>

### Paper Abstracts

#### **Buried treasure: telling the hidden stories of the past to today's audiences – Louise Hampson**

Two church projects currently being undertaken by The Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture, University of York show how central the fruits of archaeological investigation have been to how the current custodians understand and present their history and manage public engagement with their past.

The first is Hull Minster, where extensive archaeological intervention and excavation of the church surroundings, which included clearing its churchyard and the detached burial ground of human remains have uncovered new and untold stories about the church, the community, and the development of Hull. The project has invited discussion around artefact display, the presentation of death and commemoration and visitor responses. This has drawn in new people, built skills and engagement, and connected the heritage to their current life.

St Michael le Belfrey church in York is undergoing a radical internal reordering and installation of a baptism immersion pool. These works have required extensive internal archaeological excavation that have revealed fascinating insights into the church origins, the identity of former parishioners (via previously concealed 17th-century ledger slabs) and the story and role of the church in the city.

These findings have significantly improved the current community's understanding and appreciation of the history of the building and how their current project is just the latest chapter in a long story.

Both projects show clearly how significant the role of archaeology is in the transformation of these churches, how it is the gateway to widening audiences and engagement and how the knowledge exposed has improved preservation and understanding.

### **St. Collen's Heritage Project (Llangollen):The duality in the practice of reordering medieval churches - Suzanne Evans and Duncan Sanderson**

Like many medieval churches, St Collen's has gradually adapted to change throughout the last eight hundred years. Most noticeably, a substantial amount of the present structure was added during an extensive Victorian re-ordering. Whilst it is, therefore, fair to say that the church building has, throughout its history, often been changed and adapted to meet the needs of the community it serves, it is also essential to acknowledge that many identify with the church as a place of continuity and cherish its familiarity; feelings of nostalgia, tradition and sentiment create a sense of anxiety about change.

At St Collen's, there was a significant need to disseminate the church's heritage assets more widely, given the prevalence of misinformation and uninspiring onsite interpretations. Many large church facility projects overlook the archaeological interpretation of the building, focusing primarily on reordering to meet the congregation's needs. This project, however, presents a unique opportunity to incorporate church archaeology, inviting various academic disciplines to contribute and expand the project's academic output; the transformative aspects will enable a new interpretation.

By shedding light on its architectural, archaeological, and historical dimensions, the project aims to safeguard this cultural treasure for future generations and deepen our understanding of Wales' medieval past. The findings and recommendations will contribute to scholarly discourse and inspire and inform heritage conservation efforts in the region, underscoring the project's dual purpose and significance.

### **'If walls could talk' – repopulating Breedon Priory Church, Leicestershire – Rachel Askew**

Abstract TBA

### **Holy Trinity, Minchampton : a biographical approach – Chiz Harwood**

Abstract TBA

### **200 years of scholarship at St Mary's church, Deerhurst; past, present and future research directions – Michael Hare**

In 1823 Thomas Rickman identified St Mary's church, Deerhurst as a building of Anglo-Saxon date. This paper will briefly survey the study of the building over the last 200 years, beginning with studies by Daniel Haigh in 1846 and by the incumbent, George Butterworth, who drew on observations made during the extensive restoration of 1861–2. In the 20th century an excellent paper by W. H. Knowles was published in 1927, while the description of the building by Harold and Joan Taylor is the longest individual entry in their catalogue of early churches. In the 1970s there were extensive archaeological excavations and structural studies in and around the building, carried out by Philip Rahtz with Harold Taylor and others. The results were published in 1976 and 1997; the observations made remain immensely useful, but their interpretation of the development of the building as of fiendish complexity is open to debate. Much work has since taken place on the art history of the in situ paint and sculpture and on the geology of the building stones. All this has enabled a recent study to conclude that the surviving early work belongs to a single phase. Work currently in progress includes the study of the effects of a major fire, perhaps around 1100, as well as the later medieval development of the building and the Victorian restoration of 1861–2. For the future modern scientific approaches must be brought into the study of the structure, as well as much-needed consideration of the wider landscape.

#### **'Stones Shout Out'; a project by Bangor Diocese – Andrew Davidson**

Abstract TBA

#### **The archaeology of historic burial management in Cathedrals – Adam Daubney**

A recent survey of 20th and 21st century excavations has recorded over 200 instances of historic burial management spread across 42 Cathedrals: the most comprehensive survey of its type. Information gleaned by the survey allows us to explore trends in Cathedral burial and disturbance through time and space and provides a new dataset that has great potential to inform policy and best practice today. However, the survey also revealed distinct challenges which require further thought by both the Heritage Sector and ecclesiastical bodies, especially around how information is recorded and made available. This paper presents some initial results of the survey and makes suggestions for future areas of discussion.

#### **Church Archaeology and Research Frameworks – Glenn Cahilly-Bretzin and Ruth Nugent**

Since 1966 in England, 2001 in Wales, and 2012 in Scotland, the UK archaeological Research Frameworks have offered an evolving set of guides to establish what is known, and remains to be known, about the UK's archaeological past; establish an evolving research agenda; and identifying strategies for future investigation. Operating at national, local, and thematic levels, the Research Frameworks are aimed at supporting local authorities, archaeological contractors, academics, and local societies. The proposed paper offers a review of the occasional presence and habitual absence of church archaeology within the current Research Frameworks, exploring how and why church archaeology has played a relatively minor role within UK research agendas, the potential

consequences of being overlooked in the Research Frameworks, and makes preliminary recommendations for how church archaeology may contribute more substantially in the future.