

St George's Church Trotton: Pondering Paintings Post Pandemic!

St George's Church is a Grade I listed building dating from the early 14th century. The church's historical treasures include unique medieval wall paintings and some of the biggest, most ornate and best-preserved brasses in England: historical assets to be treasured and shared.

The church is well known for its intimate association with the Camoys family, (of the Battle of Agincourt fame), and its extraordinary late 14th century wall paintings were commissioned to recognise the status of Camoys family. Both the brass monuments and paintings have survived for over 600 years. It is likely that the programme of religious and secular painting originally covered the whole of the interior walls of the building. However they were only discovered beneath limewash in 1904.

The method of preservation and the church's wood and coal fired heating system caused further deterioration and work to save these paintings began again in 1986.

The most striking series of paintings is the Last Judgement Scene which covers the whole of the west wall. Sadly, some of the Seven Deadly Sins issuing from dragons' mouths, have been faded by sunlight, but Christ in Judgement seated on a rainbow below a band of stylised clouds, above Moses bearing the Tablets of the Law, and the Seven Acts of Mercy framed in roundels, are extraordinarily well preserved. The rich ochre colours allow them to be easily appreciated, taking the visitor back to their original medieval purpose to interpret Latin Bible texts.

Looking at the north wall, as you enter the church, a secular scene can be deciphered with four towering figures in armour including helms and bearing the Camoys arms on their jupons. One wears a dagger and holds a hunting dog on a leash with what appears to be dead game beside it.

Following the reopening of the church to congregations after the 2020/21 lockdowns, many people noticed how the paintings had emerged more clearly. Without the benefit of scientific explanation for this, one can but assume that a damp and cold church offered ideal conditions for the ochre colours to re-emerge quietly, whilst the 21st century was paralysed by the pandemic.

Our intention as a community is to create a sustainable future for St George's and her treasures. By the installation of infrared heating panels in the pews we will diminish the impact on the lofty wall paintings. Our community events programme will restart and St George's doors will be open once more to welcome all visitors, local and international.

If you would like to donate, all your gifts are very gratefully received, via this link <https://thyg.uk/CUR013686>.

July 2021