

Inspiration for Dedication 1315

Inspiration for Dedication 1315, **the celebration and commemoration of the consecration of 43 churches** in Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire during the summer of 1315, draws on **professional work, amateur participation** and the **desire to discover more about the heritage of our church buildings, the religious procession, our communities, dedication services and written records.**



Frampton on Severn

This Heritage Lottery Fund bid is being led by members of **four churches who have come together to inspire the congregations and communities of all 43 churches** to take part.

We will involve a **wide spectrum of the community** in this local history project which will help **children and adults** to develop a **greater sense of identity with the place in which they live.**



Harescombe

Our four churches and communities vary in size, but all are closely linked to local schools who, like us, share an enthusiasm to make Dedication 1315 a resounding success.



Fretherne

St Mary the Virgin, Frampton on Severn, has been much-extended since medieval times and is the biggest of our four churches. Frampton is a large village with a population of more than 1100. It boasts over 40 community-led organisations and its primary school also serves Fretherne.

The medieval church of St Mary the Virgin, Fretherne, was demolished in 1846 to make way for the present church which was built in the Late Decorated style, reminiscent of Gothic designs of c1290-1350. Its lively, but small congregation meet for worship each month, and often follow their service with a fund-raising meal inside the church.



Whaddon

The interior of St John the Baptist, Harescombe, was 'restored' in the mid-nineteenth century. The church has a small, regular congregation but on important occasions the building is filled to capacity. Children from the village attend the primary school at neighbouring Haresfield. Ladies from Harescombe are making a new altar frontal to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the 1315 dedication.

St Margaret of Scotland, Whaddon, is a small and simple traditional building dating largely from the 13th century. Whaddon, a parish of 75 inhabitants, adjoins Tuffley (population c8,500) and has close links to several schools. Whaddon and Tuffley churches combine to form one benefice and events at St Margaret's are well-supported by Tuffley residents.

Dedication 1315 is about **sharing information**. Professionals will help members of each church and community to engage with and enjoy their heritage. They will produce easily **downloadable toolkits** for our **website** on key aspects of the original services and the activities which would have accompanied them.

Our **logo and artwork** will be created by Alison Merry, illuminator, whose work includes:



Dedication of Gloucester Abbey Church

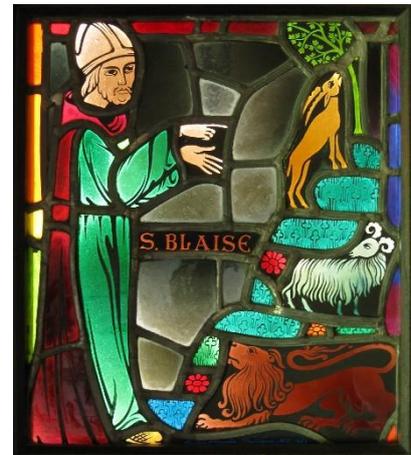
<http://www.merryilluminations.co.uk/>



Girl Band (Fourteenth Century Style)

St Blaise is the Patron Saint of woolcombers and an image of him was said to have been much venerated in one of our churches before being destroyed during the Reformation. Here he is seen depicted in stained glass at St Joseph's Abbey, Massachusetts.

We shall **make a giant St Blaise** as a **community project** involving **children and adults from all four parishes**. **Beasts**, including hobby horses, will also be made. To make our **procession with St Blaise** more spectacular, we shall invite one or two other giants, as existing giants like to visit new giants.



The **giant** is tall and not carried, but **danced** during the procession. The most famous surviving giant in England is Christopher in Salisbury. He is about 500 years old and has taken part in both religious and secular processions.

The survival of this giant is unique; such figures were condemned as idolatrous at the time of the Reformation. Christopher is seen here taking part in the Giant and Sarum Morris Dance.

Stephen Rowley <http://www.artension.com/index.htm> has 22 years of experience of arts in the community and education and much of his work is concerned with cultural heritage. Not only will he lead our **giant and beast-making workshops**, he will also **teach us music and dance** from the 14th century and help us **create our costumes**.

Edi beo thu is a carol from 1296, found in the manuscript of a school master from nearby Llanthony Secunda (Priory) in Gloucester. Stephen will teach us its beautiful tune and words.

Music will include tunes played on the **pipe, tabor and whistles**. Well-known songs of the period such as *Sumer is icumen in* in which translates to 'Summer has arrived' will be taught by Stephen for us to perform at the **church ale and medieval feast** which form part of our celebrations.



Sumer is icumen in



Our four churches will be decorated with artwork displayed as '**medieval wall paintings**' created by children from the local schools and also local artists. The **visual impact of these will be immense** and provide a strong reminder of how our churches may have looked in the 14th century.

This photograph was taken at St Fagan's National History Museum where reconstruction of the church of St Teilo's included the recreation of the brightly decorated murals, paintings and carvings, so much a feature of the medieval church. **Schoolchildren and adults will be inspired by such images to create their own work.**



The Experience of Worship in late medieval Cathedral and Parish Church is an ongoing research project initiated at Bangor University (2009 to 2013), as part of the UK-wide research programme exploring *Religion & Society*.

We shall draw on the extensive research initiated and directed by Professor John Harper of Bangor University to help us **understand the significance of the consecrations of our churches in 1315**, and the **content of the original dedication services**.

The Experience of Worship project has included enactments of medieval services at St Teilo's church which can be seen at <http://www.experienceofworship.org.uk/>. Alison Merry will use her experience as an historian to **build on this scholarship** and **make our 1315 dedications relevant and accessible to the communities in which they took place.**

THE
EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIP
IN LATE MEDIEVAL
CATHEDRAL AND
PARISH CHURCH

MAKING
DOING AND
RESPONDING TO
MEDIEVAL LITURGY



Walter Maidstone was bishop of Worcester (1313-1317). In 1315 he consecrated 43 churches within his diocese, then covering the counties of Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. Several of these churches display a carved image of a bishop and, although not identical, they may represent Bishop Maidstone and commemorate his visits.

Our **main commemoration service** will also be led by a bishop and will **bring communities and congregations together** into the largest of our four churches. We shall involve children in **enactments of parts of the original dedication service** as they assume the roles of Bishop Maidstone, his attendants, the vicar, parish clerk, lord of the manor, freemen, serfs and villeins (peasants and servants).

At this service **lay clerks and choral scholars** will perform the more complex music that may have been sung during the original dedication services. Some of the religious music of the period is simpler and translations and paraphrases are **sung by congregations** in our churches today, for example *Veni Creator Spiritus* (*Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire*), believed to have been written in the 9th century.

Hymn
8

V e-ni Cre- á-tor Spí-ri-tus, Méntes tu-ó-rum vís i-ta:

Imple su-pér-na grá-ti-a Quae tu cre- á-sti pécto-ra.

In medieval times 'ales' were held in support of many different causes, the word 'ale' meaning the event (as in bride-ale, the wedding feast).



Church ales, which took place to honour the church saint or **celebrate a church festival or event**, facilitated the collection of parish dues and raised money for the church from the sale of ale by the churchwardens. Profits were



WIVENHOE
CHURCH
ALE

used to keep the parish church in repair and distribute alms to the poor. The ales were usually held in a barn near the church, or in the churchyard itself and comprised feasting, dancing, music, plays, archery competitions and other games. At Wivenhoe the tradition has been revived. One of our churches will host a church ale, whilst a **medieval feast** will take place inside another. These will be **self-funding**.

We hope that Dedication 1315 will inspire congregations and communities from all 43 churches to learn more about their individual and shared heritage.