

## PRESS RELEASE



Members of the Forbes Adam family, left to right: Titus, Harry, Reverend Sir Timothy, Nigel and Charles



Members of the Heritage Project Team with the Archdeacon of York and the Bishop of Selby. Left to right: Roger Wandless; Caroline Wandless, Churchwarden; the Venerable Sarah Bullock, Archdeacon of York; the Right Reverend Dr John Thomson, Bishop of Selby; Judith Luscombe, Christine Mason and Chris Mason



160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Service at St Helen's Escrick on 2 July

### Title

## ST HELEN'S HERITAGE CELEBRATED ON 160<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

A day of celebrations commemorated the 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Consecration of St Helen's Church, Escrick by the then Archbishop of York, Thomas Musgrave, on 1 July 1857.

As was the case in 1857, the celebrations centred on the interwoven heritage of this, the third successive St Helen's Church, Escrick village and the Escrick Estate. A programme with echoes of the 1857 Consecration included a special commemoration service in the morning, a 'sumptuous' hog roast buffet lunch at the neighbouring Parsonage Hotel, and a choral Evensong Service led by the Archdeacon of York, the Venerable Sarah Bullock, with the Sermon preached by the Right Reverend John Thomson, Bishop of Selby.

The day of celebration brought together both churchgoers and St Helen's supporters from the wider church, estate and village communities.

Speakers of all ages, representing the shared heritage contributed to the special service by reading out reminders of notable local and wider history from the last 160 years. The service was led by the Rector of St Helen's, Reverend Richard Kirkman and Malcolm Smith, who regularly leads Morning Service at St Helen's. Musical contributions came from St Helen's organist, Nigel Bellamy, the Escrick-based Tuesday Singers and the Celebration Singers who are regular contributors to St Helen's special services and concerts.

Three generations of the Escrick Estate-owning Lawley family, who paid for the then new church and Rectory are commemorated in the Consecration plaque in the Church Porch and six members of the same family, now Forbes Adam by marital succession, were among the readers at the Anniversary Service. They included Charlie Forbes Adam, who is 'Champion' of St Helen's current bid to secure a Heritage Lottery Fund Delivery Phase Grant for its "Walking through the centuries with a legless knight" heritage hub project.

On the 1857 Consecration Day guests from throughout the Diocese, including the Reverend Charles Kingsley, author of "The Water Babies" and the celebrated Alderman George Leeman of York, were treated to a 'sumptuous feast' at the Rectory, so it was particularly appropriate that the Parsonage Hotel, venue for that feast in its original role as the Rectory, kindly provided the venue for the 'sumptuous' buffet.

A notable local choir, the Selebian Singers enhanced the special Choral Evensong after lunch, to round off the commemoration of the last 160 years of a shared heritage which extends back to around 1200.

## Quotes

Reverend Richard Kirkman, Rector of St Helen's, commented: "It is wonderful to have the opportunity to welcome Bishop John, Archdeacon Sarah and so many people from the wider community to St Helen's, to celebrate a remarkable continuity since my predecessor Stephen Lawley welcomed the Archbishop of York and many clergy and local representatives to the Consecration in 1857".

Caroline Wandless, Churchwarden and Heritage Lottery Fund Project Team Leader added: "Today's celebrations emphasised the extent of the continuous heritage for which St Helen's is the natural hub. The worship here at St Helen's is very important to us and is part of a wider shared sense of heritage and belonging on which we are building. We aim to ensure a sustainable future where St Helen's plays a central role in stimulating future generations of youngsters to appreciate the shared heritage of the community in which they are growing up."

## Notes to Editors





### **About St Helen's Church**

St Helen's Parish Church of Escrick was built in 1857 and is a Grade II\* Gothic Revival building. The Architect was Francis Penrose, Surveyor of St Paul's Cathedral and later President of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). It sits majestically at the side of the A19 half way between York and Selby. The Church is in the Derwent Deanery within the Diocese of York. The Church is available for all Parish residents for weddings, baptisms and funerals and provides a venue for concerts by local choirs who appreciate the natural acoustic of the building, art exhibitions and school visits. St Helen's generates opportunities for people to feel part of something special, with more than 60 people involved in various volunteering activities from cutting the Churchyard grass, cleaning, helping with fundraising events, flower arranging, editing and distributing the parish magazine to name but a few. St Helen's provides an enduring presence in the community, open to all, and offers a haven of tranquillity and stability in a busy world. St Helen's has already secured Development Phase funding for its "Walking through the centuries with a Legless Knight" project.

### **About the Heritage Lottery Fund**

Grants programme applications are assessed in two rounds. A first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. A first-round pass may also include an immediate award to fund the development of the project. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about – from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). Follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #HLF supported.

### **Further Information**

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