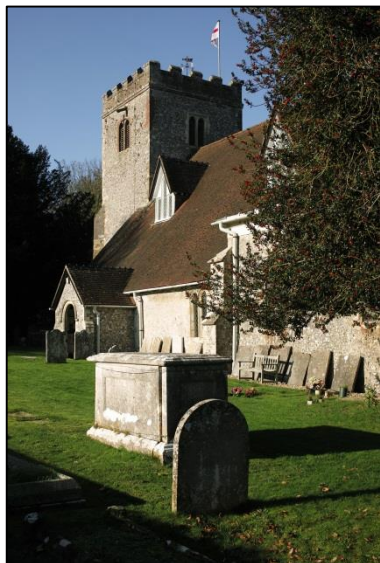


# Droxford Church Lady Chapel Flip-book

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Welcome to the Lady Chapel.  
This short guide may help you to appreciate some of the historic and religious aspects of this special part of  
St Mary & All Saints, Droxford.

It is recorded that the Lady Chapel was consecrated in 1316 by John de Droghensford, then Bishop of Bath & Wells, who was a son of the local squire, and at various other times Rector of Droxford, Keeper of the King's Wardrobe to Edward I, Chancellor of the Exchequer to Edward II, and a chaplain to the Pope.



The original altar of the Lady Chapel would have been made of stone. The present 20<sup>th</sup> century oak altar table has five consecration crosses engraved on its top surface.



Behind the altar is a reredos with the Lamb of God at its centre. To the right are lilies, symbolic of the Virgin Mary. To the left, in red and gold, are the letters IHS, originally derived from the Greek spelling of Jesus. The reredos was given by her family in memory of Hannah Talbot-Ponsonby, and is dated 6<sup>th</sup> January 1952.



To the left of the altar is a stone niche with an ogee shaped canopy, probably dating from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. The niche shows traces of medieval painting. It would originally have contained a statue, probably of the Virgin Mary, which would have been removed at the time of the Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The recumbent figure of a woman to the left of the altar is thought to have been part of a memorial erected by John de Droghensford to his mother. It was removed by the Puritans in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but found again in a nearby field in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and restored to the church.

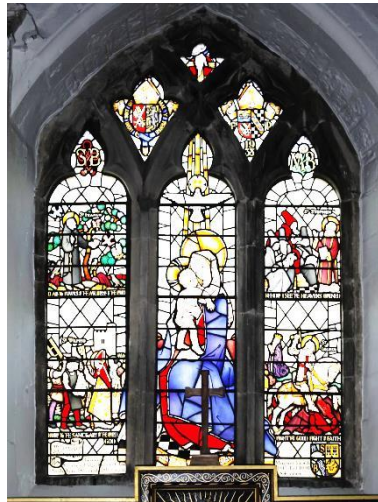


A pre-Reformation piscina, used for washing communion vessels, was uncovered to the right of the altar during restoration of the church in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The stained glass of the east window of the Lady Chapel is a memorial to Stephen Bridge, Rector of Droxford from 1868 to 1886, and his wife Margaret. A shield in the bottom right hand corner has his initials either side of a bridge over a river, presumably the Meon.



The hand of God is shown at the top of the window. Below it a dove represents the Holy Spirit. On either side are the crests of the dioceses of Winchester and Portsmouth. The Decorated stone tracery of the window probably dates from the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, with cusps, and intersecting stone tracery.



The Virgin and Child are depicted at the centre of the east window. Mary is clothed in the blue with which she became associated in the Middle Ages, since this pigment, derived from lapis lazuli, was the most precious in an artist's palette.





The four corners of the east window of the Lady Chapel depict some of the saints. In the top left hand corner St Francis of Assisi, who founded the Franciscan order, and adopted a life of extreme poverty, is preaching to a varied collection of birds, including two very attentive owls.



The upper right corner shows St Stephen, who was stoned to death as the first Christian martyr because of his teachings. The window depicts the scene in Jerusalem in the Acts of the Apostles when Stephen, while making a speech in his defence, looked upwards and saw a vision of Jesus.

In the lower left corner St Wilfrid is seen with the builders of St Mary & All Saints, with the present church behind. Wilfrid may have founded a Christian church at Droxford during his mission to the Meon Valley in 681 to 686, but no remains of an Anglo-Saxon building have yet been identified.



In the lower right hand corner St George is slaying a dragon, with a rescued princess in the background. Little is known of the real St George. He may have been Greek, and an officer in the army of the Roman emperor Diocletian. He was martyred in about 303 when he refused to give up his Christian beliefs.





The arch between the Lady Chapel and the chancel rests on two carved busts, which may date from the early 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The arch from the Lady Chapel into the south aisle dates from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the south aisle was widened. The box pews in the south aisle are Victorian.



The north pillar of this arch displays extensive deeply carved graffiti, which could be as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century. There is more graffiti throughout the church, some dating back many centuries.



A circular slate memorial with a plaster surround between the windows on the south wall commemorates Lewis Stephens, Rector of Droxford from 1722 to 1746, who founded the parish library. This is now held in the Southampton University library.



A stone plaque on the south wall is dedicated to Neville Lovett, first Bishop of Portsmouth and later Bishop of Salisbury, who retired to Droxford in 1946. The Lady Chapel is also known as the Bishop Lovett chapel.

The stained glass of the two windows in the south wall of the Lady Chapel dates from about 1900. The left hand window shows St Peter with the risen Christ.



Peter was the first apostle to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection. Jesus asked him three times if he loved him, despite having been denied by him three times after his arrest, and before the cock crew. When Peter answered that he did love him, Jesus told him to 'feed my sheep', two of which can be seen around the bottom of his cloak.

In the right hand window Mary Magdalene is shown with the risen Christ, whom she encountered near the tomb of Golgotha in the presence of two angels.



Mary Magdalene is dressed in red, which is a sign both of her love for Jesus, and of her past as a 'scarlet woman'. In her left hand is a jar of perfume with which she intended to anoint the body of Jesus, and a reminder of when she wiped his feet with perfume shortly before he entered Jerusalem.





The Lady Chapel has a fine raftered oak ceiling, which supports its flat roof.

A very talented team of local volunteers provides impressive flower arrangements for the Lady Chapel and the rest of the church throughout the year.



The upholstered oak chairs in the Lady Chapel were purchased in 2015 with a grant from the Diocesan Mission Opportunities Fund, and donations from parishioners.



From the Lady Chapel, take note of the 17<sup>th</sup> century altar rail in the chancel, and the oak panelling made early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in a similar style.



They replaced some very basic and uncomfortable wooden chairs, and were the first step in our renovation of the Lady Chapel, which will include new paintwork, lighting and heating.