

# **Droxford Church Leaflet St Mary & All Saints Church**

Author: Michael Collins

[www.friendsofdroxfordchurch.org.uk](http://www.friendsofdroxfordchurch.org.uk)





The stained glass in the east window was installed as a memorial to members of the Hulbert family after the window suffered bomb damage during the Second World War. The altar rails in the chancel are Jacobean (8). The oak panelling was made early in the 20th century in a matching style.



The oak screen leading to the north chapel (9) was designed by the eminent architect Sir Charles Nicholson when he was working on designs for Portsmouth Cathedral in 1935.



The elaborately carved Norman doorways (10) were moved to the outer walls when the aisles were added between the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 14th century.



There are four medieval mass dials on the south side of the church, used to indicate the time of services. Two of them can be found on the jambs of the south doorway (11).

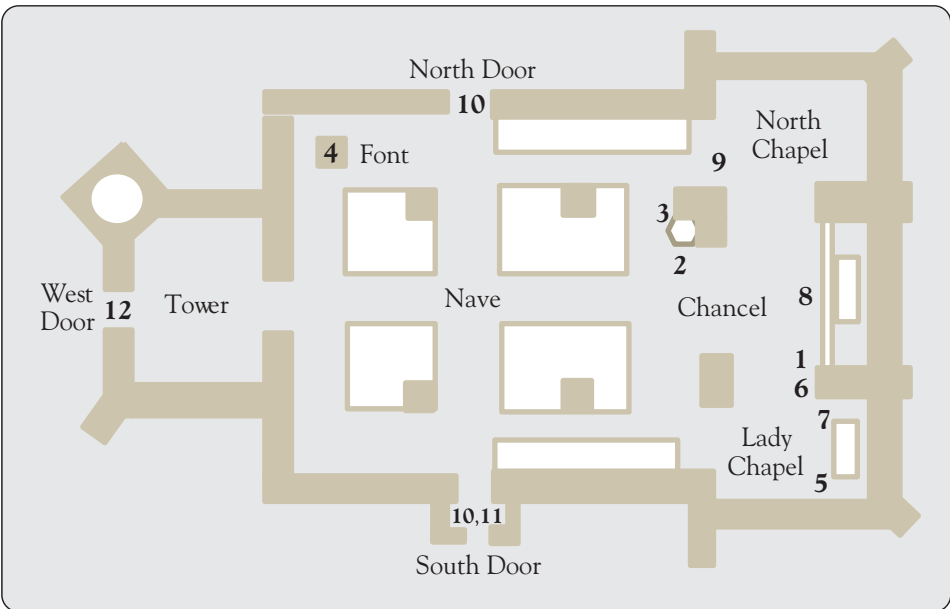


Above the west door (12) is a plaque with the date AD 1599. This may refer to the construction of the present tower, although the plaque itself and the stonework of the doorway itself appear to be later.

# Welcome to St Mary & All Saints Church



St Wilfrid may have established a religious community at Droxford during his mission to the Meon Valley in 681 to 686, but the earliest record of a church here is in the Domesday Book of 1086, when it was valued at 20 shillings, and held by the Bishop of Winchester for the benefit of his monks. No remains of this Anglo-Saxon foundation have yet been found, and the earliest details of the present church are Norman, dating from about 1150. This leaflet describes some of the features of this historic Grade 1 listed building. The numbers in the outline plan below refer to the text.



Copyright: Droxford PCC.  
Publication kindly arranged by the Friends of Droxford Church supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.  
Find out more at: [www.bridgechurches.org.uk](http://www.bridgechurches.org.uk) and [www.friendsofdroxfordchurch.org.uk](http://www.friendsofdroxfordchurch.org.uk)



The church initially consisted of just a nave and chancel, the massive square pillars being part of its outer walls. The impressive Norman chancel arch, with its distinctive zigzag carving, was raised by about 4 feet during the 19th century. The new sections can clearly be seen at the top of the supporting pillars.

Over the arch from the chancel to the Lady Chapel are stone segments from two of the original windows of the church (1). Two more are hidden beneath the paintwork above the arch to the north chapel.



The pulpit (2) is a 19th century copy of a 15th century design. It was given to Droxford in 1882 by St Matthew's, Denmark Hill, where the then rector of Droxford, the Reverend Stephen Bridge, had previously been vicar.

Above the pulpit is the exit from a stairway inside the north pillar of the chancel arch (3). This provided access to a medieval rood loft, which would have run right across the chancel arch, and carried a representation of the crucifixion.



The font (4) is from the 20th century, but in a 12th century Norman style. Nearby are three late 17th century Latin memorials to the Morley family, who lived at the Manor House. The church has many other fine memorials, including one in the Lady Chapel to Neville Lovett, first Bishop of Portsmouth, who retired to Droxford in 1946.

The Lady Chapel may have been built in 1316 by John de Droakensford. He was at times Keeper of the King's Wardrobe to Edward I, Chancellor of the Exchequer to Edward II, a chaplain to the Pope, and Bishop of Bath and Wells. There is a carved stone medieval niche with an ogee canopy to the left of the altar.



The east window of the Lady Chapel, with the Madonna and Child at its centre, is one of a number of attractive stained glass windows dating from the 19th and 20th centuries.

A pre-Reformation piscina, used for washing communion vessels, was uncovered in the south wall of the Lady Chapel during restoration of the church in the early 20th century (5).



The arch from the chancel into the Lady Chapel rests on two busts. One of them appears to be of a man and the other of a woman (6).

The recumbent figure of a woman in the Lady Chapel (7) was part of a memorial erected by John de Droakensford to his parents. It was removed by the Puritans, but the figure, thought to represent his mother, was found in a nearby field in the 19th century and restored to the church.

