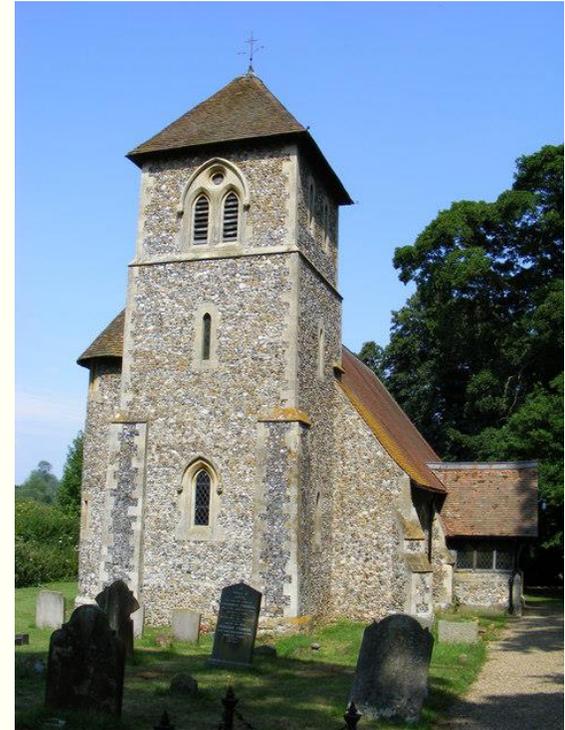


A SHORT TALK ON THE HISTORY
OF BUSH END CHURCH AND
HATFIELD FOREST IN WW11
PRESENTED BY JOHN MONK



Content for today

- Short Introduction
- The History of Bush End Church
- The connection with Hatfield Forest and the Church
- The connection with the Houblon family
- The connection with Rev.Thomas Francis Hall
- The importance of the stained glass windows
- The Church today
- A short talk on Hatfield Forest and it's part in WWII
- Refreshments
- Guided walk to visit the munitions camp within the forest



St John The Evangelist Church, Bush End

In 1850's there was a move by the gentry to construct Churches to provide a Christian faith for the less fortunate.

On Friday 5th August 1859 the consecration of this neat little structure, situated in the ancient forest of Hatfield, and on what was formerly considered the most wild and destitute part of the parish.

Two notable men lay at the heart of the Church. These being:

John Archer Houblon
Rev. Thomas Francis Hall



The early years.....

- The church was built in the Gothic style favoured at that time
- The foundation stone was laid on 8th July 1856 and can be seen on the outside of the south-east end of the church, it reads:
“To the glory of the eternal Trinity. This dedication stone of the church of St John the Evangelist was laid July 8 1856 by Sarah daughter of the late Stanes Chamberlyne Esq. formerly of the Ryes in this parish”.

T F Hall MA, Vicar



The connection with Hatfield Forest

The names of the Houblon family and the Rev T Hall occur many times in the history of the church.

The Houblon family owned Hallingbury Park that once stood adjacent to the forest. It was used as a hunting forest and they enjoyed country pursuits by the lake. Indeed the famous landscape gardener Capability Brown redesigned the lake and surrounding parkland.

The stained glass windows of the apse of St Peter was presented by Georgina Anne Archer Houblon in 1857.



HALLINGBURY PLACE, ESSEX.

THE SEAT OF J. A. HOUBLEN, ESQ.
TO WHOM THIS PLATE IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

Published by Geo. Virtue, 26, Ivy Lane, July 1, 1832.



The centre window is that of the patronal dedication- St John the Evangelist. This was given in memory of Robert Impey first born child of Thomas Hall MA Vicar of the parish and Mary Phillippa his wife. The right hand window was presented by Joseph Clarke Esq. the Diocesan architect in 1844.

There are, also two in Hatfield Heath church in memory of Mr Hall's infant daughter Mary Jane who died from scarlet fever in 1844. Mr Hall himself died in 1858 one year before the consecration of the two churches that he brought into being. Indeed it was said that he died in consequence from anxiety, of frequent disappointment and of over exertion in his endeavors to get the churches built!

Mr Houblon indeed was to say at the consecration
"....had he lived to see these churches consecrated he was sure it would have been one of the happiest days of his life."

The Parish of Bush End...

The power of faith....

- In 1864 Bush End became a separate parish but was resided by the vicar of Hatfield Broad oak as was Hatfield Heath. In 1929 the living became vacant and since that date has been linked with that of Broad Oak. Indeed the name Broad Oak is linked to that of the famous Doodle Oak tree that stood in the Hatfield Forest parkland.
- The church has an early english inscription of the ten commandments written in red and black. It is worthy of record that whereas the neighbourhood used formerly to be the most notorious for thieves, poachers and deer stealers, not one of the reverend's gentlemen's flock has been before the magistrate since the vicar was resident within them!



Dedication of organ as a war memorial at Bush End....

Within the church there once was a church organ donated by the Rev. F W Galpin as a memorial to those who fell in the great war 1914-1919 within the parish.

The only evidence today is the brass plaque that would have been located on the organ.

It's cost was £200 but sadly this memorial was either sold or donated to another church.



The Church today.....

The Church raised over £150,000 to create modern day facilities that we can enjoy today.

A new toilet and kitchen facility was installed together with a beautiful mezzanine meeting room.



Hatfield Forest in the Second World War

The forest was used as a munitions camp for the services.

It is believed to have been used to support its forces and those of the American air base at Stansted.

The camp was based within the area known as Elgins Wood.



But was it just to keep munitions?



CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

DANGEROUS GAMES.....



Was it a testing site?



The National Trust complain that explosions are scaring the cows.....
A large oak tree was blown up!



Forest at War

Extract from The Observer 23 July 1987

“Royal Engineers were to be asked NOT to dynamite in the open because of the cattle and breaking into the drainage system....”

January 1943 damage put at £5 a hole for 20 holes made by experimenting dynamiting.....”

“damage by a bulldozer in Sycamore coppice in putting up guiding lights...”

“soon afterwards damage was done to the Spike oak by the Royal Air Force...”



So let's go for a walk and find out.....



Thank you and now its time for Refreshments.....

