



# Dorset Historic Churches Trust

*Conserving the past – enriching the future*

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## DHCT Church Crawl – Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2018

### Around Wimborne

The high-summer Friends of Dorset Churches ‘Crawl’ started at the most warm and welcoming church of St Michael and All Angels, Colehill. After a revivifying coffee in the splendid church rooms and a formal greeting from the Chair of DHCT, Simon Pomeroy, we were addressed by architectural historian Dr Tim Connor who described the “absorbingly interesting church” building constructed in the 1890s (through the energetic support of Leopold Grimston Paget) by W D Carøe in an eclectic, broadly Arts and Crafts style. The amalgamation of styles was admired, as well as the overall effect of light in the church, especially from the Comper east window which provides a telling focus of colour.

The 40-strong party moved on to All Saints, Hampreston, where we received a hearty welcome from the vicar, The Revd Everton McLeod. This more ancient church revealed a wealth of interest, not least in its memorials to Victorian empire builders who ended their days in rural Dorset – especially in Uddens House a local stately home demolished in 1955. Sue Smith, the Crawl organiser and stained glass expert, had much to talk about, especially the Clayton and Bell east window, the west window by Kemp and a number of other works by the Munich firm of Mayer.

Moving on the Canford Magna, we heard a quite common Dorset story of the influence of large estates upon the history of local churches. Within this parish lies Murley House as well the Canford estate (now a school) which was home of the Guest family in the nineteenth century. They left their mark on the church here which has Romanesque origins but underwent two restorations in the Victorian era. The current structure has a complicated appearance which was fun to untangle under Tim and Sue’s expert tutelage.

The party then made its way over to Pamphill Village Hall where Sue Smith and Sue Bruce-Payne organised an excellent and much-appreciated buffet lunch before we made our way to St Stephen’s Church, Kingston Lacy. This was an interesting comparison with Colehill, with which it is roughly contemporaneous. Like Canford an estate church, it was designed by Ponting in a fifteenth century style and opened in 1907. We imagined much of the fine joinery being carried out by estate workmen and we were charmed by the family images incorporated into the building – not least the stained glass representation of Ralph Bankes as a child aged about 6 and the stone image believed to be of him in the south tower buttress. It was he who gave the property to the National Trust in 1981.

The final visit of this Crawl was to the church of St Bartholomew, Shapwick. This beautiful and very rural church is typical of many of the fine churches in the county. It is intimate enough not to have ever had aisles, but a curious northern extension, which was probably a private chapel prior to the Reformation – or probably two such chapels. Noteworthy decorations include the very elaborate nineteenth century iron font cover and the twentieth century folding reredos in the style of Giotto – again with Bankes connections.

After tea in the churchyard, we dispersed to homes all over the county, looking forward to the next event on September 13<sup>th</sup> in the Longburton area.

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**President:** HM Lord Lieutenant of Dorset Mr Angus Campbell

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