



FRIENDS OF REPTON PARISH CHURCH

Charity No. 1162837

NEWSLETTER NO 2
DECEMBER 2021

www.friendsofreptonparishchurch.co.uk



Dear Friends

Welcome to our second Newsletter which we hope you find of interest. Thank you for your support over the past year which has seen the Charity progressing and achieving our fundraising goal for our first project.

We are most grateful to those Friends who have set up regular payments as this helps our budgeting and provides a firm financial footing. We are equally grateful to those of you who have provided a single donation but wonder if you might now consider an annual subscription.

This can be as little as £5 for students, £10 for individuals and £15 for families.

Details are on our website or you can access our Charities Aid Foundation page here.



The Trustees would welcome any comments you have on how your experience of being a Friend might be improved and any suggestions that would have popular support in the community encouraging greater membership and prominence of the Friends in the village.

We are also still looking for someone to be our Treasurer or Secretary and would love to hear from anyone who might take on one of these roles.



*We wish you a
happy
Christmas and
a peaceful
New Year*

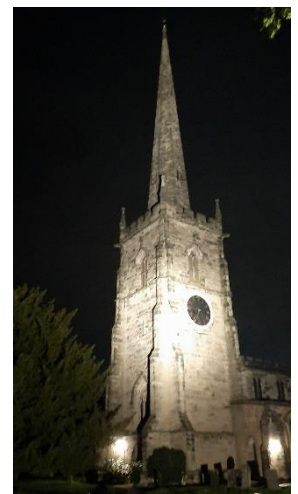
NEW FLOODLIGHTING

We are delighted to report that thanks to our successful fundraising event and some very generous donations both financially and in kind, we have been able to donate the full cost of the floodlighting to the Repton Parochial Church Council.

Particular thanks go to James Williamson who donated his time, expertise and electrical

fittings, and his sponsor Parker Technical Services, who enabled the work to be carried out with full insurance and certification.

The cost effective LED lighting will allow it to be on longer than in the past and give greater prominence to this historic building in the life of the Repton community.



FIRST BIRTHDAY EVENT

We would like to thank everyone who joined us for the first Birthday celebrations in Repton Parish Church on Saturday, 16th October. It was a very successful and memorable evening which started with the Revd Martin Flowerdew, Chairman of the Friends, welcoming everyone to the event.

Throughout the evening we were entertained by the South Derbyshire Music Centre Swing Band who played music from traditional to modern jazz such as In The Mood, Ain't Misbehaving and A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square.



We were also treated to a children's choir created especially for the occasion. Pupils from Repton Primary and St. Wystan's schools joined forces to perform extracts from Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo.

During the evening Professor Mark Horton, President of the Friends, and Professor Martin Biddle both gave a short presentation about the extensive history and significance of Repton Church and how important it is to maintain such an historic building. Later Stephen Gould, a trustee of the Friends, emphasized how the Church is a living church and how the building could tell stories of joy, hope, laughter, worship

and prayers over many many centuries and that the essence of the Friends is all about ensuring that those attributes live on today, tomorrow and in the centuries ahead. Before being invited outside for the turning on of the new Floodlights, there were refreshments, donated by the Gould family, during which Trustees, make donations or become a Friend of Repton Parish Church.

At 8pm everyone was invited to go outside and after a signal from the Revd Martin Flowerdew the children of the choir were invited to count down from 10 to 1, then the new floodlights were turned on and the bells rung to the great excitement of everyone.

The floodlights are the first of many projects which the Friends will be funding for the Church.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

On the evening of Saturday 14th May, Silver Sax, a local group of saxophonists with full rhythm section will entertain us at St Wystan's Church with their blend of swing, jazz, rock, pop and latin styles. There should be something to suit most tastes.



For further details see our website <https://www.friendsofreptonparishchurch.co.uk>

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Repairs to the spire in 1857

The new floodlighting of St. Wystan's tower and spire reminds us of how the spire is a major feature of the local landscape. Given its tall tapering structure and exposed position it has needed regular repairs over the centuries especially to the top stage.

Two interesting accounts survive of an alarming incident during repairs in 1857: Mr J M Bland, an Old Reptonian, wrote to the vicar in 1925: "Noticing that some repairs to the steeple of your church are necessary recalls an incident of 67 or 68 years ago when the weather vane needed attention.

A small line was cleverly carried over the apex of the spire and dropped on the ground. A heavier line was attached and pulled up by the workmen employed. As might have been anticipated the join stuck on the rod extending above the stonework of the spire and the efforts of the workmen to dislodge it resulted ... in seeing some twenty feet of the spire totter and fall. In its descent it broke some of the pinnacles of the tower and I believe killed some sheep at its foot ... The steeplejack was content to ascend by the rope to examine the vane and so avoid the expense of scaffolding. Fortunately for him that the break did not occur when he was aloft ..."

Mr H E Fanshawe, another Old Reptonian writing in 1907 remembered the same incident and the involvement of Repton schoolboys: "I was one of a party of boys who were asked to come and pull at a rope which had stuck at the top of the spire; we gave but one pull when the topmost 15 feet of the spire came down with a crash into the Churchyard, striking on its way one of the pinnacles of the tower .."

Notwithstanding this setback a major repair project was completed which included a lightning conductor, new weathercock, and extensive repairs to the stonework.



A view of the church from the west c. 1840 (Repton Village History Group archive)

FUTURE EVENTS

We are considering holding annual lectures on subjects of relevance to the history and archaeology of the church and local area.

If you have suggestions for other fundraising events which you would like the Friends to organize please let the Secretary know on frpc.ad873@gmail.com .

If you are able to help organize events we would also love to hear from you.