



St Peters Church, Wootton Wawen

Trail for Young People INFORMATION & ANSWERS



The Nave - Answers 1 - 4

- 1) The FONT holds **WATER** blessed by the Vicar for baptisms/christenings. The Font dates from the 14th century, it's shape is **OCTAGONAL** with **EIGHT** monks heads around it.

To the left of the Font, and high on the wall are the 'Coat of Arms' of George 1. After the Reformation it became customary to display the royal arms in churches. This one dates from around 1714-27

- 2) The stone heads are said to be Edward 111 (1327 /77.) & Queen Phillipa of Hainault (Mother of the Black Prince). The connection to Wootton Wawen is through the marriages of the Earls of Stafford who were Lord's of the Manor of Wootton Wawen. King Edward's grand-daughter, Anna, married into the Staffords. The stone heads may originally have been outside the window.
See website www.fashion-era.com for suggestions of how people dressed in those days.
- 3) The North door is set within a 15th archway. Originally dedicated to St.Mary, the Church was newly dedicated to St Peter-in-Chains between 1150-1250. It is the Mother Church of the area founding many other churches and chapels locally - So our Patron Saint is **SAINT PETER**.
- 4) The **CHOIR** now sits in these STALLS – in the 15th century they contained chantry chapels dedicated to the Holy Cross and to St Gregory, appropriately patron of music and teachers.

The Crossing - Answers 5 -7

- 5) The Saxon Sanctuary, 10th century or earlier, houses the modern altar. The lower two thirds of the Tower has **FOUR** arches, originally opening into the arms of a small cruciform church (The Crossing) recalling the remnant of the Anglo-Saxon Minster of St Mary, the earliest centre for Christian mission in this area.
- 6) The north arch of The CROSSING contains a **SEMICIRCLE** or arched stained glass memorial window by Margaret Traherne (designer of Coventry Cathedral's Chapel of Unity windows). Representing the story of the boy king St.Kenelm who (Chaucer) succeeded his father to the throne of Mercia in 821AD at the age of 7 years. Sadly he was murdered shortly afterwards on the orders of his aunt
- 7) The table is called the **ALTAR** – this is the one most regularly used in this church (but there is also the High Altar in the Chancel Chapel to see). This is where the Communion is blessed. Did you note the colours of the cloth on your visit which are changed to denote the different Seasons?

Seasonal colours:

White for festivals, Christmas, Easter, Saint's Days
Purple Advent (4 weeks before Christmas) Lent (40 days before Easter)
Red Pentecost, also called Whitsun – the coming of the Holy Spirit
Green for all other periods (known as Ordinary Time)

Looking upwards you are under the Bell Tower – six Bells date from 16th-19th century. They weigh between 0.203 - 0.304m.tonne (4 and 10 cwt. each), a lot of weight over your head! The Tower is about 8.28m high (60ft) and 1.39m square (15ft square) with walls of 0.60m – 0.91m thick (2-3ft) and has three floors.

The Chancel Chapel - Answers 8 - 10

- 8) The PRAYER BOARDS from the 18th century were used by the worshippers, as books were **EXPENSIVE** and many couldn't read – so they would learn the Commandments, The Lords Prayer and the Creed off by heart. The prayers on the Boards represent the foundation of our faith, the way we build our Christian life and a Christian community.
- 9) The alabaster CHEST TOMB is of John Harewell (d.1428) The stump is where the knight's sword was placed, it was stolen many years ago. The shield at the left hand end of the tomb shows a **HARE's** heads and wavy lines (a pun on the family name)

See another large marble & brass tomb left of the High altar for John, the great-great grandson of the John above, he died 1505. Then to the right of the high altar are the remains of a one-time exterior wall (pre-dating the Lady Chapel) and the priest seat (the stone sedilla). The small wooden doors open onto a delicately carved squint (peep-hole) which would have allowed a view of the high altar but is now blocked by the large tomb on the other side of the wall in the Lady Chapel - see Lady Chapel over.

- 10) The large window behind the high altar is the wide-arched 15th century Perpendicular EAST WINDOW with some interesting 14th and 15th century stained glass of demi-angels and fragments of other designs, including the roundels, one of which depicts the tiny **BLACKBIRD**.



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Lady Chapel - Answers 11 - 13

- 11) On the left is a large canopied Italian style memorial tomb to FRANCIS SMITH, the Lord of the Manor in 1522 -1605 We counted **20** golden flower heads.
- 12) Next to the tomb are the workings of the old CLOCK from the early 18th century. It is a hand-built tower turret clock probably built by a local family of clockmakers; the Paris family of Warwick. It was replaced in 1954.
- 13) The stone tablets on the wall of the LADY CHAPEL conjure up wonderful stories of past lives. Sir Nikolaus Pevsner writing about this church, called the Lady Chapel 'a clutter of social history'. If you were able to identify any of the remnants of the medieval wall paintings, well done!

The seven Deadly Sins are of PRIDE, COVETOUSNESS, LUST, ENVY, GLUTTONY, ANGER and SLOTH - there is definitely an identifiable horned devil to be seen.

Other things to look out for in this area before returning to your Question sheet:

a) Rising high in front of the Lady Chapel window is the stone funerary urn on the marble plinth to Robert Knight (1675 -1744), the exiled and disgraced cashier of the fraudulent government-based Company at the centre of the notorious South Sea Bubble scandal of 1720.

b) Moving round the wall you can see the piscine (basin) which was where the communion vessels were washed. It is very ornate with miniature representations of windows and pillars from around the church.

c) High above is a 'hatchment'. Hatchments are lozenge-shaped panels, painted with the armorial bearings of a dead person, used in ceremonial funerals and often afterwards displayed in church. You can see others around the church too. Did you spot the marble skull?



Before you leave the Lady Chapel look at the Elizabethan brick floor to see if you can see any black marks which were left by the fires that warmed the family pews with their winter Sunday braziers.

Vestry Area – Answer 14

- 14) Some of the language is ancient **LATIN**. There are many other stone floor slabs or ledger stones around the church providing much historic information. There is currently a Ledger Stone Survey collecting information of this kind for a central record.

South Aisle – Answers 15 - 18

- 15) Our VICAR'S BOARD is just about full - it names approximately 70 or so priests who have given their time to serve in this parish since 1190 (Richard the Lionheart's reign). Between 1100 and 1443, six vicars were Priors of the Benedictine Priory established here by the Abbey of Conches, Normandy.

Vicar EDGM Kirwan's date is 1854 and Vicar John Mascall's is 1580-1580 = **274 years**

Behind the Font is a brass memorial tablet to Revd. Kirwan. The Revd. John Mascall was a friend of William Shakespeare of whom, some say, may have conducted the marriage or handfasting between William and Anne Hathaway in the church porch.

- 16) Were you surprised to note how far the ORGAN consol is from it's many pipes? The ones you can see are only a fraction of those hidden within the oak housing. You should be able to count **13** pipes. This Compton Organ, was given by Mr GA Mansell (1958) of Austy Manor.
- 17) The PULPIT is a raised and enclosed platform with a reading desk used for the preaching of sermons by the Vicar and rarely used today. It is 15th century oak with delicately carved leaf-tracery panels and an 18th century stair balustrade - restored in 1881 to a design by George Gilbert Scott Jr. at a cost of £1,850. It has **6 steps**.
- 18) Each year on Remembrance Sunday a special Service is held at the WAR MEMORIAL and then in Church the people remember the men and women of our Country who have given their lives to protect us all. Not only those mentioned on the Board in church and the Memorial Cross but those who have fought and died to keep the peace during all the Wars since. There are **17** names mentioned from the two World wars.

We would like to dedicate this Trail to Canon Lawrence Mortimer and to the memory of the late David Daymond, the late Donald Graham, Historian and the late Philip Shephard, Artist who gave so much of their interest to this church and community.



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Wootton Wawen was given a Royal charter for a church in 723 A.D. and these are some of the notable world events which have taken place since that time.

1066	The Battle of Hastings
1215	King John and the Magna Carta
1337	The Hundred Years War with France which meant the French monks who lived here lost their rights to tithes and the Priory declined
1348 -75	The Black Death
1443	The church was closed by Henry VI and given with all its estates to his new King's College in Cambridge, which is still patron of the parish.
1476	William Caxton sets up his printing press in Westminster
1485	Start of the Tudor period in England beginning in the early 16 th century The Reformation
1549	English Book of Common Prayer
1564	Birth of William Shakespeare
1605	Gunpowder Plot
1620	The Pilgrim Fathers settle in New England
1649	Charles 1 executed – Commonwealth
1653	Cromwell becomes Protector
1660	Restoration of the Monarchy
1775 – 83	The French Revolution
1799 -1815	Napoleonic Wars
1914 – 18	World War one – the Great War
1918	Spanish Flu
1927	Charles Lindbergh makes first solo flight across the Atlantic
1939 – 45	Second World War
1961	Soviet cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin becomes first person in space, shortly followed by the American Alan Shephard.
1979	Margaret Thatcher first woman as British prime minister
2015	September – Queen Elizabeth 11 - longest reigning monarch
2016	The British people vote to leave the European Union – BREXIT