

19.6.20

St Edmund's ceiling repair and redecoration

On Tuesday this week we had the anticipated visit from the Architect whose inspection of the repaired plasterwork resulted in a snagging list of further repairs which the plasterer has now completed, all within the time originally allocated for this work. This included filling the gaps through which dust used to continually fall on the bookshelves near the main door. On Thursday we had a visit from a specialist surveyor who took a sample of the material previously found in various parts of the roof and suspected as potentially containing asbestos. The laboratory test result on this sample is expected very early next week. It will guide us as to the sequence and programme of the cleaning work for the rest of next week. He also made a detailed general inspection of all parts of the building and his report will help us to carry out any future work on the building safely.

While others have been working in the Church I have continued cleaning in the tower. My work in the bell and clock chambers is now completed including preparing and painting all exposed ironwork (see photos below). On Thursday Michèle viewed all the roof areas and the work in progress generally. She is pictured high up in the south aisle. I have now commenced cleaning in the ringing chamber which also contains the pendulum. Since we stopped ringing of the bells from here the room has become a store. Michèle and I have discussed the disposal of some items long retained but no longer used and we have made some decisions about arranging better conservation and storage of other items we do wish to retain. I have commenced cleaning the spiral stairs that give access to the tower, including, by means of a broom and multiple poles taped together, the inside of the very high dome over the stairs (see photo). Today (Friday) Jill & I brushed down the walls of the Lady Chapel and the North side of the Chancel. We'll continue working towards the organ chapel tomorrow.

I am aware that as we begin to re-furnish the church on completion of the project, there will be further preparations to do. If you would like to get involved in any of these tasks please get in touch with me (email: gbailey@doctors.org.uk).

The following could be done at any time from now on:

- a. Cleaning all the brass- and silver-ware. Although not in use it has all become quite tarnished. A good clean now will make it much easier to bring it all up to standard once we open to the public again. Would the people who usually do this job - additional volunteers always welcome - like to prepare a little plan for the work and then contact me to say when you would like to come so I can make sure it is co-ordinated with the other things going on and advise you of the special safety procedures. The Sacristy is available as a working area and the brass lectern is temporarily in the Chancel, away from the Contractor's operations.
- b. The plan of the churchyard burials and the Adelard's Tree certificate have become rather dirty and splashed with wax. Somebody used to working with paintings could clean these at any time ready for re-hanging.
- c. Several of the flower display stands are corroded and could be prepared and re-painted.

The following would ideally be done during the week commencing Monday 13 July:

- a. Washing the sanctuary curtains. These are unlined and each is divided into small pieces easily manageable for a domestic washing machine and garden airer (no tumble drying). Care instruction labels are provided. There are six pieces in total. I can bring them to you. The washing should preferably be timed so that they can be re-hung as soon as they are dry. Michèle is arranging professional dry cleaning of the blue Lady Chapel curtain which cannot be washed.
- b. Vacuuming the two British Legion Standards before they are re-hung.
- c. Dusting and polishing all the pews and furniture once it is re-installed and setting out the cushions and hassocks. A couple or more from a single household could work together on this or maybe two friends working with distancing.

Geoff Bailey



