Lottery grant secures future of Langley memorial



Langley memorial window

St Michael's, the parish church for Langley, closed seven years ago, and the future of the three-light stained glass window was in doubt. It was carefully removed earlier this year, and is now undergoing professional restoration and framing. When this is complete, it will be installed at Zion United Reformed Church, Langley Green, close to its original site.

The Bishop of Birmingham originally dedicated the window in April 1921. It was designed by a Langley man, Tom Stokes, and made by Messrs S W Evans and Co, of Smethwick. It includes the names of 64 men from the Langley area who died in the First World War, and is the only public memorial in Langley to have individual names.

Dr Terry Daniels, Chair of LLHS, said: "We are delighted to have been awarded this HLF grant which secures the future of the window. It was originally bought through a public appeal, and, therefore, belongs to the people of Langley, so it is important that it remains here. Our recent Langley War Memorials Appeal has been just as successful, and we are grateful to all the individuals and organisations who have contributed. We have already restored a granite memorial cross and moved it from St Michael's to Langley High Street. Now, we can complete the project by making the memorial window accessible to the public again."

Part of the project involves further work on telling the stories of the soldiers named on the window. Most of them were identified in LLHS's book on all the men of Oldbury who fell in the First World War: this was published in 2007, also with HLF funding. Much more information is now available on the men, and volunteers are researching them in greater detail for a booklet and an exhibition in spring 2015, to coincide with the rededication of the window at Zion URC. The information will be included on LLHS's website History of Oldbury.

Dr Daniels added: "We would welcome any information on, or photographs of, these men, whose names can be found on the LLHS website."

Reyahn King, Head of HLF West Midlands, said: "More than £58million of money raised by National Lottery players has enabled HLF-funded projects across the UK to commemorate the Centenary of the First World War. We're pleased to support the Society to secure the future of the memorial for the Langley community, and the stories of those named on it, for generations to come."

Notes to editors

About the window

The window has three lights. The left panel shows the figure of Faith, 'fideo', and the right panel has the figure of Hope, 'spes', with an anchor. The centre panel shows St George with a sword. Across the top are the words: "It is given to all men to die, but to the few to die for their country", and across the base: "To the Glory of God and in grateful memory of the men of Langley who died in the Great War 1914-1918."

About Langley Local History Society

Langley Local History Society (LLHS) arose from reminiscence sessions at Langley Library in the late 1990s, but soon outgrew the facilities available at the library and became independent. Meetings are held at the Salvation Army Centre in Merton Close, Langley, at 10.30am on the second Wednesday of each month, and are open to anyone for a small charge. Talks cover a range of local and more general historical subjects. Its aim is to research, document and publicise the history of Langley, Langley Green, Rood End and Causeway Green. The society has published seven books to date on aspects of Langley's and Oldbury's history, and is currently researching the experience of people in Oldbury in the First and Second World Wars. It runs a website which covers aspects of Oldbury's history and the activities of Langley Local History Society, Oldbury Local History Group, and Old Warley Local History Society. It also hosts a Facebook page on the history of Oldbury, Langley and Warley.

Further information

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