Bells restoration project wins support

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The target has been reached with the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Church Buildings Council, Guild of Bell Ringers, Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust and The Benhams Charitable Settlement.

The project will take about 5 months to complete, and the process has started with the bells being removed from the church tower and taken to the bell – hangers' works in Oxfordshire.

The bells, were recast in 1727 from the bells of the earlier gothic church, believed to be cc.1265. The work was carried out by Thomas Eayre of Kettering and all are listed in the Church Building Council Schedule of Bells for Preservation. They are regarded as virgin bells as they have not been tuned together, although one of them shows signs of some "chip tuning".

The ring is set into a contemporary and unusual diagonally set oak bell-frame believed to be by Henry Ladds. The diagonal setting allows the corners of the frame to sit into the sound openings of the tower, rather like letting the frame rest on the 4 window sills to average out the stresses and loadings around the tower structure.

It is an important project to Stoke Doyle as it will allow the bells to be rung again, providing not only a lovely sound across the Nene Valley, but will also give the opportunity for the local people to become involved in bell ringing especially the younger residents of the village. An extract from one of the village families: ~ "We have every intention of remaining in the village and hope perhaps one day, our children will attend St.Rumbald's in their own right as adults. It would be wonderful to think the bells could ring for them and generations to follow, indeed it would be nice to think that they will become bell-ringers."

We are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the other organisations who have helped us with the funding, which is making all this possible.

Note to editors

Stoke Doyle PCC are organising the restoration of the bells, and this is the first press release relating to the project. More information and photos will be forthcoming in the autumn when the bells return to St Rumbald Church and are re-instated. At this time we will be arranging a rededication service and celebration, probably with the Bishop/Archdeacon attending.

Further information

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