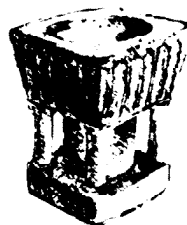


St Andrew's Church – Sherborne St John

Approaching St Andrew's Church, where parishioners have come to worship since **1150**, you pass through the Lych gate built in honour of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. The flint faced church has undergone considerable changes since then but the original south and west walls of the nave with their doorways and the **font** remain.



The brick **porch** providing shelter outside the church was added in 1533 by James Spier. Above the entrance, under the sundial, is an inscription to the donor, and another above the door together with the broken figures of him and his wife kneeling.

As you enter the Church look across to the north wall to the beautiful **modern stained glass window** in memory of Mrs Barbara Loveys, some time Church Warden. Installed in 1997, it contrasts in age with the remains of two features embedded in the original south wall. A holy water stoup set into an arched niche is positioned just to the right of the entrance door. Then further up the nave, behind the pulpit are the remains of a structure, possibly a piscina, which would have been used for draining water used in the celebration of Mass. This was the east end of the church before the chancel was built.

MAD BY HENRI
SLY 1634
WM I B

The **pulpit**, dated by the maker as 1634, is hexagonal, made of dark oak, and unusual in that the initials of the donors are accompanied by the maker's name. The natural wood was revealed in 1884 when nine layers of paint were removed.

At the foot of the **Chancel** steps are three ledger stones. Nearest the pulpit is that of Ezekiel Lyon, Vicar 1699-1732. Next to him one is that of three year old Isabella Martelli, one of the children of Francisco Martelli, Steward at The Vyne in the 18th century.

Moving into the Chancel, which, only 40 years after being built was upgraded - lancet windows were replaced by the present larger windows. In 1866 it was reroofed. Note the finely carved wood bosses. Its floor was raised above the level of the nave in 1884. The stained glass is Victorian. There are several wall memorials to members of the Chute family.

In the **Sanctuary** is a memorial of 1635 to Richard Attkins, who married into the Sandys family, owners of the Vyne before the Chutes. It is made of alabaster.

The **Reredos** of the Last Supper, was made of glass mosaic in 1885 at the time of the major restoration work during the incumbency of Rev Devereux Chute, brother of Chaloner W Chute of The Vyne (whose memorial is inscribed "from his sorrowing cottagers".) Also in the Sanctuary is the Malmesbury chair engraved with a scene from "The Flight into Egypt" which was given by the Rev. Devereux Chute.

The **altar rails** are late 17th C. The dark oak **panelling** lining the walls was originally installed in The Vyne and probably of Tudor origin. It was donated by Sir Charles Chute in 1946.

The **BROCAS CHAPEL** was built by the then owners of the Beaurepaire Estate as a family mausoleum in 1420, though its earliest brass, on the wall on the right, of Raulin and Margaret Brocas (1360) predates it. Other brasses are of Bernard Brocas, in armour with a skeleton and shroud (1488); John Brocas with his two wives, both named Anne (note the different headdresses) of 1492; and William Brocas on the wall, 1540.



Floor tile

The large **tomb** is of Ralph Pexall and his wife. He married Edith Brocas, the heiress to the estate, and they died c. 1535. After a hundred years a Pexall heiress married a Brocas cousin, so the name came back to Beaurepaire, and the epitaphs to Thomas Brocas, his wife and daughters are on the Chapel floor. The encaustic floor tiles may have covered the whole floor when the chapel was first built.

The origin of the **helmet** is uncertain. It was probably made in the mid 16th century in either England or Germany. It is not known why it hangs in the church.

There are fragments of early **glass** in the Chapel window. According to Pevsner 'some rather poor dated 1638, but the early 16th C. coloured glass is Netherlandish and is the best of its kind in Hampshire.'

The **sculpted panels** on the north wall are probably 16th century, but their origin is unknown.

The Chapel was re-roofed in 1969, (when the Nave roof was also re-tiled). In 1993 further restoration work was carried out, including strengthening of the arch over the tomb.

The **North Aisle** was built by Devereux Chute's father, William Lyde Wiggett Chute, in 1854, mainly to provide needed employment, but not until 1884 was the archway built to connect the north aisle with the Brocas Chapel. It is said that when the old north wall was knocked down its lancet windows were used in the row of four almshouses built in Vyne Road.

Displayed in the aisle are the three volumes of **Fox's Book of Martyrs**. These were given by William Jackman, vicar 1652-89. The unusual three sided lectern on which they stand probably dates from that time. The Book of Martyrs was once to be found in all parish churches, and is basically an anti-Roman Catholic polemic, but few now survive in churches.

The **Royal Coat of Arms of Charles II**, put up in the year of his return as King (1660) is also a rare survival of so early a date.

The four **Hatchments** on the nave walls are coats-of-arms which were carried at the funeral of members of the Chute family.

Following a survey of the church in 1884 it was decided to remove the lath and plaster ceiling from the nave to expose the rafters. The old box pews and the west gallery were removed. The change must have been dramatic because the Vyne and Beaurepaire pews were substantial 'rooms' at the front of the nave with one above the other.

The **organ** dates from 1888. Mrs. Devereux Chute was the organist for 47 years, playing first on a harmonium and then on the pipe organ which was first installed in the Chancel. It was moved to its present position in 1928 and rebuilt in 1972.

The **Tower** was built, in about 1250, to the height of the Nave roof. It was partly rebuilt, raised to its present height and the spire added by Elizabeth Chute, widow of William John Chute in 1834. The spire was repaired in 1885 and again in 1973 when it was covered with new copper sheeting.

There are six bells. Two are inscribed: "Prayse ye the Lord - Joseph Carter 1587". One is undated; one is of 1602; the tenor is inscribed "Henri Knight made this bell ano 1618"; and the treble bell was added in 1928. During the Civil War, when Old Basing

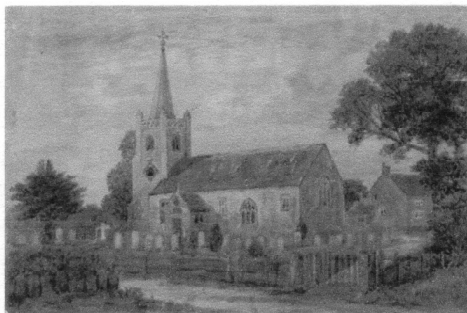
was besieged by the Roundheads for three years, their six bells were removed for safe-keeping. Sherborne St. John received two of them. The tower of Basing Church was destroyed in the fighting and was not rebuilt for a hundred years. Their bells are still here. The bells were re-hung in a steel frame in 1963.

On leaving the Church you may wish to look at some of the **gravestones**. On the left is the memorial to George Hickson dated 1828; it reads in part: "He had lived above 20 years in the service of William Chute, Esq. as whipper-in and huntsman and continued after he died in the family as coachman. Respected while living and lamented when dead" Near the west door is the gravestone of Charles Jennings, sexton for many years, who died in 1914.

The path flanked by yew trees leads to the new cemetery where gravestones to Henry Raymond Biggs a pioneer of jet propulsion; James Harrow who at his death aged 110 was said to be the oldest man in Britain and Major Euan Gilchrist, MC DFC who commanded 56 Squadron Flying Corps in WWI, are all to be found.

Walking back along the church path the village school is on the right. It was founded in 1850 by William Lyde Wiggett Chute of the Vyne on the site of the old Rectory. Its replacement is now a private residence, Edernish House. The present Rectory was built in its grounds in 1975.

*St Andrew's
Church*



*- from a mid-
nineteenth
century
water colour.*

*Artist
unknown*