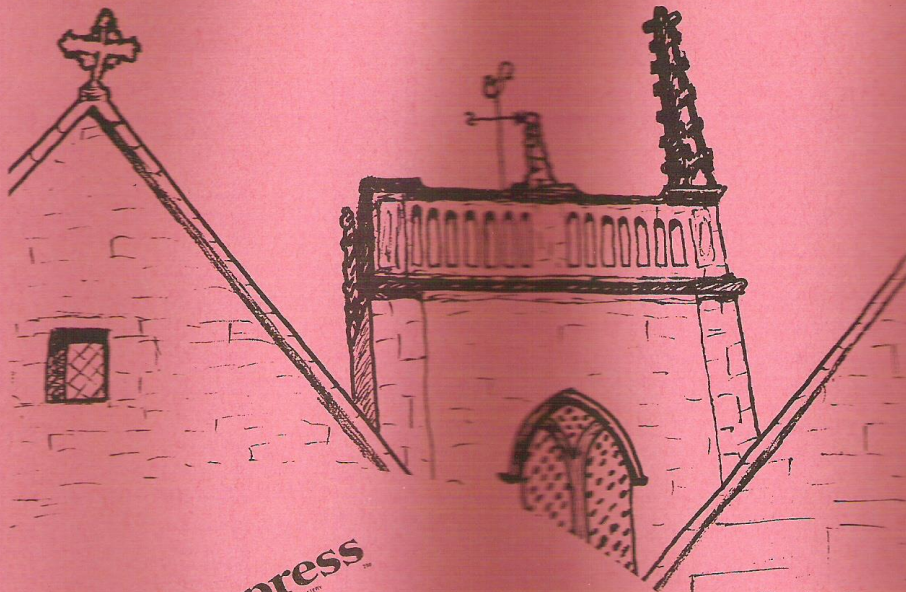


St Michael & All Angels Church Restoration Appeal Folder
from 1991 (4 pages)

RESTORATION APPEAL



Daily Express
Wednesday December 26 1990

Carols
Worshippers were about to sing carols in the little parish church of Kington St Michael, near Chippenham, Wiltshire, when the roof fell in at 9.38 am. Masonry crashed on to a

ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS
KINGTON ST MICHAEL

RESTORATION APPEAL 1991

NATIONAL NEWS AT CHRISTMAS

During the first carol on Christmas morning, the South East Pinnacle of the tower, weighing about half a ton, was dislodged during a storm by a freak gust of wind, and, after a fall of over 40 feet, crashed onto the nave roof. The main part of the pinnacle was held by the roof timbers, which was truly amazing, but a mass of stone tiles and other debris, as well as one large piece of masonry and several broken roof timbers, crashed onto the packed congregation. The incident was reported within an hour by the radio news services, and later by all major newspapers and both TV channels. Miraculously, only four members of the congregation required hospital treatment, but many suffered severe bruising and shock.

RESTORATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Before this happened, we were on the point of launching an appeal with a target of £80,000 to re-roof a large part of the church. We are now faced with that and a great deal more. A structural survey, carried out following this incident, has shown that the design of the tower balustrade and the fixing of the pinnacles is unsatisfactory. The rectification of this is clearly not covered by the insurance, and a budgetary estimate for the work is a further £10,000. While the storm damage will be covered by the insurance, the incident has precipitated the total repair programme, as in order to minimise costs, it is vital that the builders are able to carry out the entire roof repairs and make good the tower structure in one operation.

SAFETY HELMETS AND HYMN BOOKS!

Following such an experience in church, confidence in entering our house of prayer is a very real anxiety to many people, and will remain so until all necessary work is complete. This gives us (less than 700 souls in the parish) great incentive and determination to raise this sum as fast as we can in order to re-open our church for services again.

WE MUST AIM TO RAISE £90,000

Will you please help us to restore our beautiful church, keeping time and cost to a minimum, by making a donation now?

DETAILS OF HOW YOU CAN HELP ARE ENCLOSED IN THIS FOLDER



"No no ... not us ... Baghdad!"

The original of this cartoon (measuring 11.5 inches by 17.5 inches) has been given by Clive Collins for the appeal, and will be auctioned when the appeal approaches completion. Bids are being accepted by the treasurer.

Please contact the following for further information:-

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Appeal Committee:

- Rev. John Smith
- Mrs Janet Elms
- Mrs Barbara Fenner
- Mr Gordon Jobbins
- Mr Colin Labouchere
- Mrs Emma Reilly
- Mr Stephen Reilly

HISTORY

The oldest part, the chancel, formed part of a Norman church, which probably consisted of chancel, nave, and western tower. The tower later supported a steeple, thought to have been built by Michael of Glastonbury, but this was too heavy, and after many forecasts that it would collapse (notably by John Aubrey, who was born in the village) it did so during the great storm of 1703. The present tower was built in 1726, and the ring of six bells, which were probably broken in the tower collapse, were recast in that year. The original north aisle was built early in the thirteenth century, but this was later destroyed. The present north aisle dates from 1755. The fine south aisle was built at the end of the thirteenth century, although its west gable and window were destroyed in the tower collapse.

John Britton (1771-1857), author of many beautifully illustrated books, such as the 14 volume *The Cathedral Antiquities of England*, was born a few yards from the church. He was a self-made man, and rose to be a Fellow of the Society of Arts.

Francis Kilvert, the 19th century diarist, was for four years curate of nearby Langley Burrell, and sometimes preached at St Michael's. His diary has many entries about Kington St Michael.

