

SAINT ANDREWS CHURCH

GUIDE

St Andrew's Church, in its well-kept churchyard, overlooks the village green where one of the most magnificent trees in Essex stood here until it fell in June 2001. The tree was a Caucasus oak planted to commemorate the Golden Jubilee in 1887 of the Coronation of Queen Victoria. It was replaced by a new oak in March 2002, along with one to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth.



The settlement of Bedenesteda (a stead in a valley) appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as "a manor of 4 hides, 10 bordars, 1 serf, 11 plough, 1 cow, 14 swine and 24 sheep".

The first mention of "Sandon" is Saundon (Sand dune) in 1274 in the rolls of the hundreds. It had become Sandon by 1303. The "players of Sandon" are mentioned in Maldon Corporation records of 1453 as being paid 20d for a performance of the Sandon Mystery Play at Maldon on Corpus Christi.

The south wall of the Nave (within an inch of being three feet thick) is Norman c.1086. One hammer beam roof truss (near the chancel arch) is all that remains of the six that formed the beautiful 15th century oak ceiling replaced in 1878.



The stone Font is; c1550, the stone mason is unknown. The wooden cover was given in 1935 by the incumbent at that time in memory of his wife; The Hebrew inscription reads "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing" is from Proverbs 18 v22.

The Chancel Arch has undergone several alterations. It was originally the east wall of the Norman church and it would have had a narrow recess for an altar. High in the wall above this recess was a window, (the remains of which can now be seen as a niche from within the Chancel behind the central spot light).

The wall was broken through when the Chancel was built sometime after 1080. It was widened when the east wall was demolished and the Chancel extended eastward by about 4 feet in c.1450. The dark oak wagon roof was constructed at the same time,

The Altar table is Jacobean (c.1620). The Altar rails were made in 1890 by Mr Stibbard the local Blacksmith.

The oak reredos behind the Altar and the figures of St Alban (left) and St Andrew (right) date from 1900.



The East Window was reglazed in 1920. The South Chancel window containing the original heraldic glass of the Doreward, Montgomery, Darcy and Fitzwalter families was refurbished in 2000 and had the shield of Queens' College Cambridge and a new shield to commemorate the Millennium added. The Choir Stall on the north side is c.1800 and the other 1930

The church Porch is Tudor brick with an unusual vaulted roof, and was built at the same time as the massive Tower in 1520. They were added by Cardinal Wolsey, Lord of the Manor of Sandon Hall (died 1530) and were built at the same time as Hampton Court and by the same architect, Giralamo de Treviso.

The Tower top has the appearance of the Cardinal's Hat, it's strings being represented by darker Bricks'. The dome is actually the sounding chamber for the Bells and the dark brick forms a series of crosses to match the St Andrew's crosses further down. This latter motif can be seen on other village buildings.

The arch of the south door is 14th century and the three strap hinges on the door are 15th century. The North Door dates from 1350 and is displayed in the Organ Loft.

The walls of the nave and chancel are of pudding stone and flint, traces of Roman brick, used for the corners; mark the successive easterly extensions of the church. Up to 1906. the walls were plastered externally.

There are two scratch sun dials one on the S.E. buttress and one on the porch once used to tell the times for services.

To the West of the porch there are traces of a Norman window about 22 inches wide splayed down inside to about: 12 inches. The early church building with its strong thick walls would have been looked upon as a fortress and such windows would have been useful for bow and arrow fighting and as they were not glazed would keep out some of the weather. The church had, at one time, a West Door, now the vestry window and the slots for the massive timber baulk securing the door against attack can be seen through the window.

The Organ can be seen in its gallery, which was originally used for ringing the bells. Built in 1912 it was moved to its present position from the east end of the north aisle in 1955 and restored and updated in 1981.

In the tower there is a ring of six Bells hung on a oak frame.

BELL	Weight				Year Cast	Maker
	Cwt's	Qrts	lbs	Kgs		
Treble5	5	0	7	567	1952	Qillet & Johnson
No.2	5	0	0	560	1653	John Hodson
No.3	5	3	0	644	1653	John Hodson
No.4	6	3	6	762	1854	C&GMears
No.5	8	2	0	952	1784	Chapman & Mears
Tenor	10	3	16	1220	1908	Barwell

when the bells are rung, the tower actually sways in a semi-circular motion.

The Eagle Lectern was originally owned by the Church's patrons, Queens' College, Cambridge and was given to Sandon Church in 1894.

The Pulpit once described as "the glory of Sandon Church" and "the finest of its kind in Essex" is an almost unique wooden Perpendicular wine glass specimen still with its original door dating from the reign of Henry VII (1500). It was originally painted red, green and, probably, gold,



A Meeting Room with kitchen and toilet facilities was added in 1993 closely matching the main building both in construction and design.



The Painting of St. Andrew (1972) and the Aumbry Safe Door (1968) in the north wall are by local artist the late Lytton Lamb.

Under the Aumbry in the north-east corner is a shafted Piscina, the hatchet work carving on it closely resembles that in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral. It was discovered as part of the 'rubble' in fill in a buttress during restoration work in 1904.



The North Aisle was added in 1350, the Arcade and pillars being of Caen stone, from France and brought up the River Chelmer to Sandford Mill, and then by cart to Sandon. The wall plate where the aisle roof joins the much lower as the bulge in the wall shows, indicating a rather low roof. The roof was renewed in 1878 in fir.