

Saint Andrews Church Sandon Guide



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A Brief History of Sandon, Essex

Sandon village has a long history. There are signs of occupation in the area dating back to the Roman era. Robert held Bensted in Sandon.

Before 1066, it was held by Guthmund. The village is mentioned in the Domesday Book, commissioned in December 1085 by William the Conqueror. During the civil war, the parish supported the Commonwealth.

The church has been in existence, in one form or another, since 1080. Since then it has been adapted and extended repeatedly.



Cardinal Wolsey, one time Lord of the Manor, added the unique tower and porch to the church in 1520. On 21st June 1887 the Jubilee Tree on the village green was planted to commemorate Queen Victoria's golden jubilee. Attacked by Honey Fungus, it finally collapsed in strong winds on 2nd June 2001. The tree was commonly known as a Spanish Oak, most likely a Luscombe Oak – a hybrid of Turkey Oak and Cork Oak. The tree was recently replaced by three English oaks donated by the Speakman and Ford families. The original metal seat has been restored and replaced around one of these trees. For schooling, from around 1800 until 1850, children could attend a Dames School in Sandon. In 1850 a new school was opened adjacent to the Crown Public House and this



existed until it was closed in 1961. The current Sandon School serves Sandon and surrounding area. In the 1920's, Sandon was a farming community with some two dozen farms and 300 or so fields.

The parish contains a number of listed buildings, dating from the 13th century.

Many farms acquired their names from families who lived there centuries ago, e.g. Sporhams from William Sporun c.1254. In the 1800's, Mr William Ratcliff worked small clay pits on the north side of Woodhill Road, converting clay into bricks. He used these bricks to build four

Cottages around the village green, with thatched roofs. Hence the name 'Brick Kiln Road'.

At the end of the First World War, the Women's Institute acquired an ex-army hut, dubbed 'The Hut', for use as a meeting hall. The Hut burned down in 1961 and was replaced by the current village hall in 1963. In 1963, the Old Rectory was sold and a new rectory came into use.

Over the years, Sandon has been associated with various well-known public figures, including Tolstoy (War and Peace) and Cardinal Wolsey (Hampton Court). There have also been ecumenical links with St Pauls and Kings College, Cambridge.

Howe Green chapel was built in 1873, replacing an earlier shed that was used for worship. From 1905 to 1945, Merivale (recently demolished), in East Hanningfield Road was a sanatorium devoted to the treatment of tuberculosis. The house next door was the nurses' home.



Sandon St. Andrews Church



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 bordors, 1 serf, 1 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.



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.



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 (when facing the Alter) of St Alban (right) and St Andrew (left) date from 1900.



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



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 roof, was originally much lower as the bulge in the wall shows, indicating a rather low roof. The roof was renewed in 1878 in fir.

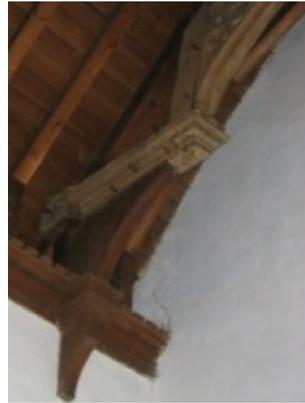


There are five scratch Sun dials on the S.E. buttress and on the priest Door porch once used to tell the times for services.





The south wall of the Nave (within an inch of being three feet thick) is Norman c.1080. One hammer beam



roof truss (near the Chancel arch) is ball 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 off 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 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 in construction and design.



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, who was granted the Manor of Sandon by Henry the VIII in 1510 and were built at the same time as Hampton Court and by the same architect, Giralamo de Treviso.

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

BELL	Weight				Year Cast	Maker
	Cwt's	Qtrs.	Lbs	Kgs		
Treble	5	0	7	257	1952	Gillet & Johnson
No.2	5	0	0	254	1653	John Hodson
No.3	5	3	0	292	1653	John Hodson
No.4	6	3	6	346	1854	C&GMears
No.5	8	2	0	432	1784	Chapman & Mears
Tenor	10	3	16	553	1908	Barwell

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

The Tower top has the appearance of the Cardinal's Hat, its 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.



