



Review: A Saturday in Stamford with Paul Sharpling

Leaden skies and roadworks did not lessen the enthusiasm of the small group that joined Paul Sharpling for a tour of historical glass in Stamford, Lincs on June 28th.

First stop was the glorious church of St Martins with the 18th-century glazing scheme of C15th/C16th glass by William Peckett – it was agreed by all that the geometric design greatly enhanced the viewers' appreciation of the mediaeval glaziers work.

St John's church, now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, has a vibrant C19th East window by Oliphant, and interesting medieval glass in the tracery of the aisles depicting Saints and Virtues.

St Mary's church had, amongst a Whall and Wailes, an example of Hugh Arnold's work. A confusing dedication panel dated 1961 – Arnold was killed at Gallipoli in 1915 – led to much discussion!

Lunch and discussions about the universal problems of working in the stained glass medium (glass availability, commissions and finances, or lack of!) was followed by a visit to Brownes Hospital – a wonderful example of a Mediaeval alms house still in use.

With 'possibly the best Mediaeval glass in the East Midlands', the setting allows the visitor to view the glass in close proximity. It was interesting to note how the painted glass figures in the Audit Room seem to derive from a limited pattern with a 'mix and match' approach from which to create another figure – the head of Solomon re-used with the figure of David to create a Paulinus! The 'liveliness' of the figure painting was breathtaking.

Final stop of the day was the church of St George. Originally the Garter Chapel before this moved to Windsor, the emblem was to be found in painted and stained quarries left of an East window, again by William Wailes. Hugh Arnold was also represented, as was A K Nicholson.

With well-researched in-depth knowledge, Paul proved to be a most generous guide and host.

Rachel Aldridge

