

## Practicalities

- **Toilets:** there are no toilet facilities in the church, but by kind permission of the President, the facilities in Old Warden Cricket Club Pavilion will be open for use. It's just down the hill and over the road.

## St Leonard's Church, Old Warden, Bedfordshire



# Tudor Times at Old Warden Church



## A CELEBRATION OF ANNE OF CLEVE'S HERALDIC PANELS

Sunday 3 July 2016 from 2pm

**Talks:** at 3pm and 4pm

**Admission & Souvenir Programme:** £5, children free



### A Celebration of Anne of Cleve's Panels

Presented by:  
Old Warden Parochial Church Council  
Old Warden History & Heritage Society

## Welcome

The Abbey Church of St Leonard's, Old Warden, is first mentioned in the charter of Warden Abbey in 1135. In common with many medieval churches a succession of later work and restoration spans the centuries.

Today the interior reflects the taste of the C19 – C20 owners of Old Warden, the Ongley and Shuttleworth families. However, some earlier treasures remain. The C14 medieval stained glass window near the pulpit was probably presented to the church by Abbot Walter Clifton, depicted wearing the white habit of the Cistercian order. The faces are Victorian replacements. Two octagonal tablets set into the pillars of the Lady Chapel bear a crowned M, representing the Virgin Mary – a link to Warden Abbey which took the name St Mary de Sartis.

The last Lord Ongley (1803-77) furnished the church with salvaged wood carvings from the Low Countries and England. It is these which tend to leave visitors with a lasting impression. The Shuttleworth family endowed the church with stained glass windows, the pulpit and fine memorials.

This afternoon we celebrate church folklore turned fact; Anne of Cleves Heraldic Panels were installed by Lord Ongley and date to the 1550's – a remarkable survival, hidden and misunderstood for so long. We do hope that you enjoy looking at the finely carved panels and hearing more about them. We have two fantastic guest speakers, both of whom were involved in unravelling the story of the panels, plus other Tudor themed attractions.

All proceeds will help protect and preserve the church and its treasures for future generations. Thank for your support.

*St Leonard's, Old Warden, Parochial Church Council*

## Tea and Cakes



What could be nicer than tea or coffee and a homemade cake, sitting in an English country churchyard on a Summer afternoon? Visit the marquee just outside the chancel door and make your choice from the delights awaiting you.

## Tudor Musicians



Musicians from 'Waytes & Measures' will entertain you with Tudor music, playing the cittern, pipe, medieval fiddle, tabor and drums.

## Tudor Gowns



Queen Anne of Cleves and will be in attendance, brought to life by live interpreter Rachel McNeil, who will gladly answer any questions you may have on Tudor clothing.

# Anne of Cleves 1515-57

Poor Anne has gone down in history rather unfairly as the 'Flanders Mare' (in fact a later slur) and was Henry VIII's Queen for just six months in 1540. Their marriage was never consummated – Henry just wasn't attracted to her, but the clever lady kept her head by acquiescing to a divorce and was rewarded with a handsome pension and estates. A relieved Henry then called her 'his beloved sister'.



Anne was German, born in Dusseldorf to John III, Duke of Cleves and Maria of Juliers. Her education was limited to needlework, reading and writing but no languages – an immediate disadvantage in the English Court. The marriage to Henry was brokered by Thomas Cromwell as a political alliance and Hans Holbein famously painted the portrait of Anne which so entranced Henry. Holbein survived Henry's wrath, but Cromwell was executed.

After the divorce Anne stayed in England, living life quietly and mostly staying on good terms with her stepchildren, Edward, Mary and Elizabeth. Her heraldic panels are likely to have adorned one of her last two homes, Dartford Manor or Chelsea Old Manor, where she died. Queen Mary 1 bestowed Anne the rare honour of burial in Westminster Abbey close to the high altar.

# Programme Highlights

## Take a pew at 3pm....



**Dr Sarah Morris**, Tudor author and historical researcher, talks about the places where Anne of Cleves lived and visited Sarah's latest book *'In the Footsteps of the Six Wives of Henry VIII'* fully describes the research into the Anne of Cleves Panels, and she will be available to sell and sign copies of her book during the afternoon.

## ...and again at 4pm



**Dr Jonathan Foyle**, acclaimed architectural historian and author, will talk about Tudor Relics with reference to Old Warden's 'vanishingly rare' panels. Jonathan was a regular expert on Time Team. He has written a series of books on English cathedrals, his latest on Lichfield Cathedral is released on 27 July.

# Anne of Cleves Panels – from Folklore to Fact

**Folklore:** In the early 1840's the last Lord Ongley of Old Warden Park, filled the church with an eclectic mix of wood carving. All we know is that he got it from anyone selling it, probably London dealers who profited from the lucrative trade in continental church furniture, then readily available in large quantities after the Napoleonic Wars.

A set of 22 carved oak panels of 3 designs was attributed to Anne of Cleves, indeed many panels bear an AC monogram. The church guide confidently asserted that the carvings came from the private chapel of Anne of Cleves at Bruges. She spent just one night there in 1540, en route to marry Henry. But there has never been a scrap of evidence.....until now.

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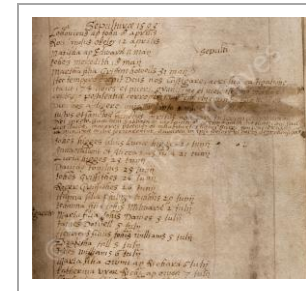
*“What has Anne of Cleves to do with Bruges?” — Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Buildings of England'*

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**Fact:** In 2014 author, Dr Sarah Morris came across the story when researching Anne of Cleves for her latest book. After visiting Bruges Sarah engaged the help of local historian Christine Hill, Tudor expert Dr Jonathan Foyle, and the PCC. It was soon discovered that Old Warden's panels were identical to Anne of Cleves heraldic panels adorning her tomb in Westminster Abbey. The designs were at last confirmed as Anne's personal emblems – but how old were they?

A scientific analysis of the panels proved inconclusive, more likely the panels were C19 copies ..... but fate intervened! Two more panels were found, one for sale at auction, the other related panel in the Museum of London, both dated to c1603 and said to originate from Suffolk House, a Jacobean mansion which once stood in the Strand. A gesso (plaster) covering had beautifully preserved the panels, which again were identical to those in Old Warden. There was now little doubt, and Dr Foyle was able to pronounce that some, if not all of Old Warden's panels were contemporary to Anne's lifetime. They were indeed Tudor, dating to the 1550's, and the folklore was proven as fact.

## Throughout the afternoon, from 2pm



Check out a display with a Tudor theme by Old Warden History & Heritage Society. Where are Old Warden's only remaining Tudor buildings? See some fascinating extracts from the Elizabethan parish registers.



Local Historian, Christine Hill, will be on hand during the afternoon to help with any questions.