

ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE CHURCH TOWER APPEAL

Tower Work Progress 15th March 2011

Rose, Tower Appeal Treasurer, climbed up inside the tower to watch our funds being spent!



May I introduce Mark "Woody" Wood, Croft's site foreman.

Amid the spider-web of scaffolding the bells wait to be lowered.



This mark is stamped deeply into the stonework.



I can find no record of the stamp. Is it a mason's mark?



This picture was taken inside the steeple.

The tower was struck by lightning many years ago, cracking the oak beam. Here you can see the metal repair put up by an agile and fearless Arthur Lee, who had to access the beam from underneath and work from a ladder.

The death watch beetle damage is extensive; this huge oak beam is quite hollow. Woody can reach right inside it.



Still inside the steeple, Woody showed me where the wall-plate timber has sunk into the stonework.



This happens when the timber becomes very wet. It rots and releases tannic acid, which dissolves the red sandstone.



Up the next set of stairs and out on to the tower roof, where the tiles have been stripped off the steeple ...

and are stacked neatly on the scaffolding, awaiting re-use. These tiles are called "dreadnoughts".



Back on terra firma via the scaffold ladders, here is Woody with our funders' signboards!

The work is on schedule and due to finish by the end of June 2011.



Didn't donate? It's not too late!

We should have enough in the kitty to complete the work *if everything goes according to plan*. So we hope so! But ...

There are many situations which could impact on our costs. Unrest in Libya is likely to raise oil prices and metal prices are still rising. We have allocated sums for site security and additional insurance and whilst these have been kept to a minimum they were not in the original budget. If we run out of funds everyone will look – quite rightly – to the fundraiser/treasurer and say *"We thought you had enough. Why didn't you think of that?"* It is my job to make sure that doesn't happen. So ...

The fundraising continues! Ron Cantrill is organising a poetry reading here on Saturday 2nd April at 7.30pm, with renowned actor Timothy West topping the bill. The Cradley Singers are in church on Saturday 9th April at 7.30pm, see Ruth Reeves for tickets.

Please continue to support us! Should we raise more than we need the money will be used for restoration work to keep this beautiful church in good condition.