

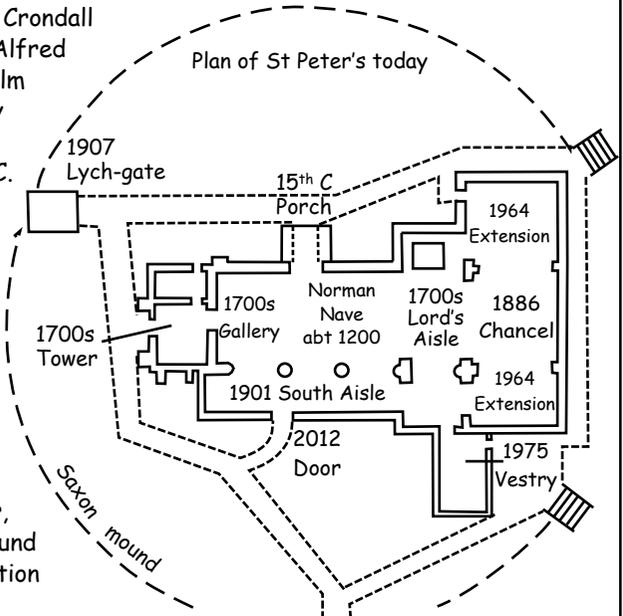
THE OLD PARISH CHURCH FARNBOROUGH, HAMPSHIRE

Farnborough Parish, part of Crondall Hundred, was bequeathed by Alfred the Great to his nephew Ethelm in 901. The manor was held by the Bishop and monks at Winchester later in the 10th C.

In the Domesday book (1086) Odin Windsor held three hides of land in Fernberg (worth 60 Shillings), jointly with Alwin. There were seven villeins, four borderers and five serfs, living with three ploughlands, woodlands and three acres of meadows and a mill worth 10 pence. However, despite the circular Saxon mound visible today, there is no mention of a church at this date.

The north and west walls are the oldest part of the church and the style of the north doorway decoration indicates a building date of about 1200AD. We know there was a dispute between the parson of Crondall and Stephen de Farnborough in 1230 over tithes, so the Norman church was built by then. In early days the church was designated "The Church of our Blessed Lady of Farnborowe", but is now known as St Peter's. The first Rector's name is recorded in 1290.

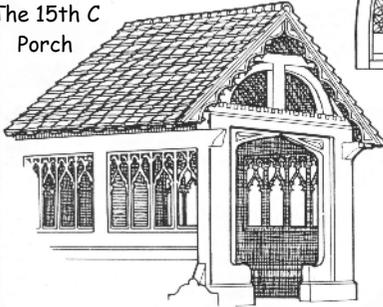
The wall paintings, from about 1300AD, near the north door, were found in 1881, when the west end of the church was panelled with wood from the old box pews when these were taken out. The representation of Eugenia is unique in this country; it is an odd coincidence that Farnborough became the home of Empress Eugenie more than 500 years after the painting was done. The consecration cross may be considerably older.



·EUGENIA· AGNES



The 15th C
Porch



The capital and moulding of the north doorway, c.1200 AD.

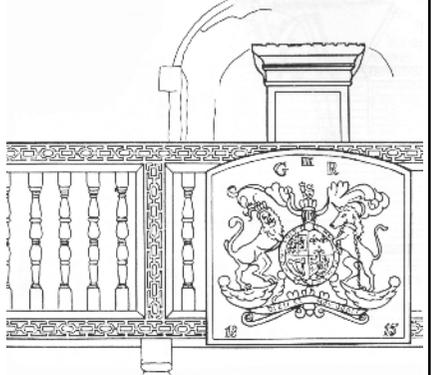
The porch has been a meeting place since the 15th C. Any Farnborough folk making the pilgrimage to St. Swithun's shrine before the Reformation would have found the Perpendicular style tracery of their own church porch an echo of similar work in stone and wood in the magnificent Minster at Winchester. In the 15th C., at a time when churches all over the country

were being enlarged or rebuilt, the original Norman windows were enlarged, one of which remains behind the organ in the north extension.

Access to the gallery, constructed in the 17th C., is through the enlarged west window of the Norman church. Although it is 200 years older, the porch is of finer design, an indication of the inspirational decline in church architecture and loss of craftsmen after the dissolution of the monasteries.

During the early part of the 19th C. a small orchestra in the gallery led the singing in the church. Later a barrel organ was used.

Displayed on the front of the gallery are the Royal Arms. Although the year 1815 is shown (the year of Waterloo) the use of the arms depicted was discontinued after 1801, something which the artist, a local artisan, did not know, or chose to ignore.

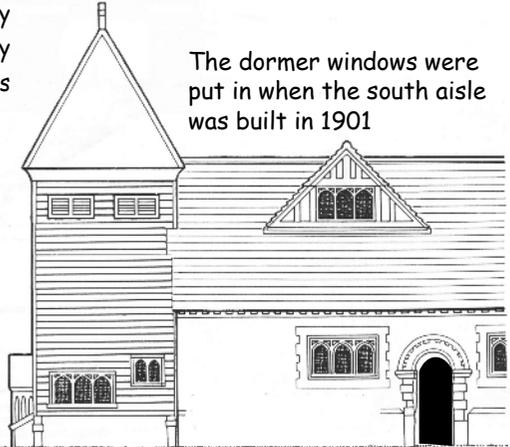


The 17th c. tower was probably built by local craftsmen using wood that was readily available, although the stout corner posts may have been ship's timbers.

It was extensively rebuilt in 2002.

The bells are

	Weight Cwt.qr.lb	Cast	Recast
Tenor B ^b	6-2-1	1619	1887*
7th C	5-0-4	1699	1922
6th D	4-2-17	1638	
5th E ^b	3-3-15	1633	1887*
4th F	3-3-2	1887*	1957
3rd G	3-0-7	1928	
2nd A	2-3-20	1964	
Treble B ^b	2-1-27	1964	

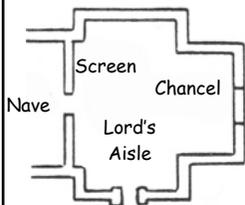


The dormer windows were put in when the south aisle was built in 1901

The South Door was left as an outside feature when the south aisle was built, but not made into a door until 2012

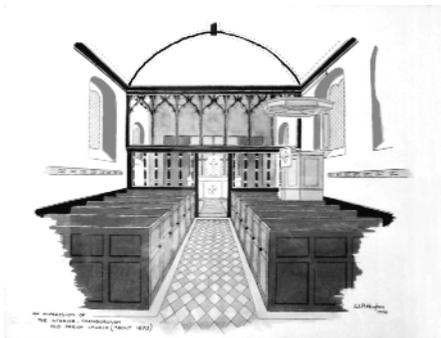
The eastern end of the church has seen the greatest changes. The Norman building probably had a chancel or an apse extending as far as the present chancel arch.

This was replaced in the 15th C by a chancel built in a style, we can be almost certain, like that of the contemporary porch which has survived until to-day.



This chancel was demolished in the 17th C. to make way for what was known as the Lord's Aisle. The Lord involved was the Lord of the Manor for whom what was virtually a private chapel was created at the eastern end of the church by having a wooden screen erected across the nave. There was a small chancel to the east of the Lord's Aisle. A window and a doorway from the 15th C. chancel could have been used in the Lord's Aisle; they still remain today, although the Lords Aisle does not.

After 1854, when the Aldershot Military Camp was started and barracks were built at North Camp, Farnborough's population increased rapidly. The building of St. Mark's Church started in 1880 but more room was wanted at the Parish Church. In 1886 a new chancel was built accommodating choir and clergy, and the plaster ceiling removed to expose the timber roof. Two transepts and the south aisle were added in 1901 and the Jacobean pulpit, until then a three-decker with clerk's desk and sounding board, was moved from the south to the north side of the nave. The Norman south door was moved to become a feature on the outside of the new south wall.



The church in 1850, with the screen,

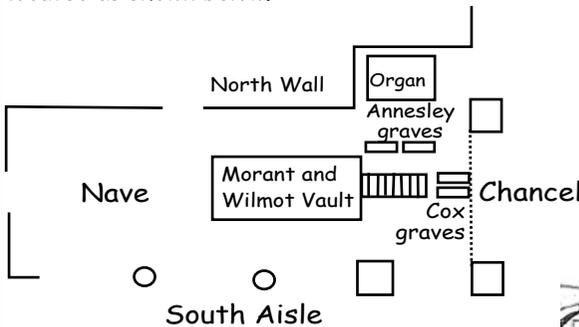
These modifications were made at the time when the so-called Gothic revival was the fashion in architecture. So we see the Decorated style in the design of the windows in the transepts.

The organ was installed in 1893, in a small extension in its present position.

The need for more accommodation was met in 1964 when the chancel of 1886 and the transepts of 1901 were made into one large open east end. The old nave screen was moved to the northern bay of the eastern extension and the pulpit moved to a position north of the chancel arch. The arch, east window and the reredos remained as before. The font was moved from the crossing aisle to a position just west of the North door in 1989 .

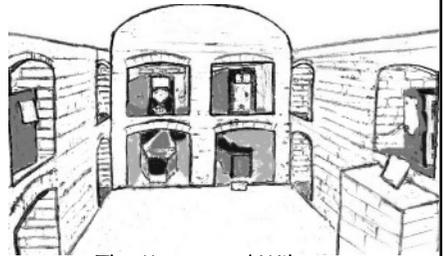
In 2002 major work was done replacing the lower timbers of the tower which had begun to rot, causing the tower to sway. It was re-clad at the same time, not the first time in its history that this had been done. Evidence of previous work was revealed when the old cladding was removed. Then in 2011-12 major work was needed on the floor of the church, which was badly eaten by death-watch beetle. A limecrete base was laid and under-floor heating was installed, beneath a new stone floor. The step which had been in place where the screen had been was removed, and a curved ramp made to allow wheelchair access to the Chancel and Communion Table. Pews were replaced by chairs and the font moved to its present position. In the days of microphones and loudspeakers, and large video screens, the pulpit has not been replaced.

Below the nave, tombs and a burial vault have been located and identified, then re-sealed, although there is a marker on the floor above the vault entrance. They are located as shown below.



The Annesleys were Earls of Anglesey in the early 1700s, and lived in Farnborough Place, just behind the church. They had it built about 1675. These were the Lords after whom the Aisle is named.

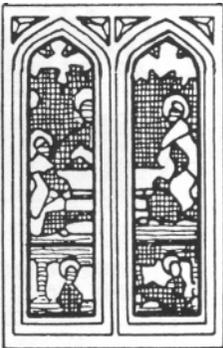
Henry Wilmot owned Farnborough Place after the Annesleys, until the early 1800s; his memorial records the "peculiar liberality he displayed in the use or affluence". Among those he entertained were David Garrick, Hannah More and Joshua Reynolds, who painted the portrait of Sarah, his host's wife.



The Morant and Wilmot family vault

After the Wilmots, the the Morant family were the owners of the house until George Morant died in 1875.

The Cox tombs are of Katherine Sophia Cox who died at Farnborough Hill (as it is today) in 1780, and her daughter Catherine Sophia Grant. There is a wall memorial to Katherine.



South transept window

The Sherwin-Holts of Farnborough Grange gave the 1886 chancel and the lych-gate in 1907, and the Devers of Farnborough Court gave the glass in the south transept.

Numerous memorials reveal the association of the Army with this area since 1854, although the military service tradition of the Grants of Windmill Hill, later Farnborough Hill, can be seen to go back further than this.

Outside the north wall are graves of the Clayton family. John Henry Clayton was Rector of Farnborough, 1839-62. His cousin, Mrs. Alexander, wrote many hymns, including "There is a green hill" and his grandson, 'Tubby' Clayton, was co-founder of ToCH.

