

# **ST. HELEN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH HOVETON 1959-2009**



**A SHORT PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY**



**THE EARLY DAYS**  
Fr. Cormac Murphy O'Connor,  
later Cardinal Archbishop of  
Westminster, on left, outside the  
mobile chapel in 1958, prior to  
erection of the new church



May 3rd 1959. Bishop Leo  
Parker of Northampton  
entering for the Dedication  
Mass



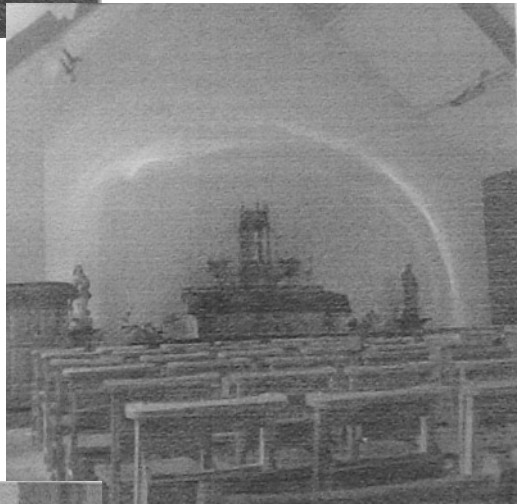
The old gate & the 1984 Silver Jubilee gate Harold Neave, first sacristan

## THE EARLY DAYS 1959



The entrance to the church from the gate. At the time there were steps up to the door, subsequently removed when the narthex was added in 1986

The original interior prior to the organ being built. The fittings were all brought from Wroxham Hall, with the tabernacle cover still in use, and the reredos had yet to be built. The lighting in the sanctuary at that time produced the halo effect which disappeared after a subsequent refurbishment



The sanctuary viewed from the side showing the altar in the days when the priest celebrated Mass with his back to the congregation. This was later moved forward to form a table with the priest standing behind it and facing forward. The window down to floor level was always fragile and replaced with a smaller version in 2000 containing an engraved pane to commemorate the Jubilee year.



## DEVELOPMENTS



**BEFORE**  
Wallpaper on sanctuary wall.  
Ceiling heaters.  
Tiled floor.

**AFTER**  
Church refurbished.  
Repainted and carpeted  
Wall heaters  
Old Spanish Crucifix on wall  
New tabernacle top



**BEFORE**

No narthex. Profusion of trees In background

**AFTER**

Narthex added. Trees decimated after the 1987 hurricane



The pipe organ was erected in 1979 by Nigel Church of Stamfordham, Northumbria from a Swiss design



In the Spring of 1986 the 5 church was extended by the addition of a narthex erected by Wroxham Builders. In addition to providing extra space it also contained a small bar area for providing refreshments, which had previously been served outdoors

The two photos show the narthex partly erected, & nearing completion. The addition of a copper roof resulted in it being known as the Golden Temple until it slowly weathered to a dull sheen



1995 saw the creation of the Rosary Garden laid out as a quiet place where one could sit and recite the rosary using the roses arrangement. The one in the right background is St.Helena.

The Garden of Remembrance was created in 1998 with the Calvary at one end and a small plane tree at the other. This has proved popular with parishioners eighteen of whom already have their ashes interred there







1984 was the church's Silver Jubilee year and a number of events were held to commemorate it. One of these was a Bygones Exhibition including artefacts from the earlier chapel at Wroxham Hall



A special Mass was held celebrated by the Bishop of East Anglia, Alan Clarke, attended by the clergy at St. George's, Norwich the parish church.



Bishop Alan enjoying refreshments with clergy and parishioners at the celebratory reception held following the Mass.



First Communion 1985 with the communicants waiting with Fr. Tony Rogers to greet the congregation as they left the church. Note the original front of the building before the addition of the narthex





October 1987 when a hurricane hit the east side of the country causing immense damage. St.Helen's lost over thirty trees, which fell on two sides of the church without damaging it

In the Spring of 1988 Operation Lumberjack was launched to clear up the damage, and a score of parishioners and friends succeeded in completing the task in a single day.



During Lent 1989 the Stations of the Cross were fully restored, the work being completed on the morning of Good Friday.



The carved statue of St.Helen & Constantine by Anton Wagner





2005 Annual Harvest  
Supper  
Waiting for the starting  
gun!

1997 Harvest Festival

Wheat, flowers,  
fruit & vegetables  
in profusion.  
Bread & grapes on  
the altar



*Above:* Hoveton Village Fete.  
Arrival of St.Helen's 'Popemobile'.  
The 'poppe' married the next week!

*Right:* Christmas 2003  
Part of the large display of cribs



## ST.HELEN'S GUILD 1980 - 2008

The social arm of the church and open to all the local community until its winding-up in 2008. A few examples of activities follow:

During its existence over £30,000 was raised for the church & charity.

.....

June 1985. A trip on the Broads on board all three of the pleasure wherries - 'Olive' shown



NEW YEAR  
PARTIES  
1986 Nautical  
Night  
Entertainment:  
*The Wreck of the  
Hesperes*

1989 Wild West  
Night -  
Ringing the Bull





1990 A selection of characters  
From Childrens' Stories



1992 European Night





**NEW EXTENSION 2008-9**  
Building of the new chapel and other facilities began in September and was completed ahead of schedule by the end of February.

*Left:* Lushers, who built the church in 1959, erecting the roof.

*Right:* View across the carpark showing the new chapel well on the way to completion



*Left:* Showing the full length of the extension, housing the new sacristy, kitchen, disabled toilets and small meeting room as seen from the north-west corner

*Below:* Framework completed, the tilers get to work

Showing the interior of the roof construction



## THE FINISHED ARTICLE

The original Rosary Garden was destroyed during the building works and is shown during re-instatement.

Pictured on St.George's Day



The garden near completion showing Japanese style gate and picket fencing. The Papal flag has replaced St.George for the Golden Jubilee visit of the bishop and dedication of the new extension



View from carpark showing the relative size of the new extension.

Viewed from the rear showing the chapel entrance, to the right of which the new facilities stretch the length of the building





*Above:* Looking from the rear of the church towards the chapel.

*Right:* Viewed from the chapel opening towards the rear of the church and the narthex



View into the chapel from the chapel, showing the curtain which can be drawn across as required



## THE INTERIOR

The original building has been completely renovated with new carpet and seating, chandelier lighting, and new electric panel heaters along each side. The opening through the original wall into the chapel is on the right of the organ

Looking into the chapel, the addition of which has provided another thirty seats and can be curtained off for separate use as required





Left: Bishop Michael dedicating the new extension during Mass

Below: Survivors from 1959, helpers with the celebrations and St. Walstan's gallery band

Below: The sanctuary and one of the arrangements from the flower festival held the same weekend



Bishop Michael cuts the cake



December 2006. Photos of St.Helen's congregation sent to our Cambodian twinned parish at Svay Sisophon