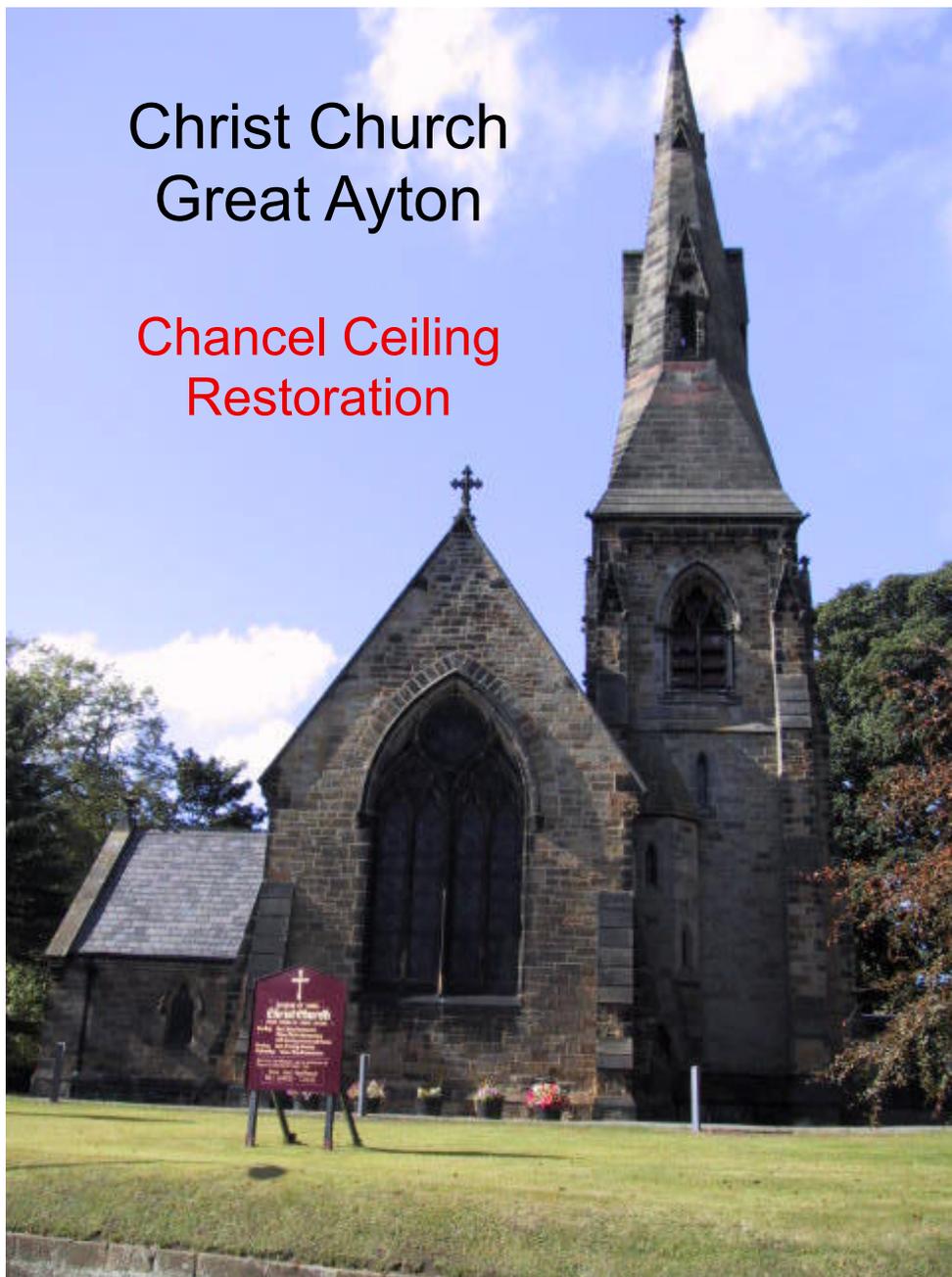


# Christ Church Great Ayton

## Chancel Ceiling Restoration



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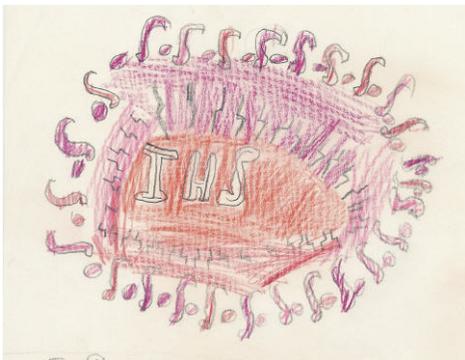


The chancel ceiling at Christ Church has received little attention since it was installed in 1876. Comprising 60 ornate panels containing the letters IHS (the first 3 letters of Jesus in Greek), it had suffered during the intervening years from dirt and grease from old heating systems and burning candles and from water leaks around the slates and lead flashing of the roof. When the roof leaks were repaired in 2006 it was decided to clean and where necessary restore the painted ceiling- over £20,000 was required and, thanks to a large grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, this was achieved by the summer of 2010- thanks to the efforts of children from the local Marwood School lobbying on our behalf!



Jennifer Retch

I Love church because we come here to celebrate Easter, Harvest and Christmas and pretend weddings. Reverend peverell puts on puppet Shows to tell us stories from the Bible. We need the money to restore the panels on the roof. We hate to see the church looking scruffy. Paint is falling off- it is that bad!



A number of well known restoration firms were invited to tender and the project was ultimately awarded to Francis Downing of Harrogate who commenced work in September 2010.



A two-tier scaffold was erected to ensure access to all areas of the ceiling. The cleaning of the panels began using a spirit-based solvent. Some of the panels had been made of a thin linen glued to a lath backing which had impregnated into the material. Most of the panels however were made of canvas and proved easier to clean. Seven panels on the north side were in need of major restoration. The worst of these (a) below had suffered severe damage and had to be carefully treated with several layers of a water-based acrylic filler (b). The canvas was then painted to match the dark grey of the original (c).



A stencil (d) was then prepared from an existing panel to enable the original pattern to be returned to the restored area. (e) shows the completed panel.



Another example (below) of a badly damaged panel, showing how the damaged areas were removed and replaced with acrylic filler.



(Above) A panel showing streaking as a result of water damage.



Another ceiling panel before.....and.....after restoration



Finally two coats of resin-based varnish were applied to protect the ceiling for hopefully, at least another 100 years!! All under the watchful eye of the restorer, Francis Downing.



The end product - a fine new ceiling completed in time for Christmas!



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