

## Sir Thomas Parkyns Monument

This is the most famous monument in the church. It was originally sited in the chancel at the east end of the north wall and was moved to its current position in 1912 when the chancel was restored. Sir Thomas Parkyns designed the monument himself before his death in 1741. On the left it depicts Sir Thomas in a life-size effigy with his hands pointing forward, ready to start a wrestling bout reflecting his love of the sport. The right hand compartment shows Time as the mower with Sir Thomas stretched at his feet. It is thought that this side was carved by his curate, and so explains the difference in quality between the two sections. In the lower part of the monument you can read the impact he had on the village, building the school house, rectory, manor house and many of the farm houses, as well as re-roofing the chancel and writing a book on wrestling.



He taught wrestling to his friends amongst the gentry and nobility and set up an annual wrestling match in his park.

The shield of arms above the monument is of the Parkyns and Cressy families – Sir Thomas' mother was Anne Cressy.

## Welcome to St Mary the Virgin Bunny

The church of St Mary the Virgin sits in the middle of the old part of the village of Bunny. At over 140 feet (42m) long it is the longest church building in south Nottinghamshire. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book when there was a church and priest in Bunny. In 1323-24 the Chapter of Southwell appropriated the church of Bunny to make a chantry for the soul of William, Archbishop of York, then in 1346 the church was claimed by the priory of Ulverscroft. The chancel was built around this time, though it is unclear why it was made so large (it is only three feet shorter than

the nave). In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Parkyns family came to Bunny Hall and they were to be the most influential family to live here. Sir Thomas Parkyns had extensive renovations made to the church including the lowering of the chancel roof. In 1887 the pews were taken out and replaced with chairs, the west gallery was removed and the fire place and chimney in the Hall pew were removed from the north wall of the chancel – leaving a vertical line of soot on the wall.

Outside you will see a walled up window and doorway on the south wall of the chancel. This door



was probably used by people coming from the Hall.

The organ was bought in 1905 for £252, which was raised by subscription. Mrs Cordeax from Bunny hall had it built and enlarged in 1916 – see the plaque on the side of the organ. Electricity was installed in the church during the time of Rev J F Kahn was vicar from 1920-33. In 1955 a new high altar was added.

There are six bells, one of which, made in 1629 carries the inscription, 'I sweetly tolling men do call to taste on meats that feeds the soole'.



The University of Nottingham

The information in this leaflet is taken from comprehensive historical research, which may be found in full at <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk>

Many thanks to Bill Buchanan for his extensive research and to David Chapman for his photographs.



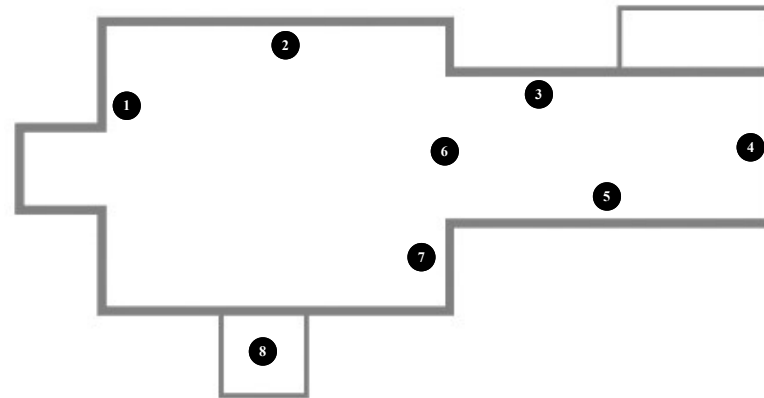
## 1 Fonts

There are currently two fonts in the church. The older font was dug out of a field in Bunny Moors having been used as a drinking trough for cattle. At one point there was a third font with a marble shaft, but this was given to a London church by the Vicar at the time.



## 2 Squint or peephole

To the right of the north door you will see a small hole in the wall. One theory is that lepers would look through to watch the host (bread) being held up during services of Holy Communion services in the chapel that was then in the south aisle.



## 8 The south porch

The south porch dates from 1425 and has a stone vaulted roof. Village business was likely to have been conducted on these stone seats. Over the door is a niche which probably contained a statue of the Virgin Mary, to whom the church is dedicated.

## 6 Screen

The oak screen is 14<sup>th</sup> century. There is damage to it that suggests it has been moved at some point. Nearby is an ancient document chest.



## 7 Oldest monument

The oldest monument in the church is to Humfrey Barlowe who was 'one of the Lords of the Manor of Boney [an early spelling of Bunny] and divers other lands in the counties of Notts. and Derby.' The inscription is no longer readable, but records of its wording still exist. Humfrey's widow, Elizabeth, then married Richard Parkyns (great great grandfather of Sir Thomas Parkyns of the wresting monument).

## 3 Monuments

On the north wall of the chancel is a monument showing the effigies of Richard Parkyns and his wife with their four sons and four daughters in contemporary dress. To the right of this is a monument to Richard Parkyns' grandson's wife, Anne. At the base of the monument are her five children, the two children who died before her being represented with skulls.



## 4 East window

The East window has an unusual square top, thought to be the result of lowering the chancel roof in 1725.



## 5 Piscina and sedilia

The double piscina was used for washing the communion vessels. The quality of the mouldings here suggests it was made before the Black Death in 1349. Because many masons died in the plague skilled workmen were scarce and expensive, so often less competent workmen were employed, producing lower quality work. The three graded sedilia is of the same period. These seats were used by the priest and his assistants during a service.

