

Archivist's Report 2025

During the last few years Mike Broadsmith's work on updating churchyard and burial records has been invaluable. Enquiries from visitors about family records and work to assist these enquiries in the Island's Records Office by me has continued. More recently Mike has located evidence clarifying the ownership of the footpath between the East and West churchyards at St Edmund's, which will be valuable in any future disputes. Such records as I had found in the past were insufficient.

In the archives, there is the original PCC minutes book from the time of the building of St Mark's at the beginning of the 20th century. This and other material helped me to write the history of St Mark's for its centenary in 2009. I also produced at that time a folder of information about our furnishings, many of which came to the parish when St Marks was reopened in 1969-70. Unfortunately, this folder is currently missing. Since the original minute book is unique, I would like to have it covered for its protection, preferably in acid free paper.

The Shedden family was involved in the building of St Mark's. I believe that Miss Shedden's prayer book (used while she was a parishioner) is among our records. However, the Shedden family tomb is in the churchyard at St Mildred's in Whippingham. I believe that this could be an opportunity for cooperative research with the rest of the plurality.

The archives continue to contain material which I use in the writing of articles for the Bridge magazine.

I have continued membership of the local History Forum for the parish. I was surprised to discover recently just how much my contributions have been used and appreciated by others, while our parish archives have also benefited considerably from the historical research of other local scholars.

Sadly, the Friends of St Edmund's no longer organise Open Weekends due to the increasing age and lack of availability of members. However, trustees are considering ways to mark our 40th anniversary next year. I would like to offer thanks for the loyalty and generosity of the Trust members who continue to help the organisation.

St Edmund's is increasingly considered a historical and spiritual local treasure, and is being visited by people from all over the world, as can be seen in the visitor's book.

Finally, I would like to invite other members of the congregation to involve themselves in the archive. Enquiries are welcome.

Doreen Gazey