

## IN THE CHURCHYARD

### Our Jane Austen Connection



#### MAIN GRAVE

In the churchyard of particular importance and situated appropriately near the church is the grave of five members of the Austen family. They are:

**GEORGE HEATHCOTE AUSTEN** who was rector here for 41 years (1856-1897). He was the nephew of JANE AUSTEN, the novelist. He was the son of **Sir Francis William Austen CMG**, (1774-1865), Admiral of the Fleet, who is buried in Wymering Church

Francis was **Jane Austen's** brother, and said to be the inspiration for the character William Price in 'Mansfield Park'.

Francis and his wife Mary had ten children. George was the third son.



**LOUISA TRAGETT** (1821-1895) married George in July 1851.

They had five children, two of whom are buried with their parents - they are:

**FRANCIS GEORGE HEATHCOTE AUSTEN** (1857-1885). Francis never married and died aged 28, shortly after returning from India, where he had been working.

**ERNEST LEIGH AUSTEN** (1858 - 1939) who, following family tradition, entered the Navy as a cadet in January 1871, retiring as Commander in December 1903.

**ROSE CLARICE BOWGEN** married Ernest in June 1911. They had no children.



#### SECOND GRAVE

In another grave, near to the footpath leading to the church, lies **COLONEL ARTHUR ROBERT AUSTEN CMG** (1860 - 1939) of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry.

Arthur married **Rose Price de Teissier**, whose father was Henry Price, 4<sup>th</sup> Baron De Teissier. They married on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1891. Rose does not appear to have been buried with her husband.

Their third son, **Arthur Neville Austen**, died of wounds in 1918 and was awarded the Military Cross in 1918 (posthumously) for distinguished service in France and Flanders. He is buried in a war cemetery in France.



# Saint John's

## St John the Baptist Church

### Rowlands Castle



## Our History 1835 to the Present day

**We hope this brief history and description, which tells you something of the points of interest in the church and grounds, will add to your enjoyment of your visit**

**Please also pick up a copy of our Welcome Leaflet**



## CHURCH TIMELINE

An Act of 1818 allowed for the building of new churches in areas where a large enough population existed at least two miles from an existing church.

On 29 August 1837, the year Queen Victoria came to the throne, the Revd G R Mountain of Havant and Rev W Norris of Warblington made an application to build a church at Red Hill following pledges of £783 by local people.

Mrs Harriet Dixon, wife of Charles, owner of Stansted House, laid the foundation stone on 31 August 1837.

The Church was consecrated by Charles Sumner, the Bishop of Winchester, on 12 July 1838.

The original Church consisted of a cruciform shape which included:

- the Nave - the central seating area from the first step to the crossing opposite the porch
- the Chancel - now a raised open area, with a movable Lord's Table.
- the Sanctuary - the area beyond the wooden rails containing the original Lord's Table.

**1853:** The north and south aisles were added.

**1866:** A Rector was appointed to the living of Rowlands Castle

**1906:** The entrance porch was built (glazed in 1963)

**1909:** First organ installed.

**1919:** War Memorial dedicated by the Bishop of Southampton.

**1929:** The Chancel area was raised and re-ordered (later improved in 1953).

**1929:** The Nave extended west beyond the line from the porch to the south wall.

**1968:** Current organ placed (originally built in 1933)

**2008** Latest modernisation creating today's flexible space.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

- The East Window shows the Crucifixion with Mary and St John the Evangelist (the writer of St John's Gospel). The ram is the symbol of St John the Baptist. The window is in memory of Francis, the eldest son of Revd George Austen and dates from 1885.
- The South Window in the Sanctuary shows the Baptism of Jesus by St John the Baptist to the memory of Louisa Lane Austen in 1895 - the wife of George Austen .

## IN THE SANCTUARY

- On the North Wall are two boards showing the Ten Commandments



- Note the brass plates on the south Sanctuary Wall commemorating Francis, Louis and Arthur Austen.
- See the plaque giving words of caution and admonishment from the Psalms to priests.
- Above the Lord's Table are the "I Am" sayings of Christ from the Gospel of St John.



- In the intricate roof structure: can you spot the Victorian shield?

- Look at the sculpted faces on the columns, in the Chancel and in the Sanctuary. Perhaps these could be the disciples, but one head is of a woman? What do you think?
- There is a church in Chichester, now a pub, opposite the Cathedral with similar faces. This is under research.
- Board of Rectors. Note George Austen



*George Austen's memorial plaque*