

BAS Grant Towards the Restoration of the Lovett Memorial at All Saints Church, Soulbury

Grinling Gibbons (1648 – 1721) was a Dutch-British sculptor and wood carver known for his work in England, including St Paul's Cathedral, Blenheim Palace, and, Claydon House in Buckinghamshire. He was born and educated in Holland of English parents, his father being a merchant. He is widely regarded as the finest wood carver working in England, and the only one widely known among the general public. Most of his work is in limewood, especially decorative baroque garlands made to decorate the walls of churches and palaces, but he also produced work in stone, mostly for churches.

The monument to Sir Robert Lovett, 1701, (see front cover) is stated to be documentarily certain as the work of Grinling Gibbons. It is constructed against the North Wall of the chancel of All Saints Church, Soulbury, Buckinghamshire, and is constructed of marble and black stone encasing a brick, rubble and lime mortar core and held together by wrought iron cramps.. Over the course of three centuries, the iron cramps have rusted and burst within the structure causing cracks and endangering the whole construction. One of the winged cherubim had fallen, and cracks reveal other parts of the structure are at risk of a similar fate.

Now there is an appeal for contributions needed towards the restoration and preservation of this monument. George Lamb brought this matter to the attention of the BAS Council, and so at the Council Meeting of 4th October, it was proposed that the Society make a grant of £200 towards the restoration of this great treasure. BAS Council recognises that this work by Grinling Gibbons is an important piece of our county's, social, religious, and cultural heritage.

Michael Ghirelli