

## Haverfordwest news...

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# Medieval church's Lottery windfall

A FUNDING boost of more than £17,000 will help bring an 800-year-old Llangwm church into the 21st century.

St Jerome's Church, Llangwm, has received funding of £17,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to renovate the medieval church and create an exhibition that tells the story of its Flemish origins.

The project will see the building transformed, with a modern toilet and kitchen, as well as environmentally friendly heating.

In addition, members of the community will conduct extensive research into the village's Flemish and medieval past.

"This is a marvellous opportunity," said Pamela Hunt, chairman of the Heritage Llangwm team.

"We have a church in desperate need of renovation, so while we are achieving that, why not create an exhibition that pays tribute to the very people who built it in the first place?"

By Joanna Sayers

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She said the project would help "create a clearer picture of the lifestyle and culture of the people who made this part of Wales their home".

St Jerome's Church was built by Flemish craftsmen around 1200, then in 1830 and 1879 the church underwent modernisation work that lost much of the building's original medieval character.

But enough remained to inspire Llangwm's Local History Society to investigate more about the church's early history.

The aim is to create a state-of-the-art exhibition in the church telling the story of Flemish settlers who fled the collapse of sea defences in Flanders and came to Pembrokehire to make their homes at the start of the 12th century.

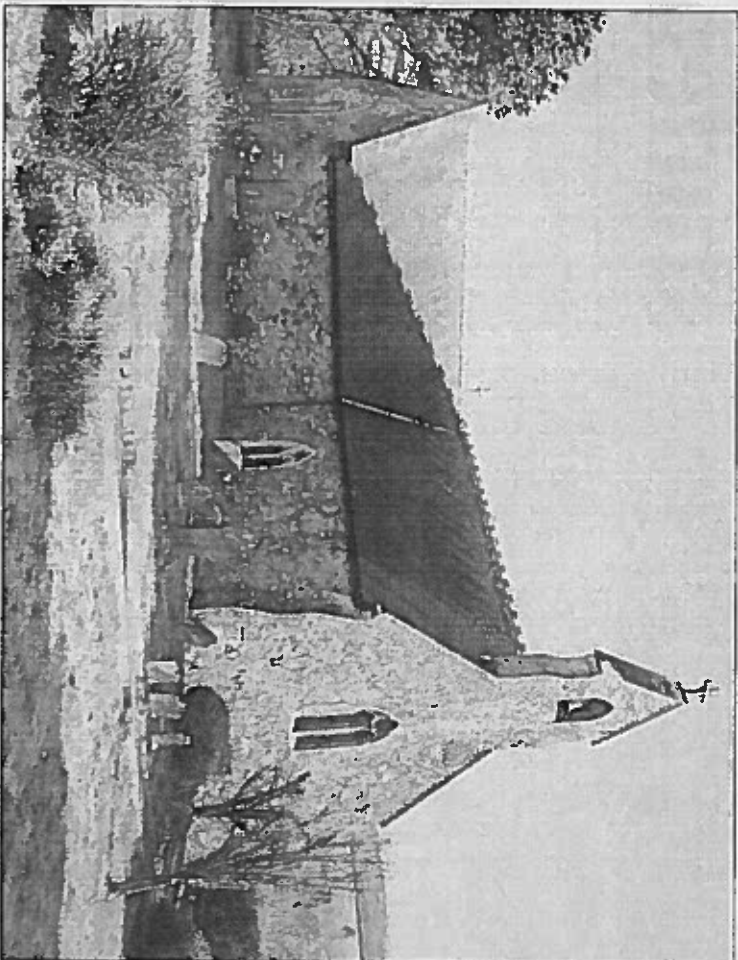
This project will also create an opportunity for the whole village community, young and old to take part.

Rev Jane Goupllon, Rector of Llangwm, also welcomed the news, saying it was a "wonderful opportunity" to preserve the medieval building.

Jennifer Stewart, head of the HLF in Wales, said: "There is certainly an interesting story to be told at St Jerome's and I am delighted that we have been able to award a grant to help develop the plans for this exciting project further."

The entire project is expected to be completed by April 2016, in time to mark the 700th anniversary of the marriage of Lady Johanna and Sir David De la Roche, the biggest 'society' wedding that St Jerome's Church has ever witnessed.

● If you would like to know more about the De la Roche family go to: <http://www.rochecastle.com/sites/default/upload/DelaRoche.pdf>



CASH BOOST: The money will be used to renovate the medieval church and create an exhibition about its Flemish origins. (3350992)