

**SACRED SPACES VOLUNTEERS
ANCIENT TREE MEASURING DAY AT
ALL SAINTS CHURCH, GRESFORD
OCTOBER 30TH 2009**



*Measuring by hugs
'The Old Lady of Gresford'*

Ancient Tree Hunt Tree No.210

*Rob McBride – Tree hunter
July 2010*

Introduction

The Sacred Spaces Ancient tree measuring day took place on 30th October 2009 at All Saints church Gresford. The location of a fantastic Ancient Yew: The Old Lady of Gresford. A tree that is perhaps 1,600 years old.

This ancient Yew tree has had numerous venerable tree recorders visit it over many, many years. It has been recorded for hundreds of years.

Our volunteers followed in the old tree recorders footsteps by measuring the tree at:
0 cm (Ground level); 30cm or 1'; 120cm or 4'; 150cm or 5'

<i>The Old Lady of Gresford'</i>							
<i>Tree No.5</i>							
<i>Year</i>	<i>Recorder</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1' or 30cm</i>	<i>2' or 60cm</i>	<i>3' or 90cm</i>	<i>4' or 120cm</i>	<i>5' or 150cm</i>
<i>1808</i>	<i>Daniel</i>		22' 6"				27' 9"
			686cm				846cm
<i>1833</i>	<i>J.E. Bowman</i>	22'		23'	29'	26'6"@4'5"	29' @5'3"
		675cm		701cm	884cm	808cm	880cm
<i>1843</i>	<i>Archaeologia Cambrensis</i>					30'	
						915cm	
<i>1878</i>	<i>Sir Robert Christison</i>	22'		24'9"		28'2"	
		675cm		755cm		860cm	
<i>1916</i>	<i>Edward A. Fishbourn</i>	23' 3.5"					
		710cm					
<i>1961</i>	<i>Alan Mitchell</i>						29' 6"
							896cm
<i>1980</i>	<i>Allen Meredith</i>			27' 7"		29' 7"	
				844cm		914cm	
<i>1984</i>	<i>Reg Wheeler (Radius)</i>	25'3.5"		27'7"		30'5"	34'10"
		771cm		841cm		927cm	1060cm
<i>30th Oct 2009</i>	<i>Sacred Spaces project volunteers</i>	27' 1.5"	28' 5"			33' 3"	34' 10.5"
	(I will re-check 1' 4' & 5' data again)	827cm	866cm			1014cm	1063cm
<i>12th July 2010</i>	<i>Rob McBride</i>	27' 2"					
	(I will re-check 1' 4' & 5' data again)	828cm					

This table clearly shows how measurements have changed over the years.
(Some allowance has to be made for errors)



The Ancient Tree measuring day 30th October 2009 at Gresford All Saints church



Aerial map giving position of numbered trees for measurement purposes.

Trees 6-13 and 14-18 have to be seen at ground level to be accurate.
 It is assumed from Reg Wheelers hand drawn diagram that tree 21 is in the position that tree 23 was indicated.

Measuring an 'Old Lady's' girth



Gresford's yew tree is thought to be over 1500 years old

A yew tree known as the Old Lady has been growing in the churchyard at Gresford for more than 1,500 years - and now it's time to see how big she's getting.

Tree expert, Rob McBride, is measuring a number of Gresford's famous yew trees and he needs volunteers to help as their span is so great. The trees stand in the churchyard of All Saints church. The most famous of them is known as the 'Old Lady' and is thought to be more than 1,500 years old. Other yew trees were planted in the early 18th Century.

The event is taking place as part of the [Sacred Space](#) project which aims to help people conserve and explore the history and wildlife to be found in their local churchyards.

Sue Kelly, a volunteer co-ordinator for the project, said: "The Gresford Yews have attracted attention over the last 200 years and articles about them have appeared in various publications.

"The 'Old Lady' has been measured several times since 1808.

The last record dates back to 1984, so as a quarter of a century has elapsed since then, it seems an ideal time to update the records of the yew trees in the churchyard." Rob will also give an illustrated presentation about ancient trees in some of the other rural churchyards in Wrexham during the workshop (Friday October 30, 10am-3pm). For more information, and to reserve a place, call 01978 298386 or email heather.williams@wrexham.gov.uk

<i>Reg Wheelers data 3rd Feb 1984</i>				
<i>Tree No.</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>Girth cm</i>	<i>Girth ht cm</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Yew	165	70	Or = Reg Wheelres 1984 data
2	Yew	281	0	
3	Yew	278	30	
4	Yew	317	10	
5	Yew	771	0	The Old Lady of Gresford
"		841	60	
"		927	120	
"		1060	150	
6	Yew	358	0	Multi-stem tree
7	Yew	258	35	twin stem
	Box			
8	Yew	165	95	
	Cedar			
9	Yew	180	117	
10	Yew	170	15	
11	Yew	128	140	This is odd as in 2010 tree 320cm?
12	Yew	227	120	
13	Yew	113	145	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH and GATE HERE
14	Yew	175	90	
15	Yew	195	40	
16	Yew	161	70	
17	Yew	127	90	
18	Yew	196	10	multi-stem
19	Yew	294	15	
20	Yew	200	20	
21	Yew	205	35	This tree is where 24-28 starts
22	Yew	295	15	Robert Parry's headstone at this tree
23	Yew	180	35	
24	Yew	186	10	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH HERE
25	Yew	250	30	
26	Yew	242	0	
27	Yew	278	40	
28	Yew	275	30	
29	Yew	201	40	
30	Yew	233	40	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH and GATE HERE
31	Yew	232	35	
32	Yew	235	35	
33	Yew	201	30	
34	Yew	292	0	
35	Yew			Newly planted tree

SACRED SPACES PROJECT 30 th October 2009 and (12th July 2010))				
Tree No.	Species	Girth cm	Girth ht cm	Comments
1	Yew	179	0	Bk = ckd October 2009 OK
2	Yew	329	0	Pu = ckd July 2010
3	Yew	310	0	
4	Yew	342	0	
5	Yew	828	0	The Old Lady of Gresford 27' 2" @ 0"
"		866	30	28' 5" @ 1'
"		1014	130	33'3" @ 4'
"		1063	150	34' 10" @ 5'
6	Yew	439	0	Multi-stem tree
7	Yew	298	40	twin stem
	Box	67	80	
8	Yew	181	30	
	Cedar	381	130	
9	Yew	207	100	
10	Yew	205	130	
11	Yew	320	30	This is odd as Reg W. data in 1984 tree 128cm?
12	Yew	312	0	
13	Yew	180	150	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH and GATE HERE
14	Yew	213	130	
15	Yew	240	150	
16	Yew	174	150	
17	Yew	151	150	
18	Yew	242	0	multi-stem
19	Yew	225	30	
20	Yew	252	0	
21	Yew	222	0	This tree is where 24-28 starts
22	Yew	343	0	Robert Parry's headstone at this tree
23	Yew	213	0	
24	Yew	200	0	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH HERE
25	Yew	287	0	
26	Yew	272	0	
27	Yew	303	30	
28	Yew	298	30	
29	Yew	237	0	
30	Yew	265	0	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH and GATE HERE
31	Yew	253	0	
32	Yew	260	0	
33	Yew	228	70	
34	Yew	325	0	
35	Yew	42	0	Newly planted tree

		2010	1984	2010	1984	Combined data 1984 & 2010
Tree No.	Species	Girth cm JULY 2010	Girth cm	Girth ht cm JULY 2010	Girth ht cm	Comments
1	Yew	179	165	0	70	Bk = Reg Wheelres 1984 data
2	Yew	329	281	0	0	Pu = Recent 2009/10 data
3	Yew	310	278	0	30	
4	Yew	342	317	0	10	
5	Yew	828		0		The Old Lady of Gresford
"		866		30		
"		1014		130		
"		1063		150		
6	Yew	439	358	0	0	Multi-stem tree
7	Yew	298	258	40	35	twin stem
	Box	67		80		
8	Yew	181	165	30	95	
	Cedar	381		130		
9	Yew	207	180	100	117	
10	Yew	205	170	130	15	
11	Yew	320	128	30	140	This is odd as in 2010 tree 320cm?
12	Yew	312	227	0	120	
13	Yew	180	113	150	145	
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14	Yew	213	175	130	90	
15	Yew	240	195	150	40	
16	Yew	174	161	150	70	
17	Yew	151	127	150	90	
18	Yew	242	196	0	10	multi-stem
19	Yew	225	294	30	15	
20	Yew	252	200	0	20	
21	Yew	222	205	0	35	This tree is where 24-28 starts
22	Yew	343	295	0	15	Robert Parry's headstone at this tree
23	Yew	213	180	0	35	
24	Yew	200	186	0	10	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH HERE
25	Yew	287	250	0	30	
26	Yew	272	242	0	0	
27	Yew	303	278	30	40	
28	Yew	298	275	30	30	
29	Yew	237	201	0	40	
30	Yew	265	233	0	40	
PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH	PATH and GATE HERE
31	Yew	253	232	0	35	
32	Yew	260	235	0	35	
33	Yew	228	201	70	30	
34	Yew	325	292	0	0	
35	Yew	42		0		Newly planted tree

Data from both sets. Reg Wheelers 1984 survey and our October 2009 survey compared.

Further reading:

The Ancient Yew Group – Tim Hills

<http://www.ancient-yew.org/>

This website provides masses of information on Yew trees.

It has a downloadable pdf file regarding the Old Lady of Gresford.

<http://www.ancient-yew.org/pdfs/GRESFORD.pdf>

The Woodland Trust website - The Ancient Tree Hunt

<http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk>

Link to Ath tree no. 210 - The Old Lady of Gresford

<http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/recording/tree.htm?tree=EF0C1880-658A-45FD-A720-EB35AD1ED108>

BBC website article on the day out:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/northeastwales/hi/people_and_places/nature/newsid_8314000/8314831.stm