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A 400-year-old church lectern has been restored to its former glory after it was badly damaged.

A member of All Saints' Church in Landbeach accidentally knocked over a treasured angel lectern at the front of the church two months ago. The impact snapped off one of the angel's arms and left its wings badly damaged.

Now the 5ft 6in oak reading stand has been fully restored by conservation woodworker Andrew Matthews, from Arrington, near Royston. The work cost £1,350 but churchwarden Dr Ray Gambell said the angel now looks beautiful at the front of the building.

Dr Gambell said: "You can imagine our distress when the angel was accidentally pushed over and damaged some months

ago. Fortunately we have been able to have it expertly



restored, and even had some of the fingers and toes that have broken off over the years replaced to make the figure complete again. One feature that we had not noticed before is that the book rest is a finely carved piece of fretwork, which for as long as anyone can remember had been covered with two plain oak boards. Now we can see this as an extra decoration supported by the angel."

The piece, which originally came from a church in the Netherlands in the 1600s, was bought from an antiques dealer in York in 1882 for the sum of £13.50.

Dr Gambell, who has lived in Landbeach since 1976, added: "It is fantastic that the lectern is back at the front of the church fully restored. Members are delighted that it has been returned – it really is a treasured piece of work. Many people describe it as life size when they see it."

The church is open seven days a week to people wanting to see the angel lectern.