

Additional important sites of interest in Walsingham

Walsingham Abbey

Walsingham Priory was a monastery of Augustinian Canons regular in Walsingham, Norfolk, England seized by the crown at the Dissolution of the Monasteries under King Henry VIII.

The priory is perhaps best known for having housed a Marian shrine with a replica of the house of the Holy Family in Nazareth. Walsingham Abbey Grounds and the Shirehall Museum are opened to the public.

History

The village of Walsingham stands a few miles from the sea in the northern part of Norfolk. Walsingham Priory had its origins in the time of Edward the Confessor, the chapel of Our Lady of Walsingham was confirmed to the Augustinian Canons a century later and enclosed within the priory.

From the first this shrine of Our Lady was a famous place of pilgrimage.

Hither came the faithful from all parts of England and from the continent until the destruction of the priory by Henry VIII in 1538. To this day the main road of the pilgrims through Newmarket, Brandon, and Fakenham is still called the Palmers' Way. Many were the gifts of lands, rents, and churches to the canons of Walsingham, and many the miracles wrought at Our Lady's shrine.

Henry III came on a pilgrimage to Walsingham in 1241, Edward I in 1280 and 1296, Edward II in 1315, Henry VI in 1455, Henry VII in 1487, and Henry VIII in 1513.

Erasmus in fulfilment of a vow made a pilgrimage from Cambridge in 1511, and left as his offering a set of Greek verses expressive of his piety. Thirteen years later he wrote his colloquy on pilgrimages, wherein the wealth and magnificence of Walsingham are set forth, and some of the reputed miracles rationalized.

In 1537, while the last prior, Richard Vowell, was paying obsequious respect to Cromwell, the sub-prior Nicholas Milcham was charged with conspiring to rebel against the suppression of the lesser monasteries, and on flimsy evidence was convicted of high treason and hanged outside the priory walls.

In July, 1538, Prior Vowell assented to the destruction of Walsingham Priory and assisted the king's commissioners in the removal of the figure of Our Lady, of many of the gold and silver ornaments and in the general spoliation of the shrine. For his ready compliance the prior received a large pension of 100 pounds a year, while fifteen of the canons received pensions varying from 4 pounds to 6 pounds.

The shrine dismantled, and the priory destroyed, its site was sold by order of Henry VIII to one Thomas Sidney for 90 pounds, and a private mansion was subsequently erected on the spot. The Elizabethan ballad, "A Lament for Walsingham," commemorates the shrine's destruction.



Abbey Entrance



Site of the 11th Century Anglo Saxon Shrine of the Holy House of Nazareth

Additional important sites of interest in Walsingham cont..

St Seraphim's Pilgrim Chapel and Garden Russian Orthodox Church



About

The Chapel has been open to visitors daily since 1967. Styled on the Byzantine model with icons, an icon screen, tower and onion dome.

As well as the Chapel Icons, the site includes an Icon Museum and the former railway workers garden has been developed into The Quiet Garden. A natural space to complement the spirituality of The Chapel and provide a calming and natural reflective space. The Chapel and Quiet Garden are both open 9am – 5pm/ dusk.

The Story of St Seraphim Chapel

In 1966, Fr. Mark (later to become Fr. David) and Leon Liddament came to Walsingham as part of the newly formed Brotherhood of St. Seraphim and their role was to look after the little Orthodox Chapel that had been built in the Anglican Shrine; however, they soon felt that the local Orthodox needed a larger church. This led to the conversion of the railway station building to its current form with the addition of an onion dome and cross. St. Seraphim's has remained a pilgrim chapel open to all who visit Walsingham.

Throughout its history, St. Seraphim's has been a centre for the creation of Orthodox Icons with both Leon and Fr. David earning their livings as full time iconographers. The Trust aims to build on their legacy and make St. Seraphim's a space for the study and practice of iconography once again, reflecting the life and work of St Seraphim of Sarov through publications, literature and icons.

Additional important sites of interest in Walsingham cont..

The Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham



Nearly four hundred years after the reformation, the 20th century saw the restoration of pilgrimage to Walsingham as a regular feature of Christian life in these islands, and indeed beyond. In 1897, there was a Roman Catholic pilgrimage to the restored 14th century Slipper Chapel, now at the centre of the Roman Catholic National Shrine. Fr Hope Patten, appointed as Vicar of Walsingham in 1921, ignited Anglican interest in the pre-Reformation pilgrimage.

It was his idea to base a new statue of Our Lady of Walsingham on the image depicted on the seal of the medieval Priory. In 1922, this statue was set up in the Parish Church of St. Mary, and regular pilgrimage devotion followed. From the first night that the statue was placed there, people gathered around it to pray, asking Mary to join her powerful prayer with theirs. This work of intercession continues to this day.

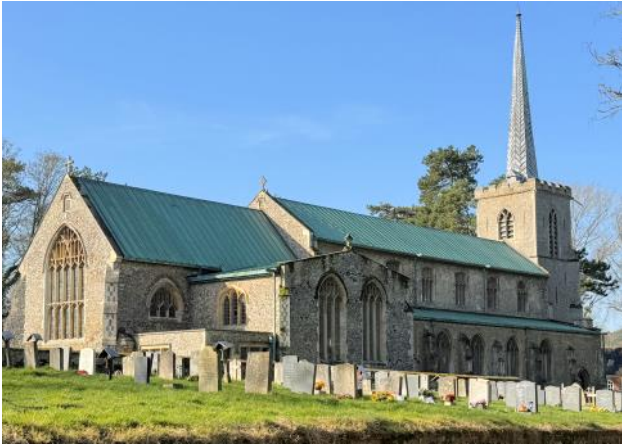
The Shrine Hospice and Church

Throughout the 1920's, the trickle of pilgrims became a flood of large numbers, for whom eventually a Pilgrim Hospice was opened (a hospice is technically the name of a place of hospitality for pilgrims) and in 1931, a new Holy House encased in a small pilgrimage church was dedicated, and the statue translated there with great solemnity. In 1938 that church was enlarged to form the Anglican Shrine, more or less as we know it today. Fr Patten combined the posts of Vicar and Priest Administrator of the Shrine until his death in 1958. As pilgrim numbers continued to grow, so did the needs of those who came. St Joseph's House was opened for pilgrims with special needs and Richeldis House opened in 1991 to provide yet more accommodation.

The shrine has continued to develop to accommodate the growing number of pilgrims visiting Walsingham.

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St Mary and All Saints Parish Church



The church is 14th and 15th-century, built from flint with stone dressings. In addition to nave and chancel, there are north and south aisles and north and south transepts. The tower is at the west, with a lead needle spire.

The church was gutted by fire in 1961; only the tower and north porch remain from the original, the rest of the church having been rebuilt. It is Grade I listed. The churchyard walls and gates are separately listed Grade II.

The original dedication was to All Saints; when Fr Patten became Vicar in 1921 he changed the dedication to the present double dedication of St Mary and All Saints.

The church is renowned for its font, which is 15th-century and depicts the Seven Sacraments and the Crucifixion. The font survived the fire. The 17th-century font cover did not; the 1964 font cover is a replica of the one that was lost. A plaster cast of the font was exhibited at the 1851 Great Exhibition.



15th Century Font