



St. Margaret's Church

I P S W I C H

Praise The Lord
and

MAGNIFY



The people who built and decorated the church through the centuries used their craft for the greater Glory of God.

Although many details are barely visible to the naked eye, this exhibition aims to show, through magnification, a closer view of some of the marvellous works found in the church.

A dragon, carved about 1500, in the roof. The church is dedicated to St Margaret of Antioch. Legend suggests that Satan, disguised as a dragon, swallowed her. However, his stomach rejected her, opened and let her out unharmed.



A Green Man in the roof.
It was carved and painted in about 1500.



Green Men are usually found on religious buildings but not always: The Green Man is also a popular name for pubs! The Green Man is an example of how images from the Old Religion were brought into Christian churches and is one of the most ancient, pagan symbols to be found in many Christian churches. Pre-Christian pagan traditions and superstitions, were still influential in the early Middle Ages.

A rose
carved and
painted in
the roof
about
1500.



The rose is a symbol for both Mary and the Infant Jesus. It is beautiful, yet has sharp thorns which remind us of Jesus's crown of thorns.
The whole of the carved roof would have been painted. Imagine how colourful the church would be if all the paint had survived.

John and Katherine Hall (who died in 1503 & 1506 respectively) were the major benefactors for the new roof we see today. They were woddyers – dyers and woad merchants. Their initials and trademark (shown here) appear over 30 times in the church fabric.



John Bryd
the Elder
(a thatcher)
was also a
major donor to
the cost of the
roof.
His trademark -
a sheaf - is
shown here.



A pomegranate carved and painted in about 1500.

The pomegranate is a symbol of resurrection and life everlasting. In medieval representations the pomegranate is also a symbol of fertility.



Henry and Isabel
Tylmaker were
brickmakers.
They were also
major donors to
the new roof.
Their trademark
is shown here.

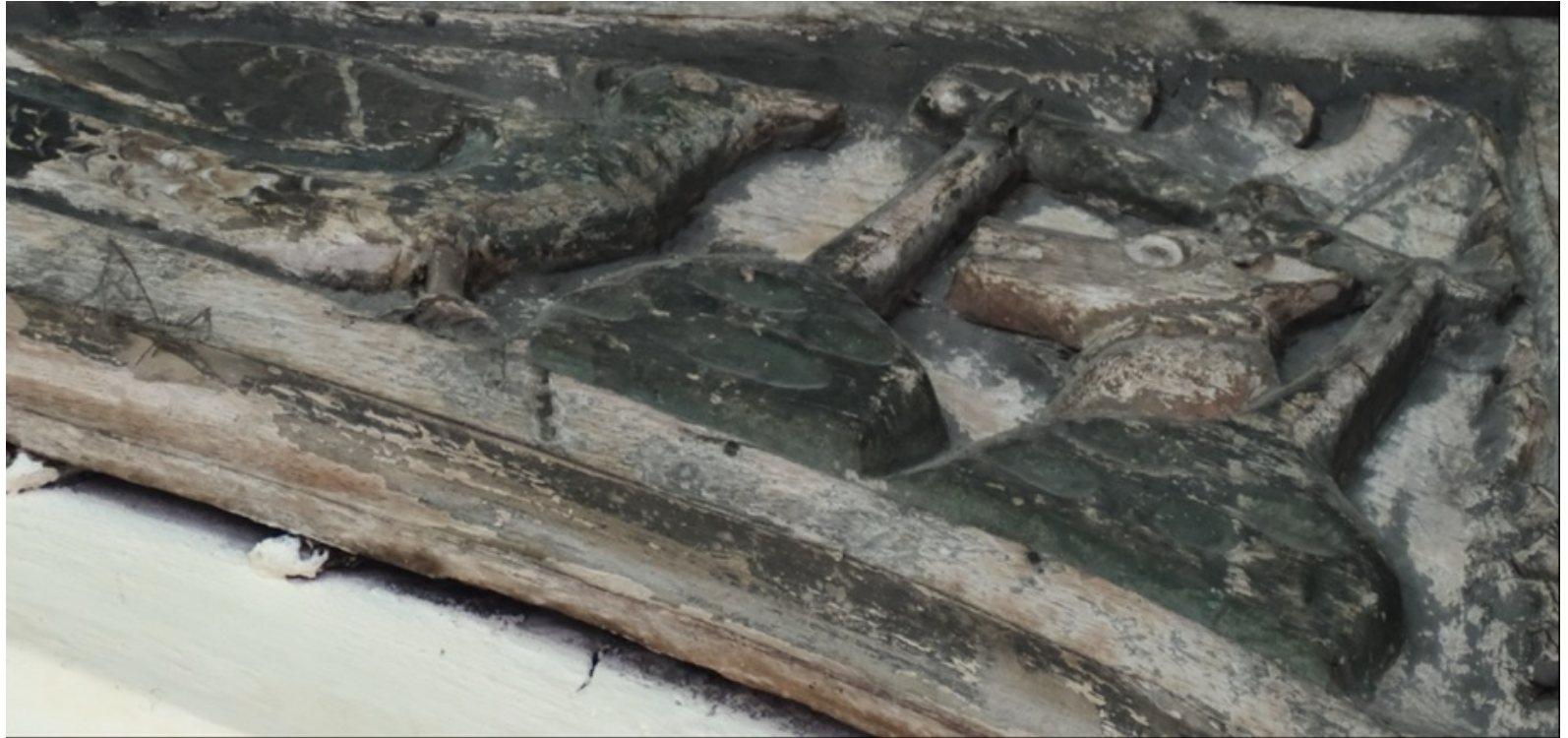


A chained bear carved above a window in about 1500.



Today this serves as a reminder that bears were chained and made to perform for our pleasure. A fair was held on St Margaret's Green from the 13th Century having been granted a Charter by King John. Bear baiting would have been a common sight at the fair.

A fox and
goose above a
window. The
fox has been
caught and is
tied to the
gibbet!
Carved in
about 1500.



The tale of the fox and the geese tells the story of the fox preaching to geese. This is a moral tale warning against corrupt clergy. In Medieval and Tudor art foxes were often used to represent corrupt or immoral clergymen. Reynard the fox was a recurring character. He is the hero of a series of European allegorical tales. Reynard was a trickster who is often depicted trying to deceive other animals but here meets his comeuppance.

A beaver
and a bee on
two mid 19th
Century
Hatchments.



A hatchment is a large coat of arms, usually painted on a wood and canvas frame and placed over the door of a deceased person's house shortly after their death. The hatchment stayed in place for six to twelve months, after which it was moved to the parish church where it was usually hung on a wall.

The practice developed in the early 17th century from the medieval custom of carrying helmets and shields before the coffin of the deceased, then leaving them for display in the church.



The following slides show parts of the East window of the church.

A lily held by Mary.
It can be found in the
window at the east
end of the church.

The lily is known as a
symbol of purity,
rebirth, new beginnings
and hope. It is most
often associated with
the resurrection of Jesus
Christ on Easter Day. It is
also associated with the
Virgin Mary.



An Angel in the
East window.

The window
with both
Resurrection
and Ascension
scenes is by
Jones and
Willis of
Birmingham
(1913).



This detail, from the East window, is the top pinnacle above the angel sitting on the portico above St John.

