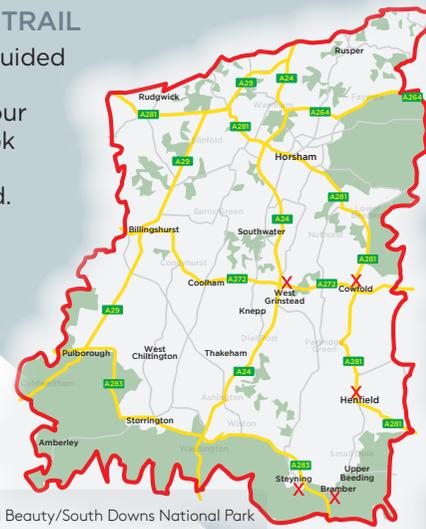


Horsham Heritage Trails Religious Curiosities of the Horsham District Eastern

ABOUT THE TRAIL

This is a self-guided driving trail. To enhance your enjoyment look at the church websites listed.



Areas of Natural Beauty/South Downs National Park

Designed and Printed by Treetop Design and Print. Tel: 01293 863131



This trail starts at **St Andrews Church Vicarage Lane, Steyning BN44 3YB** and goes to **Bramber - Henfield - Cowfold - West Grinstead**

Car parking can often be found near the church or in the village. See church websites for details



Dogs: Please keep dogs on leads and clean mess up. Please respect the privacy of local residents.

Research by:
Blue Badge Tourist Guide Richard Shenton
www.southeastbestguides.org
Storrington Heritage Trails Group
www.storrington.org.uk

FIND OUT MORE:

To learn more about the heritage of the wider district and discover additional trails, please visit www.horshammuseum.org

The trail is supported by Horsham District Community Partnerships Forum and The National Lottery Heritage Fund.



Information is correct at time of going to press.

Exploring Horsham District's Heritage

Religious Curiosities of the Horsham District

Since Christianity first came to our shores as long ago as 597AD, the English country church has been at the heart of rural life, and in Sussex we have many fine churches that have adapted through the ages, to show why this is the case. From the turbulent times of the 16th century, when the Church of England broke away from the Church of Rome during the reign of King Henry VIII, to the present day.

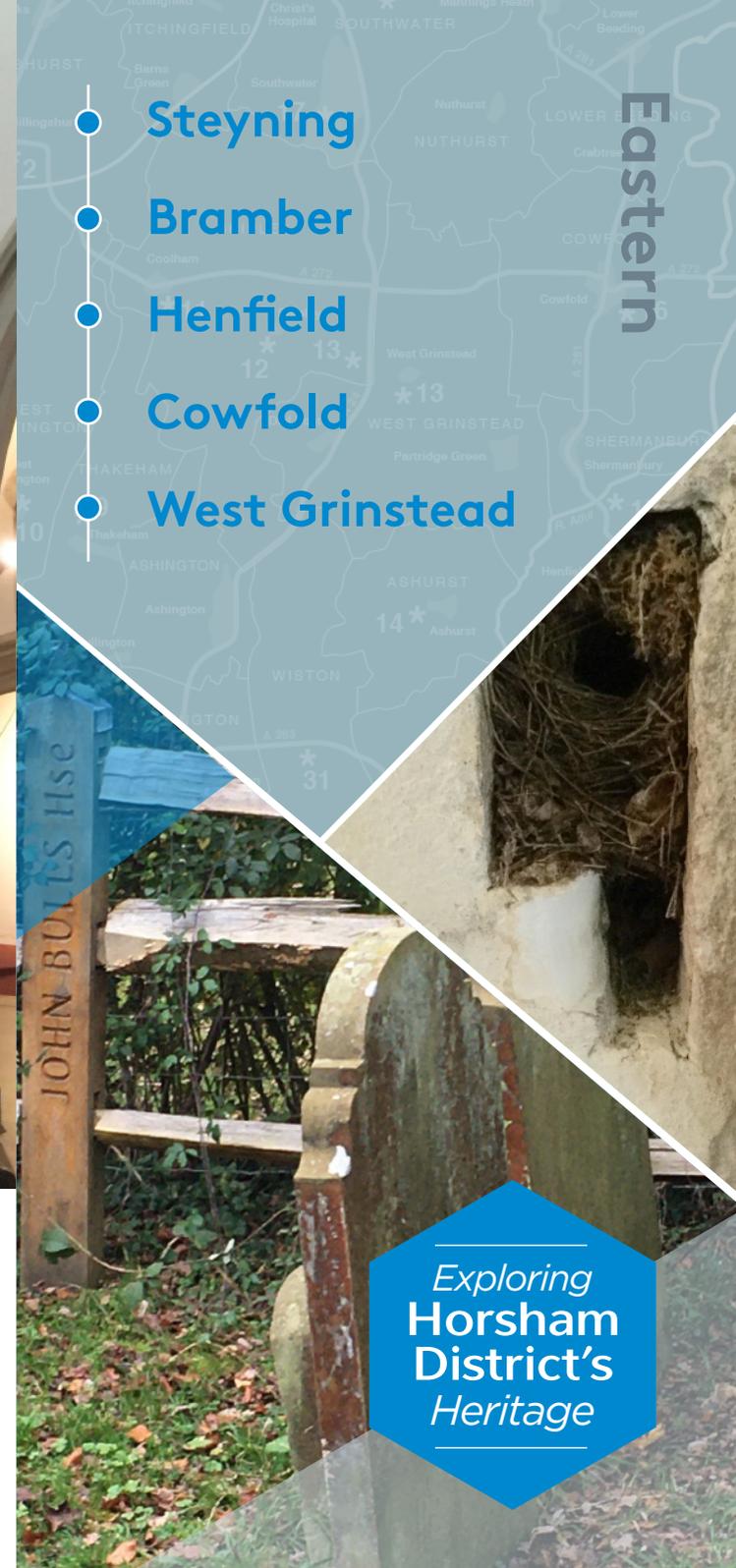
Sussex has played host to various different faiths, which include the Church of England, The Church of Rome and The Non-Conformist Churches, as well as non Christian faiths. There is a well known saying amongst Sussex folk, that says "We will not be druv", meaning we will do things how we want to, and during the 17th and 18th Centuries this was particularly so when a breakaway movement from the established church was formed. The Horsham district is proud to be the home of one of the best known of these break-away churches, with the formation of The Society of Friends, who are better known as the Quakers.

Being very much a rural county, the towns and villages of Sussex are spread out and one of the best ways of getting around is by use of the private car. These trails have been designed to show what the district to the south of Horsham has to offer to those who have their own transport and an enquiring mind. The trail aims to tell the fascinating story of religion within the County, through the graves of people who have lived interesting lives, Unusual architectural features, the Coats of Arms of well known Monarchs, and the actions taken by individual churchmen.

The areas covered are bordered by Cowfold, Billingshurst, Pulborough, Amberley, Storrington, Steyning and Henfield, with excursions to nearby places of interest. The trails have been designed with a circular tour in mind, and can be started



and finished at any point. Visitors who are staying at the larger hotels in the area may find them of particular interest. Some of these places have individual trails of their own, which visitors may find help to explain local history in more detail. The trails have been split into two halves, the Western Section and the Eastern Section. Access to churches cannot be guaranteed, but unless otherwise stated, access should be possible.



*Exploring
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Religious Curiosities of the Horsham District - Eastern

1 St Andrews Church Vicarage Lane, Steyning BN44 3YB www.steyningparishchurch.org

One of the best examples of Norman architecture in Sussex, with rounded arches decorated in the dog-tooth style. An intricately carved screen commemorates the marriage of King Henry VIII with his first wife Catherine of Aragon. Outside and around the base of the roof can be seen several figure heads (grotesques) which warn the illiterate of the perils of committing cardinal sins. There are several interesting graves in the churchyard, these include local smugglers and also due to the limitations of space, vertical graves by the church wall, behind the church.

2 St Botolph's Church Annington Road, Botolphs, Steyning BN44 3WR www.yelp.co.uk/biz/st-botolphs-church-botolphs-steyning

A very unusual church in so much that both the dedication and the parish in which it stands, share the same name. The oldest parts of the church date to 950AD. Inside, can be seen Faded wall paintings, a Jacobean (late 1600s) Pulpit, an impressive roof, a panel with the Coat of Arms of King Charles II, and a door with the date 1630 carved on it.

3 Coombes Church Church Farm, Coombes, Lancing BN15 0RS www.coombes.co.uk/church

Half a mile along the same road towards Lancing, lies the pretty 11th century downland church of Coombes, which has no known dedication. The church is half way up the hill adjacent to Coombes Farm, which in turn, is very popular with visitors in the lambing season. The church was recorded in the Domesday Book and features several wall paintings. The door latch hole has been decorated by a wren (Britain's smallest native bird) which used it as a nesting site.

4 St Nicholas Church Bramber Castle, The Street, Bramber BN44 3WE www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=4947

Built as part of Bramber Castle, it claims to be the oldest Norman Church in Sussex. Features include a Romanesque Chancel Arch (rounded), as well as three lancet windows behind the Altar. The Organ loft containing the organ pipes, is Harp shaped, unusual in Sussex. Also within the church a letter confirming William Wilberforce (Abolition of Slavery fame) as Member of Parliament for Bramber, can be seen.

5 St Marys House The Street, Bramber BN44 3WE (Opening Hours as advertised) www.stmarysbramber.co.uk

A timber framed house that dates to 1450, which includes examples of period furniture and panelling and has literary connections with Oscar Wilde and Sherlock Holmes. Originally built as an inn catering for Pilgrims making their way to Canterbury along the Old Pilgrims Way britishpilgrimage.org/old-way, it is now a private house, that welcomes Group Visits and Weddings and Concerts.

6 Henfield Cat House Church Terrace, Henfield BN5 9PB (Not open to public) www.hiddenhenfield.co.uk/the-cat-house

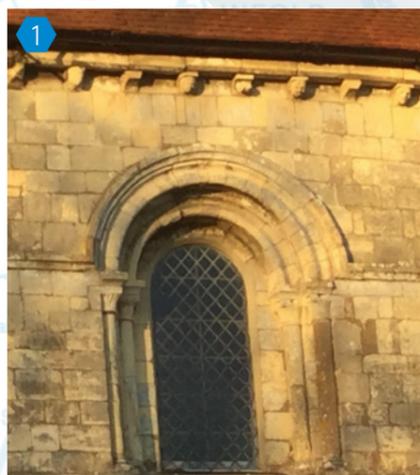
An attractive timber framed thatched cottage, within the historic quarter of Henfield and close to St Peter's Church. In the 1800s, the then owner of the house had a pet canary, which was killed by the Vicar's cat. The owner being of an eccentric nature, decorated the house with images of his canary within the cat's claws, so that when the Vicar, the Rev Nathaniel Woodard (Later to become the Founder of Lancing College), passed by on his way to church, he would be constantly reminded of his cat's misdemeanour. The adjacent churchyard is unusual in that it has 104 Yew Trees within it.

7 St Peter's Church 2a Station Road, Cowfold, RH13 8DA www.stpeterschurch-cowfold.org.uk

The present church dates to the reign of King Henry VIII and has a very fine porch attached to it. Set back from the road it is hidden by several adjacent houses, forming a close. The boundary to the churchyard is in the form of a fence. The fence posts have been inscribed with the names of the 35 houses and farms, which were responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the panels within the church. The churchyard today has an extension on the West side, which affords a fine view to St Hugh's Carthusian Monastery, whose members maintain a strict order of silence, and which can be seen for many miles locally. Further details of St Peter's Church can be obtained from the Cowfold Heritage Trail leaflet.

8 The Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation 46 Park Lane, West Grinstead RH13 8LT www.consolation.org.uk/about

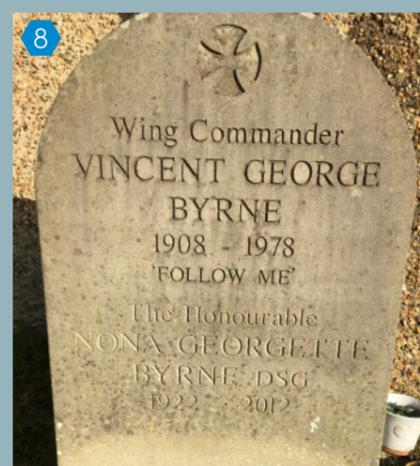
This is the Roman Catholic Church. The local Parish church is nearby. Built on land owned by the Caryl family, who were prominent Catholics during the age of religious persecution. The church is very colourful inside and has the Coats of Arms of all the Families and Bodies connected with the construction of the shrine on the inside of the columns in the nave. Adjacent to the church, is a house with a timber framed front, which is thought to be the oldest continuously used Roman Catholic Priest house in England. In the graveyard there are two graves of note. One is to the Poet and Author Hilaire Belloc and his family, who lived at nearby Shipley Windmill, and the



other to Wing Commander Vincent George Byrne (1908 - 1978), who as a junior pilot in World War 2, fired the opening shots in what was to become known as the Battle of Barking Creek. This was a friendly fire incident that resulted from an identification error. Byrne was charged with the death of another RAF pilot, but was acquitted on the grounds that he was following orders. His defending Officer, was Roger Bushell, the man who led the Great Escape, of which, a popular film was made in 1963 and which starred many famous actors.

9 St George's Church Rectory Lane, West Grinstead RH13 8LR www.sussexparishchurches.org/church/west-grinstead-st-george/ www.westgrinstead.org/

An interesting church dating back to the 11th century that has many architectural features as a result of rebuilding and extending. Most notable of these are the roof, which consist of local fossilised limestone slates, commonly known as "Horsham Slab"



and to the right of the porch, there is a section of herringbone stonework that dates back to Saxon times, that is very rare. Inside the church, on the backs of the pews are the names of all the farms and properties, that paid dues to the church and reserved a space for their owners. Also, there is a panel with the Royal Arms of King George IV on it.



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