

Gargoyles to Gables Honeycomb to Spider's Silk

Architecture All Around Us

A review and record of St. Christopher's, Willingale 2025 annual celebration of Heritage Open Days and Harvest Festival Service.



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. St. Christopher's, Willingale celebrated Heritage Open Days over the weekend of 20th & 21st September. The weekend included harvest festival service.
- 1.2. The celebration included floral displays with a common underlying theme, children's activities related to the theme, bell ringing demonstrations, church tours, refreshments and sale of local produce.
- 1.3. The common underlying theme was architecture taken in the broadest sense and reflecting the rural setting of Willingale. The individual themes upon which the displays were based were:

Bees' Honeycomb
Spiders' web
Recycled buildings
Doors and gates
Timber buildings
Tuscan columns
Bell frame
Thatch
Edwin Luytens
Bridges
Gargoyles
Trees
Windows
Garden

Details of all the above are shown on following pages.

- 1.4. To mark harvest festival a display featuring a wheelbarrow of local produce was included.
- 1.5. Incidental displays of flowers and produce were placed around the church.
- 1.6. Children's activities related to the theme included a gargoyle hunt and building with Lego.
- 1.7. The bell ringing demonstrations comprised of explanation of the theory illustrated with scale models, CCTV of the bells and practical demonstration of ringing.
- 1.8. The church tours were informal guided walks around the church.

2. Thanks

The parish of Willingale and the church of St. Christopher's celebration Heritage Open Days and Harvest Festival Service over the weekend 20th and 21st of September was made possible by the voluntary work of many people. The Parochial Church Council wishes to thank all those that made the weekend a great success, bell ringers, flower arrangers, cake bakers, table and chair carriers, marquee erectors, produce contributors, refreshment servers, church readers, sausage and bacon cooks and many other tasks. And also thanks to all those who came along to see the displays, enjoy the refreshments, and attend the service. The weekend showed our community and our church at its best.

3. Refreshments and Social Time

A church event would not be complete without tea and cake. And St. Christopher's produces a fine coffee. Many volunteers contributed their baked goods.



Served with a smile.

And the weather was good.





Stunning view to the west of St. Christopher's.

4. Local Produce

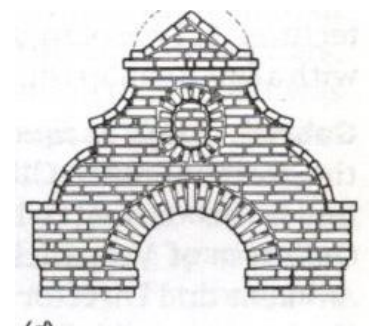
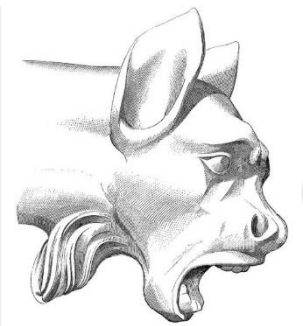
To compliment the tea and cake local produce was on sale.



5. The Welcome



WELCOME

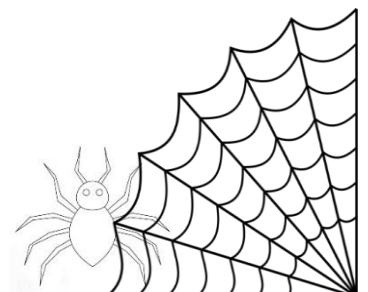
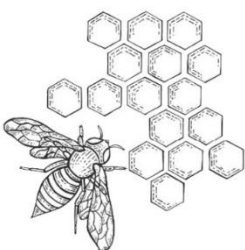


This arrangement in the porch is a foretaste of what you can expect to see inside the church.

Welcome to Willingale's annual celebration of Heritage and Harvest for 2025. Be intrigued, inspired and captivated by Architecture in its widest form.

We hope that you enjoy your visit.

Arranged by Amber Zakrzewski

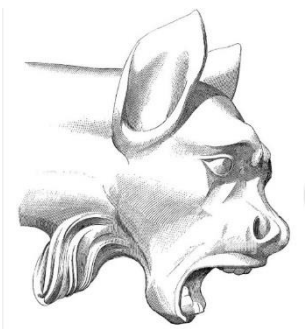




In the porch a dramatic arrangement by Amber a foretaste of the displays within church.

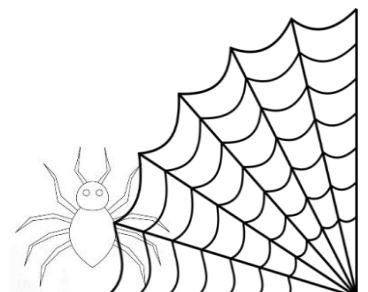
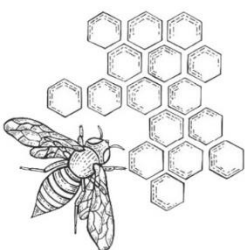


BEE'S' HONEYCOMB ARCHITECTURE IN NATURE



Remarkably uniform. Surprisingly strong. What a feat of construction. The best builders in nature? The hexagonal shape is extremely efficient, maximizing storage space and structural strength while minimizing the amount of wax needed.

Arranged by Pauline Booty

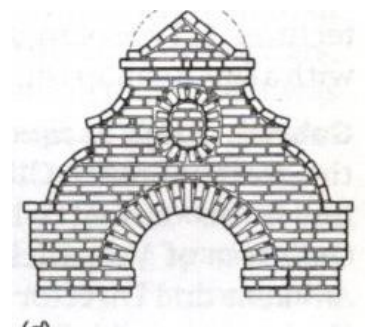
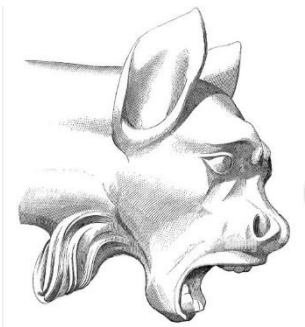




7. Spiders' web

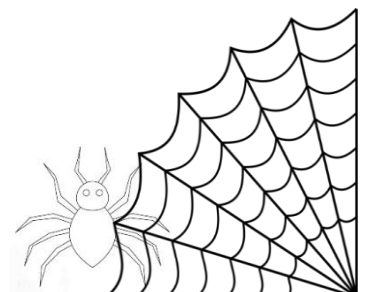
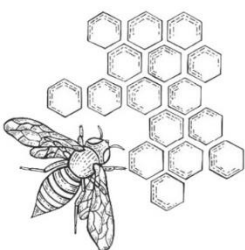


SPIDERS' SILK ARCHITECTURAL MARVEL



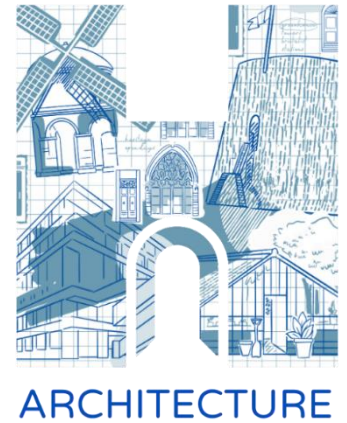
Spider's silk stronger than steel, based on weight.
The diameter of silk varies depending on where in the web.
The spacing of the silk in the web a marvel of nature. How
do spiders span gap for the first strand of a web?
The structural engineers of nature.

Arranged by Saron Harper

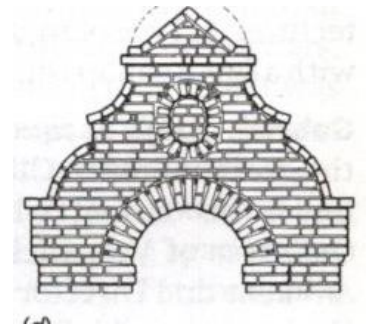
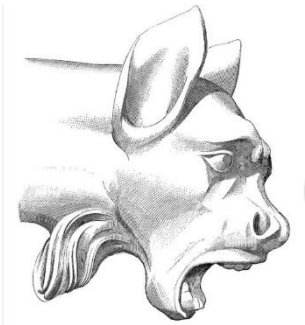




8. Recycled buildings

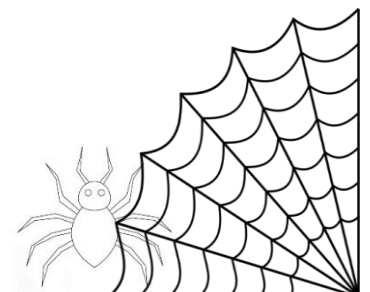
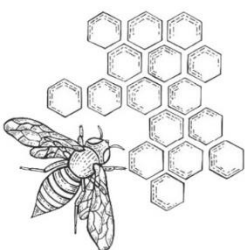


RECYCLED BUILDINGS ARCHITECTURAL REUSE



Barn to mansion, control block to apartment, Nissen hut to luxury pad. Various reuse of buildings. Here in Willingale Nissen huts built by the Americans in 1942 followed by years of decay and then transformed into a ultra-modern home.

Arranged by Peter Tottman

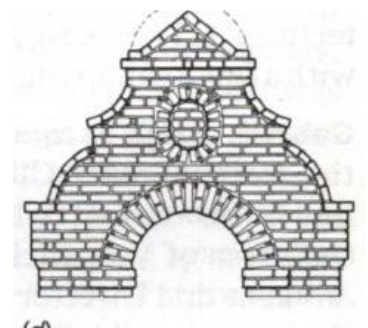
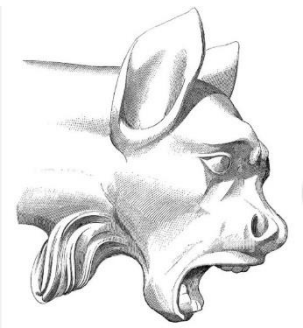






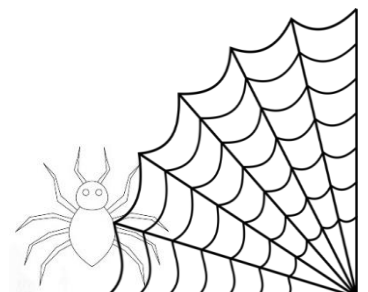
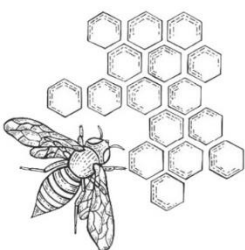
DOORS AND GATES

ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS



Doors and gates keep out the cold and unwanted visitors. They secure our gardens and fields. Often ornate, some are very strong like the door of St. Christopher's or with elaborate hinges like the one to the vestry in St. Andrew's.

Arranged by Rosemary Stratton

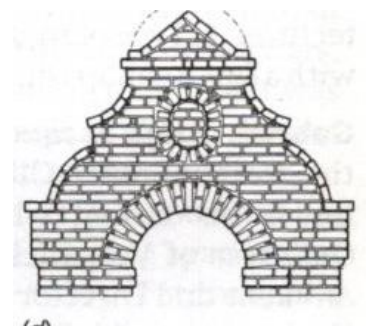
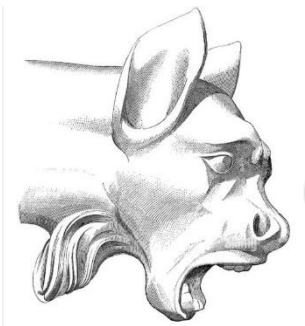






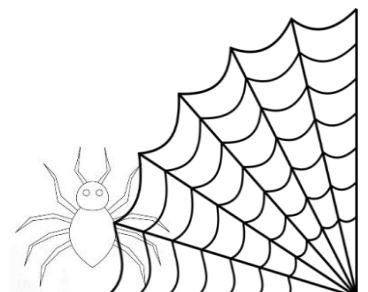
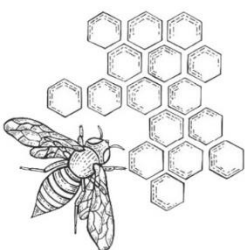
TIMBER FRAMED BUILDINGS

ARCHITECTURAL MATERIAL

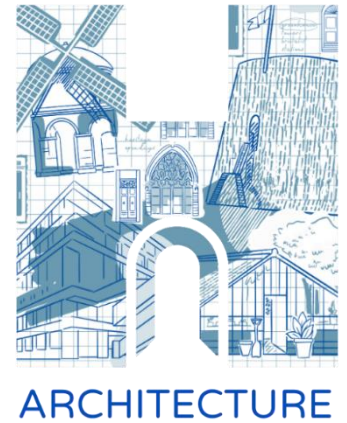


Timber the natural building material of Essex. Most old buildings in Essex have a timber frame. The timber roof structure of St. Christopher's is 700 years old. The replica is of the scissor braced truss in the St. Christopher's roof.

Arranged by Llyris Leatherherd

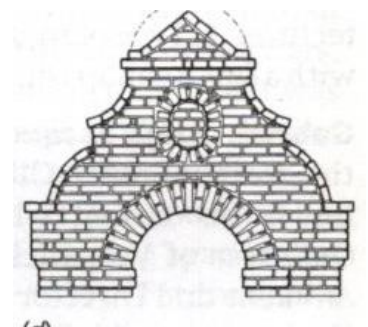
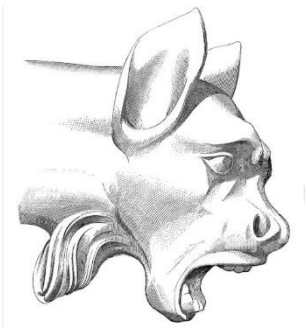






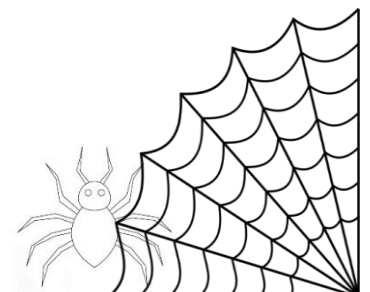
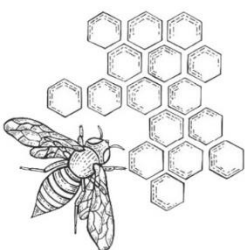
TUSCAN COLUMN

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIC



The columns of the St. Christopher's north aisle are of the Tuscan order. They are unfluted columns with round capitals. Tuscan is one of the two classical orders developed by the Romans and the simplest in appearance.

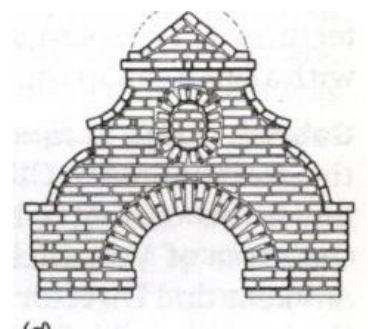
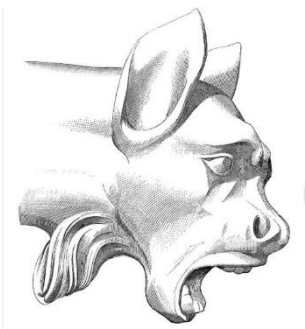
Arranged by Val Noon





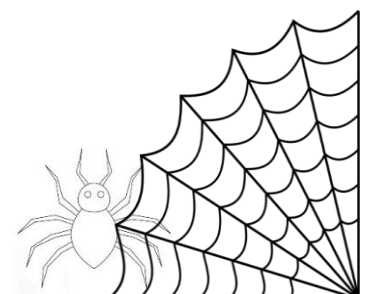
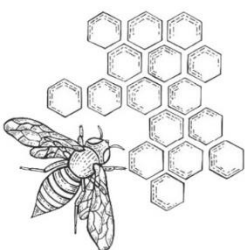


BELL FRAME ARCHITECTURAL DYNAMICS



A swinging bell imposes a horizontal dynamic force on the bell frame that is $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the weight of the bell. Hence bell frames have hefty bracing as shown in the model. The braces in the oak frame in St. Christopher's are 300 x 90 mm.

Arranged by Pauline Booty

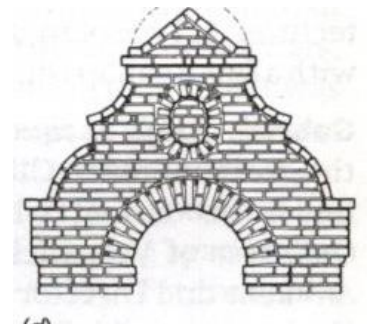
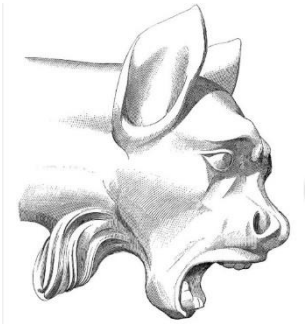






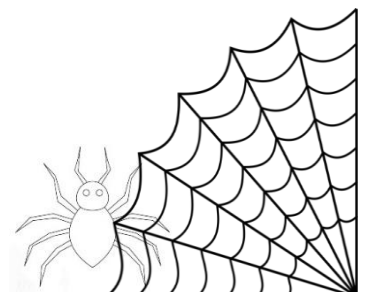
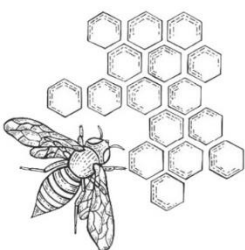
THATCH

ARCHITECTURAL MATERIAL



A building material that has been in use for 10,000 years and grown in Essex and Norfolk. Shown here is Norfolk Reed a *long, almost bamboo like thatching material* that can last for 60 years if installed properly. The most long lasting of thatching material makes it an economic choice for property owners.

Arranged by Sally Green





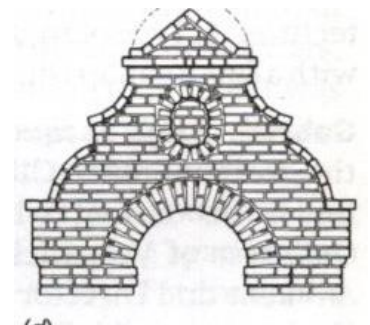
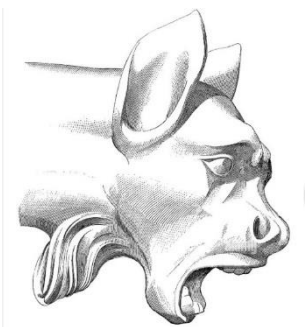
Thatching tools and reed kindly loaned by Ian Bruce.





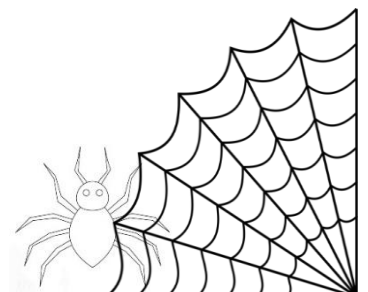
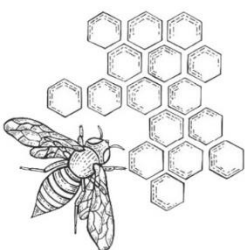
SIR EDWIN LANDSEER LUTYENS

ARCHITECTURAL VISIONARY



Edwin Lutyens 1869 – 1944 considered the greatest British architect of the twentieth century - The architect of the Cenotaph in Whitehall, Thiepval Memorial, France and 600 buildings and monuments, and designed gardens with Gertrude Jekyll. Abroad he played a major role in the design and construction of New Delhi in India.

Arranged by Val Noon

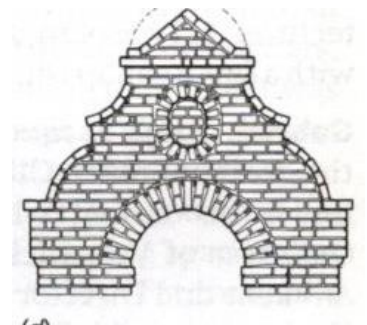
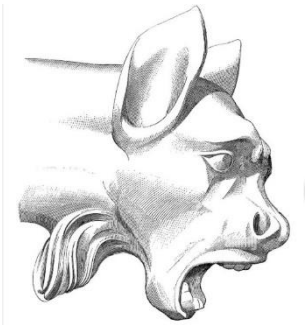






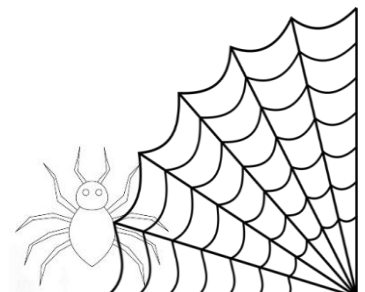
BRIDGES

ARCHITECTURAL LINKS

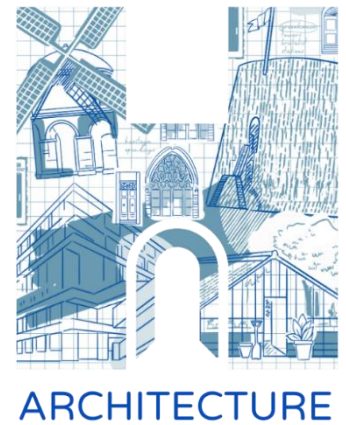


Spanning wide rivers, deep canyons or humble streams, bridges take many forms and serve many purposes. The oldest form the stone arch bridge, the modern the slender suspension bridge.

Arranged by Gemma Crouchman

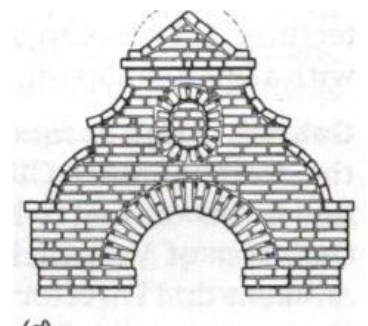
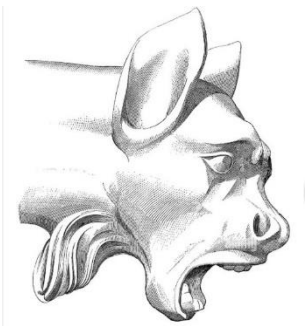






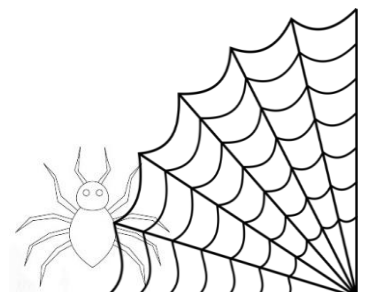
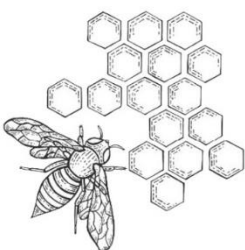
GARGOYLES

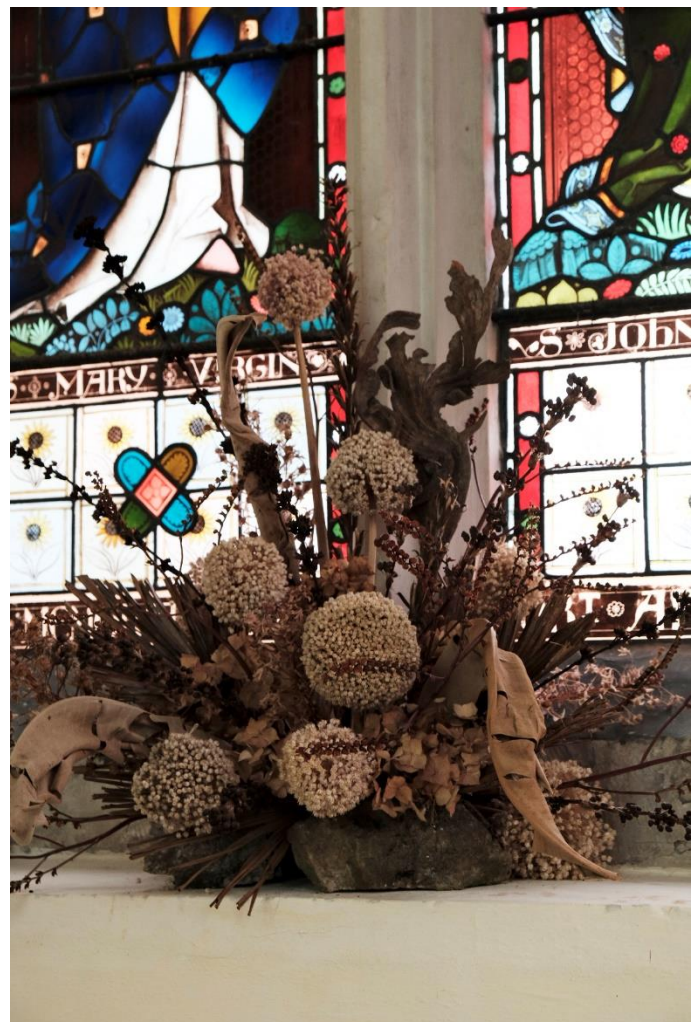
ARCHITECTURAL SPOUTS



The ornate sometimes terrifying roof spouts. Gargoyles have been built into churches since medieval times the first believed to be on a cathedral in France. St. Christopher's has only two.

Arranged by Pauline Booty

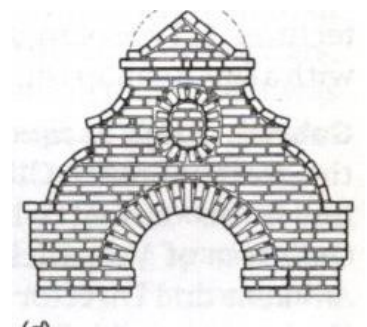
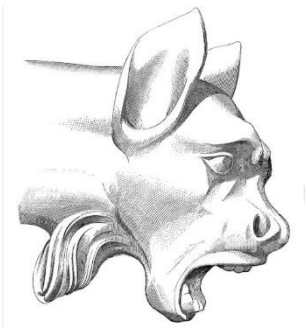






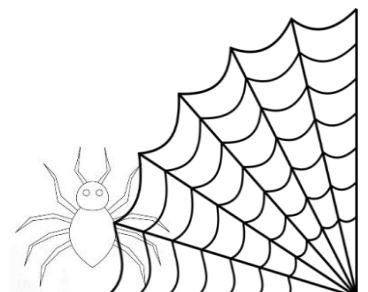
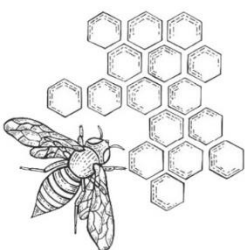
ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURES

NATURES' TREES



Majestically tall or huge in volume trees are astounding natural structures. The Coastal Redwood in California is 116 m high, a Giant Redwood also in California is considered the largest by volume and the oldest is a Great Basin Bristlecone Pine in Nevada which is 4,900 years old.

Arranged by Lin Sanderson

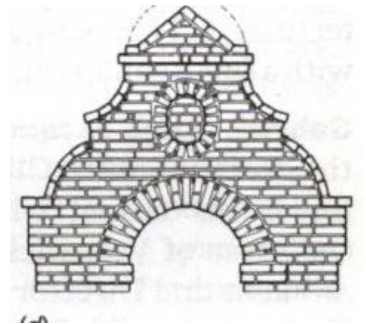
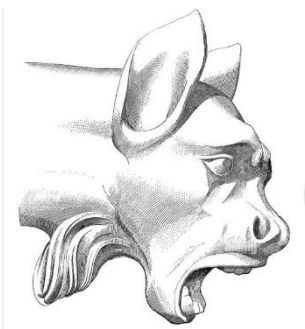






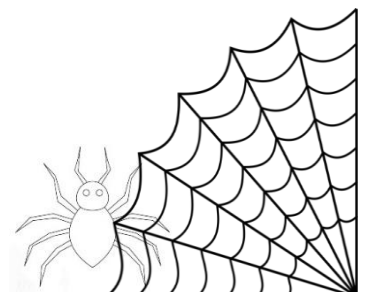
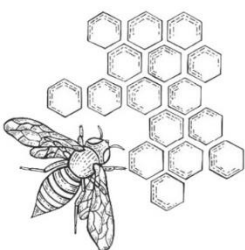
WINDOWS

ARCHITECTURE FENESTRATION



How boring a building would be without windows, how sinister. Without natural light and a view of the outside world life in a windowless place would be dreadful. Sash, casement, eyebrow, clerestory a whole range. Here in St. Christopher's the windows are enhance by the stained glass.

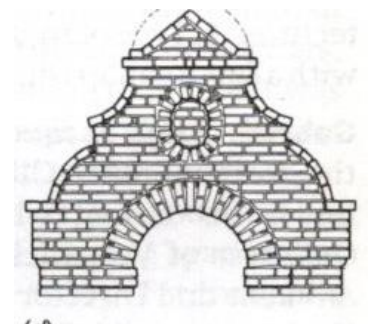
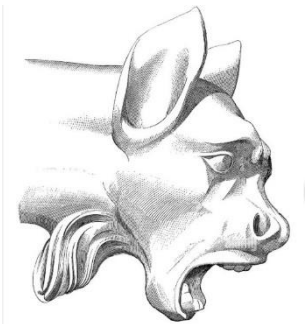
Arranged by Heather Gooday





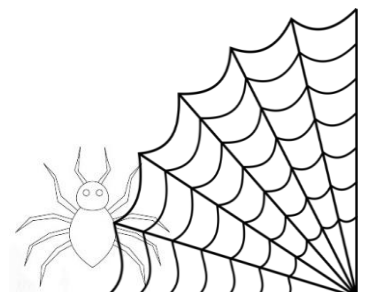
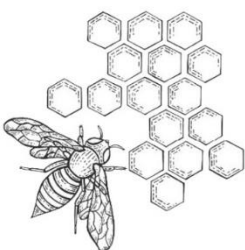


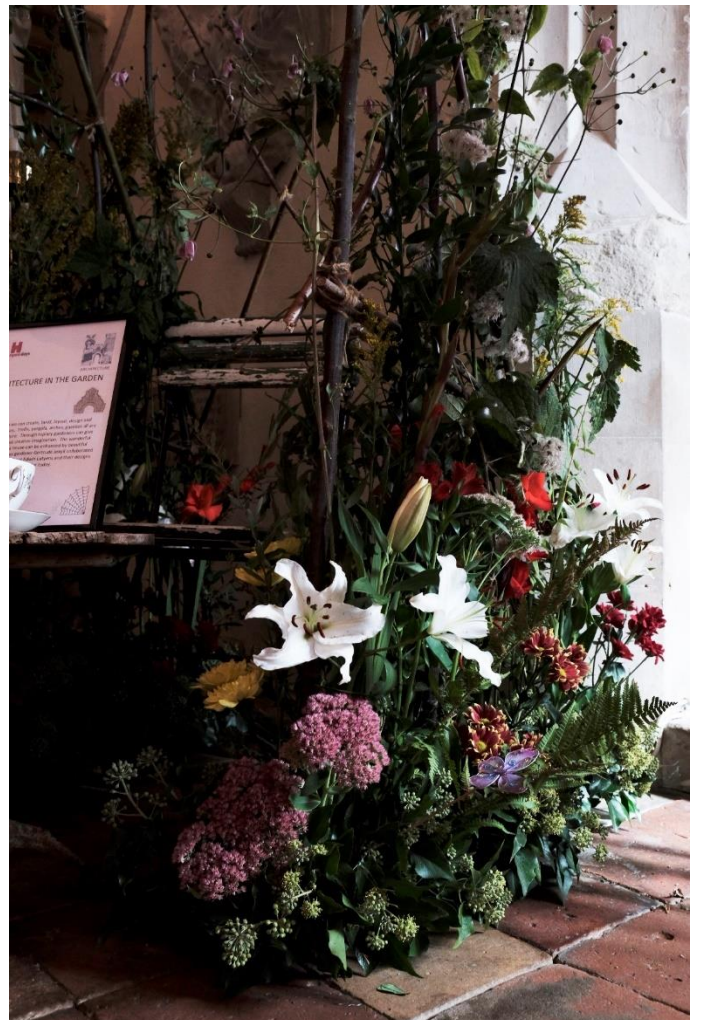
ARCHITECTURE IN THE GARDEN



In the garden we can create and build, layout, design and coordinate colours. Trellis, pergola, arches and gazebos all are garden architecture. Through topiary master gardens can give vent to their most creative imagination. And how else to set off the wonderfully architecture of a house than to surround it with beautiful gardens.

Arranged by Pauline Booty





THE BOUNTY OF THE LAND

A selection of local produce grown with much labour and care.



Apple “Evereste” painted by Francesca Ross wife of a former priest of Willingale.

Arranged by Heather Gooday with produce from local gardens.



21. Incidental

In addition to the displays there were floral arrangements located around the church.

On the pulpit steps produce to reflect harvest festival.



On the ends of the pews simple beauty of nature.



On the step of the chancel door.

On the table by the entrance.





On the table by the display of church photos.

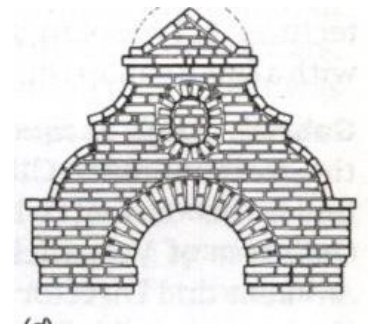
On the transept sideboard.





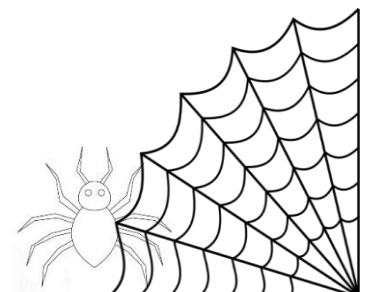
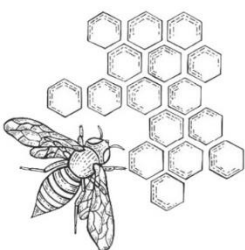
THE FONT

ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURAL



Fonts have been installed in churches since Anglo Saxon times. The font in Wells cathedral dates from 705 AD. They are generally octagonal and lavishly decorated. Each face of the St. Christopher's font has a recessed round-lobed quatrefoil within a circle with an uncharged shield in centre.

Arranged by Pauline Booty





23. Ringing Demonstrations

Bell ringing is an important part of the life of St. Christopher's. Over the weekend two demonstrations of bell ringing were given consisting of an explanation of the technique of ringing and ringers putting that into practice. As part of the demonstrations CCTV on a screen showed the bells in motion, a 2D model showed the technique and a white board was used to explain changes.

Various people said that they did not realise that ringing was so complex.



24. Church Tours

On the Saturday and Sunday people had the opportunity to join a tour of the church, an informal walk around the building during which some of the less apparent features and history of the building were explained. Having been built just over 700 hundred years ago it is no surprise that there is a lot of history in St. Christopher's but some of that is less obvious and intriguing. Such as the memorial slab that has dates for the birth and death of a child suggesting that she died before she was born.

25. Children's Activities

There were activities for children. In line with the architecture theme, children had the opportunity to be creative and build using Lego with the results being put on display.



To encourage children to explore the church and look at its contents children were set the task of the hunt the gargoyle game wherein they searched the church to find photos of gargoyles and mark the positions on their copy of a plan of the church.



26. Harvest Festival Service

At 9.30 on Sunday 21st the parish celebrated with a well-attended service of harvest festival that was led by Rev Gibbs and followed the format of St. Cristopher's family service. The hymns were:

121 Come, ye faithful people com
169 For the fruits of his creation
167 For the beauty of the earth
705 We plough the fields and scatter

The organ was played by Richard Overill.

The reading was taken from Psalm 65 verses 9 to 13.

You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide their grain, for so you have prepared it.
You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops.
You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance.
The grasslands of the wilderness overflow, and the hills are clothed with gladness.
The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain;
they shout for joy and sing.

As was appropriate for harvest festival the reading was given by Sally Green wife of Bernard Green who farms Shellow Cross Farm.

During the service local farmer Stuart Bosworth gave a verbal review of the farming year. Stuart started by mentioning that the Bosworth family had been farming Spains Hall Farm for 91 years. Spain Hall Farm is an integrated farm that has an arable operation providing cereals that are then used on the farm as feed for pigs. The pigs are processed by a company owned by the farm and sold as bacon and sausages.

In his review Stuart explained had arable yields and been slightly less than the ten-year average for the farm on account of low rainfall and taking on acreage new to the farm where soil conditions needed to be improved. Stuart explained the sophisticated veterinary management adopted by the pig farming operation and how these ensured high standards of animal welfare.

Immediately following the service the congregation enjoyed a breakfast of bacon and sausage rolls cooked by Ian Kerwin and Ray Booty using bacon and sausages kindly donated by Stuart.



27.Fact and Figures

The two days attracted 166 visitors.

Local publicity and the St. Christopher's entry in the National Heritage Open Days web site had enabled people from beyond Willingale to find out about the weekend and visit.

The weekend raised £750.

Over 21 volunteers worked in one way or another to make the weekend a great success.