

Discovering Broadland's Churches

5 mile route from Drayton to Spixworth

Drayton St Margaret

This well loved parish church set in the heart of the village was mainly rebuilt in the 19th century after the old tower collapsed in 1850. It is built of flint and the nave roof is thatched. There was a church built on the present site during the reign of Richard 1 and the first rector was appointed in 1198. However the font dates from 1150 and the graveyard from 1160, pointing to the possibility that there was an even earlier church in Drayton. In the churchyard is a coffin lid dating from the 14th century which is of interest because of its age and decoration. Much of the interior of the church is 19th century, although the octagonal font bowl stands on Norman colonnades. Most of the stained glass is 19th century but two panels in the south east nave windows are 17th century. The nave and tower have examples of comparatively rare 13th century windows with plate tracery. There is an interesting story about the church's chalice, of which there was no trace until 1920 although church records showed there had been one, dating from 1567. It was returned by a local man who had received it as a Christening cup as a baby. He had heard of the chalice missing from the church and realised it was the same one. This is an attractive, busy church which is well used by the community.

Horsford All Saints

This is an attractive church standing at the edge of the growing village of Horsford which was mentioned in



William the Conqueror's Domesday Book. Built mainly in the 13th century it has had many

repairs, alterations and extensions, including the tower which was built in the 15th century, therefore its appearance has changed considerably over the years. Inside the church is an unusual Purbeck stone font thought to be Norman and a medieval carved wooden screen. There are interesting memorials to the Barrett-Lennard family, Lords of Horsford Manor, and the Day family, who lived at Horsford Hall. These include a stained glass window in memory of three young sisters, Edith, Dorothea and Nora, who all died of consumption within two years of each other. There is also a headstone in the churchyard to John Pirsins, an 11 year old boy who died of his wounds while serving in the First World War at the Battle of Camperdown.

There is a list in the nave of all the vicars of Horsford, beginning in 1335. Two of these men, Walter Holm and John Ingeland, are said to have died of the Black Death, at the altar. There is much to see around this well loved church.

Horsham St Faith and St Mary and St Andrew

This church originates from the Priory of St Faiths that was founded here in 1107. The

site of the Priory is just north of the church and is also open to the public during the St Faiths Festival in October, for viewing of its monastic wall paintings and cloister garden. St Faith was born at Agen in Aquitaine in France, and became a martyr for her faith by being burned to death on an iron grill. The priory was built after pilgrims Robert Fitzwilliam and his wife were taken prisoners by robbers in France, and were 'miraculously' set free after constant prayer to St Faith, whose shire they were visiting. They vowed to build a monastery in her honour on thier return to England.

The building of the church dates from 1290 when the tower was erected. This



was often used during the war as a watch tower, as there was an RAF station nearby. The tower, which has been restored, has grotesque gargoyles on its exterior angles and now holds six bells instead of the original four. The two storey porch contains an unusual figure of St Andrew bound to the cross. Inside the church is a 15th century font that has a fine 17th century Jacobean cover and lambs' head at the base. The pulpit of around 1480 shows 12 painted panels of unusual Saints. Note the well preserved 16th century screen with its painting of the saints - this was a gift of William Wulcy and his two wives. This is a church full of interesting and ornate objects for the visitor to discover and is open every day. The church in St Faiths now acts as both a Parish Church and Methodist Church.

Spixworth St Peter

From the outside this is perhaps a rather odd looking church but once entered by the tiny wooden door the feeling is very welcoming. Built in 1160 by the Bardolfe family the church originally had a round tower. This collapsed in 1804 but as the damage did not warrant complete reconstruction it was merely encased by a square tower. The two bells are amongst the oldest in England. Inside, the church has a 12th century Norman font with a new carved wooden cover which was given by the family of Camilla Chittock and her daughter Janet, who both died in 1967, and a 14th century piscina - the basin used for washing communion vessels. Probably the most noteworthy item in the church is the large alabaster memorial to William and Alice Peck with inscriptions dated 1634, marble figures lying in shrouds with beautiful verses below and the family crest and helmet above. There are also memorials to the Longe family who were Lords of the manor for around 200 years. This is an unusual church which is well used by the community.



Drayton to Spixworth

Directions

The tour begins in Drayton. From the Norwich outer ring road take the A1067 Norwich to Fakenham road, north west of the city. After 2½ miles, at the far end of Drayton, turn right signed Horsford. Continue past the pub and the first church we visit on the tour is immediately on your left.

- 1 Turn left from the church, right at the mini roundabout and continue for ½ mile along Hall Lane.
- 2 Turn left signed Horsford and at the next crossroads go straight ahead. Continue for ¾ mile.
- 3 At the staggered crossroads again go straight ahead. Next church on the left.

4 Continue for almost a mile and at the end of this road turn left then immediately right signed Horsham St Faiths. Follow the road into the village and the next church is on the left.

5 From the church continue straight ahead and where the road bends to the left turn right signed Spixworth, opposite the St Faiths village sign. At the junction turn left and continue for about 1½ miles. At the end of this road the next church we visit is directly in front of you.

This is where our tour ends. From the church turn left signed Catton and Norwich and follow the road for 3 miles back to the Norwich outer ring road.

