



* ST. MARY'S CHURCH * WREAY *
A Magical Mystery Tour

St Mary's Church is a magical place, filled with animals and flowers, monsters and insects. It was created by the imagination of an unusual lady, Sarah Losh. Sarah lived nearby and between 1840 and 1842 she designed and paid for the building of a new church. Her ideas came from the buildings she had seen while travelling in Italy but her builders and craftsmen were just local people.



There is a plaque in memory of the stonemasons - what were they called?

As you walk around look out for animals and find 10 of them in this word square.



BAT, BUTTERFLY, COCK,
 DOVE, DRAGON,
 DRAGONFLY, EAGLE,
 LAMB, OWL, STORK

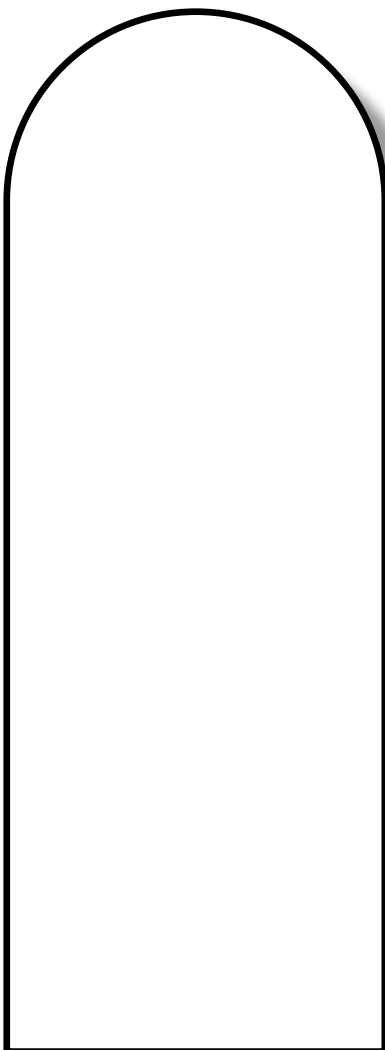


A	D	M	C	O	C	K	C	B
N	R	H	O	T	J	I	U	A
E	A	G	L	E	O	T	P	T
K	G	W	N	Q	T	S	V	R
R	O	Y	X	E	A	F	K	O
O	N	D	R	A	G	O	N	P
T	F	F	O	S	C	H	D	Y
S	L	I	C	V	B	M	A	L
Y	Y	P	L	P	E	T	H	O

Sarah not only loved animals but she used them as symbols, such as the dove for peace. In a corner near the front of the church find two birds, one for day and one for night.

What type of birds are they?

Walk into the apse - the round end where the altar stands. You are surrounded by 13 seats, one each for Jesus and his Disciples. Each seat has a badge. Whose badges are these?



High up in the apse you will see a row of small deep windows. In these are the carved outlines of fossil plants. When Sarah was alive scientists were just beginning to study fossils and the idea of evolution. Draw your favourite fossil.



So you see that Sarah had an interest not only in art and architecture but also in science. She liked the symbolism of numbers as well. The numbers 3,4 and 7 are magical - 3 for the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, 4 for the Elements, earth, air, fire and water and 7 for the Gifts of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness and self control. As you walk back down the aisle look at the windows - they are in groups of 3, 4 and 7. In total there are 84 windows. Choose the correct maths signs (+ - ÷ x) to finish this sum.

$$3 \quad 4 \quad 7 \quad = \quad 84$$

At the back of the church on the left you will see the font for baptisms. Sarah herself helped to carve this. You will find more animals on the side of the font.

Put a cross through the odd one out.



Now look around the inside of the door and see if you can spot another animal eating a gourd. You can read all about him and Jonah in the Bible in Chapter 4 of the story of Jonah.



The handles of the door are carved as pine cones - this is another of Sarah's magical symbols. A pine cone looks dead but if you plant it, it will grow into a tree and so it is a symbol of new life. Sarah never married but she was fond of a family friend, Major William Thain. He had fought at Waterloo and was a local hero. In 1842 he was fighting in the Afghan War and sent a pine cone home to Sarah. She planted it in the church grounds where it grew into a tall tree. Look around and you will see many more cones.



Major Thain did not return home as he was killed by an enemy arrow. To remember William, Sarah used the symbol of the arrow to decorate her church.



How many metal arrows can you find?
You will have to look outside as well.

Sarah built the church to replace an older one. She saved the font from the old church and now it stands outside as a bird bath. What is the date on it?

Nearby is a sun dial.
Can you complete the motto that is written around it?

DO _____ WORK _____

Walk around the church and high up you will see gargoyles in animal shapes. Gargoyles on churches usually act as spouts for rainwater from the roof but at St Mary's only one ever served a useful purpose. Find the dragon. Originally the church was heated by a stove and the chimney ended in the dragon's mouth so that he looked to be breathing smoke!



Design your own gargoyle



In the church grounds you will find a large stone pillar. This is a copy of the very old cross at Bewcastle. Sarah had it erected in memory of her parents.

Find the bird and complete the picture. What is he eating?

In the small graveyard you will find many tombstones with the name Losh carved on them. Find Sarah's and you will see that she was buried with her sister. What was her name?



Sarah was very fond of her sister but she died young and Sarah missed her very much. In fact she built the church as a memorial to her sister. This is the end of our magical mystery tour around a very special church built by a very special lady.