

GUIDE TO HOLY TRINITY CHURCH SEATON CAREW

John Lawson was a great supporter of the lifeboat, turning out in all weathers to cheer the men on when they went to rescue sailors. He enlarged the church, extended the graveyard, and erected the Seafarers' Memorial. Up to 500 people used to attend a service in those days.

As a mark of their appreciation for his service, parishioners marked his 25th anniversary in 1860 by raising £613 to build an extension to the vicarage. In his later years, he had a curate to help—James Pattison, famed for his photos of the local area and people, which can be seen on the Hartlepool History Then and Now website.

9. Fawcus window

Anna Maria and Robert Fawcus had 14 children and lived on The Green in the 1850s to 1860s, in the left hand semi detached house on the south west corner of North Road. The parish history tells of the exploits of this family. Robert was a local businessman, acting as agent for the collieries in shipping coal, spending a lot of time on the continent. Letters between him and his wife have survived, giving a picture of daily life in Seaton Carew at this time.

10. Ralph Thomson Walker window

This commemorates a local farmer from Greatham. It depicts Jesus saying 'Suffer the little children to come unto me'.

11. Vicars of Holy Trinity

The faithful clergy who have guided the church are shown in two frames. They are also noted on an oak board on the back wall. However, neither show the first two priests-in-charge (too early for photos). James Lawson (vicar 1831-33) was the son of Lady Lawson the founder of the church. He was succeeded by Arthur Guinness, grandson of the famous brewer from Dublin, who sadly died only two years later, and is buried at Harrogate.

We hope you have enjoyed your visit—please sign the visitors' book and spend a little time in the churchyard, where you will see the gravestones of many faithful servants of the church as well as the Seafarers' Memorial to those who died at sea.

Have a safe journey home and may God bless you.

Welcome to Holy Trinity Church; we hope you enjoy your visit. The church was built in 1831, when Seaton was a village with only about 300 residents, but due to its status as a fashionable seaside resort, many visitors came to take the air.

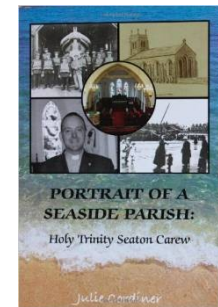
The church has served the community for generations and we continue to look after it. Thanks to a Heritage Lottery Fund grant and a major fundraising drive by members of the congregation, the stonework has recently been restored, the roof realigned and the clock and bells brought back into working order.

This leaflet will guide you round the church, pointing out items of interest and people linked with it.

People from all walks of life have worshipped here, leaving their mark in different ways. The church's location by the sea means it has seen many funerals of shipwreck victims and people who have drowned in accidents—59 such people are buried here. Villagers used to send wreaths and attend the funerals of those who had no-one to mourn them. The

churchyard contains a Seafarers' Memorial in memory of those who died at sea.

If you would like to know more about Seaton and its church, please ask for our parish history book which is on sale, priced at £10. It can also be purchased at Hartlepool Central Library, Art Gallery or Maritime Experience. All proceeds go to the church.



In 1831 the church was smaller than it is today. It only consisted of the tower and the nave with pews and benches of dark wood. There was no gallery (balcony), and the altar was a simple table against the east wall, which had three pointed windows. In 1842 it was extended, adding the chancel at the east end and a gallery in which a barrel organ was installed.

So... on with the visit.

1. The Nave

As you walk down the left hand aisle of the nave, notice how the side pews are slightly higher than those in the middle. There are brass card holders at the end of some, where families who paid 'pew rents' placed their names. There were free pews for those who could not afford to pay.

2. School banner (and see another on opposite wall)

The two banners were made by the church school, Holy Trinity Primary, depicting the links between the Diocese of Durham and Lesotho in Africa.

3. Wray window

The first stained glass window on your left, in the north wall, is the earliest surviving window, in memory of sisters Anna Wray (d.1843) and Jane Wray (d.1856). Jane was a local landowner living in Seaton. The coats of arms are from the Wray and Ferrand families, representing their parents' union. Their great-grandfather Richardson Ferrand was Mayor of Stockton.

4. Colonel Thomlinson window

This is the most recent stained glass window, given in 1965 by the family of Colonel Sir William Thomlinson, who lived at Seaton Hall on The Green, now a nursing home. The window depicts the church itself, buffeted by the wind from the sea, and also shows the Seaton Carew Ironworks where he was in charge. He was a significant local figure, being a JP, a councillor, an officer in the Durham Light Infantry, and Deputy Lieutenant of County Durham. He funded the clock and bells, the font and the pulpit.

5. Empire Star bookcase

The oak case beneath the Thomlinson window holds the Book of Remembrance. The dedication gives thanks for the survival of the Empire Star ship when it was attacked by the Japanese while rescuing evacuees from Singapore in 1942. Its connection with Holy Trinity is a mystery; an anonymous parishioner donated the piece of furniture in 1967.

6. The Chancel

Step up to the chancel where the altar is. The Sanctuary chair on the left is one of several by Robert 'Mousey' Thompson of Kilburn—see the mouse

carved on the front leg. The chair is in memory of Annie, wife of William Wilson Clark. He was a school teacher at Ward Jackson Junior School and founded Carlton Camp outdoor education centre near Stokesley.

The organ was built here in 1891, replacing the one on the balcony. The triple East Window is in memory of Ann & Julius Ernst Guthe, who died in 1917. It depicts the baptism, crucifixion and ascension of Jesus Christ. Julius Guthe was born in Germany but it was in Hartlepool that he created a successful shipbuilding company. He amalgamated it with Ralph Ward Jackson's Steam Navigation Company, and had Christopher Furness as Chairman—a trio of well-known businessmen.

The altar came from St Oswald's Church, and the table to its right was given in memory of Canon Booth, vicar at Seaton from 1936-1954. The dark wood vicar's stall was made for him—an indication of his girth! The medallions in the three south windows are from the original 1842 windows.

The altar rail and the lighter oak choir stalls are also by Robert Thompson, given in memory of Stanley Dryden Robinson, a choirboy and churchwarden. After an argument with the Diocesan Advisory Committee, the plaque commemorating the gift had to be hidden on the inside of the choir stall on the south side of the chancel.

How many 'Mousey' Thompson carved mice can you find in the chancel?

7. War Memorial

Stepping back down to the nave, see the First World War memorial dedicated by the Bishop of Durham in 1921, on the same day as he unveiled the church bells and the war memorial on the Green. There is also a memorial for the Second World War. The south wall also holds plaques in memory of the Tilly brothers who died in WW1. They were sons of Tobias Harry Tilly, a local solicitor who also donated the magnificent eagle lectern.

8. John Lawson window

The Good Shepherd window near the war memorial corner remembers John Lawson, vicar for 55 years, during which he never took a single day off. He was an inspiration to the people of Seaton, and founded the church school (in what is now the parish centre) in 1843, well before the 1870 Education Act.