

Now get up and walk around the Abbey
Look for:

- Bob the builder's column - look at the top of it
- The names of the four people who bought the Abbey for the people of Romsey
- The till receipt for the Abbey signed by Henry VIII
- St Nicholas statue, patron saint of (*? Can you guess the answer?*)
- The remains of the original Saxon church in St Lawrence chapel
- The last three bays of the nave, with their pointed arches, all the other arches are in the Norman rounded style
- Look for the head of hair in a glass cabinet near the west window. This was found in a lead lined coffin under the Abbey. There was nothing left except the hair. I wonder what amazing shampoo this lady used?

Educational Visits to Romsey Abbey

We want to make the parish church as useful to your school / organisation as possible.

We want to make sure that every visit you make meets your needs and also exceeds your expectations. To do this we want to tailor each visit to your specific requirements.

If you are thinking about using Romsey Abbey for an educational visit, please contact the Parish Office to discuss your requirements and to book a date and time.

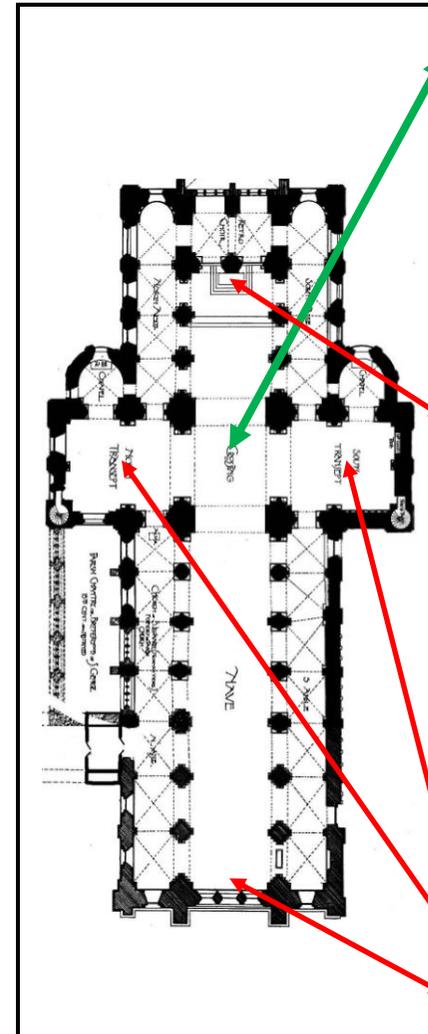
Please contact the Parish Office on:
Telephone: 01794 513 125 or
Email: parishoffice@romseyabbey.org.uk

Romsey Abbey 30 Minute Quick Visit Guide

Thank you for visiting Romsey Abbey today. We have prepared this "30 Minute Quick Visit Guide" to support you in guiding your group around the Abbey. It will allow you to see some basic details of the Abbey church, keep your group interested and informed and hopefully inspire you to return to find out even more. See the contact details on the back page for information on planning your next visit.

With our best wishes.

The Volunteer Team at Romsey Abbey



- Start by sitting in the crossing facing east towards the high altar
- Get everyone quite and listening to the silence in the Abbey
- People have worshipped here for over 1000 years, they have prayed to God, thanking God for life, asking for forgiveness and asking for help
- Take time to look up at the height and decoration of the ceilings
- Look east towards the high altar
- For over 1,100 years there has been a church here in Romsey and every day there have been and continue to be services (times of worship) in the Abbey
- People have been baptised, married and buried here
- There have been countless amazing and special services and events
- Queens and Kings have visited, famous people have visited, prayed and performed in this place
- Look south into the transept of St Nicholas (clockwise from the high altar)
- Look north into the transept of St Lawrence, this was the people's church
- Look west towards the tall plain glass windows, see how long the nave is

When Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries (the dissolution of the monasteries) in the 1530's, the fact that part of the Abbey was used by the people of Romsey as their parish church, meant Romsey people wanted to keep this building. Many churches like Romsey Abbey were pulled down, but four people helped raise enough money to buy the Abbey from King Henry VIII. It cost £100 in 1544, probably the same as £4,000,000 in today's money

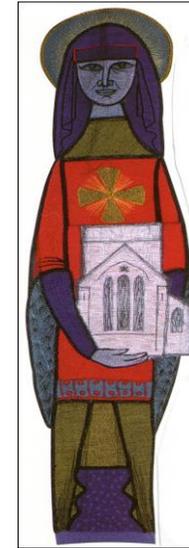


- You can find their names on a paving stone in front of the high altar. See if you can see the connection between some of their names. (think food)
- The receipt for the purchase of the Abbey is still here. It's in a cabinet on the south side aisle in the east end of the Abbey. It's probably the poshest till receipt in Hampshire

- Romsey Abbey started in 907AD when King Edward the Elder, settled some nuns here under the charge of his daughter Elflaeda
- In 960 King Edgar re-founded the Abbey under the rule of St Benedict

A simple explanation of the rule would be:

- Obedience** - the nuns must obey the abbess at all times and straight away
- Silence** - usually nuns were expected to be silent during the day and night
- Humility** - nuns should be humble, not full of pride
- Pray** - nuns had to pray seven times a day, even during the night when prayers were said at 2:00 am
- Possessions** - nuns were given only what they needed, they dressed simply with clothes suited to the weather, they did not own anything and had no personal possessions
- Work** - nuns were expected to work every day as well as pray
- Guests** - the Abbey should be a place where people would be welcomed and looked after.



- During this time Ethelflaeda became Abbess in 996
- The Abbey is known as the parish church of St Mary and St Ethelflaeda
- Between 1120-1140 work took place to replace the Saxon church
- It was built in the shape of a cross - look towards the high altar, right towards St Nicholas, left towards St Lawrence and behind towards the west window
- In 1240 the final three bays of the nave were added. They don't match, look at the top of the arches, and the south side is wonky
- 1539 Romsey Abbey Dissolved
- 1544 the Abbey was bought by Robert Cooke, John Salt, John Ham and John Knight



The south capital as drawn by Dr Latham in the early 1800s.

- "Bob the Builder". When stone masons worked on a building they often left their marks or names, usually hidden
- One stone mason at Romsey Abbey was called Robert and he left his name on the top of a pillar
- He signed it with "Robert fecit" which simply translated from the Latin means "Bob built this"
- You can find him in the chapel of St Anne