

Can you find this camel which is carved on the outside of Chapel? The stonemasons often carved faces of people they knew into their work. Who might this man have been?



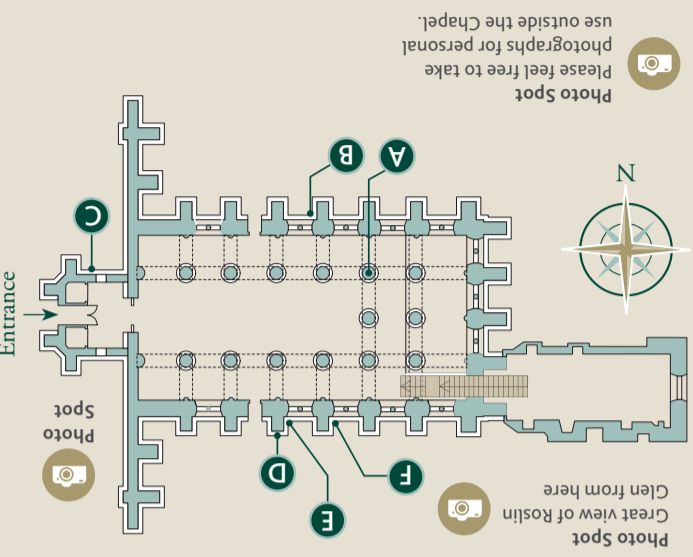
Carved gargoyles like this one act as water spouts. How many gargoyles can you count? The Victorian baptistery was added in the 19th century.



Can you find this carving of a farmwife saving a goose from a hungry fox? The stonemasons who built the Chapel created a secret beehive in this high roof pinnacle.



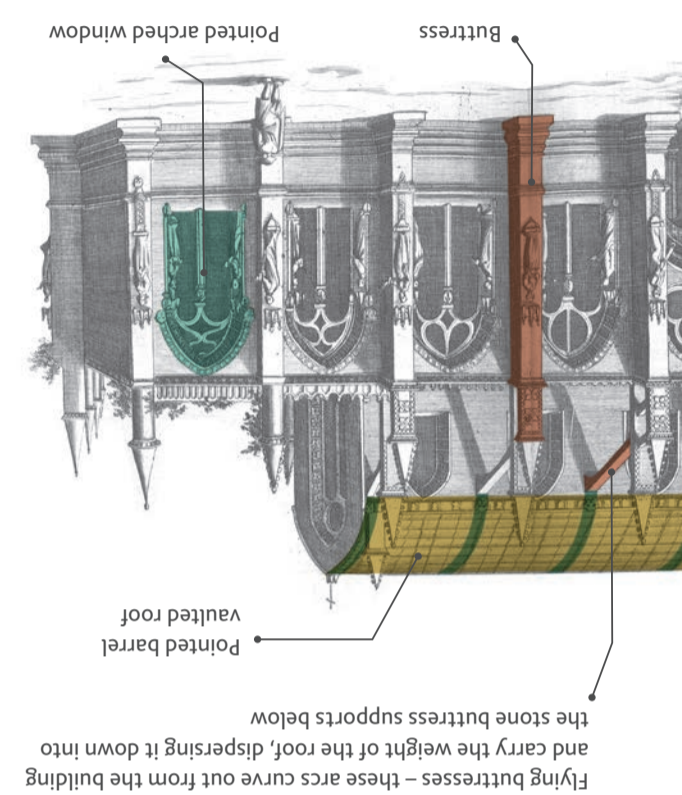
Take a look around the outside of the Chapel. Here are some things to spot.



This monument marks the burial place of the 4th Earl of Roslyn. It is a stretch of ancient woodland in Midlothian and is a haven for all kinds of wildlife. The picturesque landscape, known as Roslin Glen, contains the largest surviving inscribed with a passage from one of the Earl's own sonnets.



**Did you know?**  
The development of the flying buttresses, which carried the weight of the roof outside the building, allowed Gothic architects to build higher and introduce more light into the Chapel.

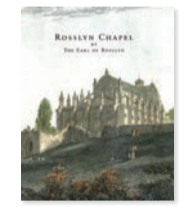


This wall was never intended to form the outside of the Chapel. It marks the start of what would have been the transept, the wider part of the church which joined the choir to the nave.

Here are some things to look for  
This illustration from 1693 shows statues in the niches on the outside of the Chapel. Today they no longer exist but what happened to them remains a mystery.

Rosslyn Chapel is built in the Gothic style of architecture. This emerged in France during the 12th century and spread throughout medieval Europe. Although variations emerged, there are some typical characteristics which help identify the Gothic style.

### Making the Most of Your Visit



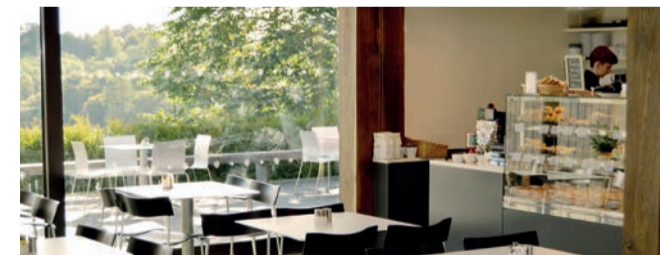
Our official guidebook, on sale in the shop, will help you find out much more about the Chapel and its history. It makes a great souvenir of your visit today.

Rosslyn Chapel Guides give introductory talks throughout the day, helping you find out more about the Chapel and its carvings. There is no additional charge for the talk.



Explore the visitor centre with its interactive displays.

Solve the Rosslyn Mysteries told by the UK's Storyteller Laureate.



Enjoy a drink, snack or lunch at our coffee shop. Choose from our gourmet sandwiches, homemade soups and delicious pastries. We also have a great selection of drinks, including locally roasted coffee. Takeaway service available.



Take home an exclusive souvenir from our Gift Shop.



Thank You For Visiting

We would love your feedback on your visit.

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You can support our work through volunteering, donations and legacies.

Please ask for details or visit [rosslynchapel.com/support](http://rosslynchapel.com/support)



You can turn your day ticket for Rosslyn Chapel into a year's pass, giving you free admission to the Chapel and Visitor Centre for the next twelve months, at no extra cost.

Please ask at reception for details.



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Free map inside

# WELCOME TO ROSSLYN CHAPEL 1446

Explore the Mystery  
Discover the History

We hope you enjoy your visit, which provides vital income to care for the Chapel.  
Thank you for your valuable support.

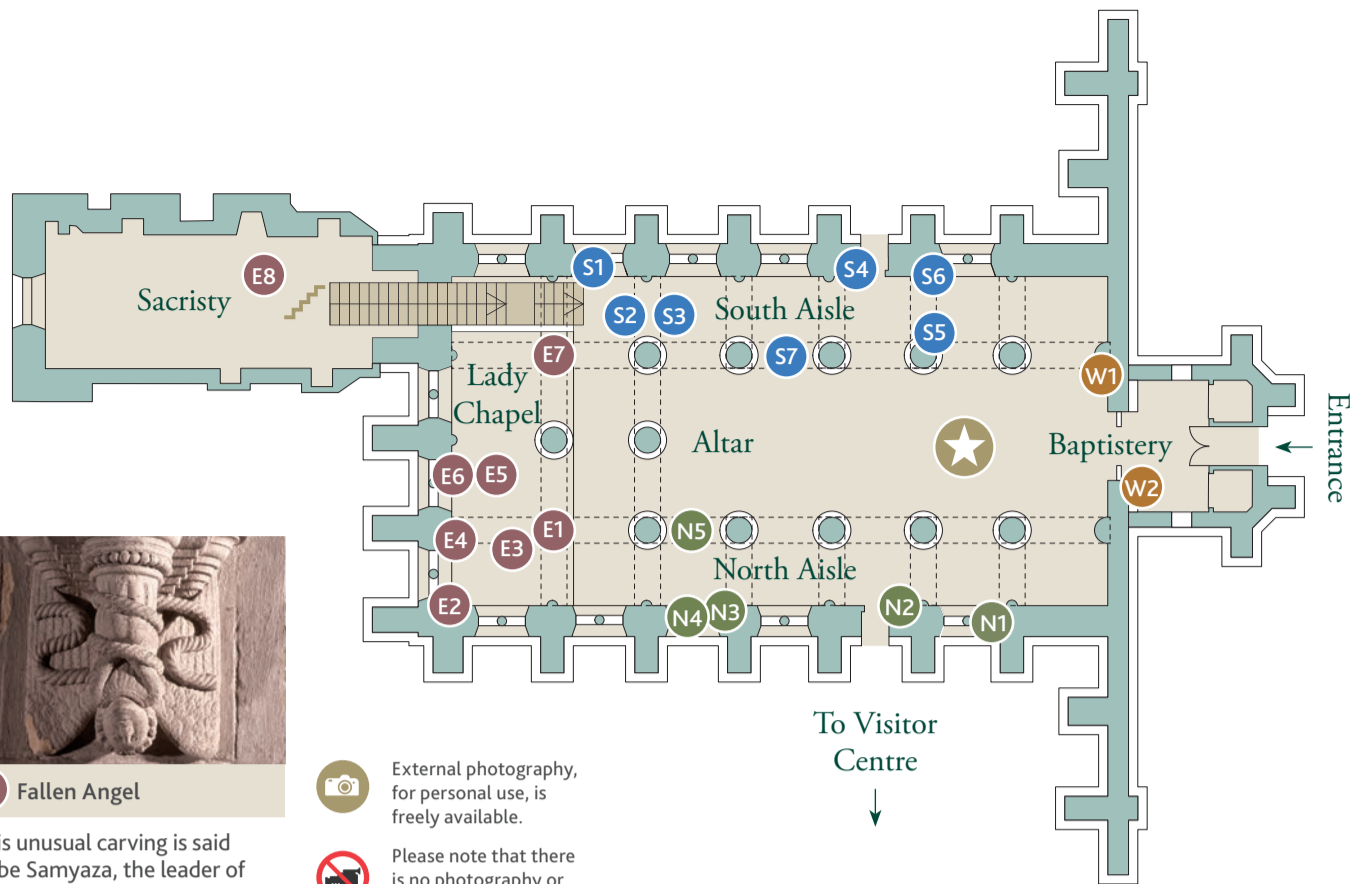
[www.rosslynchapel.com](http://www.rosslynchapel.com)

# The Carvings

Founded in 1446 by Sir William St Clair, as the Collegiate Church of St Matthew, the Chapel took forty years to build. The beauty of its setting and the mysterious symbolism of its stonework have attracted, inspired and intrigued artists and visitors ever since. This plan will help you to find some of the most famous carvings and features in the Chapel.

Please take care, as you walk round, as some of the floors can be uneven in such an old building.

We gratefully acknowledge support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Scotland towards the recent conservation project.



**N1** Devil and Lovers

The devil turns away in anger from the two lovers who gaze towards a carved angel, holding a cross, opposite them.



**N2** The Crucifixion

The ladder in the background of this carving suggests that it depicts Christ's descent from the cross.



**E4** Fallen Angel

This unusual carving is said to be Samyaza, the leader of the fallen angels, thrown out of heaven. He is sometimes called Lucifer.

External photography, for personal use, is freely available.

Please note that there is no photography or video allowed inside the Chapel as this can distract or inconvenience other visitors.

★ Don't forget to stand in the Chapel and look all around. There are so many more carvings to see!



**N3** Lamb of God

As well as being a reference to Christ, the Lamb of God was a symbol used by the Knights Templar, whose aim was to protect pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land during the Crusades.



**N4** Angel with engrailed cross

This angel holds a shield decorated with an engrailed cross – the coat-of-arms of the St Clair family. The engrailed cross is repeated many times throughout Rosslyn Chapel.



**E5** Birth of Christ (overhead)

This carving in the shape of the eight-pointed star of Bethlehem, depicts Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, three wise men and three shepherds around its sides.



**E6** Green Man (jutting out)

Rosslyn is renowned for its many carvings of the Green Man. The vines sprouting from the figure's mouth represent nature's growth and fertility.



**S3** Seven Deadly Sins

The second part of the moral lesson on this lintel depicts the deadly sins which people should not commit, including greed, anger and gluttony.



**N5** Knight with dog (floor)

The knight etched into the stone floor slab could represent Sir Alexander Sutherland, father-in-law of William St Clair who founded Rosslyn Chapel.



**E1** Mason's Pillar

This pillar carved by the master mason is much simpler than the elaborately carved apprentice pillar (see **E7**), perhaps indicating why the mason flew into a jealous rage.



**E7** Apprentice Pillar

Inspired by a dream, an apprentice mason is said to have carved this pillar in his master's absence. On his return, the master mason flew into a jealous rage killing the apprentice.



**E8** Sacristy

The sacristy is the oldest part of the Chapel and was probably used as a workshop when the upper Chapel was being built. A template for one of the stonecutters is etched into the wall. Please do not touch this fragile sketch.



**S1** Maize

This is one of the more exotic plant carvings in the Chapel. It is thought to be maize, which grows in North America.



**S4** Veil of Veronica

Here St Veronica holds up a veil which shows the image of Christ. Legend tells that Christ's features were transferred when he wiped his brow on the veil.



**S5** Aloe Vera

There are lots of carvings of local plants in the Chapel but this one is from further afield. Aloe vera grows in hot, dry places such as India and North Africa. It is known for its medicinal uses.



**S6** William the Seemly

This knight could be William 'the Seemly' St Clair, who is said to have escorted Queen Margaret to Scotland for her marriage to King Malcolm Canmore in 1070.



**S7** Tilson Window

Unveiled in 2021, this window was designed by Joe Tilson RA and marks the 25th anniversary of Rosslyn Chapel Trust.



**E2** Dance of Death

These figures are caught in the 'Dance of Death': look for the skeletons pushing and pulling the reluctant people to meet their fate. The carving symbolises death's inevitable triumph over life.



**E3** Angel with bagpipes

This angel playing the bagpipes celebrates Christ's birth. Bagpipes first appeared in Scotland from the mid-1400s and this is thought to be one of the earliest depictions of the instrument.



**S2** Seven Acts of Mercy

This lintel is the first part of a moral lesson to demonstrate the seven virtues by which people should live. These include helping the needy and feeding the hungry. One of the Virtues has been transposed with one of the Sins – Greed appears within the Virtues and Charity with the Sins. Was this a simple mistake? Or does it suggest that each of us has the capacity for both good and evil?



**W1** William the Founder

This carving is thought to be of the founder of the Chapel, William St Clair. He began building Rosslyn Chapel in 1446 but died in 1484 before it was complete.



**W2** Trillium

Like maize and aloe vera, trillium is one of the exotic plants carved in the Chapel. It grows in North America and Asia.