

### **Things to look for**

(while you are enjoying your tea, try to find the following fittings that are part of the history of the Holy Trinity).

**Door:** (now placed within the Saxon tower) 14th or early 15th-century with three strap-hinges and pierced scutcheon-plate.

**Font:** early 15th-century, octagonal bowl, each face carved with foliage or blank shield, moulded lower edge with ribbon ornament.

**Memorials:** In the north chapel a marble and alabaster tablet to William Gilbert who lived over the road at Tymperleys (died in 1603), was the physician to Elizabeth I and inventor of electro-magnetism (he was the first person to describe the earth's magnetic field and to realise that there is a relationship between magnetism and electricity). There is also a tablet to John Wilbye (died 1638), one of the greatest English composers of madrigals, erected in 1938 by the English Madrigal societies. Wilbye lived in the house next door to Gilbert where he was music master to Mary, Countess Rivers.

**Funeral hatchments** display the arms of Sir John Shaw (d. 1690) and his wife Thamar (d. 1681), John Brasier (d. 1725), Sir Richard Bacon (d. 1773), and Thomas Talcott (d. 1685).

**Bell:** one by Miles Graye, 1633 (unfortunately you will not be able to find it, as it was stolen in 1960s)

In the **churchyard**, which became a public garden in 1972, look out for the grave of William Gilbert; there are also many 18th and 19th-century tombs including those who fell at Trafalgar but a pyramidal monument to Mary Darcy, Countess Rivers (d. 1644), had been removed by 1748.

### **What is CO1?**

CO1 is a charity working with Colchester Borough Council and English Heritage to restore the Grade 1 listed building as a place of national importance, incorporating a public café, a youth music and arts venue and a place for communities to meet and be supported.

The café is run by employed staff and volunteers, working regularly with organisations such as GO4 Enterprise, whose aims are to provide training, work and ongoing support to young people unable to get employment.

For more information and to find out how you can help, please contact us via our website or pop in.

We hope you enjoyed your visit to this wonderful and historical place.

### **CO1 (Youth Culture Ltd)**

Registered Charity 1085944

### **Café opening times:**

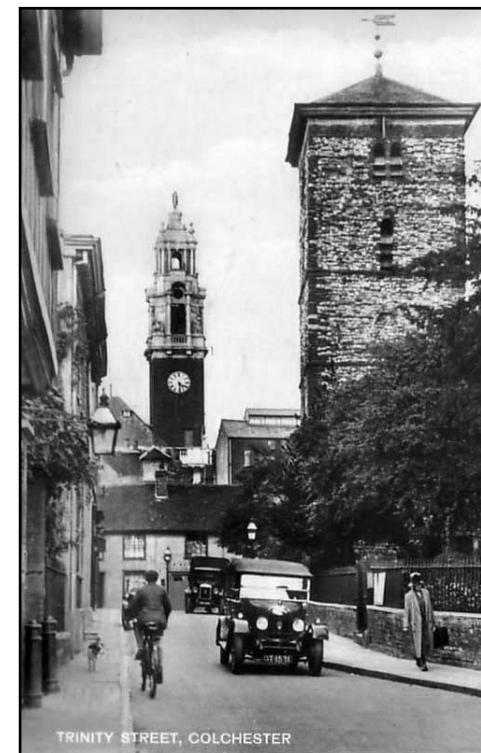
Monday-Saturday 9am-4.30pm

Information compiled by Mrs. Mariana Brown  
with additional information and photos  
by Phil Toms and Nichola Gardiner.



café with a purpose

## Parish Church of the HOLY TRINITY



CO1, Holy Trinity Church,  
Trinity Street, Colchester CO1 1JR

[www.co1.org.uk](http://www.co1.org.uk)

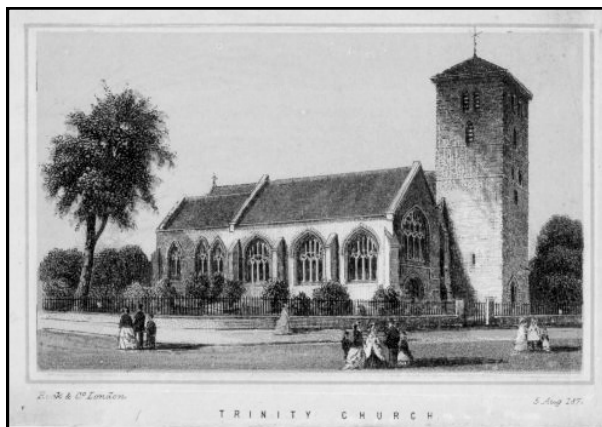
The church would have once stood as a focal feature in the town a few decades before the Normans came and built Colchester castle. Holy Trinity Church is a contrast between Saxon and Roman architectural unique in this country.

This is Colchester's only standing Saxon building, the only remains above ground that we have of the Saxon period are found here.

Built around 1000, the west tower dates from the Saxon period, and is made largely of Roman brick. There is a small Saxon doorway with a triangular head, and some Saxon upper windows. Except for the east end of the chancel and a few other 14th- and 15th-century details the rest of the church is of 1886 when there was a full scale restoration and the north aisle and chapel were rebuilt.

The church is built of flint rubble, septaria, and Roman brick, with dressings of Roman brick and Reigate stone. It comprises a chancel with north and south chapels and south-east vestry, an aisled nave of three bays with south porch, and a west tower of three stages with a pyramidal cap

The Anglo-Saxon church may have been single-celled, the nave and chancel undifferentiated from each other structurally. Parts of the west wall of that church survive, and part of its east wall has been found at the south-east corner of the surviving nave.



*The lithograph above shows Holy Trinity Church and its parishioners during the 1870s.*

*The photo below, which dates from 1892, reveals the familiar Colchester skyline but without the Town Hall, which was built from 1898-1902.*

*The front cover of this leaflet shows Trinity Street in the 1930s. Times may have changed but Holy Trinity Church has stood firm.*



The surviving tower (11 ½ ft square) was added in the later 11th century. In the mid 14th century the nave was rebuilt and the chancel built or rebuilt. The south arcade and aisle and the south porch were built in the late 15th century; the south chapel was added later in the same century.

For many years while the church of St. Mary-at-the-Walls was in ruins, Holy Trinity served as a parish church for both parishes. In the period 1649-51 most of the recorded marriages of Colchester couples took place there.

By 1633, however, the chancel was dilapidated, the tower ruinous, and the churchyard used as a milking yard. Some repairs were done at once, for the tower was fit to receive a new bell later that year.

In the 1850s the church was reseated and plaster removed from the outside walls revealing two niches containing defaced statues.

On Census Sunday 1851, out of a population of 798, congregations of 300 in the morning and 250 in the afternoon were reported, with 50 children at the afternoon Sunday school.

The north aisle and chapel were added in 1866. For nearly 20 years after the closure of the church in 1953 the building was left unoccupied and was vandalized.

In 1972 the borough council, with a gift from the Soroptimists of Colchester, bought the building and in 1974 opened it as a Museum of Rural History. The museum was closed in 1997 and, after 5 years of negotiation and phase one of the restoration process, the Colchester-based charity Youth Culture Ltd. opened CO1 in April 2011.