



PALACE OF HOLYROODHOUSE

FAMILY ABBEY TRAIL

Welcome to Holyrood Abbey. Use this activity trail to help you explore the ruins of this medieval site.

King David I founded this Abbey in 1128 – nearly 900 years ago! Priests, called canons, lived and worshipped here for hundreds of years



LOOK FOR THE INFORMATION BOARD near the entrance to the Abbey

The picture shows you what it looked like when the canons lived here. It was double the size then. Can you see the trees through the big window at the end of the building? The Abbey used to stretch all the way back there.

Spot the Difference

The Abbey was attacked twice during fighting in Edinburgh. It has also been damaged by bad weather over the years.

Compare the picture on the board with how the Abbey looks today.

Can you spot where these things used to be:

PILLARS

DECORATED WALLS

What other differences can you see?

STAINED GLASS

Looking after the Sick

The canons built a hospital beside the Abbey and made medicine from plants to help sick and poor people. There were lots of horrible illnesses in Edinburgh back then.

Unscramble the letters to find out the names of two of the worst diseases

U P G A E L

O R Y E S L P

Sometimes the canons died from these diseases and were buried in the Abbey. Can you find two of their coffins?

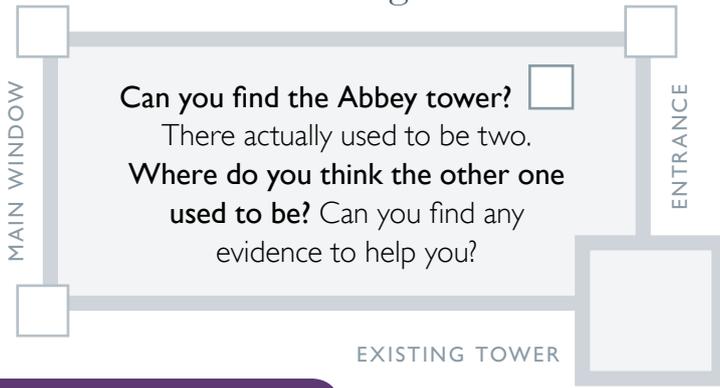
Did You Know?

The canons' day started at 1.30am when they got up to pray.

They grew their own food, plants and vegetables in the grounds outside the Abbey.

The canons looked after sheep and used their wool to make clothes. They didn't eat the sheep though as most of them were vegetarians!

The Missing Tower



Who is buried here?

Some of the royal family who used to live in the Palace were buried in the Royal Vault.

Can you find it?

Here is a clue:



Did You Know?

The second tower was taken down to make room to build part of the Palace.



Grave Investigation

Gravestones can tell us lots about people who lived a long time ago. Choose one of the gravestones and see if you can find out:

The person's name

The year they were born

The year they died

Anything else? Does the stone tell you if they had a job or who was in their family for example?

NOW MAKE YOUR WAY

Keeping Evil Away

The canons wanted people to feel safe and protected when they visited the Abbey.

Look closely. Can you spot the two gargoyles on either side of the door?



These unfriendly faces were carved at the entrance of the Abbey to frighten away evil spirits.

Could you frighten away scary spirits? Make your best gargoyle face!

Look closely. What else would protect you as you walked in to the Abbey?



OUTSIDE THROUGH THE LARGE MAIN DOOR TO THE ABBEY

Repair the Canons' Faces

When the canons used to live here, they had beautifully carved statues of themselves on the outside of the Abbey.

Can you imagine what they used to look like? Draw their faces in the box below and return the canons to their former glory.



CONGRATULATIONS! You've reached the end of the trail. If the Palace Gardens are open you can see more ruins of the Abbey there. If they are closed follow the path back to the Forecourt. We hope you enjoyed exploring Holyrood Abbey.