



One thousand years ago Canterbury was besieged by the Vikings.

The terrified inhabitants held out bravely behind their Roman walls for almost three weeks, until the defences were finally overwhelmed on 29 September 1011.

The city was sacked, the cathedral burned, and many of the inhabitants killed in a bloody massacre.

Archbishop Alphege was captured, and martyred at Greenwich in April 1012, pelted to death with animal bones, because he would not let a ransom of £3,000 be paid for his release.

This dramatic and terrible time in the history of Canterbury is being commemorated throughout September in an action-packed programme of special events including historical re-enactments, Viking trails, museum activity days, lectures, displays, Cathedral and church services and creative writing competitions for adults, children and local schools.

Read on to find out more. We look forward to seeing you at one or more of the events.

Image: Stained glass window depicting the Siege of Canterbury by the Vikings. Copyright Canterbury Cathedral

October 2011

Vicious Vikings animation workshops

Part of Canterbury Anifest

Canterbury Heritage Museum, Stour Street

Saturday 1 October 2011, 10am to 12.45pm

An inspirational morning of animation, storytelling, creativity and fun including making an animated cut-out Viking. Plus Bagpuss and Victorian animators workshops. For children age 5 to 11. Led by professional animators. Each workshop lasts 45 minutes. Advance booking only. Tel 01227 475 202. £4 for one workshop, £7 for two workshops, £9 for three workshops including materials. Organised by Canterbury Museums in partnership with Canterbury Anifest, Smallfilms and members of the Postgate and Firmin families

Siege of Canterbury Millennial Competition

Creative writing competition prize-giving

Old Synagogue, King Street, Canterbury

Sunday 16 October, 5pm

Discover who was shortlisted and who won the Save As Writers Group creative writing competition inspired by the Viking Siege of Canterbury. Including an account of the Siege taken from the original Sagas.

Tickets on the door. Adults and children age 12 plus.

Part of the Canterbury Festival. Organised by the Save As Writers Group

Coming Soon!

Further events and activities are being planned for April 2012 to commemorate the martyrdom of Saint Alphege and the return of his remains to Canterbury Cathedral.

Partners and Sponsors

The Siege of Canterbury Commemoration Committee would like to thank the following organisations and individuals whose generous support has made these events possible.

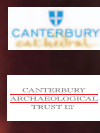
Canterbury City Council, Canterbury Heritage Museum, University of Kent, Canterbury Cathedral, SaveAs creative writing group, Canterbury Society, St Mildred's Area Community Society (SMACS), Oaten Hill and District Society, Canterbury Archaeological Trust, St Mildred's Church, Canterbury Heritage Partnership, St Peter's Church, St Mildred's Church, Peter Berg, Professor Simon Keynes, Marjorie Lyle, Milites de Bec, Badger Rampant and Caent Vikings re-enactment groups, L'Eglise Protestante Française de Canterbury, Westgate Towers Museum, Treasures Revealed Interreg project

the vikings are coming

Special events
in September 2011



1,000th anniversary of the siege
and sacking of Canterbury



The Canterbury Society

Siege of Canterbury Millennial Competition

Creative writing competition (for adults)

Deadline for entries 15 September 2011

Create a piece of poetry or prose inspired by the Viking Siege of Canterbury. Open to all writers. Visit www.saveaswriters.co.uk for further information. The winners will be announced at a special event on 16 October.

Organised by the Save As Writers Group

Siege of Canterbury Viking Saga

Creative writing competition

(for children) Deadline for entries 11 November 2011

Re-tell the story of the Siege of Canterbury and the dramatic murder of Archbishop Alphege as a story, a poem or in pictures. With prizes!

For children age seven to 14. Separate prizes for Key Stage 2 and 3 entries. To download an entry form visit www.canterbury-cathedral.org/schools or contact Canterbury Cathedral Schools Department on **01227 865 262**.

Organised by Canterbury Cathedral Schools Department

Anglo-Saxon and Viking artefacts

Canterbury Heritage Museum, Stour Street

1 to 30 September, daily 10am to 5pm

Discover some amazing artefacts including an intricately carved Anglo-Scandinavian knife and Viking stirrup as part of a time travel tour through Canterbury's history. All activities included in museum entry charge. Free to Canterbury District Residents Card holders and their children. All ages.

Organised by Canterbury Museums

The Vikings are Coming!

Family Activity Day

Canterbury Heritage Museum, Stour Street

Saturday 10 September, 10am to 4pm

Meet Viking and Saxon characters, see amazing Viking artefacts; design a sword, shield and mini longboat; attend Sven Skullcleaver's Viking Warrior School; take part in Noggin the Nog's Viking storytime and see original artwork from this classic children's animation. Admission £8 adults, £6 concessions. All children go free. Special rate for Canterbury District Residents Card holders, £3 adults, £2 concessions. All ages. A Heritage Open Days event.

Organised by Canterbury Museums in partnership with Milites de Bec Viking Re-enactment Group

French Protestant Church

Canterbury Cathedral Crypt

Saturday 10 September, 10am to 4pm

The Black Prince's Chapel, home to the French Protestant Church will be open as part of the Viking city trail and Heritage Open Days. Discover its colourful history and St Alphege link. Free entry to Chapel via Precincts with Viking city trail sheet, available from Canterbury Heritage Museum (see entry above). Suitable for wheelchair users. All ages. A Heritage Open Days event.

Organised by L'Eglise Protestante Française de Canterbury

In the footsteps of the Vikings

Viking city trail

Starts at Canterbury Heritage Museum, Stour Street

Saturday 10 September, 10am to 3pm

Discover the dramatic story of the siege and sacking of Canterbury in a free self-guided trail around the city. Meet the ghosts of real life characters, including ferocious Viking warrior Thorkeld the Tall, traitorous Ælfmaer, and saintly Archbishop Alphege. Free activity. Collect your trail sheet and map at Canterbury Heritage Museum. Viking certificate and badge for all children taking part. The trail is approximately 1.5 miles around quiet city streets, takes one to 1.5 hours and can be shortened to suit younger children. Suitable for wheelchair users. All ages. A Heritage Open Days event.

Organised by Canterbury Museums

Saxons, Vikings and Normans

Living history event

Canterbury Castle, Castle Street, access via Gas Lane

Sunday 11 September, 11am to 4pm

Meet the Saxons and Vikings. Find out about their everyday life and the dramatic Siege and sacking of the city. And meet the team from Canterbury Museums with some intriguing mystery artefacts. Free entry. Full wheelchair access to Castle grounds. All ages. A Heritage Open Days event.

Organised by Canterbury City Council Conservation team in partnership with Canterbury Museums and The Caent Vikings re-enactment group

Canterbury and the Vikings in the reign of King Æthelred the Unready

Open lecture Woolf College Lecture Theatre, University of Kent

Tuesday 27 September, 6.15pm

Public lecture by Professor Simon Keynes (University of Cambridge). Free entry, no tickets necessary. Adults and children age 12 plus.

Organised by the School of History, University of Kent

The Vikings are Coming!

Primary school activity days for KS2 children

Canterbury Heritage Museum and Canterbury Cathedral Schools Department

Thursday 29 and Friday 30 September

Learn about the Viking siege of Canterbury. Meet historic characters, investigate amazing artefacts and enjoy fun hands-on activities.

Contact Martin Crowther on 01227 475 204 or e-mail martin.crowther@canterbury.gov.uk

Organised by Canterbury Museums and Canterbury Cathedral Schools Department

St Alphege and the Siege of Canterbury

Discussion group

St Peter's Church Room, St Peter's Street

Thursday 29 September, 10.30am to 12noon

An informal conversation about the contemporary Christian relevance of Saint Alphege and the Siege of Canterbury.

Coffee will be served. Free entry. All welcome.

Contact admin@canterburycityparish.org

Organised by St Peter's Church

Eucharist in honour of Saint Alphege Church service

St Peter's Church, St Peter's Street

Thursday 29 September, 12.30pm

A special service to honour the memory of Saint Alphege and those killed or captured in the Siege of Canterbury. Free entry. All welcome. Contact admin@canterburycityparish.org

Organised by St Peter's Church

Landmarks of the Viking Siege

Guided walk

Starts outside Tourist Information Office, Buttermarket

Thursday 29 September, 2pm

Led by Peter Berg, a specialist in Scandinavian history.

No charge, but prior booking essential. Phone 01227 450 140 by 15 September. Adults and children age 12 plus.

Organised by the Canterbury Society

Sung Evensong and Commemoration of the Siege of Canterbury

Thursday 29 September, 5.30pm

The Quire, Canterbury Cathedral

This special evensong takes place on the day the city fell to the besiegers. A candle will burn on the ledger stone in commemoration of Archbishop Alphege, and the service will conclude with a procession to the Nave, the site of the Anglo-Saxon Cathedral, for prayers of commemoration. Free entry, No tickets necessary. All ages

Organised by Canterbury Cathedral

Life in Canterbury at the time of the Viking siege Popular Lecture

Thursday 29 September, 7.30pm

Canterbury Heritage Museum, Stour Street

An illustrated talk by an expert from Canterbury Archaeological Trust based on archaeological finds from Canterbury. With objects to see and touch. Admission £6, including refreshments. Advance booking only. Tel 01227 475 202. For adults and children age 12 plus.

Organised by Canterbury Museums and Canterbury Archaeological Trust