

VISIONS OF COLOUR AND LIGHT

A Midsummer Celebration in Margaret Roding

By any account, it was an interesting weekend in the village of Margaret Roding. Take a tiny, one thousand year-old church, fill it with lighted candles, artworks which glow like precious jewels, visitors of all ages from tiny children to village elders, add dry weather and sunshine, and the prospect of a picnic which includes freshly-baked homemade cakes and biscuits, and you have the makings of a very special midsummer celebration.

Four artists had gathered together to present their textile artworks and ideas, under the banner 'THREADS OF LIFE'. Soos Bowler, with a selection of the most beautiful poems in the English language and their translation into colourful and imaginative textile images. Fanny Haine, with a collection of remarkable garments and historic accessories, representing a personal and social history, from her great-grandfather's tailoring scissors to a studding, traditional, handmade shepherd's smock. Ev Hunt, with the 'Arts & Crafts' expertise of the Embroiderers' Guild, in her delightful, jewel-like hats and textile creations. Mia Polley, displaying for the first time pages from her artist's 'Book of Hours', to accompany a selection of original poems – a biography in historic textiles, bright beads and thread. These were just some of the treasures on display.



The Margaret Roding Triptych (pictured), depicting in woodcuts the legend of St Margaret, but set in the village of Margaret Roding, also made a rare and welcome appearance.

Whilst the lanes and hedgerows around the village, spangled with wild roses and honeysuckle, rang to the song of the blackbird, behind the trees in one small corner, a continuous line of visitors, from as far afield as Norfolk, Bedford and Leicestershire, as well as Cambridge and local villages came, and stayed to experience the beauty of a little, Norman church, bedecked with flowers and filled with light and colour, then departed, hopefully with a renewed sense of serenity, a moment or two of real inspiration and the memory of a perfect, English summer's day.

With special thanks to those who baked, those who helped and to everyone who came and supported this unique event and made it such a success!

Marion Polley
June 2016