

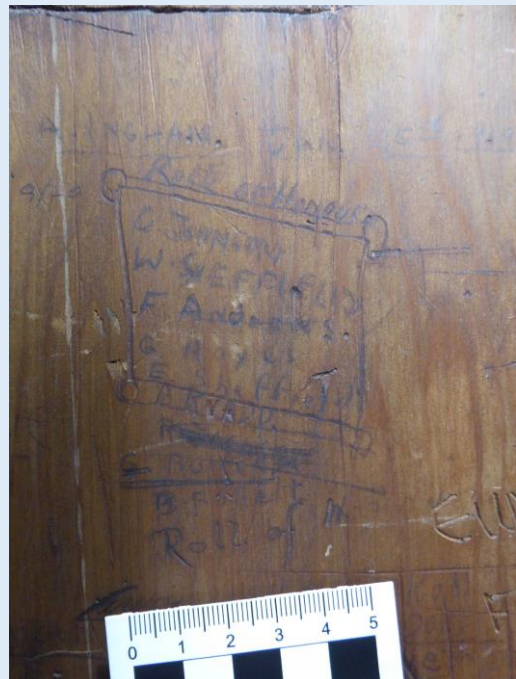
## Peartree Church

Members from Southampton Archaeology Society visited Peartree church, aka Jesus Chapel St Mary Extra, Southampton, on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018. This was at the invitation of the church, in the run up to its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. The church is of historical importance, being the first Anglican church to be consecrated after the Reformation. A plaque bearing the date 1618, now on an interior wall over the font, records its building date and consecration followed in 1620.

The church has been much extended since this date, but some original walls still stand, reputedly containing stone from the nearby Roman site at Bitterne Manor. The church also has the dubious honour of containing memorials to Richard Parker, the 17 year-old cabin boy who was eaten by his fellow crew members in 1884, after their yacht had foundered in the South Atlantic, and they'd been adrift with no food or water for 16 days.

Although no graffiti relating to the early history of the church was found, there was a quantity of early- to mid-twentieth century graffiti on the wooden organ casing, left by teams of bored organ pumpers or “blasters”, who'd listed their names in “Rolls of Honour”. This was all recorded, and a list of the names was given to the church for use by local and family history researchers.

*The “Blasters” (below) and the “Roll of Honour” (right).*



Karen Wardley