

## History of the Green Man

The Green Man is the representation of a face which is covered by leaves. These faces can take many forms but the most popular examples are to be found in sculptures and drawings. His leaves change colour depending upon the season he belongs to and from these leaves can sprout branches and/or other vegetation.

Trying to trace the origins of the Green Man is almost impossible to do. There are no records to show where he emerged from and so the original symbolism he held remains a mystery.

The earliest records we have of the Green Man start somewhere around 100AD in the Roman Empire. By the year 500, the Green Man was beginning to be used by the Christian church after the Bishop, Nicetius, salvaged some Green Man ruins from a Roman temple to decorate his cathedral.

During the Reformation when the Roman religion of multiple Gods worship was replaced with Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, the Green Man was not used. However, with time he made a reappearance and can now be seen on many churches and cathedrals where he is used for decoration.

In fact, nobody actually knows what the original name was for the Green Man. It was the scholar, Lady Raglan, who coined the term whilst writing an article on him. She struck on the name after likening the Green Man to other cultural figures and believed the Green Man deserved cultural status too!

Different cultures view the Green Man in wildly different ways. Whilst Pagan culture considers the Green Man a symbol of life, death and rebirth other faiths have not been so kind to him. For example, in Medieval Christian churches the Green Man takes on an autumnal appearance suggesting a nearness of death. He was considered a demon which represented the 'fall' of nature. Over time, the Christian churches began to adopt the Green Man as a symbol of life, death and rebirth also.

The Green Man today has a different meaning for most where he represents the cycle of nature. He is used to decorate many pubs and houses and, in fact, 'The Green Man' is one of the most popular pub names within the UK.

## About the Author

Gary Mullen from The [Green Man](#)

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