# Wooden statues of Tolkien and Edith unveil East Yorkshire’s role in inspiring Middle-earth



Wooden carved statues of J.R.R. Tolkien and his wife, Edith, are set to be unveiled in the picturesque village of Roos, East Yorkshire, on 6 June. This event will celebrate the profound influence of the local landscape on Tolkien's literary creations, particularly during his time in the area while recovering from trench fever during World War I. According to local historians, this experience played a pivotal role in shaping the narrative fabric of his most beloved works, including *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*.

The statues depict a young Tolkien, approximately eight and a half feet tall, and his wife illuminated in silhouette as she dances atop a thick oak slab. Both sculptures have been crafted by artist Allen Stichler, utilising oak sourced from the Sotterley Estate in Suffolk. They commemorate a significant moment in 1917 when a pregnant Edith performed a dance for Tolkien in a wooded area that is widely believed to be Dent’s Garth near Roos. This enchanting scene inspired the story of Beren and Lúthien, documented in *The Silmarillion*, which features Lúthien, an elf-maiden, captivating mortal hero Beren in a sylvan setting.

Liz Boulter, writing for The Guardian, previously noted that the site of the dance remains filled with greenery, featuring a vibrant understorey of cow parsley. The wood, curving around the village's 13th-century church, offers a tranquil backdrop distinct from the tumultuous events of the Great War. “Men were dying in France, but this joyous scene in a sun-dappled copse betokened a future worth fighting for,” Boulter remarked.

Councillor Nick Coultish, cabinet member for culture, leisure and tourism at the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, emphasised the significance of the statues in honouring Tolkien’s connection to the region. He stated that this unveiling is not only a tribute to Tolkien’s time there but also recognises the impact East Yorkshire had on his creativity, asserting that the landscape provided a wellspring of inspiration for his enduring narratives. The council views the unveiling as an opportunity to bolster the local economy, hoping that visitors will flock to the area to witness this artistic homage.

This initiative is part of the broader "Tolkien Triangle," a collection of sites throughout East Yorkshire linked to Tolkien's life and creative vision. These landmarks include Hornsea and Withernsea, where the author lived and drew inspiration during his recovery. Recently installed blue plaques in locations such as Withernsea celebrate these historical ties, marking the places that shaped Tolkien's imagination at a crucial period of his life.

In a region known for its breathtaking scenery, the unveiling of the statues is anticipated to highlight the everlasting connection between Tolkien and East Yorkshire, which, as many experts agree, laid the groundwork for the fantastical worlds that millions have come to cherish. The artistic representations of Tolkien and his muse serve not only as a tribute to the couple's legacy but also as an invitation for future generations to explore the roots of the stories that have woven themselves into the fabric of modern literature.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2022/aug/10/how-east-yorkshire-shaped-tolkiens-lord-of-the-rings-fantasy)
* Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2022/aug/10/how-east-yorkshire-shaped-tolkiens-lord-of-the-rings-fantasy)
* Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire), [[3]](https://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/news/history/how-east-yorkshire-inspired-worlds-5720627)
* Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire), [[3]](https://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/news/history/how-east-yorkshire-inspired-worlds-5720627), [[5]](https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/heritage-and-retro/heritage/blue-plaque-celebrates-time-jrr-tolkien-spent-near-withernsea-3332992)
* Paragraph 6: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire), [[6]](https://eybirdwatching.blogspot.com/2014/08/tolkiens-ghostly-presence.html), [[7]](https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/tolkien-tour-proves-east-yorkshire-can-be-hobbit-forming-1901990)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/may/13/statues-of-jrr-tolkien-and-his-wife-to-be-unveiled-in-east-yorkshire> - This article announces the unveiling of wooden statues of J.R.R. Tolkien and his wife, Edith, in Roos, East Yorkshire, on June 6, 2025. The statues commemorate Tolkien's time in the area during World War I and the inspiration he drew from the landscape for his works, including 'The Lord of the Rings' and 'The Hobbit'. The statues depict a young Tolkien and Edith dancing in a hemlock glade, inspired by an event in 1917 that led to the tale of Beren and Lúthien in 'The Silmarillion'.
3. <https://www.hulldailymail.co.uk/news/history/how-east-yorkshire-inspired-worlds-5720627> - This article explores how East Yorkshire influenced J.R.R. Tolkien's works. It discusses the 'Tolkien Triangle', a series of landmarks connected to the author in the region, including Roos, where Edith danced for Tolkien in a wood, inspiring the tale of Beren and Lúthien. The article also mentions blue plaques commemorating Tolkien's time in Hornsea and Withernsea, highlighting the area's impact on his creativity.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2022/aug/10/how-east-yorkshire-shaped-tolkiens-lord-of-the-rings-fantasy> - This article delves into how East Yorkshire shaped Tolkien's Middle-earth fantasy. It details his time in Hornsea, Withernsea, and Roos during World War I, where he found inspiration for his works. The piece highlights the landscapes and experiences that influenced Tolkien's creation of Middle-earth, including the tale of Beren and Lúthien inspired by Edith's dance in a hemlock glade.
5. <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/heritage-and-retro/heritage/blue-plaque-celebrates-time-jrr-tolkien-spent-near-withernsea-3332992> - This article reports on the unveiling of a blue plaque at the Lifeboat Café in Withernsea, marking the time J.R.R. Tolkien's wife, Edith, lodged there in 1917 while he was stationed nearby. The plaque commemorates their connection to the area and the inspiration Tolkien drew from his experiences in East Yorkshire for his literary works.
6. <https://eybirdwatching.blogspot.com/2014/08/tolkiens-ghostly-presence.html> - This blog post discusses J.R.R. Tolkien's time in East Yorkshire during World War I, focusing on his stays in Hornsea, Withernsea, and Roos. It highlights the locations that inspired elements of his Middle-earth mythology, including the tale of Beren and Lúthien, and the creation of languages and stories during his rehabilitation in the region.
7. <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/tolkien-tour-proves-east-yorkshire-can-be-hobbit-forming-1901990> - This article discusses a Tolkien tour in East Yorkshire, highlighting locations that inspired elements of his Middle-earth mythology. It mentions the 'Tolkien Triangle', including Roos, where Edith danced for Tolkien in a wood, inspiring the tale of Beren and Lúthien. The piece emphasizes the region's influence on Tolkien's works and the tour's role in exploring these connections.