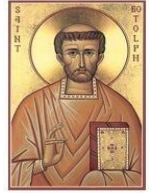




The Botolphian

Newsletter of
The Society of Saint Botolph

www.botolph.info



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President: Revd Timothy L'Estrange, Vicar of St.Gabriel's Church, North Acton.

Issue Number: 20

1st November 2014.

Highlights this month

- St Botolph's Church, Burgh.
- Welcome to our new members: David and Ronnie Gallimore.

Editorial

Well, - much to my relief, the Second Annual Luncheon of the society (which was held on Tuesday 14th October 2014 at the Cambridge City Hotel) was an outstanding success - thanks to a sudden supportive rush in response to my urgent despairing pleas for help.

Twenty-nine people attended and the food and service was excellent. We were especially blessed to have a wonderful guide in Sibella Laing who made Corpus Christi College 'come alive' for us. The icing on the cake was our visit to the Parker Library where all sorts of pleasant surprises awaited us. As John Burnapp said - "I really did not expect to see the original copy of the Thirty-nine Articles." The visit was truly memorable and, although we were not rushed, it was so awe-inspiring that it was difficult to take it all in.

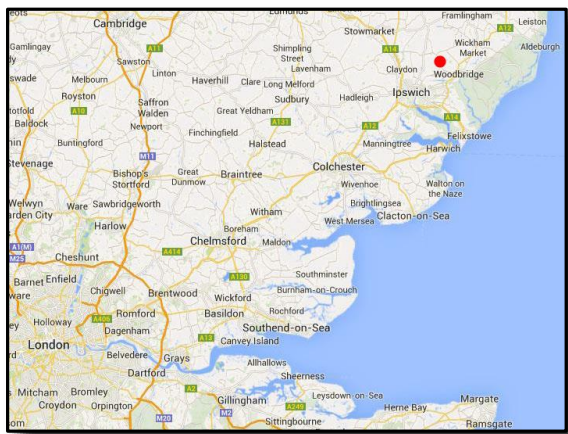


Many thanks to all who attended and I hope you enjoyed it so much that you will make a note in your diaries (mid-October is all I can say at the moment) to come along next year.



Church Feature

Burgh, (Suffolk).



Approach:- Take the A12 to Woodbridge and turn on to the B1079 following it past Grundisburgh towards Otley. A mile (or less) past the Grundisburgh junction you will find Drabb's (spellings vary) Lane on your right. We parked a little way up the road.

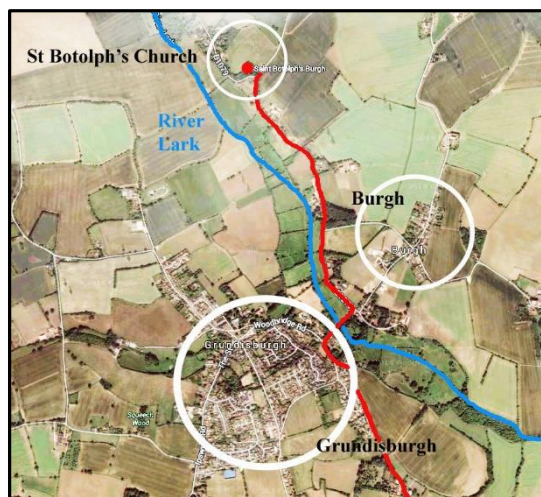
Key: The church is open during daylight hours.

Priest in Charge: Revd Canon Clare Sanders, The Rectory, Grundisburgh, Woodbridge IP13 6UF. Tel: 01473 735-183.

Church services: 0930 First and third Sundays. Morning Prayer 0930 fourth Sunday.

Location: 52.12377, 1.24743, IP13 6QB. NGR: TM2236152277.

Listed Grade: II*



Saint Botolph's Church Burgh (pronounced 'Berg') rivals, but does not supersede, Iken for importance since it was reputedly here that the bodies of Botolph and Adulph were brought following their disinterment at Icanho.

The story goes that Botolph and Adulph were initially buried in the same grave at Icanho Abbey which continued with its service to the community until it was overrun, desecrated and ruined by the Great Heathen Army of Viking invaders when they returned from York in 870. It was at this same time that King Edmund (of Bury St Edmunds fame) was killed.

Icanho became desolate once more and remained so for over a century. The effect of the fighting across the country was such that the very survival of Christianity came into question. Sometime towards the middle of his incumbency Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester (963-984), took the matter in hand and started to establish centres for prayer. Such centres were found to be more efficacious if the centre consisted of a shrine containing a saint's relics. As part of his campaign to acquire relics, the bishop petitioned King Edgar (944-975) for permission to remove Botolph's body from Icanho to a place where it could be safely stored until a shrine became available. That place was known as Burgh or Grundisburgh (pronounced Grunsborough).



The clue to the reason for Burgh being chosen lies in its name which indicates that it was a fortified area. It is thought that a chapel (separate from the church) was built to house Botolph's relics. Historical records bear evidence to the existence of a chapel as late as 1535.

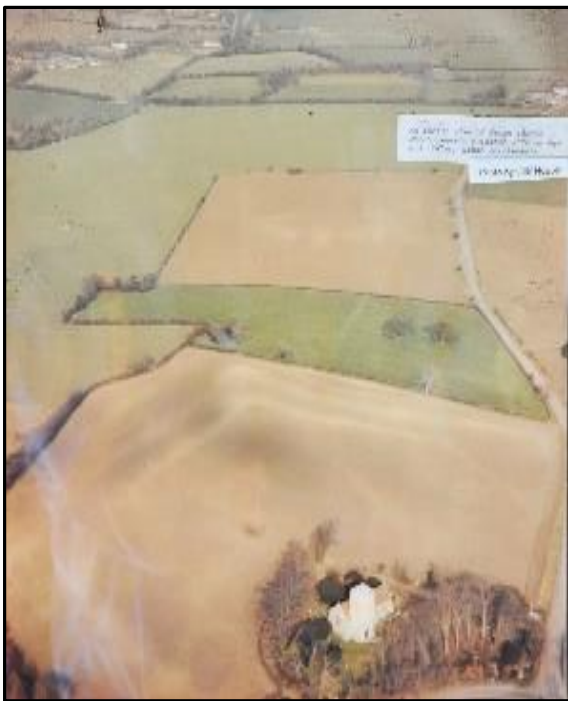
Like last month's church at Culpho, Burgh combines the separate features of tower and porch into a single 'porch-tower'.

The structure of the building is flint rubble and ashlar and the roof is of plain tiles. This building does not, however, date from the time of the translation of Botolph's bones, but is of C13 construction.



As we pass through the south doorway into the base of the porch-tower we find, on our left, an aerial photograph taken by Cliff Hoppitt which shows the outline of a fortress showing through the vegetation in the fields to the north of the church. It is believed that the original settlement here dates back to the Iron Age and that it subsequently became the site of a Roman encampment.

We will be discussing more fully in a later issue the translation of the relics of Botolph and Adolph but suffice it to say for the moment that it is believed that they came from Icanho to this area where they remained for half a century before being divided in such a way that Saint Botolph's head went to Ely, one half of his body to Thorney and the other half to Westminster.



Today's church lies on the top edge of a hill. It has the (now tiny and insignificant) River Lark to its south-west.

Walking through the C15 porch-tower (it took a century or so to increase its height to completion), past the notice-boards and under the bell-ropes, one approaches the second doorway which dates, like the outer one, from early C14. The difference between them is in the doors themselves. The outer door is only 120 years old whereas the inner door, with its nail-head decoration, is of the same age as the doorway itself. It also sports a *Sanctuary Ring* (arrowed) which is thought to be even older.



One of the most magnificent sanctuary rings is to be found in Durham Cathedral. This one is rather more humble. The principle of 'asylum' or 'sanctuary' was established by King Ethelbert of Kent in Botolph's era of C7 and continued, with variations, until it was abolished by James I in 1623. Under these 'arrangements', a person who had been charged with a crime could flee to a church where, if he gained access he would be safe. There were certain churches where, if he could just touch the sanctuary ring he was also assured of protection.

His or her safety would only last for forty days however, after which they had to decide whether to stand trial or to confess their guilt and submit to being exiled from the realm after surrendering all their possessions.



The church has an attractive nave and both it and the chancel have fine wooden roofs which date originally from C16 although a great deal of restoration work was done on them during C19.

The bottom of each pendant from the roof's arch-bracing bears a wooden angel with a shield; there is a second group of angels which are attached to the wall posts so that together they total forty delicate carvings.



Further woodwork in the shape of the C19 benches/pews, the altar table, reredos and the communion rails gives a glow of warmth to the interior of the church.

The altar is unusual in that the embroidered frontals are removable and are changed to match the colours of the ecclesiastical calendar.



Inside the south doorway stands a C15 font on a C19 stem. It is a magnificent item although some of the figures have been re-cut.



It seems that the basic structure of the nave and chancel dates from C14 although Roy Tricker comments in the church booklet that there is a suspicion (and hope?) that the cores of their walls may be even earlier.

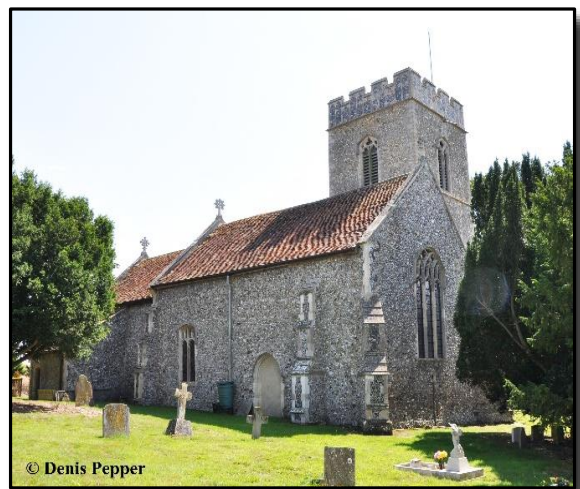
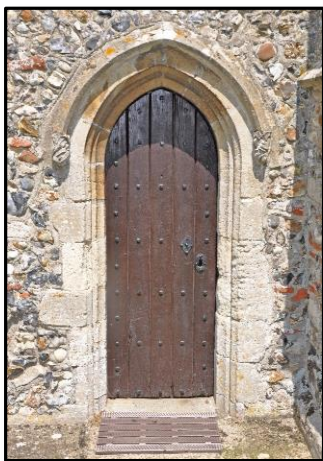
Sadly the church suffered a great deal of destruction at the hands of the Puritans in mid-C17 and all the original windows were lost but in early C20 many of them were replaced by some wonderful windows by Kempe. Particularly notable is the east window which shows the crucified Christ with Saint Botolph to his left and Saint Andrew to his right.



Rather a different picture to the Botolph we are used to seeing - but welcome nevertheless and, in view of the fact that there is no record of Botolph's *actual* appearance, it is perhaps a good thing to be presented with the conceptions of different artists.

It is interesting that Saint Andrew should feature as an additional saint. This suggests that Burgh might be another church of which Saint Botolph was originally the patron saint but temporarily lost his status during the Reformation. Perhaps he was totally replaced for a while by Saint Andrew (who was a 'Biblical' saint and therefore more acceptable to the authorities). By C18 Henry VIII's strictures had started to lose their hold and so it would be unsurprising for Saint Botolph to be reinstated. We have previously seen both St John the Baptist's and St Mary's support being lent in this way.

The Priests' Door in the south wall of the chancel - but I could see no sign of a Mass Dial here!



Summary of items of interest:-

From the exterior:-

1. The restored old Parish Schoolroom just inside the churchyard gate.
2. Note the rise upon which the church stands.
3. Note also the field to the north of the church where, first an Iron Age fortress and then a Roman fortress probably stood.
4. The combined porch-tower.
5. The red brick tomb to the east of the tower where ancestors of Edith Cavell are buried.

From the interior:-

1. The 500-year-old inner south door with its sanctuary ring.
2. 40 carved wooden angels decorating the fine roofs.
3. The attractive C14 font (on its C19 stem).
4. Kempe stained glass windows in the east, south-east and south-west of the Chancel, and at the west of the nave.
5. The picture of Saint Botolph in the east window.
6. 1969 Birds of the Bible painting in the sealed-up north doorway.
7. Early C20 mosaics in the Chancel floor.

Relevance of the church to Botolph's life.

St Botolph's Burgh is only about 16 miles away from St Botolph's Iken so, assuming that we are correct in thinking that Iken was the site of Icanho Abbey, it seems likely that the original foundations of this church date from C7 and were part of the Icanho 'benefice'!

Classification of Burgh church.

I would therefore suggest that it should have an 'A' classification.

[Please note that there was a typing error last month: I wrote 'Classification of Iken church' instead of '... of Culpho church'.]

Regular Endnotes

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If you wish to UNsubscribe then send the message 'NO THANKS.'

You will frequently see the 'twin' towns of *Boston* mentioned in these newsletters, - one in Lincolnshire and the other in Massachusetts USA. The relevance to the Society is that the name 'Boston' is said to be a contraction of '*Botolph's Town*.'

Classification of Botolph Churches:-

A: C7 churches relevant to Botolph's life.

B: 'Travellers' churches.

Bearing in mind that the Danish invasions started in c.800 and continued for 200 years, it seems logical to sub-divide Type B (and perhaps type C) churches into those which appear to have been founded:-

- (i) before 800
- (ii) between 800 and 1066 and
- (iii) after the Norman Conquest.

C: Neither of the above.

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Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013.