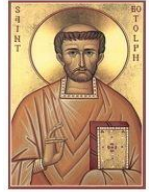




# The Botolphian

Newsletter of  
The Society of Saint Botolph

[www.botolph.info](http://www.botolph.info)



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

Issue Number: 28

1st August 2015

## Highlights this month

- St Botolph's church Newbold-on-Avon, Warwickshire.
- Emails from Tony Wood, Jean Stone, Aaron Friar, Mark Tattum-Smith, Anne Dickinson and Kathleen Tyson.
- SOSB ANNUAL LUNCHEON ON **TUESDAY** 13th OCTOBER 2015 AT THE CAMBRIDGE CITY HOTEL AT 12.30 for 1 p.m. I have negotiated a price of £25 which includes two courses and tea or coffee.

## Editorial

The excitement is building as the 3rd Annual Luncheon of the Society draws ever closer. The two previous luncheons have been very successful and everyone has said afterwards how much they have enjoyed them so I do not expect this year to be any different. We have a good speaker on an interesting Botolph-related subject but I am going to keep his name under wraps for the moment. You will find the proposed menu at the end of this newsletter. Please note that the choice will be of two courses - either starter and main course or main course and dessert.

I do now have to ask for your money please since I will shortly have to make some payments to the hotel. The price is £25 per person as noted above and I would be grateful if you would either pay by Bank Transfer to:

Nationwide Bank: Sort code 07-02-46, Account Number: 45570161. Dr D S Pepper

or send a cheque, payable to D.S. Pepper, to:

Denis Pepper, 17 Cliffe House, Radnor Cliff, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2TY.

## Church Feature

# N ewbold-on-Avon

**Approach:** *Coming from the M6 travelling westwards from the M1, turn left at Junction 1 onto the A426 towards Rugby. At the fifth roundabout turn right onto the B4112 heading west and take the second turning off the next roundabout signposted Newbold-on-Avon. After just over 1 mile the road turns to the left and starts to ascend a hill. You will find the church on your left and it seems to be acceptable to park in the lay-by immediately outside.*



**Key:** *Contact the vicar at the telephone number below or at [www.stbotolphstjohn.org.uk](http://www.stbotolphstjohn.org.uk).*

**Vicar:** *Revd Paul Wilkinson. The Vicarage (next door to the church), Main Street, Newbold-on-Avon, Rugby, Warcs CV21 1HH. Telephone: 01788 543-055*

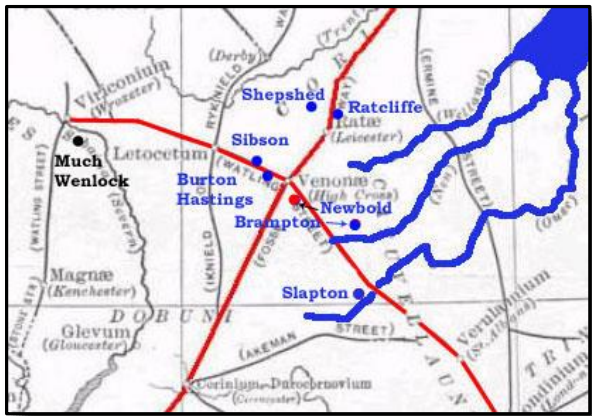
**Church services:** *Sundays at 10.45 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.*

**Location:** *Main Street, Newbold on Avon, Warcs CV21 1HR; 52.3899, -1.2862; NGR: SP4867477111.*

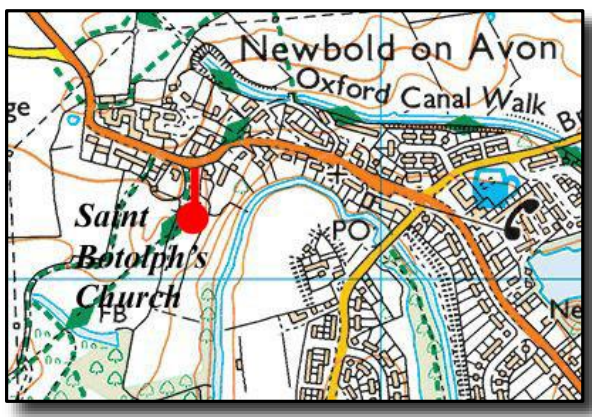
**Listed Grade:** I



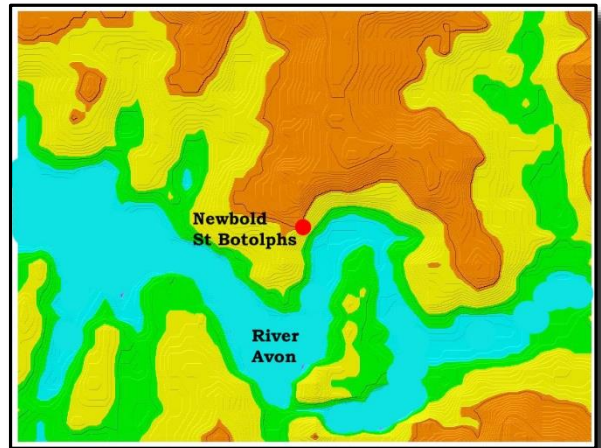
This continues the story of our visit in March 2015 to the 'High Cross cluster' of Saint Botolph churches (shown in the map below).



The ancient Fosse Way runs along the western edge of a range of low hills which act as a watershed in this part of the country. To the east of these hills the water drains into the Wash whereas to the west it drains into the Bristol Channel. The 85 mile long River Avon, which passes through Newbold, arises from a spring in Naseby (which lies 12 miles to the east of Newbold itself) and finally joins up with the River Severn near Tewkesbury.



Navigation in these upper reaches of the Avon was abandoned in 1877 due to the river's silting up and thus becoming tortuous, shallow and prone to flooding but in Botolph's time and for many centuries afterwards, the waterway would have been fully navigable.



Saint Botolph's Church Newbold-on-Avon lies on the banks of the Avon although today, since the river is so diminished, this is not immediately apparent.

Newbold is now a region of Rugby having been incorporated in 1932. Until then it was a village in its own right, its name deriving from the Old English *Niowebotyl* (New house). The nearby Oxford Canal passes through a 189-metre long Newbold Tunnel built in early C19. The remains of a previous now-disused tunnel can be seen next to the churchyard.



The church is made from local pink sandstone as you see above and the colour and the patterning on some of the ashlar makes for some very pretty 'bricks'. The sundial is on the SW corner of the tower and I guess that it is probably a C19 addition but Tony Wood, our resident Sundial Expert might tell me something different. The church dates from C15 although it is built on the



foundations of an earlier church constructed in C12. Indeed the base of the west tower is thought to be a remnant of the original church. The heavy clasp buttresses of the lower two stages of the four stage tower are typical of this earlier period.



The tower houses a ring of ten bells five of which were re-cast in 1792, one was a gift from the then current vicar, two were added in 1977 and two more were added in 1992. The clock dates from 1795. Besides the sundial and the clock the tower sports a magnificent and quirky weathervane which was placed in the 1970s. It depicts St Botolph as a traveller - leading his donkey and carrying a cross.

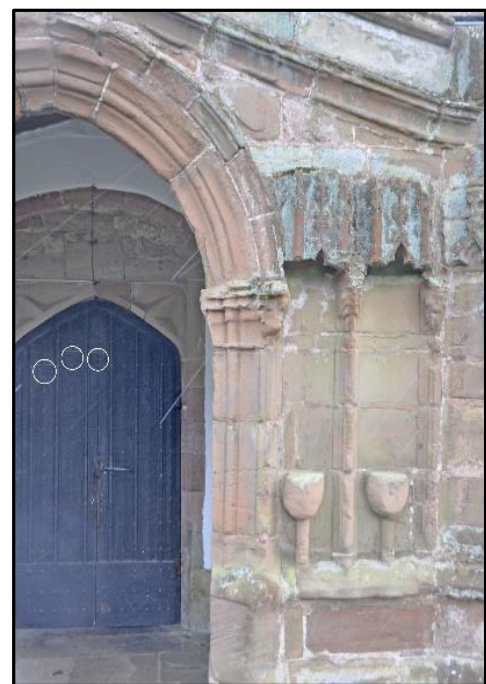


We reached St Botolphs without having made a prior arrangement because I was not too sure how well our timetable would pan out. Just after we arrived it started to rain and this was followed by a heavy shower of hail so Zina took refuge in the north porch while I returned to the entrance to copy the vicar's telephone number from the notice board. My telephone call reached Revd Paul Wilkinson just as he was about to go out but he valiantly and kindly made a diversion through the hail and opened the church up for us.



The building is large compared to other Botolph churches we have seen and because it lies on a slope with its main access from the north, it is the north porch which has seen most use over the years. However - the south porch, although now closed, was routinely used by the residents of Long Lawford which lies on the south side of the river. In years now long gone by there was apparently some voluntary segregation within the church whereby the Long Lawford congregation sat on the south side of the church while the Newbold residents occupied the more northerly pews.

The north door dates from c. 1455 and contains three wooden tablets (ringed below) carved with the names of the churchwardens of the day: Thomas Webbe, Thomas Boughton and William Boughton. Outside there are four canopied plinths which used to bear some statues before the Puritans did their work





The picture below shows the three aforementioned tablets



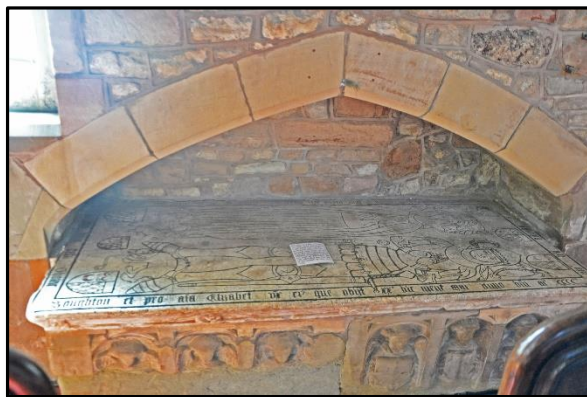
Once inside the church, the lead-lined font, said to be C14 and a remnant of the C12 church, becomes your focal point ...



... until you reach it when, as you turn to your left the focus changes to the chancel and the altar.



Churches in this cluster share different characteristics. Newbold and Shepshed share the phenomenon of a splendid series of large monuments. The Saint Botolph churches of Newbold, Slapton and Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake feature low arched tombs like this one to Thomas and Elizabeth Boughton which dates from 1454. The Latin inscription translates: 'Whoever you are who pass by, stop, read and lament. I am what you will be. I have been what you are'.



Another incised alabaster table tomb in the South Aisle is to Galfridus Allesley and his wife Alionora although on first sight the picture on the top seems to feature two women as both appear to be wearing long dresses. On closer examination the pommel of a sword on his right side identifies the more southerly picture as that of a man.

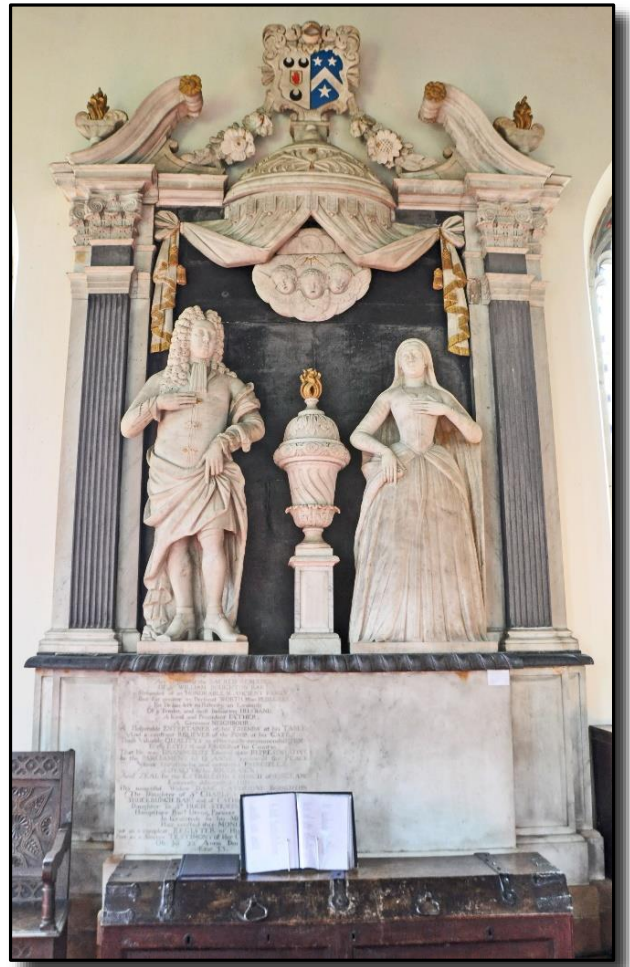
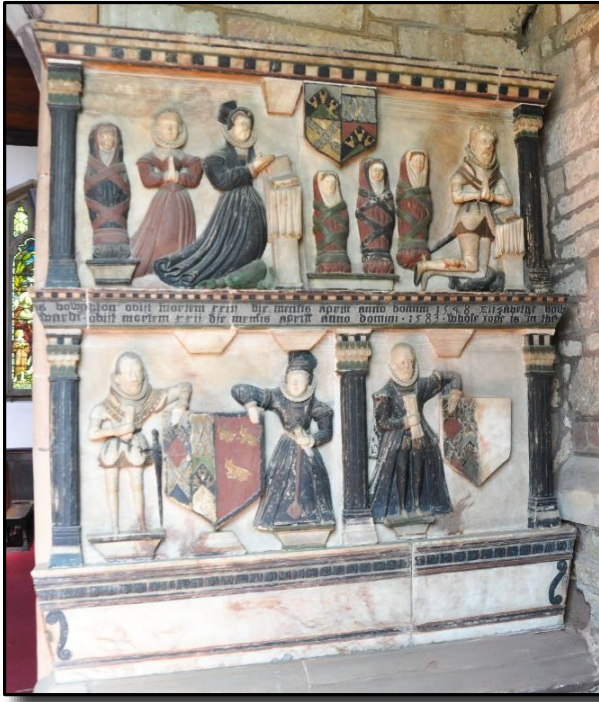
The tomb was once in the nave where it was used for seating. This has resulted in graffiti (arrowed below) being applied to the top so that miscreants could play the game 'nines mens morris'.



To the left of the picture above can be seen some C14 encaustic tiles (these are tiles where the patterns are made by different colours of clay rather than being added in the glaze).



And now for some monuments ...



... and you might have spotted at the base of this magnificent William and Catherine Boughton memorial ... the Parish chest! This is made of solid oak and dates from C17 when it was used to store registers and valuables belonging, not only to the church, but to the parish as a whole. The chest has four locks needing four differently designed keys so that it could only be accessed when all four key holders were present.



Although the pulpit was only made in 1909, it includes some 'linenfold' panelling from an earlier pulpit. The 'Linenfold' style dates from C14.



The church was heavily restored in early C19 when new pews were installed, the chancel was rebuilt and much of the tracery (i.e. the stonework of the windows) was renewed. Further restoration occurred between 1908 and 1909.

#### **Classification of the site.**

The church we see today would seem to have been a 'Gentleman's Church'. The National Archives reveal that the Ward-Boughton-Leigh family were wealthy landowners who originated in Bedfordshire and established themselves in Lawford Hall in C15. It seems likely that it was they who were responsible for erecting this church on the site of the previous one.

The Domesday Book tells us that the total population in 1086 was 34 (which was rated as being 'very large') and the Lord of the Manor in 1066 was Leofwin, father of Leofric. This Leofric (Earl of Mercia 1017-1057) would seem to have been the same Leofric who was the husband of Lady Godiva!

By 1086 the Lordship was administered by Geoffrey de la Guerche. Although the Domesday record makes no mention of a church, it would be surprising if there was not one bearing in mind the 'large community'. The church records the first vicar as Alardus who was inducted sometime between 1199 and 1216. This predecessor church therefore appears to have been Norman in origin. But did this church have a predecessor too?

We are told that the origin of the village's name comes from Saxon words meaning *New House* ... or indeed '*NewBuild*'. The community of Newbold must therefore logically date from Saxon times i.e. between 410 and 1066. Once the 'New House' had been built and a 'very large' population started to be established one might assume that a church - perhaps even a *fortified* church - maybe with a lookout tower - would arise not long afterwards.

It is not impossible that the site dates back as far as C7 and that it was founded as a direct result of Saint Botolph's missionary work but this seems unlikely. The usual requirement for a Saint Botolph's 'Travellers' Church' is a nearby road or river and this is well covered by the presence of the River Avon so I suspect that this is the service that the site eventually provided. In the absence of evidence one can only speculate and my guess is that this church site first came into existence during the Danelaw period of 800 to 1066 and I would classify it as B(ii).

Apart from its probable function as a Travellers' Church might there be a *second* reason why it would be dedicated to Saint Botolph? Could the fact that the lords of the manor in C13 were called *Paritolf*, or *Pantolf* have any relevance?

#### **My grateful thanks**

to Revd Paul Wilkinson for opening St Botolph's at short notice.

#### **Readers' letters and emails.**

**1. Tony Woods**, of the British Sundial Society, wrote to thank me for the July Botolphian and made some helpful comments about the Burton Hastings sundial and mass dials.

**2. Jean Stone**, who writes books on gardens (her latest is *The American Spirit in the English Garden*) wrote to confess that she is always happy to be diverted (from whatever she is supposed to be writing) by the arrival of *The Botolphian*.

**3. Aaron Friar** reported that he, like many others, celebrated St Botolph's Day using the old Julian Calendar, i.e. 13 days later than 17th June. He also sent me a lovely poem by Jessica Powers (1905-1988) entitled *But Not With Wine*.

**4. Mark Tattum-Smith** sent me the link (as follows) with photographs of the Mettingham College's pilgrimage to Iken this year: [http://www.mettinghamcollege.org.uk/index.php/galleries/gallery/2015\\_pilgrimage\\_to\\_st\\_botolphs\\_church\\_iken](http://www.mettinghamcollege.org.uk/index.php/galleries/gallery/2015_pilgrimage_to_st_botolphs_church_iken)



**5. Kathleen Tyson** sent me some *very exciting* news about some research she has been doing on a possible alternative location for Saint Botolph's Abbey of Icanho. There has been much controversy about this over the past 400 years and it is now generally accepted that Iken in Suffolk must have been the site. Kathleen has other ideas though. She has kindly shared her thoughts with me on the subject but naturally I am sworn to secrecy until Kathleen has completed all her investigations. All I will say is that it is not a site that has previously featured on my extensive lists of potential Icanho locations.

**6. Anne Dickinson** (Burton Hastings) wrote to thank me for the article on her church and asked my permission (which of course I was delighted to give) for it to be sent to English Heritage to help St Botolph's get approval for building work on their church.

### Endnotes

Please do not hesitate to write to me or send an email to [botolph@virginmedia.com](mailto:botolph@virginmedia.com) if you have any alternative views to those expressed in *The Botolphian*. It is good to engender some controversy from time to time!

#### Regular Endnotes

If this is your first 'Botolphian' and you have acquired it by circuitous means but would like to receive an email copy each month then just send an email to [botolph@virginmedia.com](mailto:botolph@virginmedia.com) saying 'YES PLEASE.'  
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 Church sites:-

A: C7 church sites 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

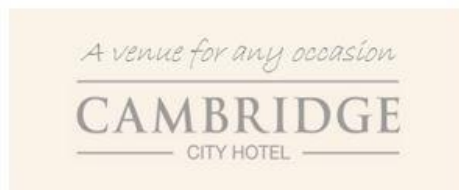
(iii) after the Norman Conquest.

C: Neither of the above.

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Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013.



## The Fitzwilliam

*Please choose one item for each course*

### Starters

Cream of roasted vine tomato and basil soup (v)

Sliced buffalo mozzarella, plum tomato and pesto salad (v)

Chicken liver parfait with plum chutney, toasted brioche

### Main Courses

Roasted corn fed chicken stuffed with cream cheese, wrapped in Parma ham

Salmon fillet with olive tapenade, new potatoes, roasted vine cherry tomatoes

Wild mushroom risotto, asparagus, truffle oil and parmesan shavings (v)

### Desserts

New York cheesecake with berry compote

Warm apple crumble fresh cream

Exotic fruit salad