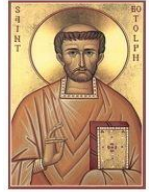




# The Botolphian

Newsletter of  
The Society of Saint Botolph

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



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1<sup>st</sup> September 2016

## Highlights this month

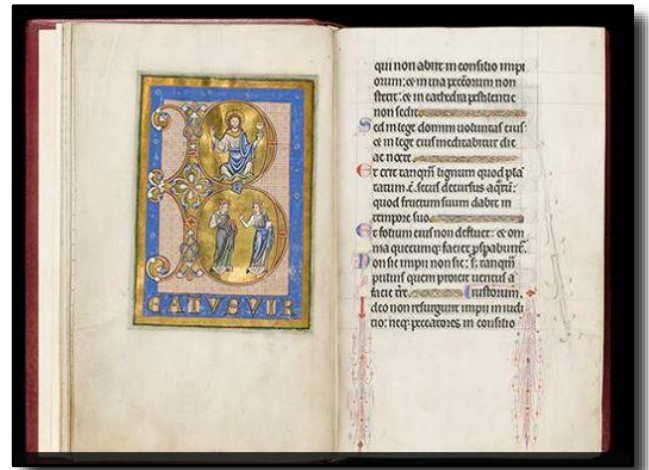
- St Botolph's church, Whitton, Suffolk
- Welcome to new members, Frank Mahon (Folkestone), Chris Sanham (Norwich), Revd Keith Dally (Banningham, Norfolk); Sue Muspratt (Hevingham, Norfolk), Nick Hartley (Scarning, Norfolk), Saskia Elson (Westwick, Norfolk); Brigadier Adam and Gillian Gurdon (Burgh, Suffolk); Revd Chris Norburn (Botesdale, Suffolk); Jill Ridout (Banningham, Norfolk); Betty and Alan Jackson (Westwick, Norfolk); Ernie and Jean Garland (Trunch, Norfolk); Judith Everitt (Bale, Norfolk); Janet Havers (Barford, Norfolk); Roger Cordey (Morely St Botolph, Norfolk); Sid Kettle (Tuttington, Norfolk); Gillian Machorton (Stow Bedon, Norfolk); Peter and Anji Sprinks (Folkestone); Michael Brook (Limpenhoe, Norfolk);
- Correspondence from Dr Clive Talbot, Tony Connolly and Graham Jones.

## A Frantic Plea

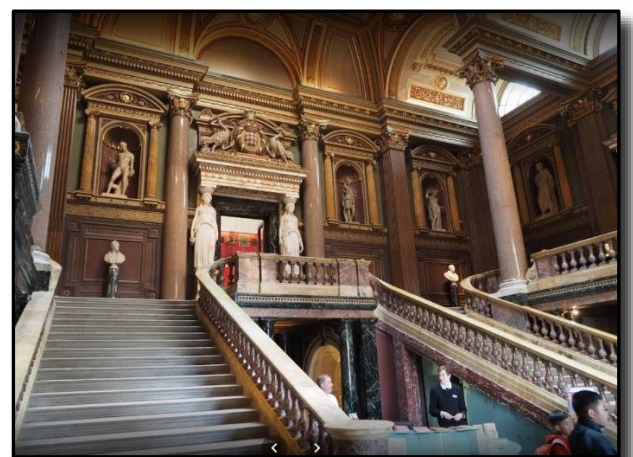
The Society's *Annual Luncheon is in Cambridge at 12.30 for 1 p.m. on Wednesday 12 October 2016 at the Hilton Cambridge Hotel. (£25 for 2-courses or £30 for 3-courses).*

This is always an enjoyable event but *numbers are terribly low this year* so I would urge you to think hard and seriously about giving me your support and joining us. We will have our usual good meal at the Hilton after which I shall be giving an illustrated talk - a round-up of my research on Saint Botolph to date. This will include such considerations as 'How would Botolph have put his monks to work in the

Scriptorium at Icanho Abbey? Where would he have acquired his quills, brushes, inks and paints at such an early date?



Those who wish will then walk to the wonderful Fitzwilliam Museum - about 500 metres away – where we will have a guided tour of an exhibition which celebrates the Fitzwilliam's bicentenary with a stunning display of 150 illuminated manuscripts from its rich collections.



They range from the prayerbooks of European royalty and merchants to local treasures like the Macclesfield Psalter, - from an alchemical scroll and a duchess' wedding gift to the ABC of a five-year old princess.

The cost will be £6.25 per head (this is the cost of the guide plus £1 towards the upkeep of the museum).

**Please oh please consider joining us. At present we have only 16 people who have confirmed that they are coming.**

Their initials (so that you can check that I have you on the list) are: DB&JB, PC, DP&ZP, GH&RH, CC, DH, DC, ER&SR, GL&MM, AB&JB.

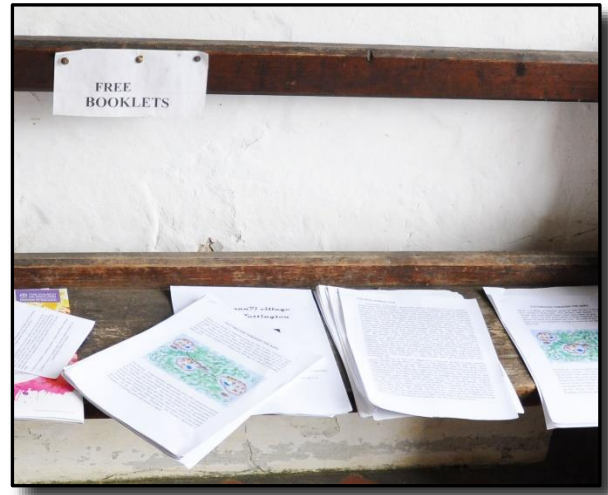
### Editorial

What an exciting time Zina and I had in Norfolk! We spent three days there 'collecting Saint Botolph Churches' to top up my reservoir for writing the Church Features.

The whole event took quite a bit of planning – arranging for churches to be opened etc – and I was relieved that everything went so smoothly. We started in Botesdale Suffolk where Jeff Lamb kindly opened the Chapel of Ease for us – and then on to see our old friend Michael Knights in Shotesham. Michael was so knowledgeable and entertaining that the 20 minutes I had allowed stretched to an hour and a half - but every minute was time well spent and both Zina and I learnt a lot. Because of this we had to bypass Broome and go to North Cove in order to catch up and there (courtesy of the churchwarden, Josie Boddy who organised it all) we met a lovely chap called Alan Glenister who showed us round. A chain ferry later and we were in Limpenhoe where the church had been left open for us – then back on to the chain ferry across the River Yare to Broome where only clues to a Botolph Church exist. Here I drove around comparing the Google Earth pictures with reality and trespassed over a cornfield to peer into a copse which I thought (incorrectly as it happened) might contain some ruins.

We started our trip knowing that we had to do some detective work because there were four sites where there are records of the existence of a Botolph Church but no physical evidence. By the time we finished, the location of the site at Broome was the only one which remained a total

mystery – but three out of four was not a bad result I thought. I left notes in St Michael's Church, Broome in the hope that a local historian might come to my rescue.



The next day at Hevingham Linda Clark opened the church and supplied me with a lot of interesting details. On then to another invisible site in Tuttington where another St Michael's Church dominates the scene. Once again, I visited and left my pleading letter. On the way out I noticed in the porchway three piles of A4 sheets with a note above saying 'Free Booklets.'

Never a person to 'look a gift horse in the mouth' I accepted the offer – and was so glad I did so because there inside was carefully detailed a mass of research done by Sid Kettle (a local man). Amongst this was his conclusion that St Michael's stood more or less on the site of the old St Botolph's chapel. An example of serendipity at its best!

On then to Banningham where the delightful Jill Ridout was waiting for us and was extremely helpful. Westwick was our next stop where Saskia Elson had kindly arranged for Betty and Alan Jackson to open the church. At Trunch we met Ernie Garland who was mowing the grass – ably supported by his wife Jean. Once again they were most hospitable and informative.

Bale was our next stop – another invisible church. We searched both the local church and the village for clues and I deposited another pleading letter. Before we had left home, whilst minutely examining local maps, I had noticed a Bale holiday cottage called 'Chapelfield' and, somewhat cheekily, I had telephoned Judith Everitt who runs it. Far from being irritated by my call, Judith was extremely interested in my quest and provided more clues (details in a later Botolphian). Suffice it to say for the moment that,

on our return home, following Judith's clues I emailed Norfolk's Historic Environment Officer whereupon their Heather Hamilton sent me details of an old archaeological dig in the area and Judith's hunch proved 97% likely to be correct. I am therefore now as certain as I can be that I know the location of the Bale Botolph's Chapel.

The grass was also being cut at Barford – this time by David Dale – another great enthusiast who had, strangely enough, originally lived in the aforementioned other Botolph Parish of Limpenhoe. After this we went to Morely St Botolph and met Roger Cordey and he too provided us with a mine of information – not only about the church itself but also about how the local community are kept involved with it during these difficult times.

At Stow Bedon I finally 'came a cropper.' In spite of my information that the church was usually left open (actually this is generally true) it was locked. This however was because it was undergoing massive refurbishment. The wonders of mobile telephones allowed me to contact the restorers (EFL) and they arranged entry for me ... at my own risk!

The last of the fifteen sites was Scarning – another invisible one but with a converted Congregational Chapel out in the countryside exactly where I would expect the Botolph site to be. I risked disturbing the owner, Tony Blake, and, true to form, he showed great interest in my topic and offered to look through his copious ancient deeds to see if he could find any clues. A historian in the village, Nick Hartley, is also on the trail and I am optimistic that my suspicions will ultimately be confirmed.

So ended three days of quite hard but enjoyable work which, through the kindness of many lovely people, provided a wealth of information which will keep *The Botolphian* well stocked for another year and add nicely to the Saint Botolph archives.

**My sincere thanks to all those mentioned above – for making our three days so much easier and enjoyable than it would otherwise have been.**

## **W**hitton (Suffolk).

[Recapitulation and continuation from the August 2016 issue].

**Approach:** *Rather than following the Thurleston route through the housing estates it might give you a better feel for the history of the area if you took the Classical Route i.e. follow the A1156 Ipswich Inner Ring Road (Crown Street) as it turns North east and becomes Norwich Road. Follow this over the A1214 roundabout and 1.28 miles after this, at the traffic lights, do not follow the main Bury Road to the left but turn right onto the Old Norwich Road. 450 yards later after passing The Maypole Public House you will reach a No Through Road sign at which turn right into Whitton Church Lane. Keep going straight on for nearly three quarters of a mile until you run out of road and you will find the church and its (locked) car park on your right. Just park as neatly as you can without blocking the bridle path.*



**Location:** *Whitton Church Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 6LT: 52.085859, 1.136498.; TM1498847696*

**Key:** *The church is normally kept locked. Access can be obtained by arrangement with Gerald and Angela Marjoram 01473 743-385, 18 Aldercroft Close, Whitton IP1 6PN, Email: [gwmargoram@hotmail.com](mailto:gwmargoram@hotmail.com).*

**Vicar:** *The church is (July 2016) in interregnum and is being curated by Revd Mary Sokanovic. (Tel: 07821 323-073). The villagers are full of hope that she will become their next vicar.*

**Services:** *Every Sunday 8 a.m. Holy Communion; 9.30 a.m. Parish Eucharist; 6.30 p.m. Choral Evensong. The parish is a large and busy one and is a very popular wedding venue.*

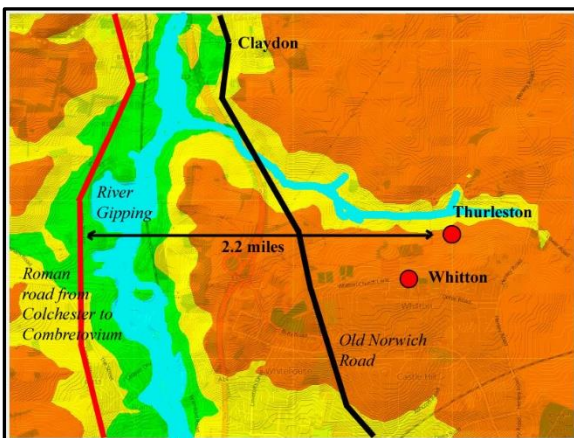
**Listed Grade: II**



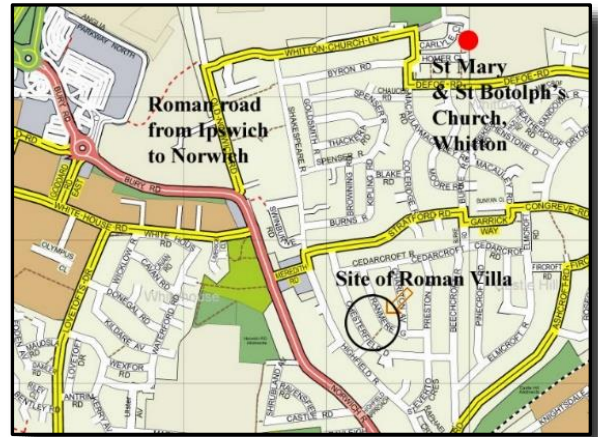
My first visit here was in July 2014 when I was unable to take any photographs inside because the church was locked. This was in my early days when I was young (only 72) and naïve and I was mainly interested in the outside of the churches. As time has progressed, not only might I have become a little wiser but I have become interested in the whole of each church. Rather than it being a chore – the more churches I see, the more interesting they become.



As we saw last month, the Domesday Book records Whitton and its neighbour Thurleston as being two large villas one of which had a church. I believe the church referred to is more likely to have been St Botolph's at Thurleston rather than the Whitton one. This I do on the basis that the sites were only 600 yards apart and there are no signs of a church in Whitton earlier than C13 whereas, as we know, churches with Saint Botolph dedications often have a long pedigree. I concede however that this is pure conjecture.



Above we see the contour map showing the Thurleston church closer to the water at 13 meters with Whitton further up the hill at a height of 47 meters. Both churches lie close to transport routes and the site of a Roman villa is nearby.



The church was copiously restored in C19 – first by the architect F. Barnes and subsequently by the architect Richard Phipson so that, today, it appears as a relatively modern and, I must say, a ‘very comfortable’ church



During, and as a result of the restoration, as we saw last month, St Mary's became St Mary and St Botolph's church when building fabric from the Thurleston ruins was used to build the south aisle (see below). The change of name was only conferred officially in 1990 though.



The new pillars seen above were built inside the old church walls before the outer wall was taken down. The nave is therefore slightly out of line with the chancel.





This becomes evident if you compare the dimension A with that of B above. In 1980 the south aisle became the Lady Chapel – although a biased visitor like me is bound to feel that ‘St Botolph’s Chapel’ might have been an appropriate name.



The altar in this chapel is a simple Elizabethan table which might originally have served as an altar in the main church since the Reformation had demanded that all churches dispose of their stone altars and replace them with such tables as this.

The small red wooden cross bears a carved Spanish ivory crucifix believed to date from C17. We referred to Whitton’s sister parish at Akenham in the last issue and this cross originally came from there but had been subject to damage by vandals. It was therefore brought to Whitton for safety. [By the time I made this discovery I was beginning to understand why the church is kept locked.]

Services are less frequently held at Akenham now but when they are the cross is taken back.

The painting above the altar is C17 Italian and depicts St John the Baptist and St Elizabeth (you can just see them in the background) with the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus.



On the wall to the right of the altar is an Icon of The Transfiguration and this cunningly disguises the fact that it is actually the door of an aumbry – a cupboard containing the reserved sacrament.



The oak box pews have been retained and are somewhat of a novelty. We have seen these in quite a few other churches (although many have discarded them) and they often look quite austere but here at Whitton I felt they were rather quaint.

Rent was of course paid for these (a now-neglected way of raising church funds) and until 1980 some of them contained locked boxes containing the family’s prayer books.



The C19 font originally stood in the traditional position at the back of the church but in 1980 was moved into the north aisle near the vestry.

I am sorry to have to admit that I did not see these carved faces on my visit so there are no pictures. This is the first time that I have heard an explanation of the origin of the expression 'going to the wall.'



Tucked away in the southeast corner at an unusually low level is a C13 piscina.



The very good church guide book tells us: *'the Chancel Roof retains the original C13 roof-beams. These beams extend behind the wagon roof boarding in the nave as far as the back pew and mark the extent of the original church.'*

The book also records that *'at the back of the choir stalls, on each side, there are carved faces of a man and woman. Experts consider one and probably both to be medieval and they may indeed be a relic from the two original church benches that once would have been placed on the wall on each side of the nave so that, before the days of pews, the 'weakest would go to the wall' and sit down.'*



Its existence and position tell us firstly that this wall was part of the original C13 church and secondly that the floor of the sanctuary has been raised since the piscina was installed.





There are now two steps raising the chancel floor above that of the Nave and another three steps in the sanctuary. This raises the base of the altar by 30 inches or so giving the altar more prominence - but confounding the piscina – a small price to pay.



And finally the south aisle, tower and vestry were built and the bell re-housed within the spire.



An early picture shows the chancel, nave, lean-to and porch.



I had not read the church guide when I wrote the August issue of *The Botolphian* but I am reassured to find it supporting my suggestion that the pretty C13 tower doorway might have come from St Botolph's Thurleston.



In 1850 a north aisle had been added and there was a belfry.

Another little gem of information given by the booklet and succinctly put is: *'the list of Rectors dates from 20 December 1299, the first of whom was Herbert de Cheperith ... In the past, Rectors were the people who received the tithe income of the Parish and were often laymen or only ordained to a minor order. Out of their income they had to provide for a priest to service the church. These unrecorded and poorly paid priests did the real work of the church in those early years.'*

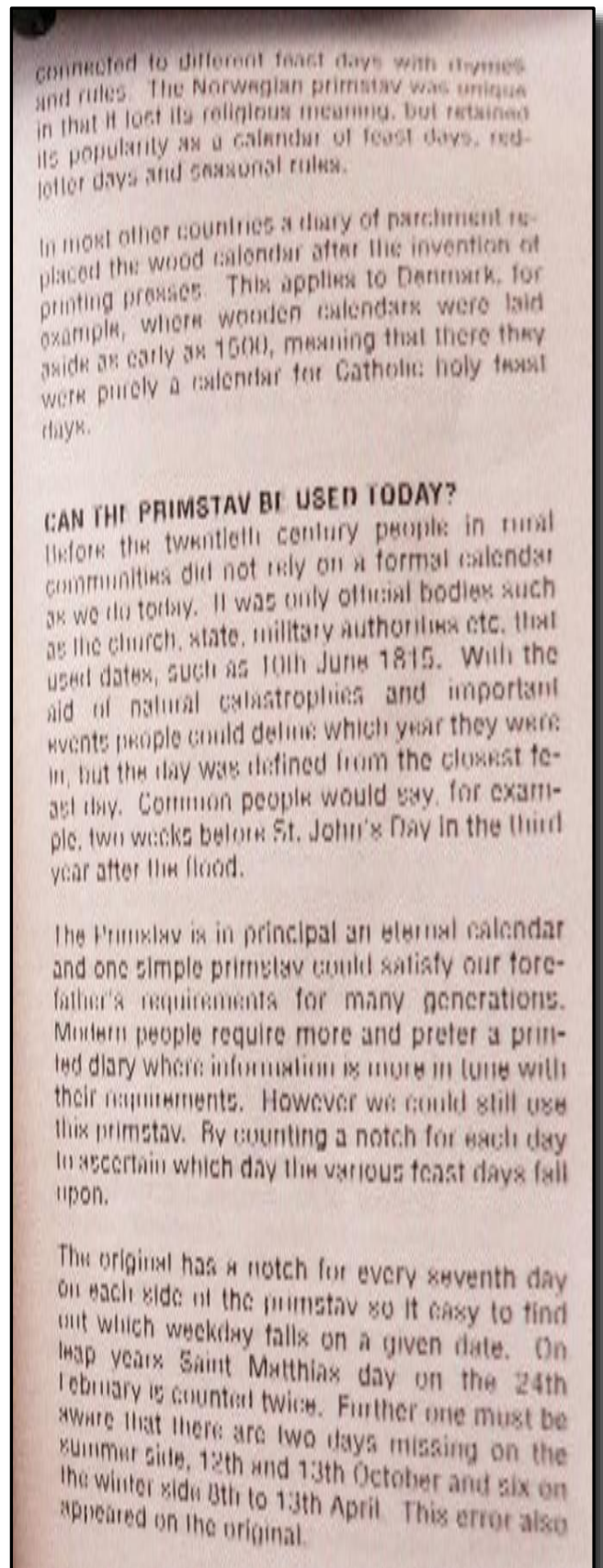
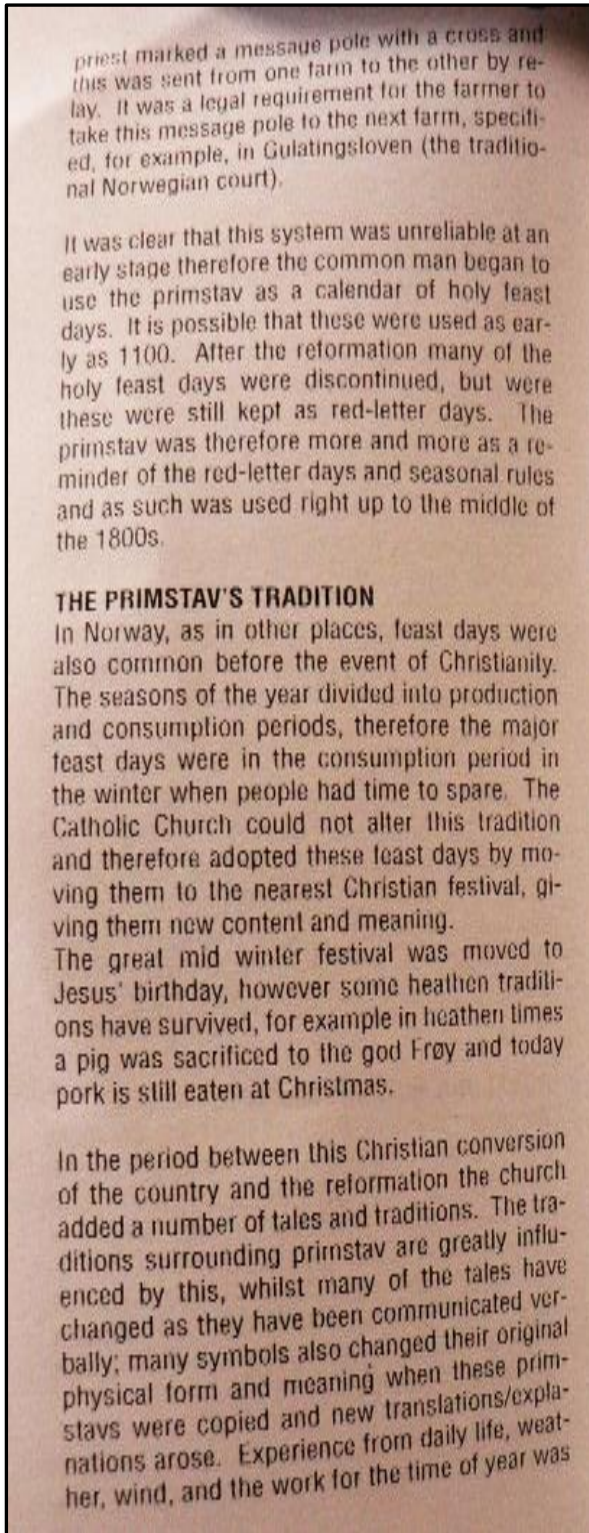
**Classification:**

There is no suggestion of an earlier church on this site so it must have been founded in C13 and merit a B(iii) classification, bearing in mind that it was not originally dedicated to Saint Botolph at all and that its link with our saint only dates from C19.



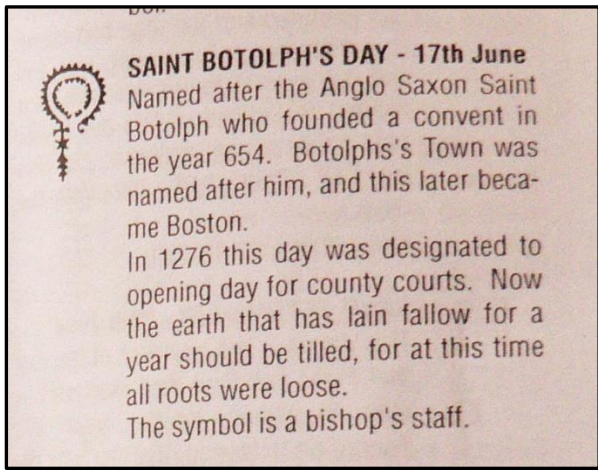
## Readers' letters and emails.

**1.** One of my fellow students at Guy's Hospital (of over 50 years ago – so good to keep in touch!) **Dr Clive Talbot** wrote from his cabin in Trollheimen in the north of Norway and sent me the following pictures on the subject of Primstavs (as mentioned in our last issue). The first part of the booklet sheds a lot of light on to the purpose for which these staffs were designed.

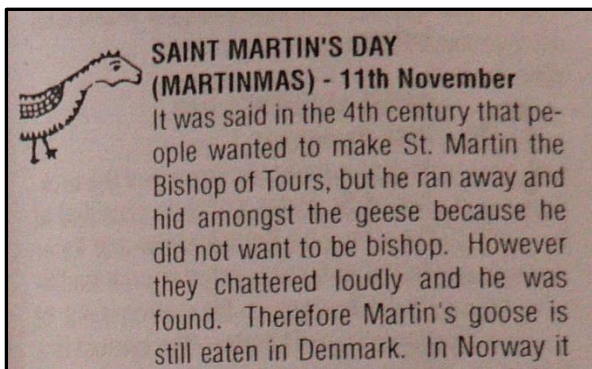
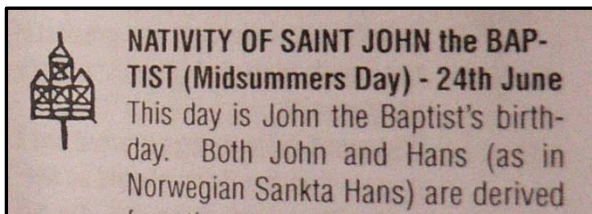
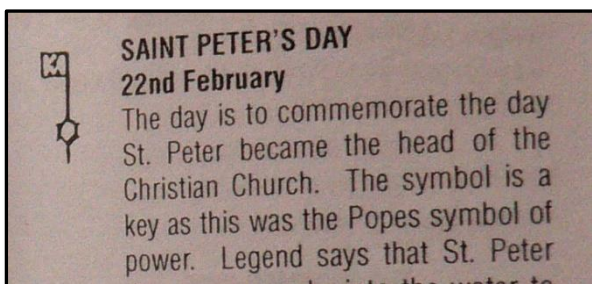


Then, further on in the booklet as we follow the dates through the year we find 17 June and there is St Botolph, complete with symbol.





Other similarly simple symbols are used to signify other saints:



All very interesting. Thank you Clive.

**2. Tony Connolly** from Croxton-Kerrial, had been trying to get in touch with **Graham Jones** for some time and, seeing his name in *The Botolphian* he enlisted my help. As a result of Tony's queries Graham wrote to him – kindly sending a copy to me. This follows on from the fact that, as mentioned in the July 2014 issue of *The Botolphian*, the dedication of the Croxton-

Kerrial church has alternated between Saint Botolph and Saint John the Baptist. Graham writes:

*Botolph is named as the patron of 'Croxton' in will 01/345 (Bishop's Transcripts) of 1518. John Lloyd in his MA thesis on Leicestershire dedications reported two wills, but I have only seen this one. Browne Willis' correspondent (possibly the incumbent) gave 'John' as patron (the 1754 edition of BW's thesaurus, p. 237), followed by John Nichols (Antiquities, v. 2.1, p. 148). Frances Arnold Forster took this to mean John the Baptist, probably correctly since Nichols also reported a wake on the Sunday before Midsummer (John's Nativity).*

*There is very little chance that the 1518 will refers to South Croxton, since in 1520 a testator names the patron there as John the Baptist, a dedication which has persisted till the present. Indeed it may be that the incumbent at Croxton Kerrial took a hint from St John's, South Croxton, though the date of the wake (never necessarily reflecting the parish patronal feast) is the more likely explanation for Botolph's displacement. It was a common misconception to assume without further enquiry that the date of a village wake marked the parish's patronal festival.*

*That said, the recovery of St Botolph in the current joint dedication in honour of Botolph and John the Baptist (I don't have the year it was adopted; the Ordnance Survey still had John the Baptist on his own in 1976) might actually restore the state of affairs in the eleventh century, when relics of St Botolph might have been (?recently) acquired by Croxton Kerrial at a time of the church's rebuilding. I've written about the suggestive adjacency of Botolph and Guthlac dedications in various places, and do so again in the forthcoming 'Guthlac 1300' volume.*

*Hugely interesting, and your fantastic results on the manor house site underline the significance of Botolph as patron at a royal manor. With due deference to him, though, I'm as equally excited by the sceatta, tweezers, and pottery, suggestive of a settlement at Croxton of a status very likely to have merited a church (a domestic chapel at the very least) in the mid-Saxon period. The possibility of John's patronage opens a number of avenues of enquiry, including his reception from Buckminster, Croxton's likely mother-church, where he remains the patron.*

Thank you Graham for shedding more light on *this* mystery – and Tony – all the more power to your

elbow as you continue with your research into this your local church.

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**

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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 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.

**Typical Characteristics of Early St Botolph Churches.**

1. All are in the eastern half of England
2. Most have Saxon foundations.
3. Many lie with 3 miles of a Roman road or well-used waterway.
4. Most are situated close to the bottom of an escarpment but well clear of water levels.
5. Many are strategically placed in areas which represent the beginnings, middles and ends of long journeys.

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Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013.