

The Botolphian

Newsletter of The Society of Saint Botolph <u>www.botolph.info</u>



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Issue Number: 73

1st June 2019

Highlights this month

- Church of St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate, London
- It gives me great pleasure to welcome the following new members: Lynne Ballew (Maine USA/Felixtowe UK): Heather Erguvanli from High Wycombe; Ben Cottam from Folkestone.
- Correspondence from Janet Havers, Anne Dickinson, Gillian Ridout, Revd David Murdoch, Marcia Barton,, Revd Paula Griffiths, Mhairi Ellis, Revd Canon Cynthia Hebden and (belatedly - see below) Christopher Micklethwaite.

<u>Editorial</u>

Well here I am again - almost fully recovered greatly encouraged by your many kind wishes and prayers - thank you. I was obviously over optimistic when I wrote that the May edition would be a little late. As time went on it became clear that it would be sensible to abandon it altogether and go straight to the June edition - so here we are.

First though, I have a massive apology to make to Christopher Micklethwaite (of **St Botolph's Quarrington, Lincolnshire**) who wrote to me with a very comprehensive account of Quarrington church's 800th anniversary. Sadly the letter arrived whilst I was abroad, became submerged amongst some other paper work and has only just surfaced.

The anniversary celebrations were clearly magnificent and Christopher created a record in pictures and text which was published in St Botolph's Summer 2018 Chronicle which he sent me. Christopher himself gave a public lecture about the village and its churches linked with the parish of Old Sleaford. Recent excavations have revealed a medieval Manor House off Boston Road, Old Sleaford and the foundations of a stone Saxon church with a rounded apse. This completes another part of the jigsaw because two churches were mentioned in the Domesday Book and this newly-discovered church is clearly the one paired with St Botolph's Quarrington.

Christopher has given me plenty more to write about but I will save this until I re-visit and refeature Quarrington at a later date.

I have not quite finished the full round of St Botolph churches yet but, since many of those I have left to cover are in ruins or underground, I plan to intersperse these with updated repeats of some of the first churches I covered in order to make the series more interesting. Looking back through the issues I can see that it really took me a year or so to get into my stride so these updates will I hope bring the early ones up to standard. The first of these repeats is this month's Bishopsgate. I was intending to leave this until later but having recently covered the other three London churches it seemed appropriate to bring Bishopsgate forward and compare the four.

Church Feature

Bishopsgate, London (St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate).

Approach: From Liverpool Street Station take the Bishopsgate exit and turn right at the top of the escalators onto Bishopsgate and head south. The church is 2-3 minutes walk away on your right. **Location:** Lat: 51.516691, Long: -0.081455; Bishopsgate, EC2M 3TL. **Key:** Open Monday to Friday 7.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Church Website http://www.botolph.org.uk. website This excellent contains useful information about Livery Companies, Guilds and other organisations linked with the church. **Contacts:** Administrator: Mhairi Ellis. church@botolph.org.uk. Tel: 020 7588 3388. **Rector:** *Father David Armstrong.*

Church Services: Wednesdays at 1.10 p.m. and Thursdays at 12.10 p.m. Services last no longer than 50 minutes.

Listed Grade: II*



Bishopsgate is due north of the last issue's featured site at Billingsgate so wayfarers heading north or south would have had two chances of being 'Botolphed.'

The first historical record of the church dates from 1212. It was rebuilt at the expense of the Lord Mayor in 1571 and narrowly escaped the Great Fire of 1666. Over succeeding years it was restored internally but by 1708 was in a poor state of repair and in 1710 the parishioners petitioned unsuccessfully parliament for permission to rebuild it elsewhere. By 1723 it was considered irreparable and parliament agreed that the church could be rebuilt but on the same site.

The architect was James Gould and work started in 1725. It was during this building work that the foundations of the church's Anglo-Saxon predecessor were discovered.



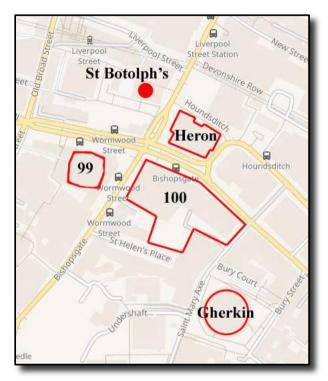
A photographically enhanced picture of today's St Botolphs-without-Bishopsgate - just about showing (on the left) St Botolph's Church Hall.



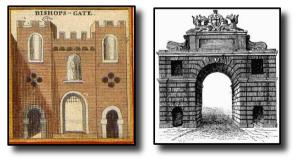
The architecture of the church's modern neighbours rather takes one's breath away.



Other neighbours loom nearby but are far enough distant to allow St Botolph's space to breathe.



Initially I was not sure which skyscraper was which but I finally identified the above as being the main ones - there are others both built and under construction but these are the ones closest to St Botolph's. They are known as: Number 99 Bishopsgate; Number 100 Bishopsgate; the Heron Tower; and the St Mary Axe - commonly referred to as 'The Gherkin.'

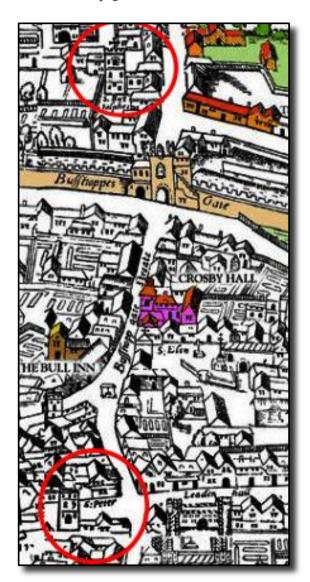


c.1650

c. 1740

The pictures above show the different forms the gate of Bishopsgate took as it changed over the years. It was finally restored by the City fathers in 1735 but as it turned out this was rather a waste of money because they demolished it in 1760.

Why though was *the Gate* called *Bishopsgate*? There seem to be several possible answers to this question. The seat of the London bishops from C11 to 1973 was well to the west - at Fulham Palace. Earcenwald (Erkenwald) of Lindsey (630-693) was Bishop of London between 675 and 693 and it seemed at first that he might have had a hand in the naming of the gate but I could find no connection. The first gate on this site was built by the Romans and this led me to the legendary Lucius who was supposedly a C2 king of Britain who, 300 years before St Augustine, introduced Christianity into Britain. He is said to have installed Thean as Bishop of London (c.185c.197) and Thean is credited with founding the church of St Peter in Cornhill (lower ring on the 1561 map below) . . . which lies a nudge to the south of Bishopsgate.



One possibility therefore is that the earliest source of the name is Roman and stems from its connection with the activities of Bishop Thean. The Domesday Book records that in 1086 the Tenant-in-Chief of the Bishopsgate area was the Bishop of London (St Pauls). Domesday also reveals that the population of the area was sparse - just ten cottagers in fact.

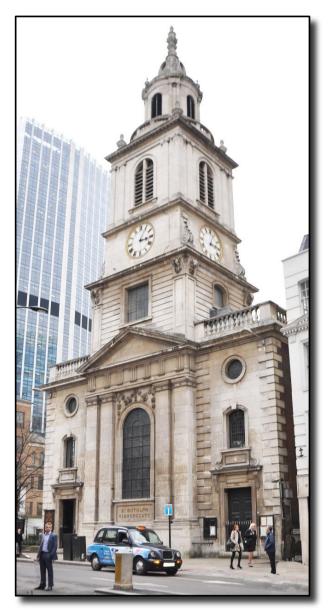
Name of Parish, Dedication, and Nature of Benefice.	Popula- tion.	Diocese.	Net Value.	Patron.
London (continued).			-2-	1.00
St. Bene't Sherehog R	180	Lond.		whit.toSt.Stephen, Walbrook, R.
St. Botolph Billingsgate R with St. George Botolph Lane R	207	Lond.	320*	The Crown.
St. Botolph without Al- dersgate	3994	Lond.	450	Dean & Chap. of Westminster.
St. Botolph Aldgate PC	9615	Lond.	247	R. Kynaston, Esq.
St. Botolph without Bishopsgate } R	10256	Lond.	{2290*	Bishop of London.
All Saints Chapel PC St. Bride V	,		(258	Rector of St. Botolph's.
Christchurch V	6860	Lond.	562	Dean & Chap. of Westminster. (St. Bartholomew's Hospital, &
with St. Leonard Foster Lane R.	200	Lond.	537	Dn.& Chap. of Westminster.
St. Christopher le Stocks R.	72	Lond.		united to St. Marg., Lothbury, R.

And the 1835 *Liber Ecclesiasticus* confirms that, unlike the other nearby St Botolph churches, it is the Bishop of London who is the patron of St Botolphs-without-Bishopsgate.



The only physical indication of the gate's position today is a moulding of a bishop's mitre (arrowed above) high up on the wall near the church garden.

I feel we should move on but we cannot leave the gate just vet because it has other Botolphian connections. In 1471 it was a crumbling ruin and it was our old friends the Hanseatic League who agreed to restore it in return for certain favours concerning their riverside 'Steelyard' premises; you will remember that these were mentioned in the April issue in connection with St Botolph's Billingsgate. The fact that the Hansa had associations with the Billingsgate Botolph's to their east and then took responsibility for the gate guarded by another St Botolph's church to their north seems to just have been a coincidence. For several years now I have been searching for a direct connection between our saint and the League but I am rapidly reaching the conclusion that the only connection between the two was an indirect one and that was mainly via the intermediary of the Boston (Lincolnshire) traders.



And now to the church itself. The architect, James Gould, was determined to give the church an impressive frontage and so, unusually, he placed the tower at the eastern end and dressed it with expensive Portland Stone.



A path runs along the south side of the building...



Beside the path stands a WWI memorial cross which, it is believed, was the first to be set up in On the base is an inscription which Britain. exhorts us not to forget our war heroes particularly those who died at the Battle of Jutland (31 May 1916) during which, although more British lives were lost than German, the German Navy were so decimated that they were unable to take part in the rest of the war. A local 16 year old, John Travers Cornwell, died when HMS Chester was sunk during the battle. The memorial also commemorates Field Marshall Herbert Lord Kitchener who died five days after the Battle of Jutland when his ship HMS Hampshire was sunk by a German mine.



A little further along the path are the church's tennis courts and then . . .



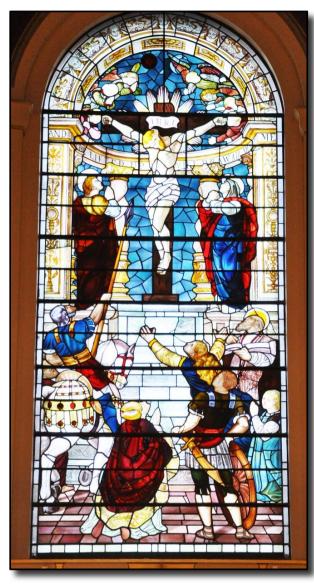
... on your right stands the church hall - built in 1861 of brick and Portland stone and formerly the parish school; from 1952 to 1994 the building was used as the Livery Hall of the Worshipful Company of Fanmakers. Both the hall and the tennis courts are available for hire from Paul Gibson at <u>hallandcourt@botolph.org.uk</u>. This area was originally the churchyard and was the first of the City burial grounds to be converted into a public garden. As one might imagine, this caused much controversy at the time but modern opinion applauds the move.



The entrance to the church is unspectacular.



. . . but inside, this magnificent building is a picture of elegance.



In the colourful east window it has been suggested that the be-mitred figure in the foreground might be a whimsical portrayal of Saint Botolph himself





Shown above is the pulpit from which the suffragist Maude Royden (1876-1956) delivered the first sermon to be preached by a woman in the Church of England. This controversial event occurred on Good Friday, 30 March 1923. Maude Royden was a lively character in spite of suffering from lameness all her life (due, it was eventually discovered, to dislocated hips). At Oxford she became close friends with Revd Hudson Shaw and his wife Effie and went to live with them as Effie's companion in his parish of South Luffenham (not far from St Botolph's, Wardley). Hudson Shaw later became the incumbent of St Botolph's Bishopsgate and it was he who encouraged her sermon.

The pulpit - on its pedestal - closely resembles the one we saw at Aldgate



Aldersgate

... whereas the Aldersgate pulpit is rather more plain and is supported by a pedestal made of cast iron which suggests that it is earlier than the other two. The size and culture of these C18 churches demanded this style of raised pulpits from which ministers could preach in an authoritarian manner. They are rather different to those we are used to seeing in St Botolph's more rural churches.



A rather magnificent staircase gives access to the Bishopsgate pulpit.



The fonts of the three churches, although vastly different to each other, bear a similar C18 metropolitan style. It was in this one at Bishopsgate that the Romantic Poet John Keats (1795-1821) was baptised.



Aldgate

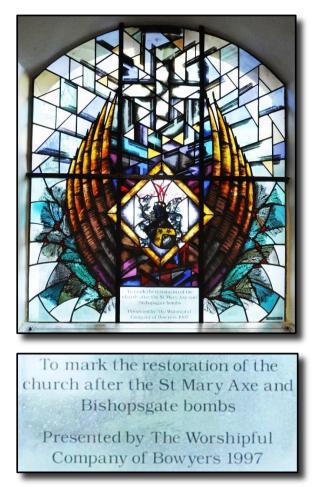
Aldersgate



The church has close connections with the London Rifle Brigade as affirmed by this memorial plaque. The brigade was first raised in 1859 and went through various changes of names until it became part of the Royal Green Jackets and is now G Company, 7th Battalion The Rifles.



It was one of the units that, whilst awaiting deployment in France, cut its badge into the chalk downs at Fovant in Wiltshire during WWI. From left to right we see here the badges of: The Royal Corps of Signals, The Wiltshire Regiment and the London Rifle Brigade. Photograph by courtesy of Trish Steel.



The Worshipful Company of Bowyers traditionally hold their service in St Botolphs when they install a new Master.

To commemorate the work of restoration following the severe damage caused by IRA bombs and in order to strengthen the company's ties with the church they commissioned this window from the artist Nicola Kantorowicz.

The first impression it conveyed to me was a scene of shattered glass in the midst of which a shape like a pair of loving hands offered protection and upward hope.

This is the official version:

By combining the yew leaves and the long curve of the bow Nicola created a design which grows and moves upwards, perhaps suggesting resurrection or earth. The colours of the bows lend themselves to fire and light and the suggestion of a crucifix gives a spiritual element to the window.



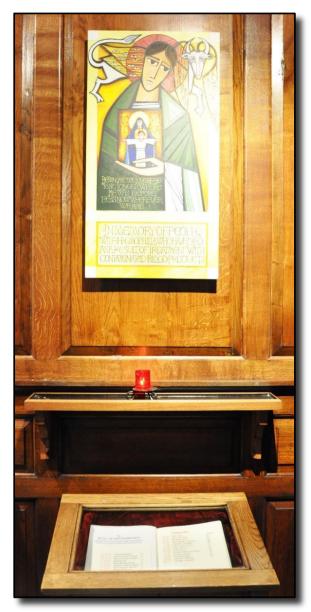
I had but a hazy memory of the news story but research brought me to this picture of devastation.



A tipper truck, like the one shown above, had been packed with 1 tonne of explosive hidden beneath a layer of tarmac and parked outside 99 Bishopsgate. Two factors prevented a massive loss of life: the first was that it was a Saturday morning and the second was that the provisional IRA gave an hour's warning of the detonation. Only one person was killed although 44 were injured. Documents were blown out of office (and church) windows by the blast and St Botolph's was one of those affected in this way. In the clearing up process police had little alternative but to use shredders indiscriminately in order to preserve confidentiality.

At St Botolph's 'the bomb opened up the roof and left the church without any doors or windows. The building was classed as a dangerous structure and cordoned-off.' It took three and a half years of hard work before the building could re-open.

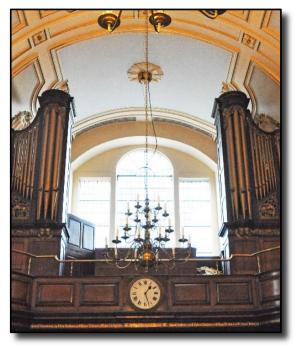
I am sorry to be the bearer of such gruesome details but I think you will agree that it gives poignancy to the presence in the church of the little window provided by the Worshipful Company of Bowyers.



Also here is a memorial to all those with haemophilia who died (and are still dying) as a result of receiving contaminated blood in the 1970s and 1980s.



The north aisle leads down to a side chapel with a memorial to the fallen of the Honourable Artillery Company.



At the west end of the building, the gallery houses the organ which was installed in 1764. The large west window had been inserted some years previously when it was found that more light was needed in the church. It was Revd Hudson Shaw (who we mentioned earlier in connection with Maude Royden) who in 1912 was responsible for heroic restoration to both the church and the organ.



Along the lower part of the gallery's woodwork there runs a continuous list of the names of the rectors from 1323.



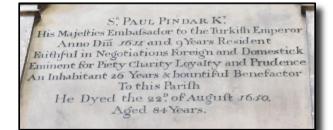
Many of these went on to become Bishops of London.



The impressive barrel-vaulted ceiling.



The south aisle.

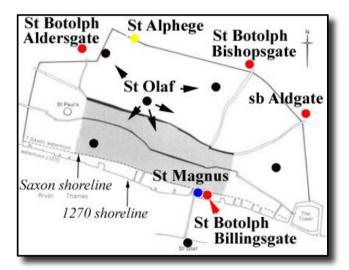


In the vestry there is a plaque to the memory of Sir Paul Pindar (1565-1650) who was King James I's ambassador in Turkey and a great benefactor to the church. His was one of several magnificent houses in the area and its frontage (seen below) is now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum.



His house was demolished in 1890 to make way for Liverpool Street Station.

Classification



As we have seen previously, the City of London contains a surprisingly large number of churches dedicated to Scandinavian saints - notably St Olaf. The name refers to **King Olaf II** (c.995-1030) who was king of Norway from 1015 to 1028.

The skaldic poets record that, in his earlier life, it was Olaf who, in 1014, as an ally of the English king Aethelred the Unready, was responsible for destroying London Bridge in order to separate two Danish factions who were encamped on opposite sides of the River Thames.

It seems strange perhaps to think of a 'Viking' being allied to an English king but since the time of Danelaw (878) there was much integration between the Scandinavians and ourselves.

When we talk about 'the Vikings' we tend to lump Norwegians and Danes together but before **Sweyn Forkbeard, King of Denmark** took control of the errant petty kingdoms in Norway in A.D.1000 the two peoples were, in many circumstances, sworn enemies and this enmity continued to erupt for many years after Forkbeard's attempts at union.

To complicate the matter further, the Romans considered the Danes to be the people who occupied the combined area of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. To put it simply, the Norwegians were the Danish occupiers of the Northern Realm and the Swedes were the Danish occupiers of the Svea Realm and it is because of this Danish preponderance that we now talk of **Danelaw** and regard Viking and Dane as synonymous.

Stone crosses and burial customs found in Norway's coastal region suggest that people in this area adopted Christianity from as early as late C7 and certainly from the reign of Haakon the Good (920-961) after which all but one of the Norwegian monarchs were Christian. Haakon himself had spent ten years of his youth in England at the court of King Athelstan where he would have met St Dunstan, later Archbishop of Canterbury, and Aethelwold, later the Bishop of Winchester who became leader of the monastic revival of which St Botolph's relics were pivotal. All these facts are, in my view, doorways in a corridor which will eventually lead us to the rationale behind Saint Botolph becoming what the historian John Toy described as 'the most popular medieval English saint in Scandinavia 'represented (there) by 10 different masses in 48 manuscripts and 8 printed missals.'

But what relevance does this have to the foundation of St Botolph without Bishopsgate? The church guide tells us:

'Christian worship has probably been offered on this site since Roman days. The original Saxon church, the foundations of which were discovered when the present church was erected, is first mentioned again in a deed of gift of 1247 by which Simon Fitzmary, Alderman and Sheriff, gave his land and houses to the Bishop of Bethlehem to found the Priory of St Mary of Bethlehem north of the church. After the suppression of religious houses by Henry VIII it was converted into the Bethlehem Hospital for Lunatics.'

Relevant dates for Bishopsgate

pre-410 Suggestion of Roman Christian worship
pre-1066 Date of verified Saxon foundations *1212 Earliest record of church*1323 Earliest recorded name of rector.
1571 Church restored by Lord Mayor *1725 Rebuilt by James Gould*

Comparative dates for Aldersgate

1050 Earliest record of church
1333 Earliest recorded Rector
1783 Demolished
1788 Rebuilt by Nathaniel Wright

Comparative dates for Aldgate

1108 Earliest prior
1115 Earliest record of church
1489 Church rebuilt
1744 Rebuilt by George Dance the elder

Comparative dates for Billingsgate

pre-1066 Likely date of foundation **1200** Earliest record of Botolphsgate 1666 Destroyed by the Great Fire

The walls and gates of London were built (rather later than one might perhaps think) by Roman legions towards the end of the third century. When Botolph arrived back in Britain in 647 after spending nine years in France, the old walled Roman city was derelict and had been so for nearly 200 years and yet travellers still passed through it.

In 604, King Æthelberht of Kent had made a bid to regenerate the area by founding the first church on the site upon which St. Paul's cathedral now stands; he installed Abbot Mellitus as the first Bishop of London (although this takes no account of the C4 Roman bishop Restitutus). Æthelberht's efforts must have been more in hope than expectation since within twelve years (close to the time that Botolph was born) Mellitus was hounded out of his see by East Saxon infidels.

Botolph would surely have been intrigued and saddened by the sight of the ruins as he passed through on his journey from Kent to East Anglia. He would have empathised with fellow travellers and perhaps identified a need for shelter and spiritual encouragement as people entered and left the place on their potentially dangerous journeys. Did he have a hand in the foundation of one of these churches? Clearly the three that we see today were part of a coordinated plan to rebuild London on a grand scale following the destruction of the 1666 fire. But the predecessor churches were probably small. I have found no suggestion of a monastery being attached to any of them. It seems that they were there to cater for the spiritual and (perhaps) accommodation needs of the traveller. Were they simply offering a service in the name of God or was there a mercenary component to their presence?

As always we are looking for the *first* church on each site. If, for the moment, we discard the possibility of a Roman stone structure, the next possibility is a C7 Saxon wooden church which would have been cheap and quick to build. There were eight gates to the old Roman city and I see merchants setting up their stalls at each one and selling trinkets and wares to send the traveller on his way. In short, each of the gates would have been a small hive of activity. A small wooden church would have been a logical addition. I very much doubt however that they would have been dedicated to Saint Botolph at this stage since they would have been founded in his lifetime. This would have come some considerable time later when the saint was firmly established as Patron Saint of Wayfarers. The dedication to Saint Botolph would have given the chapel authenticity and prestige.

To sum up, I do not believe that any of the London churches were founded personally by St Botolph although I suspect they were founded in his era. I think it is likely that he became their patronal saint during the monastic revival of the second half of C10.

Classification?

Sites: I would classify all four *sites* as B(i) - i.e. founded before A.D.800 (although I am a little hesitant about the Billingsgate site which I suspect was not founded until later - perhaps C10).

Churches: The first *Saint Botolph Churches* on these sites would have to be B(ii) - i.e. established between 800 and 1066.

This of course does beg two questions:

(i) How many other Saint Botolph Churches on the main roads to cities developed in the same way?

(ii) Who were their patronal saints before they were re-dedicated to Saint Botolph?

Thanks

My thanks to Mhairi Ellis for her hospitality when I visited St Botolph without Bishopsgate.

Correspondence

1. Janet Havers wrote from St Botolph's Barford, Norfolk to say that their church has been closed since October while undergoing repairs part funded by the Lottery. The external work has been completed but some internal reordering has just begun.

2. Anne Dickinson wrote from sb Burton Hastings forwarding a twitter picture she had received from her oppo at sb Aldgate saying: *Despite our urban setting we think we are looking lovely this spring - how about you?*



Well done you two - it is good to see the St Botolph's family are communicating well!

3. Gillian Ridout wrote from Banningham. Norfolk: Norfolk has started having a 'Norfolk Day' 27th of July and they are trying to make it an annual event. Last year, in the Church we showcased all the clubs and attractions of our village. This year we would love to have some general information on St Botolph that we can impart to any visitors that we may attract to our Coffee Morning and Afternoon Tea that day. We being Banningham know that Trunch and Hevingham (both St.Botolph's) are near enough to send interested people to visit if interested. So any information that you can let me have would be of [Ed: I will be emailing an great value. information sheet to Gillian shortly].

4. Revd David Murdoch wrote from Iken to say that, sadly, he will be moving away from Saint Botolph and transferring to a church dedicated to Saint Giles. David and I have met several times and he attended one of the SOSB Luncheons. We are sorry to lose him and wish him well.

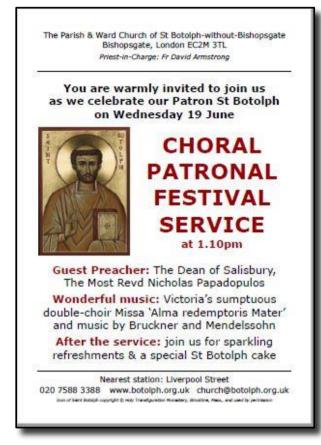
5. Marcia Barton wrote from Chevening (the St Botolph's which is next to Chequers and so has featured on some TV News Shots recently) . . . saying that they are having some repainting done and inviting Zina and me to revisit the church. - we look forward to doing so - particularly since it is four years since our last visit.

6. Revd Paula Griffiths wrote from Hadstock, Essex: As you know, Hadstock is celebrating the Millennium of the church in 2020, and planning of various projects is underway.

One idea we have had is to encourage villagers to visit other churches dedicated to St Botolph, with the aim that we might between us be able to visit them all (in England at least!) and compile a folder in the church with pictures and comments about what people had found particularly special in their journeys. It's something any one could do in their own time, by themselves or with family and friends, and could approach either as tourists or pilgrims (though of course it would be lovely if one might turn into the other!) - and that flexibility and simplicity seems to be making it quite an attractive idea to people.

So I wondered if it would be too much trouble to let me have a list of all the St Botolph's churches you know of, ideally with their addresses/postcodes, to help us guide people in planning their visits? I'd be very grateful. A simple list sent by email would be absolutely great.

[Ed: What a wonderful idea this is and something to be encouraged and perhaps copied by other St Botolph's churches ... 'visiting the family' as it were! I shall be forwarding the details to Paula shortly]. **7. Mhairi Ellis** wrote from Bishopsgate, London with details of their patronal celebrations which are going to be on Wednesday 19th June. Please attend if you can - and write and tell me about the St Botolph cake!



8. Revd Canon Cynthia Hebden wrote from Market Harborough sending me details (for the records) of the engraving artist who did the magnificent work on the glass door at St Botolph's Shepshed.

9. One of our members sent me this photograph of a village sign seen at Botolph's Bridge near Peterborough. It would seem that Botolph himself was a 'Green Man.'



REGULAR END-NOTES

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 <u>botolph@virginmedia.com</u> 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.
 - (i) Founded by radiation from Botolph centres.
 - (ii) Founded along the course of Botolph's journeys.
- B: Travellers' churches.
 - (i) Founded before AD 800
 - (ii) Founded between 800 and 1066
 - (iii) Founded after the Norman Conquest.
- C: Hanseatic churches founded as a result of commercial enterprise.
- D: None of the above.

Typical Characteristics of Early St Botolph Churches.

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

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