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Vol. XXXV111 No. 4 June 2011



# The Round Tower

Vol. XXXV111 No 4

June 2011



**Gunton St Peter**

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## ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY TOURS 2011

### Saturday Tours First church 2.30pm

<b>4<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Mautby, Clippesby, Repps
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	Framingham Earl, Poringland, Howe
<b>6<sup>th</sup> August</b>	Little Snoring, Syderstone, Sedgeford
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> September</b>	Hemblington, Little Plumstead, Old Catton

### Church Tours Sundays, first church 2.30pm

<b>19th June</b>	Tharston, Forncett St Peter, Forncett St Mary, Fundenhall
<b>17th July</b>	Wellingham, Whissonsett, Horningtoft, Colkirk

Everyone is welcome to attend both sets of Tours. There is no charge, although donations to the churches are encouraged. Refreshments will be provided by one of the churches each afternoon. The Sunday Tours visit Norfolk Churches with square, round or no towers! These Sunday Tours end with a form of Service, usually Evensong at 6.30pm, though attendance is optional. Any queries phone 'Lyn Stilgoe 01328 738237.

**Society for Church Archaeology Conference  
Churches and the Sea  
Chichester 2nd - 4th September 2011**

**Contact 'Lyn Stilgoe on 01328 738237 for more information.**

**The next issue is September 2011 and the deadline for insertion is Friday 29th July.**

Please send items for publication either as email attachments or on disc as **separate** files – text, photos, drawings etc., or by post to:-

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Tel: 01263 712301  
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### Membership Subscription

*Minimum £10 (overseas £15) annually of which 40% is for the printing and posting of The Round Tower magazine and administration, with the balance going to the Repair Fund.*

*Magazines are published on the 1st of March, June, September and December. Membership renewal date is the first of these dates following the application for membership.*

*To join the Society, please make contact with the Treasurer:-*

### Mr Richard Barham

6 The Warren, Old Catton,  
Norwich, NR6 7NW  
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## THE ROUND TOWER

**The quarterly magazine of the Round Tower Churches Society**

**Vol. XXXV111 No 4 June 2011**

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### Photographs

As always a big thank you to Simon Knott [www.suffolkchurches.co.uk](http://www.suffolkchurches.co.uk)

## BRITAIN'S MOST EASTERLY GEM



Britain's most easterly round towered church is Gunton St Peter at the northern tip of Lowestoft. It is very pretty and neat tucked at the end of Gunton Church Lane and backing on to Gunton Woods, an attractive conservation area lovingly tended by local people. It is about a half a mile from the crashing waves of the north sea and the Euroscope that marks Britain's most easterly point at Ness Point.

There has been a church on this site since the seventh century when Gunni ruled over the local Saxons (Gunni's Ton means Gunni's settlement). The adjacent wood reminds us that the whole area was probably wooded sliced through by a Roman track. The first church would have been a simple rectangle with no porch, vestry or tower built of local flint and stone. It is thought that the Saxons added a short round tower in about 900AD.

After 1066 alterations were made including the impressive north and south doorways. The porch was built in the sixteenth century which is where the original Norman font now stands. As Lowestoft grew so the community at Gunton dwindled and by the early seventeenth century the church was no longer used or cared for.

However, by the end of the seventeenth century, local man Charles Boyce restored the church, building the south porch and raising the church tower to its present height of fifty five feet and adding belfry windows. Charles was buried in the church where he has well deserved memorials.

The last major restoration was between 1899 – 1901 when the local Fowler family (residents of Gunton Hall) completely renovated the building as a memorial to their parents. The restoration included a new tiled roof, re-building the east wall, re-plastering interior walls and the installation of pews and organ. The vestry was built on the north side to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

## ST MICHAEL'S LEWES - IN AN URBAN LANDSCAPE



Unlike some round tower churches that have to be sought out on the map, St Michael's Lewes, Sussex, stands up on the hill of the High Street, packed round with other interesting buildings and difficult to photograph. Almost opposite is the wonky overhanging 'half timber' of the 15th century bookshop, and nearby there is an early 19th century neo-classical building with



columns of the Ammonite Order—an order invented by a Mr Ammon, and found only here in Brighton. As well as the usual Sussex red brick and tile-hung walls, many houses in the town are faced for decorative effect with thin bricks called, for some reason, 'mathematical tiles', while what remains of the mighty Lewes Castle tops an even higher little mountain behind the church. The tower of St Michael's can be seen from the forecourt to the barbican, adding a distinctive touch to this urban landscape. It pokes over the roof tops, not the blocky shape of a square-based tower, but a tube, and, what is more, a tube topped with an elongated version of a wood-shingled 'Sussex cap', almost a spire. This view of the tower also shows that the two cusped circular openings that can be seen from the street, near the top of the tower, are matched by at least one other on the castle side.

*Joseph Biddulph*

### BEACHAMWELL VILLAGE OPEN GARDENS DAY

**Sunday 26th June 12 noon—5.00pm**

Large variety of open gardens, The Dereham Brass Band on the village green, The King's Morris Dancers, Organ Recitals in the church, Treasure Hunt, Ploughman's Lunches, Strawberry & Cream Teas, Stalls, Raffle & Tombola. Adults £3.00, children free.

*In aid of St Mary's Church, Beachamwell. Enquiries: 01366 328817*

## ST PETER'S CHURCH THORINGTON Art Exhibition and Sale of Paintings

**Friday 10th June 6.00pm - 9.00pm**

Fund raising supper with private view of Art in the church, chilli supper (vegetarian option) and complementary glass of wine, live music. Tickets £7.50 per person

**Saturday 11th June 11.00am - 5.00pm**

Art Exhibition and Sale of paintings in the church (admission free) all day. At 12 noon, Waterstones Childrens Book of the Year Award 2011 winning author, Sita Brahmachari, will launch the exhibition. Homemade lunches and teas in the churchyard, raffle, silent auction, craft stalls, cake & produce stall, art workshops for younger children.

*For more details on the above event please contact Trish Gower on 01502 478267 or email [trish@wenhaston.net](mailto:trish@wenhaston.net)*

Though the churchyard has been closed for burials since 1999, and the church is kept locked, there are still Sunday services and open days.

### Features of interest



There is impressive sculptural carving over both the north and south doorways. The north doorway with its columns intact is particularly fine.

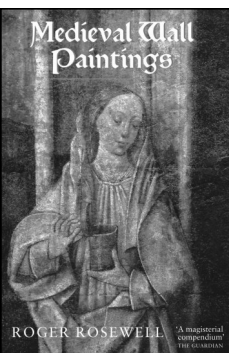
Inside the church halfway along the north wall is a small stairway which is blocked. This would have given access to the top of the rood screen which is no longer there. Near the stairs is one of the original, very narrow round-headed Norman windows and the only remaining piece of Medieval woodwork is incorporated into the Rector's stall.

The organ is dated 1903 and had to be hand pumped until 1970 when the new houses were built bringing electricity to this end of Gunton Church Lane.

The only stained glass in the church is the restored east window. It portrays the figure of Christ beckoning Peter and the disciples to "follow me".

This church is very small but beautifully restored and maintained and well worth a visit. The Waveney Valley has many round towered churches so this could be one of a trail to include Lound, Blundeston, Ashby, Herringfleet, Haddiscoe, Thorpe and Fritton which you could do all in one day.

*Carol Quentin-Hicks*



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*Offer ends 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011.*



## EDINGTHORPE SUMMER SUNDAY 12th June 11.00am - 5.00pm

Walk the country lanes & ancient footpaths whilst viewing our lovely OPEN GARDENS. Visit our beautiful Church on the hill for country crafts and demonstrations. Refreshments. Teas & Plant Sales. Relax & enjoy our village. *In aid of All Saints Church Edingthorpe.*

## ROUND TOWERS BETWEEN EARTH AND HEAVEN

*My request for thoughts on burials in round towers featured in the March 2011 (Vol. XXXV111 No.3) issue has produced a number of responses covering both spiritual and archaeological aspects. See also pages 16 & 17...*

Internment in 'Romanesque', Anglo-Danish, and Norman round tower churches, in both Norfolk and in Skåne (South Sweden), raises the question of the purpose of this unusual ritual: Why was it, in a church with a round tower in both instances?

One recalls other instances of unusual burials in the distant past, for example, at Sutton Hoo, with a burial within a Viking-type ship arrangement amidst possessions of beauty and great worth, or one may recall the funeral pyre of the pagan Rûs (Eastern Vikings) in Russia which is described by Ibn Fadlân, around the year 921 A.D. This Arab traveller witnessed a horrifying ritual where he was informed that the rising smoke of the pyre bore the deceased 'chief's' soul heavenwards to his Valhalla-like eternity. Moreover, in past and present Scandinavian languages, the name for a church nave is 'ship' (skib, skip, skepp). To underline this idea, the nave of most Scandinavian churches has by tradition a model of a ship hanging there.

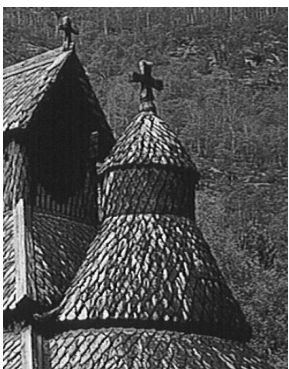


Fig.1 Borgund

The wooden round towers which are constructed over the apses to many Norwegian stave churches (e.g. Borgund; see Fig.1) may possess a spiritual significance. They may possibly be a kind of symbolic shaft from Earth to Heaven. Although admittedly one of the least obvious of explanations, one cannot ignore the possibility that the round tower was symbolically conceived as a passage between the church on Earth and the church in Heaven. In view of the importance earlier peoples have attributed to witchcraft and related spiritual matters, for example resulting in burning of 'witches', a special spiritual

significance may have been attributed to round towers when constructed for churches.

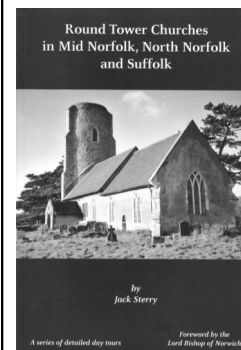
This was a belief of great antiquity and was one known in medieval culture. It was called the 'Empyrean' from the Medieval Latin 'Empyreus', an adoption of the ancient Greek 'place on the pyre (pyr)', later the Empyrean Heaven which was the place in the highest Heaven. This, in ancient cosmologies, was supposed to be occupied by the element of holy fire (of holy 'ether' in Aristotle's Natural Philosophy).

## ROUND TOWER CHURCHES IN MID NORFOLK, NORTH NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK

By Jack Sterry

ISBN 0-9544948-4-9

£10.99



In his venture to encourage more people to discover for themselves the delights of round towered churches, Jack Sterry has put together another collection. This new publication encompasses churches in Mid Norfolk, North Norfolk and Suffolk. Divided into suggested Tours, each one is shown on a map, and has detailed travel instructions. Colour photographs bring the churches and their interiors to life and give support to the narrative. The book also includes a glossary,

bibliography, a helpful explanation of the Domesday references along with a foreword by The Right Rev'd Graham James, Lord Bishop of Norwich. So set off, book in hand, and discover some of the region's architectural gems...

*Jack Sterry has been a great friend of the Society and has kindly donated £2800 from the sales of his books and calendars.*

## TOPCROFT ROSES AND STRAWBERRY TEAS

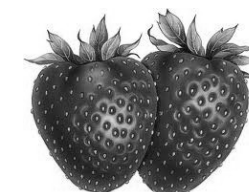
Sunday 3rd July 11.00am—5.00pm



Come and visit Topcroft Hall to see a large display of roses and also extensive herbaceous borders and wooded garden.

A 6 acre garden with a 500 year old mulberry tree under which Margery Brewes wrote the first valentine card to John Paston.

£3.50 entry and strawberry teas available.





## LETTERS

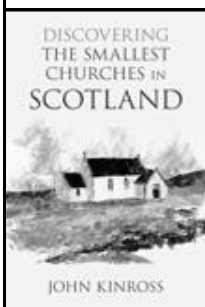
'Rickinghall Inferior Church fundraisers would like to thank the Round Tower Churches Society for giving £2,000 grant last year towards restoration and conservation of the stonework of the fourteenth century windows and porch of our church which has an eleventh century round tower. This work has been completed although frost damage in the severe winter has now caused further damage to the stonework. A further £500 has been promised this year towards the re-leading of another fourteenth century window, safety work in the tower and other repairs needed in the church as requested in the last Quinquennial inspection. We hope to complete this work during the summer.

We would also like to thank Darren Jackson who kindly represented The Round Tower Churches in the Suffolk Historic Churches Cycle Ride and for the members who sponsored him to give 50% of the total raised of £116 to our church.

*Jean Sheehan*

### DISCOVERING THE SMALLEST CHURCHES IN SCOTLAND

By John Kinross ISBN 978-0-75245-880-9 £12.99



Discover the smallest churches and chapels throughout the mainland and islands in this compact volume of hidden gems of Scottish religious architecture. With maps and directions, unique and unexpected ecclesiastical treasures are there to be discovered.

There is one round tower featured in the book - the delightful Scots Kirk on the isle of Canna in the Inner Hebrides. Often referred to as the rocket church with its Irish style pencil thin tower, and also reminiscent of the tower at Brechin, it was designed in 1911 by P. MacGregor Chalmers whose work also includes the Hoselaw Chapel in the Borders.



The Empyrean was used as a name for the firmament and in Christian literature – most notably in Dante's Comedy. It is the dwelling place of God and of the Blessed, celestial beings, who were so divine in their holy substance that they were made of pure light and were the source of constant light and creation. The word is used both as a substantive and as an adjective.

A special Christian example is portrayed in the cover panel from an altarpiece (reredos) depicting the Last Judgment (Fig.2). It is attributed to Hieronymus Bosch, 1450 to 1516; it is housed in the Palazzo Ducale in Venice. Here, the deceased is shepherded by an angel and they rise up within a round tower that bridged between the Earth and the Heavens.

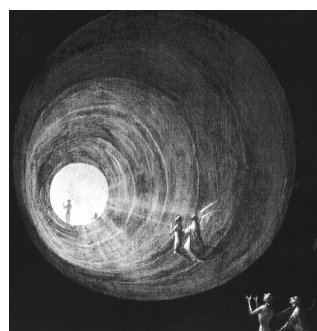


Fig.2 'Empyrean',  
Hieronymus Bosch

Did such an idea exist during the earlier period of the construction of round towered churches? To us, it would seem likely that this was the case and could explain the burials in round towered churches, for example in Hammarlunda in Sweden. Surely, there was no reason why the deceased had to be buried in the round tower instead of another part of the church or in the church yard.

*T.S. and H.T. Norris*

#### Footnotes:

- (1) The experience of travelling through a round tunnel from Earth to Heaven is a common experience of those who have experienced 'near death' phenomena.
- (2) For further details regarding 'Empyrean', there are references on Wikipedia on the Internet.

### SYLEHAM OPEN GARDENS

18th June 10.00am - 5.30pm

- \* Light Lunches & Teas at two venues
- \* Maps on the day
- \* Proceeds for Syleham church tower repairs



## YET ANOTHER WAY TO VISIT THE REGION'S ROUND TOWER CHURCHES

*In recent editions members have told how they like to visit round tower churches. As well as trips from home to visit local churches, taxis and public transport have also been used. But there is another way...*

While members living in East Anglia may have round tower churches on their doorstep, some of us are not so fortunate. I live in Worcestershire where the words 'round tower churches' receive blank looks of disbelief or incomprehension. If I had, say, a cousin or other relative in Lowestoft or Norwich that would be easy, but I do not. For me the nearest round tower is Snailwell, even that is over a hundred and twenty miles away!



My answer? A caravan, but not just any caravan. I would not recommend taking modern monsters up to seven foot six inches wide (the maximum permitted width of double deck buses when I was a boy) and approaching twenty foot long down some of the lanes where hide round tower churches. My caravan is a mere six foot three inches wide and nine feet six long.

Built in 1974, I have owned it for over twenty years (well before I saw my first round tower, Roydon, in 1993), and I love it. The little Cygnet has all the facilities I need including a full kitchen with oven, bed, table and a loo. I carry a cool box in the car. What more do I need?

Taking ones very small home behind the car has real advantages. One can stop for a pot of tea or a meal, look at the view, change direction, take a break, or stop overnight without difficulty. A lay-by, a bit of old road, car park, even a highway verge will suffice. And one never knows when serendipity may provide an unexpected pleasure along the way.

In June 2010 I spent 10 days in East Anglia. Starting with a night on a back garden caravan site at Kirby Bedon just over the hedge from the ruined tower of St Mary's church, days were spent in Norwich and Bury St Edmunds. I attended two traction engine rallies (Strumpshaw, Woolpit - and saw the choir of angels in the roof of St Mary's church, Woolpit), two museums, as well as almost thirty round tower churches. How else could one do this at minimal cost?

laid in the grave later. In comparison with the southern coffin the trapezoid form was less marked and the difference between its broadest and narrowest parts was only 16cm. The head niche was rectangular with sharp corners and very deep. The lime-mortar bottom of the head niche lay 5cm higher than the bottom in the other parts of the coffin.

The type which the southern coffin represents is without doubt the older of the two and would possibly be dated to the time 1150-1180. The northern coffin may be assigned to the first decades after 1180<sup>2</sup>.

The coffins must originally have been visible in the floor as the tops of the covering slabs were level with the medieval mortar.

During the 12th century only persons of high social standing, royalty or bishops, were buried inside a church. Possibly already at that time such a privilege may have been afforded to the builder and patron of the church.

The position of the two coffins in the tower, one on either side of the main axis of the church, shows that they were placed here after the tower or a part of it had been erected. The tower is the last part of the Romanesque church to appear and must therefore have been built at the latest around 1180, but not earlier than 1150, taking into account the shape of the apse and the south doorway of the nave.

*Editor Anders W. Mörtensson, Lund 1968 - translated by Kevin Benn*

### Notes:

- 1 An anthropological investigation was carried out on the site by Professor C.-Hjortso.
- 2 Instances of the round head niche are known from the middle of the 12th century but in general it was probably already out of use at this time and occurs only exceptionally after 1180.  
B. Engström: *De arkeologiska utgrävningarna vid S:t Peters kloster i Lund åren 1925–1926*, Fornvännen 1927, p.204  
H. Löffler: *Kongegravene i Ringsted Kirke*, Copenhagen 1858

*Please note: Rotundas and Round-towered Churches in Northern Europe featured in March 2011, Vol. XXXV111 No 3, page 13, 6th line: date information should read '...ca 1100—1250/1300 maybe ca 1100-1500.'*



# INVESTIGATIONS IN HAMMARLUNDA CHURCH

*Extract from...*

## ARCHAEOLOGICA LUNDENSIA

INVESTIGATIONES DE ANTIQVITATIBUS URBIS LUNDAE

111

## RES MEDIAEVALES

RAGNAR BLOMQVIST

KAL.MAI.MCMLXV111 OBLATA

### Medieval Graves

Only three graves from the Middle Ages were discovered in the church. Two of these had masoned stone coffins of Romanesque type and were situated in the tower. The third had had a wooden coffin and lay in the southern half of the nave. Its position suggests that it belongs to the time before the church had fixed seats. Although none of the graves were shown to be older than the stone church, it is not impossible that such could have existed both in the excavated area of the west part of the nave and in the tower. Here in the filling material disturbed skeletal parts and a small ring clasp came to light.

The two graves in the tower are of interest not least with respect to the dating of the church. They were walled with great slabs of sandstone, four to each long side, and were tapered in shape towards the footboard and had a built-out niche for the head. The lids of the coffins were composed of respectively six and eight flat slabs. The bottom was formed by a layer of clay about 5cm thick. Although the coffins were largely of the same type there were, however, some dissimilarities of form which may indicate a certain difference in age.

The southern coffin which contained the skeleton of a 40-50 year old man<sup>1</sup> had a marked trapezoid form with 30 cm difference inside between the widest part of the coffin and the foot end. The niche for the head was as broad as it was deep and was noticeably rounded, this being accentuated by thickly spread mortar in the corners. Two of the side slabs had smoothly hewn inner surfaces. These slabs were presumably formed from surplus building material from the church.

The northern coffin contained the skeleton of a young woman with a newborn baby, a two year old child and a five month old foetus. The two latter were

Tuesday 8th June was a typical day. Overnight at Little Saxham almost in sight of the windmill, morning (wet) at Framlingham Castle. Delicious fish and chips for lunch, then getting lost down country lanes looking for St Peter, Bruisyard. A beautiful church, and what a lovely peaceful spot. Next, to Leiston for the Long Shop Museum where Garrett traction engines were built until about 1930. Yes, I am into 'steam' as well! Heading North toward the A12 I stopped and visited St Peter, Theberton. Here I parked on the Public House car park opposite (with permission), and was able for the first time to enter the church with its thatched roof and gaudily painted pillars.

My plan was then to visit St Andrew, Bramfield with its tower well away from the church. Strange, but why? And why the 'curly' wall the other side of the road? More likely to be stable at the top of a steep bank than a straight one? Maybe. Finally, more country lanes to St Peter, Thorington. As the lane was narrow I pulled into a farm entrance opposite the church taking care not to be an obstruction! After taking photographs inside and outside the church, I reversed out into the lane and stopped on a small informal parking area for a nature reserve nearby. Here I had my evening meal, a walk in the woods, and decided to stay the night.

All four churches visited were open. The only one I had seen before, Theberton, had been locked when I visited back in 1994. June 8th had been a good day—but was not over yet!

I went to bed about ten and was soon asleep. I woke at 12.15, was just settling back off to sleep when a car went past. This was the sort of lane to have half a dozen cars an hour at rush hour, so why a car at 12.20am? The same car returned and stopped. I heard a door slam, then a couple of thumps on the side of the 'van. By the caravan stood a large policeman. Having seen his warrant card I opened my door. He asked who I was and what was I doing there. I gave my name, suggested he check my car registration with the DVLA and mentioned the round tower church up the lane and my membership of a certain Society. He then referred to 'a very fine round tower church up in Norfolk, at Haddiscoe'. I happily told him that when I arrived for my holiday I had spotted a note in my file that I should take a shot of that church with a telephoto lens, and that I had done so a few days earlier. He was satisfied and left, I was soon back to bed and asleep.

Why had the police checked up on me? He explained that a house nearby had recently been burgled, the owner thought it odd to see a caravan parked

down the lane and had asked the police to investigate. Though the police were clearly satisfied I received no apology from the local resident for a disturbed nights sleep!

It was perhaps no surprise that when parked with the caravan in the West Tofts Camp car park for the Society's visit to 'Stanta' (Stanford Training Area) later in the year I was approached very formally by a military gentleman and asked the same question: Who are you and what are you doing here? When I mentioned the Society and the visit he relaxed and explained that he was Warrant Officer Trevor Gedge our guide for the afternoon. Again, the challenge arose directly from the presence of the caravan.

But things do not always go quite according to plan. When I reached Norfolk for the 'Stanta' visit, I spent my first night on a lay-by near Mundford. On arrival I lit the stove to make a pot of tea. Thirty seconds later the flame died. The gas bottle was empty. No problem, change to the other (full) bottle. However, I had 'borrowed' the relevant spanner for a job at home. So, for teatime and breakfast I couldn't have tea, only water, bread instead of toast. A local garage provided the right spanner next morning. Lesson learned.

About turns are normally no problem. Round in the width of the road or a junction, or reverse into an opening? Answer: drop the 'van from the car, turn it round by hand, and hitch back on. This is a light caravan, so no problem. But even this can sometimes be difficult.

All Saints, South Elmham is an attractive church, but sadly redundant. It was one of six churches visited on 9th June, and lies not far from a single track lane. This ends at a gate into private property, woodland to the left, a cornfield to the right. There is nowhere to turn. So, drop the 'van from the car, turn it round, get the car past the 'van, hitch back on. Easy? Not so. The tarmac was higher than the field, with a deep rut adjacent to the tarmac. As I turned the 'van a wheel dropped off the tarmac into the rut. The chassis grounded onto the tarmac. With much perspiration (and a caravanner's trick or two) I got the job done. Not something to be recommended for even an active pensioner!

As I approach seventy I intend to keep visiting round tower churches by caravan. Despite occasional problems - some of my own making - for me this is an ideal means to an end and makes a very enjoyable holiday. If you see a Peugeot car with a little caravan near a church, an old chap with a beard and a camera nearby or inside the church - do come and introduce yourself. I'll always be ready for a chat over a cuppa in the 'van.

*John T Rhead*

## GRANTS PAID 2010 - 2011

CHURCH	GRANT TOWARDS:-	AMOUNT
EDINGTHORPE All Saints	Rethatching & roof repairs	£4000
FROSTENDEN All Saints	Repairs to south nave roof	£500
GREAT RYBURGH St Andrew	Repairing nave & transept roofs	£2000
HASKETON St Andrew	General Quinquennial repairs	£200
HOLTON St Peter	Repairing nave roof	£2000
LITTLE SAXHAM St Nicholas	Repairing North aisle windows	£200
LITTLE SNORING St Andrew	Window repairs	£200
RICKLING INFERIOR St Mary	Repair of window tracery	£2000
SEDFORD St Mary	Stonework repairs to porches	£2000
STOCKTON St Michael	Repairs to vestry	£3000
THREXTON All Saints	Repair of east chancel wall	£2000
WORTHAM St Mary	Repairs to windows	£2000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b><u>£20,100</u></b>



### FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

**30th, 31st July & 1st August 11.00am - 4.00pm**

*A new joint venture between the parishes of Barton Bendish and Beachamwell - to be held this year in St Andrew's Church, Barton Bendish.*

Flower displays in the Church, Refreshments, Garden Stalls, Decorative Garden Ironwork Stall, Plant Stall, Handmade Floral Cards, Second Hand Books (Gardening & Floral) and much more...

Enquiries:- Telephone 01366 347563 or email [williamsoldies@gmail.com](mailto:williamsoldies@gmail.com)

## TREASURER'S REPORT 2010 - 2011

The Society has had another satisfactory financial year.

Despite the effects of the 'recession', we have managed to pay the magnificent sum of £20,100 in grants to help with church repairs. The Committee has also made promises totalling £20,400 which will be paid to the churches involved once their repair programmes are underway. Since the Society was formed, way back in 1973, we have given away about £120,000 to help round tower churches with repairs. Not bad for a Society with a membership of just under 600. Congratulations to members, past and present, who have all played a part in the help which we have been able to give. Long may it continue.

During the year, the Society received a generous donation of £2,000 from the Tanner Trust, and sums totalling £600 from Jack Sterry as a result of the sales of his books and calendars. Jack has given a total of £2,800 to the Society, over the last few years, and this is a good reason to support his books and calendars! It is also appropriate to thank those members who have given extra amounts over and above the normal membership subscription rates.

While I write this report, it is an opportune moment to mention the subject of postage stamps. Over the years, you have kindly sent in bundles of postage stamps which Edgar Spelman was then able to turn into cash for the Society funds. Now that we have lost Edgar, a new volunteer has emerged to carry on the good work. In the future, any offerings of stamps, preferably cut neatly from envelopes, together with any stamp collections, first day covers and anything philatelic should be sent to Geoff Swain, 33 Saville Street, Blidworth, Mansfield, Notts. NG21 0RW. Alternatively, offerings may be given to me on Church Tours and I will make sure they find their way to Geoff. Special thanks to Geoff for offering to take this on.

Thank you all for making my life, as your Treasurer, free from stress and problems. Long may that continue as well! If anyone has any queries regarding the accounts I will be pleased to hear from them.

*Richard Barham*

## ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY THE 38th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING was held at Bradwell Church Hall, on Saturday, 7th May 2011 at 2.15pm.

1. The Chairman, Mr Bowell, welcomed the 26 members and friends present. The Rev'd Philip Gray kindly led the opening prayers.
2. **Apologies** had been received as recorded in the Minute Book.
3. The **Minutes** of the **37th AGM** on 8.5.2010 were agreed and signed, after a proposal by The Rev'd P Gray, seconded by Dr A. Woollett.
4. The **Chairman** paid tribute to Mr Edgar Spelman's considerable contribution to the Society, and one minute's silence was kept for him and other members "promoted to glory". It had been another successful year for the Society. The Chairman gave his thanks to all the members for their continued support, and especial thanks were due to Mr S Hart and Mrs A Haward, who have retired from the Committee after many years of sterling service.
5. The **Treasurer**, Mr Barham, explained the increased expenditure due to more grants being paid. The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mr Wiggin, seconded by Mrs Stilgoe and agreed. Mr Barham expressed great gratitude for the help given to him by the Auditor, Mr Russell Hadman, who regretfully wishes to retire after 14 years. It would be greatly appreciated if another member could volunteer to fill this position.
6. The **Grants Officer**, Mr N. Wiggin, reported that new applications from 13 churches had been received, 9 grants have been paid and several more promises of future grants made.
7. **Election of Officers and Committee:** the appointment of two co-opted members of the Committee, Mrs P. Spelman and Mr M Pollitt, was agreed, following the proposal of Mr Barham, seconded by Mrs Stilgoe. The appointment of Mr Bowell as Chairman was proposed by the Rev'd P. Gray, seconded by Mr Hart, and agreed. Two members have kindly agreed to join the Committee, Mr Paul Hodge and Dr Anne Woollett. They and the existing Committee Members and Officers were proposed for election en bloc by the Rev'd P Gray, seconded by Mrs C Chapman, and agreed.
8. **Auditor:** it was agreed to leave the appointment of a new Auditor in abeyance, in the hope that someone would come forward.
9. **Any Other Business:** the Society's thanks were expressed to Bradwell PCC for the use of their Church Hall and kindly providing refreshments after the Meeting. The Rev'd P Gray gave thanks for the organisation of the Tours. The Chairman gave the news that in the immediate future the web-site should be linked to a wider audience, and plans were in hand to add an interactive page for current news and events. It was set up in 2001 and has received over 14,000 hits within the last 3½ years. Mr Hodge commented that, with his considerable experience of web-sites for small concerns, he thought the RTCS one was exceptionally well thought out

# **ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY**

## **Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st. March 2011**

		<b>Society Account</b>			
<u>2010</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2011</u>
55,094	Opening Balance	50,038	12,500	Grants to Churches	20,100
7,701	Annual Subscriptions	8,391	979	Magazine Printing	1,065
1,286	Tax Relief on Covenants and Gift Aid	1,428	572	Purchase of Society Items for sale	1,444
1,402	Donations and Lectures	2,951	1,026	Postage, Stationery & Advertising	1,013
115	Bank and COIF Charities Deposit Fund, Interest	83	80	Hire of rooms for AGM & Committee M'tgs	46
111	Magazine Advertisements	183	900	Donations to Churches	750
712	Sale of Books and Society Items	805	29	Website Rental	30
28	Postage from Sale of Society Items etc.	24	-	Secretary's Expenses	22
-	Battle Area Tour - Donations	270	16	Treasurer's Expenses	24
			309	Speakers Fees (Study Day)	
				Battle Area Tour - Coach & Donation	235
			16,411		24,729
			50,038	Closing Balance	39,444
<u>66,449</u>		<u>64,173</u>	<u>66,449</u>		<u>64,173</u>

## **Balance Sheet as at 31st. March 2011**

1	NatWest Bank - Current Account	2,683	50,038	Society Account	39,444
37,802	- Reserve Account	24,491			
12,181	COIF Charities Deposit Fund	12,249			
54	Petty Cash in hand	21			
<u>50,038</u>		<u>39,444</u>	<u>50,038</u>		<u>39,444</u>

*Richard Barham*  
Hon. Treasurer

I have examined the Accounts and Books, etc. of the Society  
and certify this is a true Statement of the financial records.

*Russell Hadman*  
Hon. Auditor 27th. April 2011