



# The Round Tower

Vol. XLI No 4.

June 2014



West Somerton

**£1. 50 to non members**

## ITEMS FOR SALE BY THE SOCIETY

<b>Tea Towels</b> — Five Norfolk Churches design	£3.00	Plus 70p p&p
<b>Tea Towels</b> — Five Suffolk Churches design	£3.00	Plus 70p p&p
<b>East Anglian Round Tower Churches Guide</b>		
Revised edition of A5 booklet	£1.50	Plus 70p p&p
<b>The Round Church Towers of England</b> -By S Hart	£12 00	Plus £2 p&p
<b>Round Tower Churches to the West, East and South of Norwich</b>		
By Jack Sterry	£10.00	Plus £1 50 p&p
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**Please forward orders to: - Mrs P Spelman, 105 Norwich Road, New Costessey, Norwich NR5 0LF. Cheques payable to The Round Tower Churches Society.**

## A NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK SPECIALITY

‘Norfolk and Suffolk Speciality’ is to be the subject of an illustrated talk by the Chairman of the Round Tower Churches Society, Stuart Bowell, at St George’s Church, St Cross South Elmham, on MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER at 7:30pm.

Tickets for the event - £5:00 to include light refreshments – are available from Lynne Peet on 01986 788944; Hannah Custerson on 01986 782324; Maurice Philpot on 07817 108239, or on the door.

St George’s Church is one of the twelve Churches in the north-east Suffolk ‘*Saints*’ Benefice. The Benefice has two round tower churches. Ilketshall St Margaret and South Elmham All Saints.

**The next issue is September 2014 and the deadline for contributions is the 1st August 2014.**

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

**Anne Woollett and Paul Hodge**

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### **Membership Subscription**

*Minimum £10 (overseas £15) a year of which 40% goes towards the printing and posting of The Round Tower magazine and administration. 60% goes to the Repair Fund of the RTCS.*

*Magazines are published in March, June, September and December. The membership renewal date is the first day of the month following the application for membership.*

*To join the Society or to make any enquiry about your membership please contact :-*

**Mr Richard Barham**

6 The Warren, Old Catton,

Norwich, NR6 7NW

Tel: 01603 788721

## **THE ROUND TOWER**

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RTCS members who have registered will also receive this magazine as a PDF in page order. Colour photographs will be in colour and not in black and white.

If you have not yet registered but would like to receive the PDF in addition to your paper copy please send your email address to [pt.hodge@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:pt.hodge@tiscali.co.uk).

Join the conversation about round tower churches on our Facebook page.



## Editorial

Our cover photograph shows West Somerton as it was photographed by Bill Goode in the summer of 2000. We will visit West Somerton on the RTCS June tour. There are still four Saturday tours and two Sunday tours to go this season. Details are on page 22.

There has been much discussion on our Facebook page about Little Snoring following the posting of an image of the 1941 painting by Ipswich artist Leonard Squirrell. Joseph Biddulph reports on his visit to Little Snoring on page 5.

Part One of the 2013 tour programme report starts on page 9.

Many of us still get confused when we look at the rock in our churches. Jenny Gladstone attempts to put us on the right track in 'Iron-bound conglomerate – the confusing rock'. Page 16.

This magazine also includes our 2013-14 annual accounts. Our Treasurers report, a list of grants given in 2013-14 and the minutes of our 2014 AGM held at Frostenden on May 10th.

Finally don't miss out on the opportunity of attending our Study Day at Yaxham on September 27th. Details are on page 15.

### **St. Andrew's Church, Great Ryburgh**

Saturday, 21st June 1 – 5 p.m: RYBURGH OPEN GARDENS

Park at the church or the Memorial Hall

Garden pass: £3 (accompanied children under 12 free)

2nd – 10th August 10 a.m – 4.30 p.m: OPEN CHURCHES WEEK

WW1 displays and activities, light lunches and teas

3rd Aug. 6 p.m. Sung Prayer Book Evensong

4th Aug. Church open until 9.45 p.m.

9th Aug. 10-12 Open Tower: have a go at bell ringing!

6 p.m. "Pack up your troubles": an evening of song with WW1 meal.

23rd – 25th August: ARTS FESTIVAL

Art exhibition, crafts, music, flowers and bells.

Exhibition preview: 22nd Aug. 7 – 9 p.m. Tickets: £5

Proceeds from all events for Church Restoration

Details from 01328 829413

## LITTLE SNORING.

This church is bizarre and fascinating in equal measure – a patchwork of this and that. The church has a brick western gable like a barn or a manor house, a “horn” of brick at each corner – and a detached, round tower. I took a great number of photos in the hope that they might help me interpret this building at my leisure.



Little Snoring as painted in monochrome watercolour in 1941 by

The tower is round, detached but the flint gable of the west end of a vanished church is still attached. This tower has a red tile (*not* pantile) “cap”, with dormers with louvres looking to the four points of the compass. These round towers very often taper which I would regard as at least a clue as to pre-Conquest construction, but this one doesn’t – if anything, it bulges outwards near the top. In the tower is the large doorway once a tower arch – two plain square orders, sides of megalithic blocks – all in brownstone – with a kind of plinth with a chamfer at the base. This doorway tapers inwards from base, in the manner of Hiberno-Romanesque

doorways, but untypically for British Romanesque. The impostes are plain but the worn stonework on the bottom side of them can be interpreted perhaps as simple chamfers. Chamfers are generally Norman, but we're not so certain here. The right-hand one may still be showing horizontal striations or perhaps they are not just the result of weathering. Plain striations of this sort would make me look for an Anglo-Saxon date. This arch looks like that at Odda's Chapel in Deerhurst, Gloucestershire, of 1056, and it is of the brown ironstone that I have often seen when wandering around North Norfolk recognising it as "trademark" Anglo-Saxon or early Norman material. But it also shows incipient Romanesque detailing. This is comparable with detailing in the late Saxon doorway in the tower at Hovingham, Yorkshire, which suggests that some of the Romanesque ideas were entering the repertoire by about, say, 1050.

This tower has a prominent band, about 2 metres off the ground, of *very large* pieces of brownstone. The bottom course of this has a discontinuous herringbone pattern. Both of these suggest an Anglo-Saxon date. But the upper part of the tower is shown by a small cusped window set in more regular flints and is likely to be of later medieval construction.

Inside a gothic porch with diagonal buttresses finished in brick there is an ornate and romantic Late Norman doorway – so "Late" that the middle arch is *pointed*, giving the doorway a squashed look. The capitals have conventionalised curls but are almost floriated at the same time – a very curious transition into Gothic, and therefore of the late 12<sup>th</sup> century. But at the west on the nave in both north and south walls are single-splayed lancets in a massive wall. The outside of the south one is chamfered and organised, therefore Norman but probably *Early* Norman. Such a date for this portion of the building seems likely enough, till we look at the north-west quoins of the nave. They are laid in the Anglo-Saxon "side-alternate" manner, using large pieces of brownstone. The south-east quoins are like these *but* in this case there are other stones top and bottom, and the whole corner is chamfered by having the angle cut off. How then can we read this riddle?

Perhaps the rebuilding when it came about had to be done very quickly – the stonework generally is very mixed in composition – if the doorway in the tower is from the 1050s, then possibly only a very few years later with the builders simply moving the existing quoins to the new position.

The north doorway opposite the south porch, blocked, and this time with a *plain* Norman arch, and with brown carstone incorporated into one of the jambs, also keeps us scratching our heads as we walk round. It is as if this place was designed as an exercise to test the prowess of amateur and professional architectural historians.

Some tentative theories however present themselves. For instance, because the position of the tower and the direction of the vanished nave are too close to the present church for both to exist at the same time, the church on the present alignment must have taken its place shortly afterwards. This is confirmed, perhaps, if we are ready for it to do so, by the *very mixed* stonework of nave and chancel, suggesting the re-use of as many of the original stones as possible – even to the extent of rebuilding the brownstone quoins of the west end in their new position. The simpler Norman

lancets near the west end of the nave would seem to give a date to this rebuilding – but they are in the *same material* as the elaborate south door, which belongs to the very end of the Romanesque period. There are signs of much restoration and rebuilding in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when sections of the nave were replaced – some long pieces of stone laid alternately vertically and horizontally in the manner of Anglo -Saxon “long and short” work suggest to me a date something like 1700-1730? – though the base of this wall has some of the brownstones we have seen as the “Saxon signature”. Much brickwork has been added – obviously fairly recently at roof level, and the brick at the gables suggest “Georgian” i.e. late 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century.

There is a sundial with a stump of a rusted gnomon set in what could be a late medieval window-jamb stone (but not in the jamb – facing outwards), south side of chancel. A circular incision has a T (possibly) in the top, at the mid point there are two horizontal grooves, and below each of these two further rays approx. WSW and SW, ESE and SE positions. What sort of dial is this? Christopher Daniel, in his study, *Sundials* mentions that a free-standing or angled dial would be general from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, so we are looking at least for a later medieval date, despite its resemblance to Anglo-Saxon sundials in such places as Bishopstone, Sussex or Kirkdale, Yorkshire. The chancel wall containing the window in which it is set is made up of a roughly-laid mixture of flint and bricks. The bricks appear to be of the rather fatter post-medieval type – but again there are some brownstones in the lowest section up to about 1 metre above ground.



Little Snoring. W J Goode 1970

I have to admit that this building has me thoroughly confused – many of my ideas about periods of construction, built up by examination of other Norfolk churches, and by close study of Anglo-Saxon and other work in other counties, here find themselves confounded.

I came to Little Snoring with the specific task of establishing whether the great brown arch in the detached tower is Anglo-Saxon or some sort of Norman or Saxon-Norman: my own conclusion is that it *is* Saxon – possibly of the 1050's.

This is perhaps an inadequate account of what the fabric might tell us, and there has obviously been very much added over the centuries. As to the reason why the church in its original alignment was taken down, I would suggest a more powerful reason than flooding from the adjacent stream as suggested by some: this brook or beck at Little Snoring seems pathetically small, and its rise even in a torrential season would hardly destabilise flint and mortar walls several metres thick. If it hasn't already been done, perhaps at some date in the future archaeologists could be encouraged to take core samples from various spots where the old church would have stood, and see what they can find.

Joseph Biddulph

### **SITUATION VACANT – EVENTS ORGANISER REQUIRED AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, SHIMPLING**

**An appeal has been launched to help secure the future of the traditional Service  
of Carols by Candlelight at St George's Church, Shimpling.**

Maurice Philpot, who has been associated with the Church since 1972, is retiring from organising the Carol Service (and other events) following the 2014 Service - to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> December..

Anyone interested in organising events at St George's – and, in particular, the Carol Service – should contact The Churches Conservation Trust's Volunteering Officer for Norfolk and Suffolk, Laura McLean, on 07799 424078 or [lmclean@theccct.org.uk](mailto:lmclean@theccct.org.uk). Meanwhile during 2014, a full programme continues including a Celebration of the Patronal Festival of the Church on St George's Day (23<sup>rd</sup> April), a talk on 'Some Eccentric East Anglian Clergymen' (18<sup>th</sup> June), and a Commemoration of the twelve men of Shimpling who died in the Service of their Country, 1914-1918 (27<sup>th</sup> July). The Church will again be participating in the annual national Heritage Open Weekend on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September.

Mr Philpot will not be severing all links with St George's Church, He will continue to clean the Church, to offer informal conducted tours of the Church - and also to provide those special 'Shimpling refreshments' for participants in the annual Norfolk Churches Trust sponsored cycle ride on the second Saturday of each September.



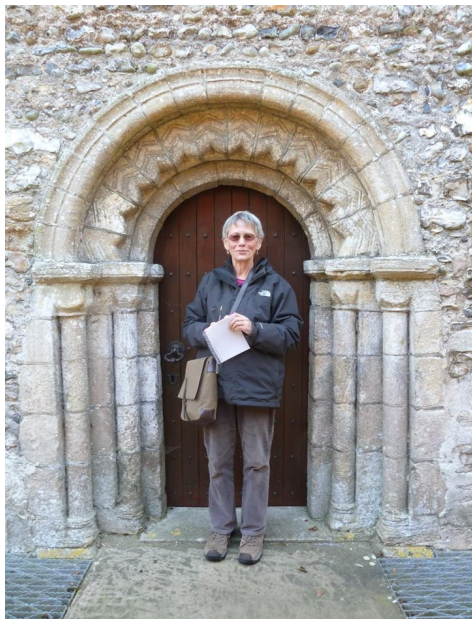
## SUMMER TOURS 2013 PART 1

In May our new Tour season had a fine sunny start, as a keen wind kept the clouds moving at Herringfleet St Margaret. This was an opportunity to see the recently repaired chancel looking in good order, its newly tiled roof contrasting with the thatch of the nave. The Saxo-Norman belfry openings are an outstanding feature of St Margarets. Entrance is via a fine Romanesque doorway with a chevron moulded arch. A varied collection of both English and Continental glass can be seen in the windows and include a figure of St Catherine, images of tulips and a tortoise.

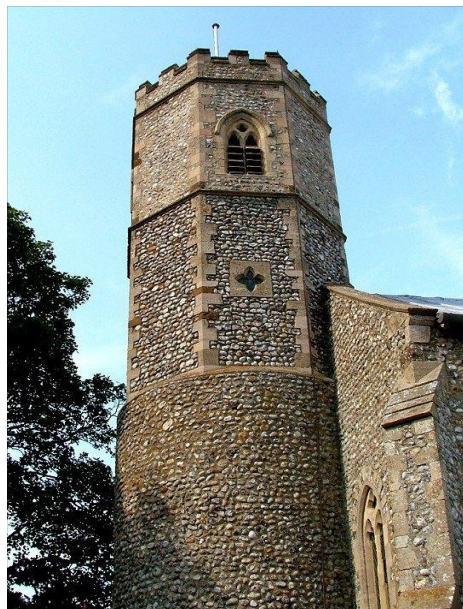


Dick at Herringfleet

The sky had clouded over when we reached Blundeston St Mary. Here the church is off centre to the tower. There are some good corbels and 15<sup>th</sup> century bench ends. A curious feature is a stoup with a grotesque wide-mouthed head beneath.



Anne at Gunton



Sidestrand

Gunton St Peter has two Romanesque doorways, the finer on the north side with a chevron moulded arch. The memorial stone to our founder Bill Goode and his wife Ada, is in the churchyard. We were made most welcome here for our A.G.M. and 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Society.

For the June tour a sea mist and the smell of wild garlic greeted us at Sidestrand St Michael. We see here a complete rebuilding. The original church was nearer to the sea and the tower fell over the cliff in 1841. In 1881 the church was taken down and rebuilt further inland using the old fabric whenever possible. Much of this work was paid for by Sir Samuel Hoare. His memorial inside the church tells us a lot about the man.

‘At HARROW SCHOOL a cricketer whose prowess is not forgotten.  
In the CITY of LONDON a banker whose wise counsel was valued.  
In the HOUSE of COMMONS a trusted Member of Parliament.  
A loyal churchman... who laboured for the good of the PARISH, the  
DIOCESE and the CHURCH.’

At Roughton, further from the coast, the mist had lifted. St Mary's tower has many Saxon features. In the lower part, bands of dark conglomerate are laid in herringbone construction. There are two double splayed circular windows and double triangular headed belfry openings. Inside are 14<sup>th</sup> century arcades and a contemporary font. Munro Cautley mentions the 'four beautiful clerestory two light windows with attached shafts springing from carved heads'.



Roughton



Aylmerton

Blue skies greeted us at Aylmerton and we were served high tea in the village hall before our visit to the church of St John the Baptist. The tower has an unusual south doorway with flint jambs, Barnack stone imposts and a pointed arch. The belfry openings have Y tracery. On the north side of the nave are the remains of a chapel, ruinous since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Inside the church on the north wall of the nave is what looks like a pillar stoup. The square headed screen has lost its lower panel and beyond in the chancel, the piscina and a two seat sedilia have elaborate crocketed arches. As we left for home several people remarked that Aylmerton was a strong contender for our 'Tea of the Year'.

Stuart Bowell

**ROUND TOWER CH**  
**Statement of Accounts for the**  
**Society A**

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<b>2013</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>2014</b>
<hr/>		<hr/>
31,443	Opening balance	18,559
8,095	Annual subscriptions	8,200
1,226	Tax relief on Covenants and Gift Aid	1,179
1,917	Donations and lectures	831
110	Bank and COIF Charities Deposit Interest	56
172	Magazine advertisements	111
769	Sale of books and Society items	250
14	Post age charges from sale of Society items	14
410	Battle Area Tour donations	-
295	Study day donations	-
<hr/>		<hr/>
<b>44,451</b>		<b>29,200</b>
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**Balance Sheet as at**

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191	Nat-West Bank– Current Account	496
5,799	Nat-West Bank—Reserve Account	6,765
12,445	COIF Charities Deposit Fund	12,498
124	Petty cash in hand	124
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<b>18,559</b>		<b>19,883</b>
<hr/>		<hr/>

**Richard Barham. Hon. Treasurer**

I have examined the Accounts and Books etc of the Society and certify that this is true



## **TREASURERS REPORT 2013 -2014**

For the first time in a number of years the Society has ended the financial year with more money than it started with. This is not due to any streak of mean-ness on the part of your Committee! Grants paid out to churches during the year totalled £6,450 compared with a record £21,450 in the year 2012-2013. I think that this may be a reflection on the state of the economy. When the recession started to bite a few years back I suspect that many churches put their repair programmes on hold until the financial outlook was more welcoming. As the gathering together of funds for repair programmes usually takes a few years I think we are seeing the results of the recession filtering through into our accounts. It will be interesting to see what we pay out in the way of grants over the next couple of years. Will I be proved right or are our churches in a much better state of repair than they used to be with fewer repairs being needed?

Increased postage costs for the magazine continues to affect the Society. Many thanks to those members who continue to send in stamps or donations that help to offset the increased cost of our mailings. Second class stamps have just recently gone up by another three pence. This means that each mailing of our quarterly magazine costs in the region of £300! During the last year it came to my attention that franked mail goes through the system at a much lower cost – currently 37pence per letter. Thanks to my daughter and her employers I have been given access to a franking machine and sent out 400 March magazines by this method. – which saved the Society £64. This was certainly a worthwhile exercise even though I had to feed the envelopes through the machine one at a time which was mind numbingly boring.

Earlier this year we received the sad news of the passing of Jack Sterry. Over a number of years Jack had been a good benefactor to the Society and from the sale of his books and calendars has given us £3,750. We shall miss his contribution to our funds.

The sale of used postage stamps and stamp collections still brings in useful funds. Since Geoff Swain took over the task two and a half years ago he has provided the Society with £339. Thanks to Geoff for his efforts. Any donations of stamps, stamp collections or first day covers are still welcome.

Thanks to all Society members for keeping my life fairly stress free. Finally many thanks to Michael Coates for examining the accounts, bank statements and the books and making them balance once he had found my non deliberate mistake of one pound!

Richard Barham. Hon Treasurer

**Round Tower Churches Society.  
2014 Study Day.  
Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014 .  
Yaxham Village Hall. NR19 1RJ.**

10.00am. Meet at the village hall for tea or coffee. There is plenty of parking.

10.30am. Welcome by Stuart Bowell followed by two lectures with a short mid-session break.

Our morning speakers are:-

David Stannard: 'The Lost Round Tower Church of Eccles-next-the-Sea'.

Roy Tricker: 'How we used our Churches in Medieval Times'.

1.00pm approx. Lunch break. Bring your own lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided.

2.00pm. Meet at St Peter's church for a 45 minute visit. The tour will be led by 'Lyn Stilgoe and Richard Barham.

3.00pm. Roger Rosewell will talk to us about 'Medieval Stained Glass'.

4.00pm approx. The day will finish with teatime refreshments. Feel free to bake a cake.

£10 for RTCS members, £15 for non members.

Stuart Bowell, 2 Hall Road, Stowmarket, IP14 1TN.

You can telephone Stuart on 01449 614336 with any queries.

Please send Stuart your cheque made payable to the Round Tower Churches Society together with your telephone number, your email address if you have one and a stamped addressed envelope for us to confirm your booking.



## Iron-bound conglomerate – the confusing rock

The article in December's *The Round Tower*, "Bessingham Round Tower Church and Solid Geology," inadvertently misleads because it mistakes the nature and source of this confusing rock, and consequently also mistakes early church building practice.



South wall of Bessingham church nave showing reuse of iron-bound conglomerate cobbles in a scattered pattern

The first confusion arises because the rock is known by many names. These names include: ironstone, ferricrete, iron pan, gravel stone, conglomerate and even puddingstone. For this article I am going to refer to it as iron-bound conglomerate, following the usage of Potter (2009).

A second confusion arises because iron-bound conglomerate can occur in a variety of forms; some of which are not even conglomerates!

A third confusion occurs when iron-bound conglomerate is mistaken for a stone of very different origin – the Lower Cretaceous Carstone of West Norfolk. Both stones are iron-rich, although Carstone is usually a lighter orange colour, whilst iron-bound conglomerate can be very dark brown.



To try and untangle this misunderstanding, it is easier to start with what iron-bound conglomerate is not. Unlike the Carstone of West Norfolk (sometimes called ginger-bread stone), which is only quarried from a single Lower Cretaceous horizon, which lies underneath the Upper Cretaceous Chalk, iron-bound conglomerate is found in surface sediments which may overlay a variety of geological horizons.

This in turn helps us to distinguish Carstone from iron-bound conglomerate. Given that flint derives from the Chalk, it cannot be found as pebble inclusions within the Carstone - which comes from a lower geological horizon. However many iron-bound conglomerates do contain flint pebbles and so cannot be Carstone. They have been formed much more recently than the Cretaceous, and geologically they are very young rocks.

So, if iron-bound conglomerate is not derived from a particular geological horizon, what is its derivation? All indications point to it being a near-surface, patchy, deposit of sand and gravel which has been cemented by iron minerals into a hard rock. It is deduced, from its wide distribution as a church building stone, that these patches of iron-bound rock were once widespread throughout Norfolk. They are also found in the London basin and as far south as the south Kent coast. They appear to have been used by early church-builders when other building stone was not readily available.



South west nave quoins worked from large blocks of iron-bound conglomerate.



'Fossil' iron-bound conglomerate quoin line in the north wall of nave.

We also think that many of the patches of iron-bound conglomerate were exhausted by these early builders, hence geologists have not been able to locate many sites where iron-bound conglomerate is still to be found in situ in the ground (Stevenson 2012). However we do know that the patchy stone is still sometimes a trouble to modern farmers and that even today they do occasionally remove it from fields in order carry out cultivation and drainage operations. It must have been an even greater trouble to early farmers who had poorer equipment and must have encountered the stone quite frequently.

One purpose in mapping the presence and abundance of iron-bound conglomerate in Norfolk's churches is to get an indication of its original distribution within the county. Here I make a plea and ask that if any reader knows where it can still be found in the ground I would be very glad to have the information. (Ask your local farmers!) It has been suggested, that some of the huge number of ponds found in Norfolk could mark sites where the stone has been removed.

So what does this suggest about early church building? It strongly suggests that, like flint, iron-bound conglomerate was excavated local to the church where it was used. It also suggests that it was a stone which in later times was either not available to church builders, or ignored by them. Although, as churches probably needed to be rebuilt (at least partially) every few hundred years, iron-bound conglomerate was often reused and incorporated into the walls of later churches.

This brings us back to Bessingham church, where cobble-sized pieces of iron-bound conglomerate have been reused in a scattered, decorative fashion in the rebuilding of the nave south wall. This appears to be typical of Victorian restorations. However there are also parts of the church where the stone probably remains where it was placed by the early builders of (what is likely to have been) the first stone church on the site. In particular iron-bound conglomerate has been shaped and worked by masons to construct hefty quoins. These quoins can be seen at the western corners of the nave. They also form a 'fossilised' quoin line within the north wall, indicating that the original nave was much shorter than at present. To make these hefty quoins the masons must have had access to a fairly thick local patch of iron-bound conglomerate.

The careful examination of how and where iron-bound conglomerate is used in a particular church could, I think, tell us a lot about the origins and the number of rebuilds that the church has undergone. However, by merely looking at the distribution of the iron-bound conglomerate in the round tower at Bessingham I would not be able to say whether any part of the tower has been rebuilt using reused iron-bound conglomerate, or whether the tower is more or less in its original form.

Geologists, such as Potter (2009) and Allen (2004), tend to the view that iron-bound conglomerate was only used as a building stone by Anglo-Saxon church builders, although often re-used in later re-builds. The archaeologists tend to the view that both the Anglo-Saxons and the early Normans excavated the stone for church building.

As I have found no Carstone in the church at Bessingham, but only iron-bound conglomerate, I am sceptical that the stone for the original church was transported very far (later limestone door and window openings and the limestone quoins for the chancel are a different matter). So, returning to the conclusions of the original article, I would not like to hazard a guess as to whether a local or distant source for the stone influenced the church builders' choice to opt for round or square towers. In Norfolk I have seen both tower forms incorporating substantial amounts of iron-bound conglomerate.



Bessingham round tower showing bands of iron-bound conglomerate near the base and used en-mass for the upper part of the tower.

#### References

- • Allen, J.R.L. *Carrstone in Norfolk Buildings. Distribution, use, associates and influences*. 2004, BAR British Series 371, Archaeopress, Oxford.
- • Parsons, David. Ed. *Stone Quarrying and Building in England AD 43-1525*, Phillimore & Royal Archaeological Institute. 1990
- • Potter.J.F, 2009. *Patterns in Stonework: The early Church in Britain and Ireland. An introduction to ecclesiastical geology*. 2009. BAR British Series 496, Archaeopress, Oxford.
- • Stevenson, C.R. *Iron Pan Sediments in West Norfolk: New Sections and Speculations Regarding Their Origin as a Building Material*. 2012, Bulletin of the Geological Society of Norfolk, No 62. p39-47

Jenny Gladstone

## ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY

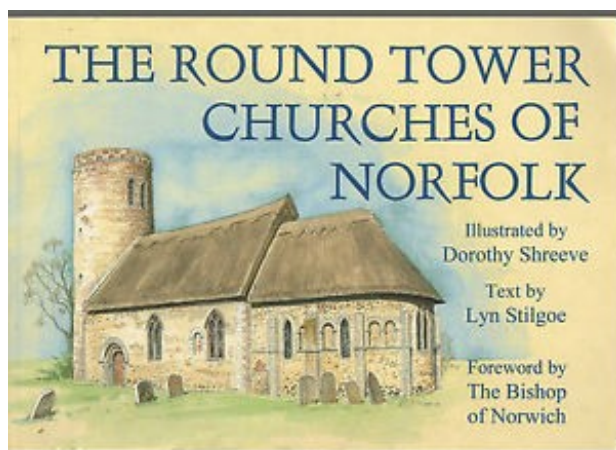
The 41st Annual General Meeting was held at Frostenden Village Hall,  
on Saturday, 10th May 2014 at 2.15pm

1. The Chairman, Mr Stuart Bowell, welcomed the 34 people present and expressed grateful thanks to Mr & Mrs Scriven for their help in arranging this Meeting.
2. **Apologies** had been received as recorded in the Minute Book.
3. **Minutes of the 40th AGM** on 11.5.2013 were agreed, following a proposal by Mr Russell Edwards, seconded by Mrs Lorna Knight, and signed.
4. **Chairman's Review:** Mr Bowell reported on another successful year and expressed his grateful thanks to everyone for their help to the Society. The Tours of Round Tower Churches continue to be well supported. He particularly remembered two deceased Members, Mr Jack Sterry and Mrs Dorothy Shreeve for their generous contributions.
5. **Treasurer's Report:** Mr Richard Barham presented the Accounts and explained that there had been fewer requests for help, resulting in grants of £21,450 in the year to April 2013, but only £6,450 to April 2014. He suggested that maybe churches were putting restoration programmes on hold due to the recession. Postage costs for the Magazine continue to rise, but he now has the use of a franking machine which saves 16p per envelope. Over the years Mr Sterry had donated the amazing total of £3,750 to the Society from the sale of his books and calendars. Mr Swain's sale of used postage stamps over two and a half years had produced £339. Membership is 555, much as it has been for three or four years. Mr Barham expressed his grateful thanks to Mr Michael Coates for his help and for acting as the Independent Examiner.
6. **Grants Report:** Mr Nick Wiggin reported on the eight grants given in the year and said that further grants had been promised when work started on the churches.
7. **Elections:** Mr Barham took the Chair for the election of the Chairman, and Mr Bowell was proposed by the Rev'd Philip Gray, seconded by Mrs Edwards, and agreed. Mrs Caroline Chapman proposed that the Committee Members be re-elected en bloc, which was seconded by Mr Coates and agreed.
8. **Auditor:** Mr Barham proposed the re-election of Mr Coates as Auditor, seconded by Mrs Butcher, and agreed.
9. **Any Other Business:** Dr Woollett reported on the progress of the web-site, which is increasingly being used to advertise forthcoming events at churches. Mr Hodge expounded on the world-wide interest in the Facebook page and the associated Facebook groups which are becoming a useful historic source for people who are perhaps not able to actually visit the churches. The drawings from the 1958 book by the Rev'd Claude Messent have been added, as have many fine photographs by Mr John Salmon, a collection of slides from the 1960/70s, over 5,000 of the original photographs by Mr Bill Goode, and the drawings by Mrs Shreeve are now being added. Mrs Stilgoe paid tribute to Mrs Shreeve, who died this week, and whose generosity and skill in drawing round tower churches have provided a wonderful source for the Magazine, etc. Mr John Butcher expressed the gratitude of all the general Members for the work done by the Committee.

## Mrs Dorothy Shreeve

We have all benefited from the meticulous drawings of Round Tower Churches done by Dot and it is sad to have to report her death. She was always so generous in allowing the Society to use her wonderful drawings in any way, particularly in the Magazine, and quite recently she agreed that they could be put on to Facebook, so that they are available to everyone as a historical record. Drawing these buildings was a post-retirement project, having been a skilled artist all her life, especially of flowers. She will be greatly missed, but never forgotten.

Lyn Stilgoe



### RTCS GRANTS 2013 -2014

£ 250 **Burnham Deepdale** St Mary. Renovation of chancel roof.  
£2000 **Fritton** St Catherine. Installation of electricity and lime washing.  
£1000 **Holton** St Peter. Plaster work and redecoration.  
£ 500 **Mettingham** All Saints. Belfry west window repair.  
£ 200 **Norton Subcourse** St Mary. Repair to west gable.  
£ 500 **Rockland St Peter** St Peter. Repair of stonework on tower.  
£2000 **Theberton** St Peter. Plasterwork and redecoration.

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£6450

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## **ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY**

### **2014 Saturday Tours, first Church 2.30pm**

7th June            Horsey, West Somerton, Rollesby

5th July            Runhall, Wrampingham, Colney

2nd August        Gresham, Bessingham, Sustead

6th September   Onehouse, Beyton, Risby

### **2014 CHURCH TOURS**

#### **Sunday Tours, first Church at 2.30pm**

15th June           Loddon, Sisland, Thurton, Bergh Apton.

20th July           Holme Hale, Ashill, Houghton on the Hill, Great  
Cressingham

All are welcome on these tours. There are no charges, though donations in the church offertory boxes are encouraged. Tea will be provided by one of the churches during the afternoon. The Sunday Tours end with a form of Evening Service, usually at 6.30pm (which is optional). Any enquiries to 'Lyn Stilgoe on 01328 738237

Festival of Flowers 2014. Organised jointly by the parishes of Beachamwell and Barton Bendish. To be held this year in St Mary's Church, Beachamwell. Saturday 26th July and Sunday 27th July from 11am to 4pm. Flower displays in the church with the theme 'CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS'. Refreshments, plant stall, decorative garden ironwork stall, secondhand books, hand made cards and much more .... All proceeds in aid of St Mary's Church Beachamwell and St Andrew's Church Barton Bendish. [www.stmarysbeachamwell.co.uk](http://www.stmarysbeachamwell.co.uk) Enquiries 01366 328774 or [williamsoldies@gmail.com](mailto:williamsoldies@gmail.com)

# ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY

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