



AUTUMN 2022 NEWSLETTER



St Mary's, Kersey

Suffolk Historic Churches Trust

Registered Charity No. 267047

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**As always, this Newsletter is also available on the Trust website
under the "Latest Newsletters" tab**

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I hope you get to read this before our great bike ride day on September 10th 2022. Last year Ride & Stride with Gift Aid and a £15,000 contribution from the sister Pedal & Drive car rally raised a remarkable £206,000. So many people now contribute to making what I call Suffolk Churches Day a success - whether they are manning a church, riding their bike, walking, turning out a vintage car or generously sponsoring those who do.

It would be wonderful if we could mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with another record turnout of cyclists. My request is that every one of our members reading this piece encourages a couple of new families to turn out on their bicycles. And that they make sure that the churches in their own Benefice are open. It is the key day in the Trust's year and if we all put our shoulders to the wheel I'm sure we can have another record year. But we need your support & energy!

Alas the time of great dislocation & uncertainty continues - by now we had hoped covid would be far behind us & the fallout from Brexit settling. But both persist and are now joined by energy price hikes, the baleful reawakening of inflation and war in the east of Europe. And of late political turbulence and rail strikes. For our church buildings all that adds up to higher utility bills, inflated works costs, fewer builders & in many cases congregations still impacted after the protracted church closures and falling church plate. So the work of the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust remains ever more important.

I am pleased to say our success with last year's Suffolk Churches Day means that we have been able to up our grants budget and at our last quarterly Grants Meeting we were able to agree to a near record £50,500 of grants to ten churches.

The Trustees have also been working hard on how we best celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust. We are planning a number of events including a Celebration Service in Autumn 2023 which we hope will be attended by representatives of every church and chapel in Suffolk.

And we trust our Anniversary will also act as a fitting tribute to Jill Ganzoni one of our founders and most generous benefactors who our President remembers in this edition.

Geoffrey Probert

THE HONOURABLE JILL GANZONI DL **1931-2022**

On 27th March 1931 in Ipswich Jill Ganzoni was born. The first child of the then MP for Ipswich Francis, first Baron Belstead and his wife Gwendoline. There would be another child, John born in 1932. Neither child was destined to marry, and they remained very close until John's death in 2005. In a material sense Jill was born into very comfortable circumstances but also into a family with a strong sense of duty and responsibility and a Christian commitment which was to shape Jill's life. From an early age she was aware of the advantages of her birth and background and was still a young woman when she established the Ganzoni Charitable Trust, the objects of which were to grant aid individuals and organisations in Suffolk. Over the many decades of her life Jill was to make innumerable grants which were, in some cases, very substantial and assisted with projects which enhanced many lives in Suffolk. In other instances, the grants may have been smaller but were also significant in the lives of those who benefitted. She was especially interested in the church, both the buildings and the communities those buildings served. Very few asked for help and were turned away.

Jill was conscious always of the need to assist young people. She was an enthusiastic supporter of the Girl Guides and served as their Vice President in Suffolk and also chaired the governors of Ipswich Girls School from 1994 to 2006.

The Church of England in all its facets was an absorbing interest for Jill. Here in Suffolk in the early 1970s Canon Fitch published a report about the state of some church buildings in Suffolk, raising the spectre of redundancies. There were several meetings of concerned people including Jill, the Duke of Grafton, Norman Scarfe and Alfred Williams as a result of which Suffolk Historic Churches was founded in 1973 with the object of raising funds to restore and maintain church buildings in Suffolk. There were no redundancies, and the Trust continues to thrive and support church buildings. One of its most successful initiatives, in which Jill was involved, was the setting up of the Annual Sponsored Bike Ride in 1982. In that first year it raised over £58,000 and subsequently has improved almost every year until 2021 when over £200,000 was raised. This means that the Grants Committee on which Jill also served has been able to award grants amounting to over £5m to date.

Jill was licensed as a Lay Reader in the Church and served on the General Synod for over 25 years. Her contribution to the Church was recognised in 2007 when she was awarded the Cross of St Augustine (an order of merit in the gift of the Archbishop of Canterbury, created by Michael Ramsey in 1965 and given to members of the Anglican Communion who have made a significant contribution to

the life of the worldwide communion or to a particular church). The citation details her membership of General Synod and particularly her work for the Pensions Board and the fact that she was a member of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis. It ended, "Her service has been quiet, showing extraordinary generosity, not only to the church and people of Ipswich, but the whole world".

Jill had little time for the material trappings of wealth and privilege: not for her designer clothes and expensive jewellery so perhaps her membership of the Society of St Francis should cause no surprise. The Third Order of the Society is an association of lay people who try to live the spirit of the order by performing works of teaching, charity and social service. Members seek to sanctify their ordinary lives by striving for Christian perfection.

Jill tried always to live according to her strongly held beliefs. She maintained it was her work with the Pensions Board at General Synod that gave her the most satisfaction but watching the development of both organisations and individuals she had assisted pleased her as she knew it was work that would have pleased her parents too.

After her brother John died, Jill's closest relative was Nick Ridley and he continued to visit her every week until his sudden death from Covid in 2020. Nick kept Jill up to date with all that was happening in the County in which she was extremely interested having been a Deputy Lieutenant for many years. Jill always lived within the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and when eventually increasing frailty necessitated her move to The Grove in Woodbridge she continued to play her part in the life of Suffolk through contact with her wide group of friends and the administration of her charity. The large attendance at her funeral in St Mary's Woodbridge on 12th May was a fitting tribute to a woman who worked to benefit others living in the County she loved and served for the whole of her long and busy life. She will be mourned by the many whose lives she touched.

Diana Hunt, President

SPRING FIELD DAY

SATURDAY 21ST MAY 2022



In order to have any understanding of the magnificence of the Benedictine Abbey that once dominated Bury St Edmunds and the surrounding area, one requires a good imagination and a first class tutor. As individuals we did allow our imaginations full rein on Saturday 21st May at our first post pandemic Field Day, but the scholarship was provided by Dr Richard Hoggett who led our morning session and breathed life into the meagre remains of this once great site.

Dr. Hoggett is a freelance heritage consultant with a deep knowledge and understanding of archaeology who assisted with the production of a report into the significance of the Abbey in time for its millennial anniversary in 2020. There may not be a great deal to see but it is extraordinary how the story came to life with his skilful guidance.

There may have been an Anglo-Saxon monastery on the site but it was in 1020 the foundations of the Benedictine Abbey were laid and from the remains it is obvious that Pilgrimage to this site to visit the Shrine of Edmund was anticipated, it was in fact to become one of the foremost destinations for Pilgrims in Europe. Nearly every medieval King made the pilgrimage, Parliament met there, and it is claimed that here the Barons met on their way to Runnymede with Magna Carta.

All that remains to show the quality of the building is the Norman Tower which is faced with dressed stone and gives a hint of just how large and magnificent would have been the Abbey Church. Construction on that building started in 1080 and developed into one of the largest churches in western Christendom. The whole site was huge but it has been broken up over the intervening centuries, so it is difficult to really appreciate its extent and the size and quality of the many buildings that existed.

The Abbey was home to about 80 monks whose daily needs were well provided for but it was the Abbot who lived in a manner which befitted a haughty prelate who owned most of West Suffolk, and bowed to no authority on earth except that of the Pope and perhaps the King with whom all abbots maintained close ties. Indeed Mary Tudor, Henry VIII's sister was buried in the Abbey and was removed to St Mary's at the time of the Dissolution.

Being both arrogant and greedy did not endear the Abbot and his team to the local population. Indeed their authority was so tyrannical that there were at least 3 major riots when the Abbey precincts were breached and buildings damaged and it is Dr Hoggett's contention that after the Dissolution the destruction of the Abbey was so comprehensive because it was carried out by a resentful populous delighted to be relieved of an overbearing lord. It is worth noting that the gateways into the Abbey Precincts were constructed as military defences complete with arrow slits!

As more than one person said to me "I shall never be able to walk through these ruins without remembering those turbulent times". And of course, the enigma of Edmund remains. I hope he is somewhere within the precincts of the Abbey resting in peace.

In the afternoon we walked the short distance to a magnificent building which requires no imagination to appreciate its extraordinary beauty, for there is St Mary's where Mary Tudor rests and medieval angels adorn the hammer beam roof of the nave and guard this sacred space as they have done for at least 500 years.

Our guide for the afternoon was a long standing and valued supporter of the Trust, a noted local historian and church expert, Clive Paine ably assisted by his wife Christine.

Although St Mary's was within the Abbey precincts it was financed by local people, not the Abbey although, the priest, appointed by the Abbot would have been responsible for the repair of the Chancel. The church we see now evolved from about 1140 to the Mid C15th and was gradually embellished, stripped at the Reformation, and restored thereafter to its current beauty.

There is much to see and appreciate in this glorious building, but it was the details of the roof which we had come to see. Of course, one cannot appreciate the detail from the floor and even with binoculars it is difficult to see everything but Clive had done the hard work for us and we were to benefit from his research.



In the nave it is a C15th single hammer beam with 11 pairs of life-sized angels. The first pair formed a Canopy of Honour over the Rood. The remaining 10 pairs show a procession of honour of the Assumption as would have been seen on 15th August each year.



We were able to appreciate the detail as Clive had pictures and thanks to the antics of an enthusiastic cleaner with some chimney brushes trying to dust the roof, one Angel lost a hand as it fell to the floor. This is now housed in a display case so one can appreciate the detailed workmanship which, after all, the craftsmen thought no-one would ever view at close quarters! Added to all this magnificent work there are over 400 carvings on the roof including saints, prophets, and angels. Birkin Haward described them as “...one of the most extensive and finest collection of 15th century woodcarvings in England”.

Then we moved to the Chancel with its wagon roof: brightly coloured and glorious. Amongst other beautiful decorations there are 198 carved and coloured bosses. Some of these are symmetrical and carvings include angels, bishops, a fox, three rabbits, owls, dogs, dragons, fish, humans, leaves and flowers: an amazing array. The roof was restored in 1880 and 1968.

In the Sanctuary is the grave of Mary Tudor with its slightly unusual marble kerb on two sides added in 1904 when King Edward VII decided it did not look regal enough.

Finally we looked at the Chantry Chapel, of John Baret, a major benefactor of the church and who died in 1467. He left precise instructions as to how his chantry was to be decorated most especially a roof by Henry Peyntour which has six decorated panels. Where the lozenge patterns intersect is a gold star at the centre of which is a small concave piece of glass which appear to twinkle like the stars in heaven.

Part of the original decoration included tongues of fire made from lead. Over the centuries these had deteriorated and were finally removed and their place taken by paint. Some of the tongues are lodged with the V and A and Clive was able to show us two of the original flames. The workmanship viewed at close quarters was quite moving. The roof was restored in 1968 by John Kursk and is deservedly considered to be one of the outstanding features of the church.

We ran out of time well before we had examined all the treasures of this lovely church. If you are in Bury and have some time to spare do go to St Mary's you will not be disappointed and Clive's excellent Guide Book will make sure you miss nothing.

We had an enthralling and exhausting day and had seen and heard much to make us think. We look forward to seeing you all at the Study Day in March next year.

Diana Hunt, President

JOY ROWE MEMORIAL CONCERT 25TH JUNE, IXWORTH

About five years ago, over a cup of cricket tea, John Rowe put to me the idea that he and I should put on a Concert in memory of his late father Alan. John felt that it could raise funds for the Trust. At the time his mother Joy was still with me on the Grants Committee. Being brought up an Anglican she was a fount of knowledge of our Suffolk Medieval Churches. Thus we benefitted hugely. She was the daughter of Mr. Martin, a surgeon at West Suffolk Hospital and lived in Ixworth. The local GP was Alan Rowe whom she married and she subsequently converted to Catholicism. He was a talented musician and with Joy bought and started to restore Ixworth Abbey.

Sadly Joy's health deteriorated and she retired from our Committee. Just after her death, I put to John Rowe that we should revive the idea of a Memorial Concert. Thus, one day last December he invited Martin Favell and me to lunch to discuss the idea. By then Martin had introduced Yalda Davis to the Trust and hence a programme started to emerge. John's sister, Julie, became involved and suggested inviting other musicians to take part. Those knowing John will be aware that he loves a production. Martin and I soon became stage hands and ticket sellers! We immediately invited Piers Hart, a founder with me of the Motor Rally, to help us with his collection of tents. Yet again his help was invaluable. With Julie handling the music John took on and generously sponsored the excellent food and wine.

The day arrived and we numbered some 100 Friends and Musicians, including a rooftop trumpeter! Martin and I are grateful to all you Friends who stoically held on to the tents against the steadily increasing wind that day. The first performance was by the Blackbourne Singers, founded by the Rowe family, who regaled us

with many a joyful song. After lunch we listened to Yalda Davis playing her 'cello. I had not realised how alluring its music sounded in the open air. Following a musical summons from our rooftop herald we proceeded from the Park to the Abbey Courtyard. There we enjoyed two of Mozart's well known Horn Concertos. As the final movement approached we were honoured by the enthusiastic baton of the Guest Conductor Christopher Warren-Green. The finale to a happy day was a conducted tour of the renovations to the 12c. Abbey interior.

Thus ended a memorable Trust Event, raising some £1,734, for which may I personally thank the Rowe family and all our Trust Friends and Helpers.

Christopher Spicer

ANNUAL SERVICE
3RD JULY 2022
ST MARY LE TOWER CHURCH IPSWICH

The annual service, Choral Evensong, took place at somewhat short notice at St Mary-le-Tower church in Ipswich on 3rd July with grateful thanks to Revd. Tom Mumford and his PCC for hosting us. The choir were in splendid voice and their rendition of the anthem "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" by Maurice Bevan was absolutely spine-tingling. Revd. Tom has kindly agreed that we can quote his sermon in the newsletter.

"There is a story of a young man who was going through a difficult time. Following the break-up of a relationship, a big move, and the intensity of a new social environment (and, as is often the case, a complex childhood) he began to suffer with quite acute anxiety. He experienced panic attacks, and all the sorts of strange physical manifestations that come with it. Unsurprisingly, he quite quickly felt very lost. His self-confidence was eroded. He was no longer the outgoing man he'd been, at least pretending, to be. He begun to question pretty much everything. After he had hit what felt like rock-bottom, life was different. He had unlearned all sorts of un-truths about the world. He had learned all sorts of new truths about himself. And though he was beginning to pick himself up again, he still felt lost. There just seemed to be no clear direction or home for him. He was, he felt, as if a kite in the wind. The only consolation for this young man, he recognised, was that this was true for far more people than would ever let on.

At about this point, the young man received a visit from his parents. In a rather bizarre and unexpected conversation, the topic of the Christian faith was raised. And very much counter to everything the young man ever thought or felt, there was a part of him that wanted to explore, enquire, and perhaps even learn from this source of ancient wisdom.

A number of weeks later, finding the internet quite unsatisfactory, the young man decided he might try actually *going* to a church. Wandering around the town where he lived he tried a few, but only to find their doors locked. Eventually though, just at the point where he was ready to put all this Christian stuff to bed, he pushed on one last door, and it opened. As it happened, there was a service about to start. The young man had no idea what the service was for, or what was going on, but he listened and found that he didn't *totally* disagree with everything being said. But what really struck him was the beauty and the majesty of the space. Its walls felt soaked in prayer, and the song, the *music* that filled it, seemed to dance between its stones. This, he felt, wasn't just an intellectual appreciation, the sort he might get touring about a National Trust property. No, this felt like a meeting with the divine. There was a sense of transcendence, the sense of something 'other' that this young man had never really experienced before. It was as if this space, this building, had enabled him to grow a sense of awareness, an openness, to something human beings are normally very good at forgetting, pushing away, or thinking they can go without. That young man would now describe this an experience of God.

...That young man was me.

Sisters and brothers, this encounter, this experience in holy space changed my life. It set off a chain of events that allowed me to discover what it might look like for me to be truly me. It set off a chain of events that taught me how to pray, how embark on a relationship with God. It set off a chain of events that enabled me to explore what real life, a life of love and fullness, of freedom and flourishing, could really look like. It began a journey that allowed me to feel *love*, free of conditions and expectation, in a way I had never really done before. *The world needs this love. It needs God.*

Now don't get me wrong, I am not saying that this experience of love, this experience of God himself, can only be found in a church, or that only certain buildings can facilitate experiences of the divine. I am not saying that at all. Some of my most profound experiences of the presence of God have been on mountain tops, hill sides, exam halls, and even football stadiums. But human beings, since the beginning of time, have been bloody minded. We have always sought to go our own way and play God ourselves. Though created for relationship with God, we too often look for him in the wrong places, getting subsumed by money, status, greed, the self. And so we need places built and set aside for the sacred, to draw us back, to untangle our busy minds, to quiet our souls, and let God in. We need church buildings, open church buildings, I think now more than ever. And this is why I feel so personally grateful to you, the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, and other organisations like you and your donors, who seek to preserve and renew holy places such as these. Your work doesn't just protect heritage, or pretty buildings. Its impact isn't just a safeguarding of tradition or a nostalgia about the past. Your work enables people to meet God, to find peace, rest for their souls. Churches are often likened to upside down boats, like some second arc, saving those who enter from the

floods of life that sometimes threaten to drown us. I think this is true. In many ways, they are ships for our souls. So thank you Geoffrey, your team and your donors (and not wanting to labour the nautical metaphors too much), but not least for helping keep so many roofs watertight. But for more than that, for providing for so many of us with a lifeboat, a place to rise back to the surface, a place to meet our God and see our lives transformed. Yours is a holy work, a Godly cause. So please keep going, and on your journey, be assured of my prayers, the prayers of this civic church, and the prayers of many other rescued souls, past, present, *and* future.”

Amen.

RIDE AND STRIDE – 10 SEPTEMBER 2022

We again exceeded our expectations in our 2021 Ride and Stride, raising about £189,000, including Gift Aid.

We are promoting the event again this year, on Saturday 10th September. As always, we rely on the commitment of the volunteers who man the churches on the day, and to whom we are eternally grateful. Many of the cyclists and walkers are keen to visit the churches and learn more about the wonderful heritage that Suffolk has. Cycling continues to be an increasingly popular form of exercise and we hope that this day will appeal to families, the young, and cycling enthusiasts. We have been blessed with wonderful weather on the recent Ride & Stride days, so let's get out there, encourage your family and friends to participate and enjoy the day, and raise some funds for your local church.

The funds raised play a vital role in maintaining the fabric and running of these wonderful buildings. They are part of our heritage. The architecture, the memorials, the gravestones, the generations of families who have been part of this heritage. The Trust is non-denominational, and it is there to help all Suffolk churches. Applying for a grant is available by contacting the Trust's website: www.shct.org.uk

Enjoy the day!

Simon Ronan Ride & Stride Committee Chairman.

SUFFOLK CHURCHES RIDE AND STRIDE / PEDAL AND DRIVE 2022 LAUNCHED AT IPSWICH AND PAKENHAM



On Tuesday 5TH July the rapper and music producer Curtis Blanc, from the International Church, in Ipswich, launched Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride 2022, at his church in the town centre, along with other walkers and cyclists. Curtis Blanc is the founder of Tisrespect, with over 10 years of music industry experience he is extremely passionate about local music and his team are dedicated to building a platform for shaping the positive role models and entertainers of tomorrow.

In the afternoon the sister event Pedal and Drive 2022 was launched at St Mary's church, Pakenham, near Bury St Edmunds.

Edward and Miranda Mason (and their dog Poppy) came in their 1931 low chassis Lagonda to join Pakenham to join Bike Ride chairman Simon Ronan, local organiser Christopher Spicer, and representatives of walkers and cyclists.



On 10th September, the Ipswich International Church in Burlington Road will be taking part in Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride for the first time, and will welcome visitors walking or cycling around the town as part of the event.

“The Churches Bike Ride last September around Suffolk’s many churches of all denominations, both ancient and contemporary, raised yet another record fundraising – being in excess of £205,000. We thank all those who participated and helped make this such a success. The leading area, Saxmundham, raised over £11,000! “ said Simon Ronan, the Chairman of Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride . “Over 400 churches and chapels opened their doors and welcomed riders and walkers, and wheel-chairs users. This is a huge effort of organisation and commitment for which the Trust is truly grateful. We much look forward to the continued support the event has attracted over the years, a sunny day, lots of cyclists and walkers, and to yet another record. It is a day to enjoy the county’s heritage, a family day out, a day of exercise, discovery, companionship, village and town participation, and lastly, generosity, both in time and donation.”

Cyclists and walkers get sponsors or donations for their journey around some of Suffolk’s churches, choosing their own route, long or short. The money they raise help save this wonderful part of our history, with half going to the Trust to give out as grants for church buildings, and half to the cyclists/walkers chosen church.

Hundreds of churches will be open to welcome participants on Saturday 10th September.

The annual ride, began in Suffolk in 1982 but has now spread across England, appeals to families, local history lovers, keen cyclists and walkers, church supporters and those who just enjoy an annual trip around the villages and towns of Suffolk.

Sponsor forms are now available in Suffolk churches, and from the Trust website. Donations and sponsorship can also be collected via Just Giving. More details are now available from SHCT Ride and Stride local organisers, by email shct@btconnect.com , by phoning 01787 883884 or www.shct.org.uk

A list of churches that are open is available on the Trust website, www.shct.org.uk and from participating Suffolk churches. Cyclists and walkers can choose whichever churches they wish, and disability scooters are welcome too. A photography competition for participants will also be held and details are on the Trust website.

On the same day, the Suffolk Churches vintage and classic car Pedal and Drive event is held with the cars travelling a provided route around a selection of churches, ending at Lavenham.

“Suffolk Historic Churches Trust is so grateful for the drivers who turn out and help us raise our target £200,000 which in turn is money to help all those who care for Suffolk’s wonderful legacy of church buildings.,” said Trust Chairman and organiser of Pedal & Drive, Geoffrey Probert. “It is the fourth year of Pedal & Drive, which is always great fun with its combination of starting out from historic country homes, the meander across Suffolk dropping in on churches and the rally finale at Lavenham. We hope to see some new cars this year! Entry forms on the SHCT website.”

Car owners should email pedalanddrive@gmail.com

Rachel Sloane, Hon Publicity Officer

Apologies for the inconvenience caused by RBS closing our membership account, but the good news is that we are now able to offer online banking for Ride and Stride payments. If you would like to use this facility please, when sending in the sponsorship money, include your church’s bank account details on the white remittance slip. Alternatively, phone the details to the Ride and Stride Treasurer on 01473 253 838. Currently this online banking only applies to Ride and Stride and not to membership payments. If you are paying via Just Giving please be sure to put the name of the church you are supporting in the message section.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF FRIENDS –
MONDAY, 10th OCTOBER 2022, 6.30 FOR 7.00pm,
AT HAUGHLEY PARK BARN, STOWMARKET IP14 3JY**

The Annual Meeting will be going ahead as usual with drinks from 6.30 to 7pm, then a short meeting to bring the members up to date on the Ride and Stride/Pedal and Drive, the results for the previous financial year and the current financial position, and any other relevant Trust affairs. This will be followed by a talk by Professor Mark Bailey, then the supper.

Mark Bailey is a professor of late medieval history at UEA. He is a visiting professor to All Souls, Oxford, an ex-headmaster at Leeds Grammar School, and ex-headmaster at St. Paul’s. He is a past student of Ipswich School, a graduate of Durham University, and gained a doctorate from Cambridge University. Mark gained 7 international rugby caps for England, playing on the wing. He played cricket for Suffolk and captained the side in 1988-90. He was a double blue in

cricket and rugby at Cambridge. He wrote “After the Black Death” in 2021. He will be talking to the Friends of SHCT on the Black Death in East Anglia. A very accomplished man!



If you would like to attend the Meeting, please advise the Trust office **by 6th October**, by:

emailing shct@btconnect.com

or phoning 01787 883884 (please leave a message if necessary).

Please indicate if you will be bringing one or more guests to the Meeting and, for catering purposes, if you will **not** be staying for the supper.

GRANTS COMMITTEE NEWS

Increase in Maximum Grants

The projects for which SHCT may grant funds are divided into three categories: A, B and C. Details of these categories can be found on the Trust's website. For some years the maximum grant for a project within categories A and B has been £10,000. For a project within category C the maximum grant has been £3,000. During their meeting in April 2022 trustees supported an increase in these figures to £20,000 and £10,000 respectively. An important factor has been the success of the recent annual Rides and Strides.

Main Grants 2022

In April the Grants Committee made four awards totalling £10,750. Three came within category A and one within category B. By contrast, an increase in the number of applications led to ten being considered in July: seven category A, one

category B and two category C. These resulted in awards totalling £50,050, the second highest quarterly total since January 2010. The highest individual award, £10,000, was to St Margaret, Somerton towards re-tiling the nave roof and stabilising the ceiling.

Jubilee Grants

In March 2022 SHCT announced that it will be making an extra series of grants in honour of HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Details of these Jubilee Grants were set out in the Trust's Spring Newsletter. A number of applications have been received. Potential applicants are reminded that the closing date for the receipt of applications is 31 December 2022. A Jubilee Grant Application form is available on the Trust's website.

Risk of metal theft to churches

Since 2015 SHCT has provided grants towards the installation of roof alarms for churches with lead roofs. Not only roofs but also roof flashings and lead rainwater pipes have been targeted. Ecclesiastical Insurance has published a guide on how to protect churches from metal theft: <https://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-metal-theft>

John Devaux
Chairman Grants Committee



St Margaret's Somerton, credit Simon Knott

GRANTS AWARDED 2021-2022

Bacton, St Mary	3,500
Badwell Ash, St Mary's	5,000
Barking, St Mary's	1,000
Belstead, St Mary	2,000
Bredfield, St Andrew	2,250
Brent Eleigh, St Mary	3,000
Brettenham, St Mary	900
Chevington, All Saints	3,500
Clare, SS Peter and Paul	10,000
Dalham, St Mary	850
Denham, St John the Baptist	4,000
Great Glemham, All Saints	7,000
Higham, St Stephen's	10,000
Horham, St Mary	2,000
Hundon, All Saints	800
Ipswich, St Mary at the Elms	700
Kesgrave, All Saints	2,000
Kirton, St Mary & St Martin	1,500
Langham, St Mary	3,000
Little Bealings, All Saints	3,000
Little Finborough, St Mary	2,500
Market Weston, St Mary	6,100
Mutford, St Andrew	5,700
Nayland, St James	3,000
Needham Market, St John	2,000
Newmarket, St Agnes	200
Rickinghall Inferior, St Mary	7,000
Rushmere St Andrew, St Andrew's	1,250
Spexhall, St Peter	1,500
Stoke-by-Nayland, St Mary	7,000
Stowmarket, SS Peter and Mary	4,000
Stradbroke, Baptist Chapel	2,500
Thrandeston, St Margaret	2,500
Wattisfield, St Margaret	1,500
Wenhaston, St Peter	5,000
Wickham Market, All Saints	10,000

£127,700

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 5 APRIL 2022

The financial statements for the year to 5 April have not yet been independently examined and as soon as this has taken place the figures will be put on the SHCT Website.

However, I can report that the year to 5 April has been a very successful one with a truly special Bike Ride and Pedal and Drive result in September 2021. The bike ride receipts excluding Gift Aid were nearly £165,500 and the Pedal and Drive added £15,728 before expenses which is tremendous. We have also received legacies of over £70,000 and special mention must be made of Yalda Davis who has supported us for a number of year and this time raised over £1,000 in the course of her wonderful performances in our churches.

We have been able to give and grant to Churches this year in excess of £210,000 and at the 5 April our reserves and investments are in a robust position so we can continue to support our beautiful Churches into the future as the Trust heads into its 50th anniversary year.

David King
Hon Treasurer



St Mary's Swiland

Continuing our articles about the non-conformist places of worship in Suffolk.
The Trust supports churches of all denominations.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

There are eight 'Friends' (Quaker) meetings in Suffolk. Six, Bury St. Edmunds, Beccles, Ipswich, Leiston, Pakfield, and Sudbury all have their own meeting houses and support us by opening every year for our Ride and Stride event in September. Felixstowe meets at Trimley Memorial Hall & Woodbridge at St. Mary's Church House.

History

The Religious Society of Friends has its roots in the 17th century during the aftermath of the English Civil War at a time when many were interested in radically reshaping religion. During this period of religious turmoil George Fox, a young man, son of a weaver travelled around the country on a spiritual quest. He met others searching for a more direct spiritual experience and came to believe that the presence of God was found within people rather than 'steeple houses' as he called churches. The key beliefs of Quakerism were formed at this time including the idea that each individual can experience inner light and "there is that of God in everyone".

Equality including between men and women was central from the very beginning. Caps were not doffed to those who might generally be seen as superiors; hats were also kept on in meetings as the belief was that no one place was more 'holy' than another. On the same basis Quakers refused to take oaths, believing that a 'yes' or 'no' was sufficient. During the reign of Charles II, Quakers, along with other non-conformists, were thought to be radicals and heretics. They were imprisoned for their beliefs and for their refusal to pay tithes to the established church. In 1660 the first mention of Quakers in Beccles is a record of six Friends who were committed to Gaol at Beccles Quarter sessions. The word Quaker is an allusion to a passage in Isaiah "tremble at the Word of the Lord", it was applied to the Society of Friends as a derisory term, but they have taken it for their own.

By the 18th century it was no longer illegal to hold Quaker meetings and it was possible for them to build their own meeting house; from 1689 they had not been allowed to be buried in churchyards and already had their own burial grounds. Quakers had also adopted 'plain dress', by the 19th century grey dresses and bonnets for women and plain coats and hats for the men. Like all non-conformists Quakers were prevented from attending university and go into the professions, so

many went into business and banking gaining a reputation for honesty and integrity. Rowntree and Cadbury founded in the 19th century are nationally well known for philanthropic work as well as chocolate. In Suffolk, Ransomes, Alexanders, and others were Quakers also prominent in the civic life of Ipswich.

Meeting Houses

Bury St. Edmunds is the oldest Quaker Meeting House in Suffolk that is still in use. Built in 1750 it has a garden and burial ground. In 2008 a new room for community meetings (the Garden Room), WC facilities, and a state-of-the-art kitchen were provided all leading off an entrance hall designed to reflect the importance of light in Quaker belief and thinking.

Ipswich's original meeting house was built in 1700 and extended 60 years later in 1858 when Henry Alexander, one of the Quaker partners in Alexanders Bank, gave a piece of land to add a library. These buildings were all in use until 1924. The current meeting house in the Fonnereau Road, originally a private house opened in 1936.

Beccles Quakers originally met in private houses but had a burial ground at Worlingham. In 1753 Philip Sewell bought two cottages for a meeting house. In the 1890's an Adult School was established which continued until the late 1940's. It was so successful that in 1909 a second floor was added to the main part of the meeting house and the large hall built along side. A garden has also been created which provides a lovely pathway through to Beccles town centre.



Beccles Quaker Meeting House

Sudbury Meeting House in Friars Street was built in 1805 and later a School Room was added on to the front of the building. It was extended in 2012 but retains its essential historic form and character.

Pakefield Meeting House is a 19th century building dating from 1833. It has the distinction of being the most Easterly Meeting, also one of the smallest situated on a cliff top, a few hundred metres from the beach. It recently underwent an extensive renovation and extension.

Leiston's meeting house was purpose built in 1860 dating from the period of Leiston's expansion as a local industrial centre. Its impressive design is a mark of the influence of Quakers in the town at that time. It retains many original features and a burial ground.

Quakers Today

Quakers share a way of life rather than a fixed set of beliefs. Their values, which are rooted in Christianity, are called testimonies. Today may be expressed differently from 400 years ago but the core remains. The focus now is on the values of peace, simplicity, equality, truth, and integrity, and how they interact with each other. Also important are the testimonies to sustainability and community. As well as the Bible they also have their own source of inspiration collected in the book 'Quaker Faith and Practise' which is updated from time to time. They also conduct their own marriages and funerals. Nationally and internationally, they are noted for their work for Peace and Humanitarian aid.

A Quaker meeting for worship usually lasts for an hour, a gathering together in silence. The meeting houses are simple with no decoration and the seating is usually in a square or a circle. There are no ministers or creeds, hymns, prayers or sermons. Sometimes in the stillness some are moved to share thoughts and insights that they experience; this is the Quaker form of ministry. Any one at the meeting may give spoken ministry. As well as Members of the Religious Society of Friends people of all faiths and none are welcome and accepted and are called attenders. Some people attend Quakers meetings in addition to worshipping in their own churches and chapels.

Quakers in Britain are made up of different meetings, groups and committees. Most of the work is done by volunteers within the worshipping community. The responsibility for running local Quaker meetings is held by their members and Area meetings are made up of several local meetings. Friend's House in London

opposite Euston Station was constructed in 1926 to be the central office and meeting place of Quakers in Britain. It is an impressive multi-use venue with a café, book shop and library accessible and welcoming to all.

Celia Stephens

With thanks to the Beccles Quaker Meeting

Would you like to write a Chat?

Our fortnightly Churches and Chapels Chats proved very popular during the pandemic but then fell into abeyance. They are now being revived on a monthly basis.

Trustees and members of our Grants Committee have enjoyed preparing them. But we are sure that amongst our members and supporters there are scribes who would love to write one too. If you are one of them please drop a line to our Hon Secretary Jill Taylor on shctwebsite@gmail.com

Your church in the news

The Flyer series of magazines are delivered free to homes in Ipswich, Kesgrave and Martlesham Woodbridge, Stowmarket and Felixstowe. We have a monthly column (space permitting) about the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, that also includes a featured church, chapel or meeting house that can be anywhere in Suffolk.

If you would like yours included, please send 200-250 words about the church and any interesting features and two or three photos (inside and out) that you have the copyright to. Please send them to mail@rachelstoane.co.uk.

They like us to include the times the church is open to visitors, disabled access, the postcode and details of where to park.

So far we have included Ipswich Unitarian Meeting House, St Mary's Kersey, St Mary's Swilland, St Mary's Polstead, St Mary's Dennington, St Mary's, Gislingham, and in September's Flyer magazine it will be St Margaret's, Somerton.

Your church, chapel or meeting house could be next!

