



**St Peter & St Paul's
Parish Church Aldeburgh
Church Guide**



Welcome to Aldeburgh Parish Church

Whether you come to worship, sit in peace and/or prayer, search for your family history or shelter from inclement weather, you are most welcome.

Aldeburgh Parish Church looks out to sea. It is home to a magnificent window in memory of Benjamin Britten and is the home church of the famous Aldeburgh Festival. Here too Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the first woman doctor and first female mayor in Britain, worshipped. Aldeburgh is a lively community, and our parish church reflects that. Please check regularly as our services reflect not only the church's year but events special to Aldeburgh. In June we have the opening service of the Aldeburgh Festival, and in August the open air Carnival Service. At Easter, Pentecost, Harvest and Christmas our worship is especially rich in meaning.

Here you will find space and beauty, a lively faith, and a deep sense of the presence of God.



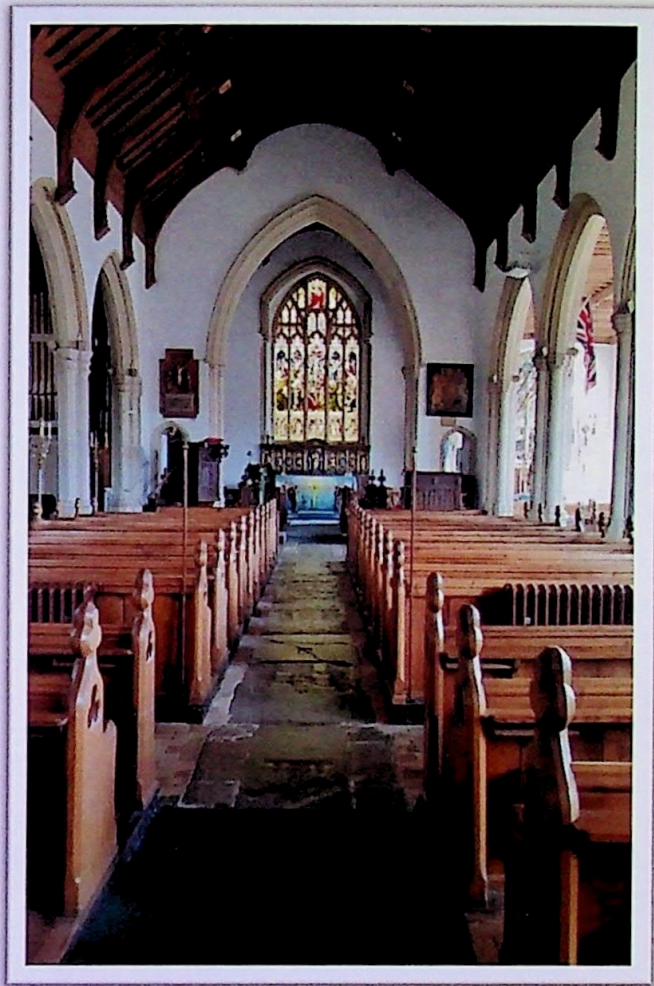
We are part of the Alde Sandlings Benefice, which includes

St Andrew's Parish Church, Aldringham

St Mary's Parish Church, Friston

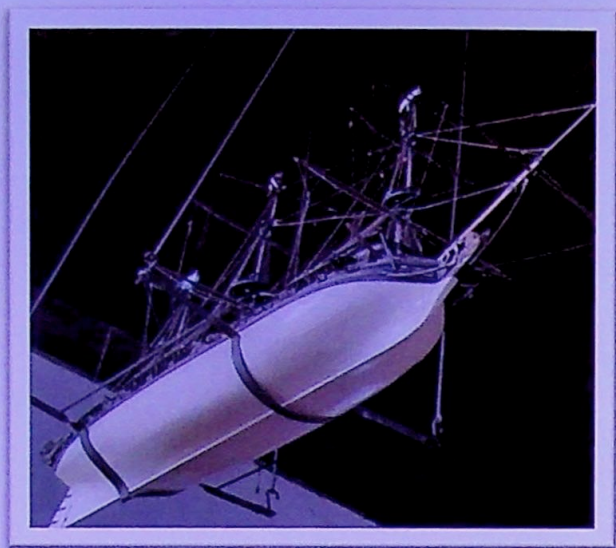
St Lawrence's Parish Church, Knodishall

Let's Take a Look Around



If you enter the church through the west door, you will see a wide nave, one of the widest in East Anglia, and a magnificent view of the stained glass east window. When you get closer (see page 11/12) look for the holes left by German tracer shells in WWII. Apparently, there are three!

Throughout the church there are beautiful kneelers reflecting the dedication of those who made them. In the Children's Corner hangs a boat reflecting Aldeburgh's heritage as a seafaring and shipbuilding town.



Look down the main aisle to the chancel arch (which takes you into the chancel with the choir stalls and the high altar). In its present form, the arch dates from the early 20th Century. What is no longer visible is the bailiff's gallery, where the town burghers sat. This ran across the space now created by the chancel arch. Like the public gallery which, it is thought, ran down the south aisle, it was removed. It is possible the burghers stopped coming once the ship auctions ceased.

To the right of the arch is a royal coat of arms, which once hung in the Moot Hall, the ancient seat of government still used by the town council.

Left of the arch is the pulpit in which George Crabbe the poet preached when briefly a curate here.

Turn your gaze from the altar and walk down the main aisle to the chancel steps, from there turn left in front of the pulpit and you will see the stunning 'Britten' Window. On this north side of the church, we remember the artists Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears, Imogen Holst, George Crabbe and John Piper (creator of this beautiful window).

Artists in words and music, in singing, in stained glass and in painting.

John Piper designed many stage sets for Britten and his design for the window brings the three Church Parables to life.

On the right is The Burning Fiery Furnace, the story of the escape of Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego from the engulfing flames. Using the techniques of the Noy play, Britten gives musical life to the story.



In the middle is the tale of Curlew River, with its ferryman, mysterious traveller, the mad woman in search of her son and its haunting music.

And on the left is The Prodigal Son. The original painting by Rembrandt, the pride of the Hermitage in St Petersburg, shows a wider canvas of an elder son deep in the shadows, arms folded in disgust and rejection. But look at the kneeling figure of the younger son. Piper adapts Rembrandt's painting and instead of a bare left foot, the son wears the hint of a tattered sandal, worn out from walking. Rembrandt's son turns his head and is embraced by his father, but Piper's son looks straight ahead. Rembrandt's father has a female right hand and a male left hand.

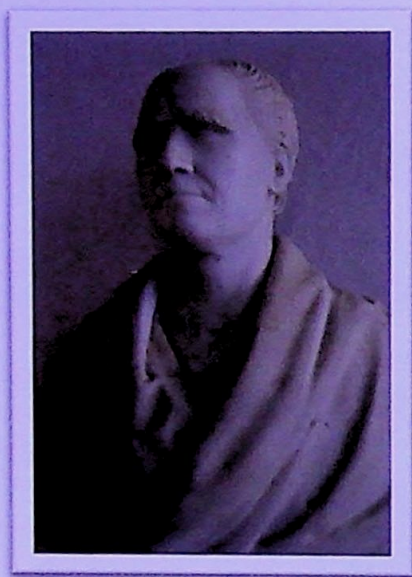
Gentleness and strength, sensitivity and compassion combine in the qualities of God and encompass and transcend all questions of gender. God welcomes us all no matter who we are and no matter what we have done.

Beneath the window is the font, one of many of similar design in this part of the country.



Look more closely. There are sword marks cutting through the lions and the same swords have hacked at the angels. A small amount of the original colour of the panel has survived. When Dowsing was commissioned by Cromwell to remove superstitious images, he instructed a local man to do his work in Aldeburgh. Thomas Johnson was the son of a local ship builder but he did not spare the church. Only one of the original panels survives intact. The panel bears the marks of the crucifixion; look closely and you see the cross, the crown of thorns, two whips or scourges, three nails, a spear and a stick on which the sponge of hyssop containing the sour wine was held to Christ's lips.

If you turn round, you will see the bust of George Crabbe.



Born on Christmas Eve, like Henry Wood, he is paid the courtesy of a laurel wreath around his brow at our Christmas Eve Midnight Communion service. Crabbe, born in Aldeburgh, was an apprentice to an apothecary. He left Aldeburgh for London to further his chances of being recognised as a poet, but returned disappointed.

At the suggestion of Edmund Burke, George Crabbe was ordained in 'Aldburgh' in December 1781. He was ordained priest in the Bishop's Palace Chapel, Norwich in August 1782, but by March 1783, he was Rector in Frome, Somerset.

He returned to the district in 1809 and finished his epic poem *The Borough*. Aldeburgh was thinly disguised in the poem, too thinly, as the town residents did not like the portrait any more than they liked the younger George when he was then curate. But he left a legacy; not just his parent's grave just beyond the east wall, but also the story of Peter Grimes within his poem, which Benjamin Britten adapted for his opera of the same name. Peter (Grimes) was a fisherman who had lost his apprentice at sea and was hounded by 'the borough', a combination of the official worthies and the town gossips.

Often painted as an outsider, some see a semi-autobiographical portrait of Britten as an outsider to the society of his day because of his relationship with Peter Pears. Alan Britten, Benjamin's nephew, said that Britten told him this portrait was the destructive power of the borough gossips and nothing else. The production of *Grimes on the Beach* in the centenary year (2013) of Britten's birth, brought the role of Aldeburgh gossips vividly to life and it was commented that Crabbe and Britten might still feel their portraits to be accurate!

Before you pass George Crabbe, retrace your steps to look at the pulpit in which Crabbe preached. Made in 1632 by Charles Warne and James Garrard, it was a copy of the pulpit in nearby Kelsale. Paid £20.7s 0d (£20.35 in present currency), this fee would be the equivalent of £3,040 today. One of the Canons (church laws) of 1603 prescribed that churchwardens had to provide 'a comely and decent pulpit to be seemly kept for the preaching of God's Word'. Some may argue that the pulpit today is complete, but it is more likely at that date it would be the top deck of a three decker pulpit, as you can see in Shelland near Stowmarket. The clerk led the responses in the bottom deck and the lessons in the second.



Few three decker pulpits now exist intact, but there are several examples of their reconstruction as simple pulpits or separate desks and it is possible that the Vicar's stall, which uses wooden panels of the same period with similar ornate carvings, was originally the clerk's desk. That fits with the idea of the three decker pulpit originally finding a home alongside the second pillar on the south side of the nave. The people would face the pulpit placed there to bring the Word of God into their midst.

A pencil sketch in the old vestry dating from 1845 shows the backboard and tester (overhead soundboard) of the original three decker pulpit attached to the east wall in the aisle beside the 15thC piscina (to be seen beside the altar rail) above yet another position for the font!

Now head to the organ. That too has moved; it was once protected by a small screen near the tower. The organ, built by Walker, dates from 1864, moved to its present position in 1882 and occupies what was the chapel of St Clement and St Catherine. Rebuilt by Hunter in 1903 it has had extensive work since then, including its trumpet en chamade added to celebrate the new millennium.

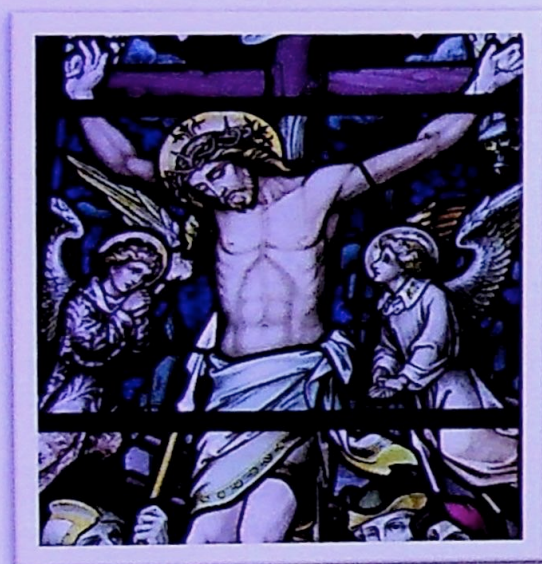
Beyond the organ is a 15thC piscina, a small bowl set in a niche in the wall in which the priest washed his hands when celebrating Communion. Part of its wooden shelf for the communion vessels is still intact. It is beside the piscina on the east wall that the font once stood with the tester of the pulpit above. Passing the rear choir pew, look for the carved cat Samson which is the work of Eric Stacy, a parishioner who died in 2005. He was a former prisoner of war in Japan, where he learnt the art of wood carving.



Samson, a real cat, came into church for every concert, sat on the cushion in the Vicar's stall and milked the applause as he strolled down the aisle as the last note sounded. Samson was carved as a modern companion for the 15thC dog who crouches legless on the equivalent pew near the Trinity Chapel.

The altar rail carving is of a different sort. Carved by Miss Fotheringham of Kent it was installed in 1911. Every sheaf of wheat and bunch of grapes appears to be different and the angels are beautiful. In the parish magazine she writes 'The carving of the rails is symbolical, the corn, the vine and the olive, speaking of Bread, Wine and the Light of the World. At the entrance to the Sanctuary two angels of the resurrection stand facing one another, suggesting reverence and devotion. On each end of the return rails two kneeling figures on the north and south side represent respectively the Angel of the Annunciation and the Angel of Gethsemane.'

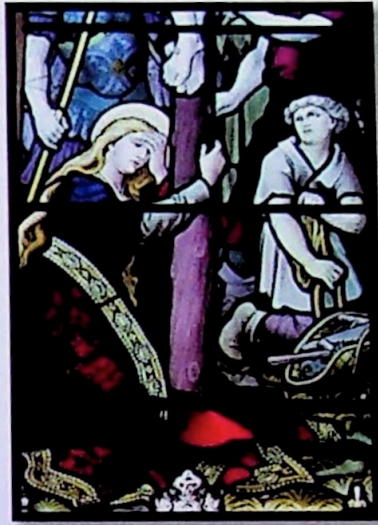
Now lift your eyes to the east window. It is not the first. In 1851 a new east window was installed but was replaced by the present window in 1891.



The main scene is a depiction of Christ's crucifixion. He is framed between two thieves, one repentant on the right facing Christ and one unrepentant on the left facing away. Soldiers hold spears aimed at the ribs of all three crucified figures. A centurion rides a white horse. Other soldiers roll dice on a draught board hiding what they are doing with the seamless robe, for which they are casting lots.

A carpenter kneels beside the cross with the tools of his trade in his basket. Jesus was also a carpenter who worked with his father to fashion wood and with his heavenly Father he fashioned creation.

Mary Magdalene, with cascading golden hair, cannot contain her grief with one hand clasping the cross and the other her face. There are several women. Far left is a woman in prayer with the hole of a tracer shell piercing her green robe (inflicted in WWII) as the agony of Christ pierces her soul.



In the next panel you see Mary, the mother of Jesus, comforted by John. Around the arms of the cross hover two angels, one praying, one clasping hands.



High above the cross sits Christ on a golden throne, his right hand stretched out in blessing and his left hand holding the seven seals mentioned in the Book of Revelations. He wears a black and gold clasp with the symbols Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the end. He is Christ in Glory. To either side of the throne, echoing their counterparts below, are two angels, one praying, one clasping hands.

Easy to miss, are tiny triangles of glass with an ox and an eagle. The winged ox is the symbol of St Luke and symbolises the sacrifice involved in the Passion of Christ. St Luke's Gospel opens with the story of Zechariah offering sacrifice in the temple. The eagle, the symbol of St John soars towards heaven. St John's Gospel opens with an account of Christ as the Living Word of God, who carries God's word to earth and our words to heaven.

The two other Gospel writers are there, St Matthew is a winged human and St Mark is a lion. The winged human speaks about the incarnation, Christ born human as told in the first story in St Matthew's Gospel. The lion is the symbol of resurrection and St Mark's Gospel begins with the story of John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness (the lion is a desert creature).

In the foreground to the right of the cross is a disciple with a nimbus (halo) round his head, it may possibly be James, so that the three main disciples (Peter, James and John) are depicted. It has been suggested that Peter is on the outskirts of the crowd at the back; he is diminished in size. He denied Christ three times, which may explain why he is apart and on the edge. Peter and Paul, our patron saints, are at either end of the small panels beneath the main part of the window framing Christ's nativity.

One tracer shell hole has been identified but what of the other two? It is uncertain but it is said that in the 1990s a youth broke some glass in the windows, with stones. When the glass was repaired so also were the tracer shell holes.

Looking down from the east window, peel back the carpet in front of the altar rail (please replace the carpet neatly after viewing) and you will see three small wooden coffin lids to the infant Eliot children - Rhoda who died in 1662, Daniel in 1659 and Thomas in 1654. Please don't tread on the delicate wood but stand on the sanctuary step to read the inscriptions. The spelling would probably be phonetic at the time and the coffin lids are crudely carved, but it is unusual to have three infants buried so close to the altar rail. There may have been more than one inscriber as there are two kinds of spelling. With spelling mistakes variations and missing letters in brackets, these are the three inscriptions:

- Heare lieth bur(i)ed the body of Rhoda El(i)ot daughter of Captain Thomas Elyot how did* May the 13 1662 * presumably 'who died'
- Heare lieth bur(i)ed the body of Daniel Elyot sone of Captain Thomas Elyot how did* November the 19-day 1659 * presumably 'who died'
- Here lyeth buried the body of Thomas Eliot who depar(t)ed this life the 11 day of Sep(t)ember 1654

Roll the carpet back further to see the resting place of the infamous Thomas Johnson. The Johnson arms include two toads and although unfair to toads it may be that their slimy nature reflects the character of Johnson!

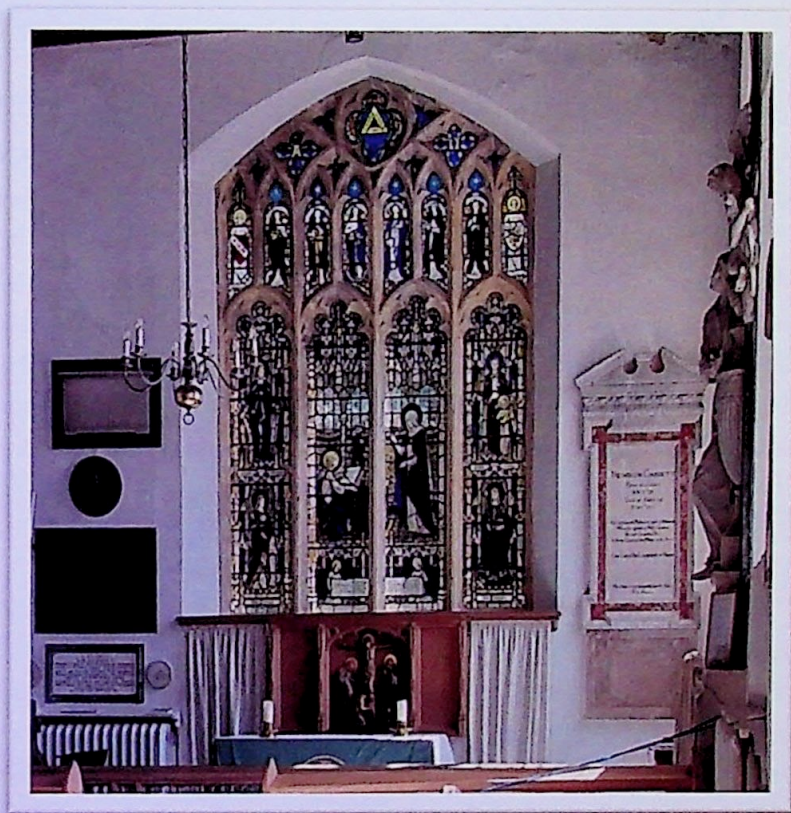
Aldeburgh at the time was a significant port and place of shipbuilding. There is a story (circulated by the writer Edward Clodd) that the Golden Hind which Sir Francis Drake sailed around the world between 1577 and 1580, was built here but it is more probable that it was built in Devonport. However, the link between Aldeburgh and the sea is strong and we know that two Quartermasters and one Quartermaster's Mate from Aldeburgh served on HMS Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar.

In 1643 Johnson was ordered by Dowsing, acting on behalf of Oliver Cromwell, to take down 20 cherubim and 38 pictures. The Puritans wanted a 'pure' place of worship devoid of distraction and superstitious images and as plain as possible. He was responsible for the soldiers who attacked the font and destroyed the angels in the roof. Now Johnson lies between the choir stalls and is walked over every time we come up for Communion. Soldiers were paid 10 shillings (50p) in beer money for carrying his coffin at his funeral in 1658.

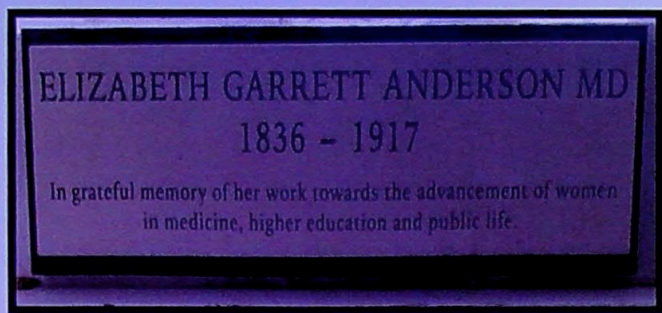
There is a connection between the three small coffin lids and this grand slab. Thomas Eliot is mentioned again, his daughter Jabes died just before Christmas 1658. Described as the grandchild of Thomas Johnson she died two months after her grandfather. We will never know if she lies in the same grave.

After replacing the carpet (thank you!) look for the two inscriptions on the walls above the choir stalls. One, a much loved vicar, The Revd Henry Turnur Dowler, appears in a photograph with these same stalls and the other is Frederick Bell, a local doctor who died aged 46 in Great Malvern having gone there to take 'the cure' possibly for depression. He appeared to be improving but died having committed suicide.

In those times suicide was a crime and the 'died suddenly' disguises the manner of his death. Newson Garrett was an influential friend, and an executor of the will Bell wrote a year before his death. He was buried in the churchyard of Malvern Priory when suicides were not usually allowed such understanding and courtesy.



Walk to the east window, turn right, down one step into the Trinity Chapel. Look towards the chapel window and to its right is a memorial to Newson Garrett, brother of Richard Garrett (founder of Leiston Iron Works). Newson lived in Aldeburgh for most of his adult life and was owner of the brickworks and the Maltings at Snape.

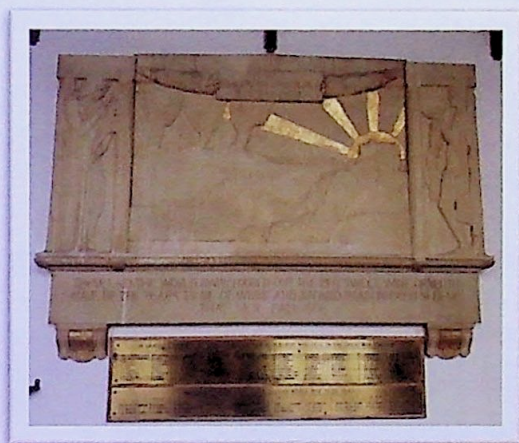


Elizabeth Garrett, who was one of Newson Garrett's 12 children, was born in Whitechapel in 1836. A meeting with American physician Elizabeth Blackwell, set her on the path which would lead her, despite opposition, to become the first woman to qualify as a doctor in England. She married James Anderson, had three children, taught herself French, gained a medical degree (which the British authorities refused to recognise), founded a hospital and subsequently helped change the rules to allow women to train to become doctors. After an illustrious career she retired to Aldeburgh in 1902. In 1908 Elizabeth Garrett Anderson became the first woman to become Mayor of Aldeburgh and was a regular member of this congregation.

Elizabeth's sister, Millicent, became a leading early member of the suffrage movement and as a suffragist was a considerable influence on the militant suffragettes who followed. Her book 'What I Remember' is well worth reading. She talks about the influence of her husband Henry Fawcett who served as a forward thinking Postmaster General. Henry was blind and the bust you see on the wall is a copy of that in Westminster Abbey. Millicent records that on his death in 1884, several of his close colleagues with whom he worked to reform the Post Office, presented her with a pair of 18thC candlesticks and an inkstand as 'an affectionate remembrance of a beloved chief'.

Millicent cherished the gifts saying she would not have parted with them 'if it had not been that in April 1916, during the darkest times of the Great War, there was an appeal, which I felt to be irresistible, from the British Red Cross to the whole country, and everyone was urged, even if he or she could not give cash, to give other possessions; and a great sale was held at Christie's to dispose of these'.

It is appropriate that Millicent is remembered next to the Trinity Chapel window which contains only angels (who are gender neutral), and female saints. The window was designed by Archibald Keightley Nicholson (1871-1937), the brother of the founder of the Royal School of Church Music, Sydney Nicholson (1875-1947). One of the saints depicted in the window is St Cecilia, the patron saint of music.



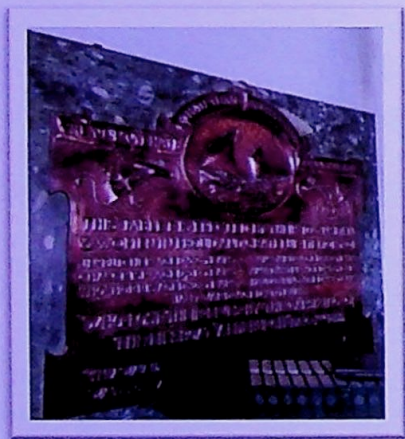
There is also a musical and female link on the War Memorial. Christine Jay, a nurse in the Queen Alexandra Imperial Nursing Service, died on 12 August 1916 on board the hospital ship Takada in the Indian Ocean.

Note also the names of Stephen Spring Rice, nephew of Cecil Spring Rice who wrote the hymn words to 'I vow to thee my country', Captain John Fox Russell, holder of the VC and 2nd Lieutenant Vernon Jack Reading the 70th of 80 victims of Baron Manfred von Richthofen, the 'Red Baron'. All these have an association with the Garretts but not necessarily Aldeburgh! Another VC holder, John Stanhope Collings Wells' name appears on the memorial to the Old Boys of Aldeburgh Lodge Preparatory School on the south wall.

The head of the dying soldier is based on a self-portrait of the artist Henry Garrett, killed in August 1915 aged 30. Only officers are given their ranks on a brass plaque beneath the memorial, but on Remembrance Sunday, when we read their names, all are treated equally and no ranks are given.

The memorial is by Gilbert Bayes and 'The Dying Soldier', or a cast of it, was exhibited at the Royal Academy and also at the V&A Museum as early as 1917, so may have been in place here before the end of the war.

Walk down the south aisle, built between 1534-1535, some years after the north aisle (1525-1529), note that its pillars are a different shape. Look up as you pass the first pillar to see a green man grinning down, then look at the other faces of the pillar as you look back. The second pillar still bears the marks of where the pulpit stood. The final pillar has the crossed keys of St Peter, a Latin cross, half a pomegranate and a couple of grinning faces.



At the final pillar you will pass on your left the south door, The original and main entrance from its construction in 1535/1539 until 1955 or beyond, when its position was supplanted by the far inferior west door. Turn right, go passed the 15thC chest and you should be back to where you began inside the west door.

Now look at the memorial to those who died in the lifeboat disaster shortly before Christmas 1899. Six men lost their lives when the boat overturned close to the shore trapping them underneath. A seventh died of his injuries a few days later. A survivor's watch can still be seen in the town's museum. It was found later in the wreck and had stopped at 11.27 a.m. The lifeboat men are buried together in the churchyard, near an imposing memorial at the south east end of the churchyard; a reminder of the constant dangers of the sea and the courage of the crews from that day to this.



Look up to the ringing chamber. Etched on the glass are the words 'All the bells on earth shall ring' from the carol 'I saw three ships', Beneath this are some richly decorated panels which originally formed part of the rood screen. Rood screens probably first appeared from the 13thC and so may have been part of one of the earlier churches here. The present church is the third and the tower is the oldest part of the present church building and dates from the 14thC. The rest is mainly from the 16thC.

Rood screens usually accompanied rood lofts, simply narrow ledges suspended across the chancel arch on a solid wooden beam. On top of, or beside which, in medieval times would be the 'rood'. The rood was a group of figures, usually Christ on the cross flanked by Mary and John. The word 'rood' literally means 'pole' and predates the use of the word 'cross' in England. The screen usually hid the chancel and sanctuary from the gaze of worshippers in the nave. The priest would be largely unseen when celebrating communion.

The rood screen went from the floor to the supporting beam beneath the rood loft but in 1561 there was an order that everything above the beam should be taken down following the Reformation and so rood screens survived but not rood lofts. The rood screen panels, in their new position, are now part of the current ringing chamber. The Bible text on the panels is on paper stuck to the wood and the words were used to inspire worship and are worth reading. From the left they are:

Isaiah 42 v10,12.

Matthew 26 v 30-31

Psalm 100 v 1-2,4

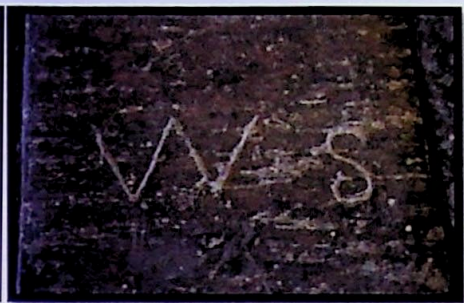
Ephesians 5 v 18b-20

Isaiah 44 v 23

Colossians 3 v 16-17

Some authorities claim that the text was only added in the 19thC but since the panels have been in their present position since 1735, when the gallery was made 'for the singers', that seems unlikely. It is possible that the text was already on the rood screen panels and had been added at some point when in their original positions at the foot of the chancel arch. The rood loft sometimes served as a singing gallery with a candle beam pierced with holes to hold candles which illuminated the rood.

Now look up at the timbered roof and note the ten painted wooden shields. The colouring of these was undertaken in 1951 and they represent the arms of families and institutions connected to Aldeburgh. These are from West to East: the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich; the (parent) Diocese of Norwich; the Borough of Aldeburgh; Vernon Wentworth, (patrons of the living); Crespigny, (old Aldeburgh family); the Suffolk Regiment; Thellusson, (old Aldeburgh family); Hervey, (the foundress of Belstead School); St John's Priory, Colchester (pre-reformation patrons); Winn, (the historian of Aldeburgh); Royal National Lifeboat Institution.



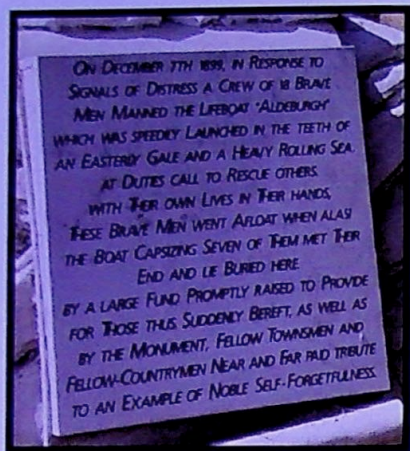
Turn back to the 15th C chest. In the days when troupes of travelling players toured the towns and villages of England, one of the most famous was the Earl of Leicester's men. In 1572 they performed in Stratford upon Avon. William Shakespeare, born 1564, would have been six years old and it is possible that he saw them.

The company may have come here many times but we have a written record that they played in the church in 1573. Unfortunately, the Chamberlain's accounts for the years either side are missing. At a later date, if William Shakespeare was, as is thought, a member of the Earl of Leicester's men before he joined the Lord Chamberlain's men, could it just possibly be his initials carved into this 15th C chest!?

This is a place of poets and musicians, of actors and playwrights. But most of all, it is a place in which to find and worship God.

'Craftman's art and music's measure for thy pleasure all combine.'
A line taken from the hymn 'Angel Voices', words by F Potts (1832-1909)

Move outside the church building via the west door and if you look carefully at the west wall you can trace where the aisles were added to either side of the tower and see the original line before the roof was raised (also visible inside). When you move round to the south door you will see that the porch has two arches facing seaward. There is a circular path to allow processions to remain on consecrated ground while passing round the church and until 1824 there was a footpath that led from the beach through the arches. A roadway of sorts followed the line of the present road according to maps of 1594 and 1790. The churchyard originally stretched to the middle of the present road and the extra land was surrendered to the town in 1824. You will see the names of the churchwardens on a small plaque set in the wall.



ON DECEMBER 17TH 1899, IN RESPONSE TO
 SIGNALS OF DISTRESS A CREW OF 18 BRAVE
 MEN MANNED THE LIFEBOAT 'ALDEBURY'
 WHICH WAS SPEEDILY LAUNCHED IN THE TEETH OF
 AN EASTERLY GALE AND A HEAVY ROLLING SEA.
 AT DUTIES CALL TO RESCUE OTHERS
 WITH THEIR OWN LIVES IN THEIR HANDS
 THESE BRAVE MEN WENT ABOARD WHEN ALAS
 THE BOAT CAPSIZING SEVEN OF THEM MET THEIR
 END AND LIE BURIED HERE
 BY A LARGE FUND PROMPTLY RAISED TO PROVIDE
 FOR THOSE THUS SUDDENLY BEREFT, AS WELL AS
 BY THE MONUMENT, FELLOW TOWNSMEN AND
 FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN NEAR AND FAR PAID TRIBUTE
 TO AN EXAMPLE OF NOBLE SELF-FORGETFULNESS.

The graves of George Crabbe's parents, the Garrett family and that of Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Imogen Holst have been marked on a separate map to be found inside the church on the south wall, together with the Lifeboat Memorial and graves.

Britten, Pears and Holst are buried towards the end of the long path that points north. Take the last path on your right and look for two tall slate headstones facing east on the left of the path. Holst's headstone is behind that of Britten and Pears. The beautiful quotation on her headstone comes from her father's (Gustav Holst) work.



A Brief Chronological History of Aldeburgh Parish Church

11th century and before

Saxon church before Norman church

1066 Norman invasion

1086 Domesday Book shows two churches in adjacent hamlets of Aldeburgh and Hazlewood, originally in the gift of the Benedictine Abbey of St John, Colchester

14th century

1320 font

14th century tower. An early warning bell against Dunkirkers can still be seen

15th century

15th century chest

May 1476 Agnes Neve leaves Will asking to be buried in Aldeburgh churchyard, leaving 12d to the high altars of Aldeburgh and Hazlewood

16th century

Pre-1525 the church has only one tower and nave. Work starts to rebuild and enlarge church

1525-29 roof and tower arch raised, and north aisle extended from side chapel of St Clement and St Catherine

1534-35 south aisle extended from Trinity chapel

1537-39 south porch is built as the main entrance. Distinctive arches enable processions to pass round the church and altar without leaving consecrated ground

1545 chancel added

Mid-century the tower arch is raised, and the roof raised and rebuilt Ships auctions held in church

1558 oldest extant register of baptisms, marriages and deaths

1561 Order that rood loft be taken down

1573 Earl of Leicester's men play here (several times). William Shakespeare, a member of the company at some point, probably played here. Chamberlain's records of this time are missing but company plays here pre and post 1573.

17th century

- 1611** Church has King James I black letter bible (only about 200 extant).
- 1631** watch house (Lucome) erected on the church tower
- 1632** pulpit made as a copy of one in Kelsale
- 1643** January. Thomas Johnson co-operates with William Dowsing in 'taking down 20 cherubim and 38 pictures'. Johnson and Swayn go beyond orders, remove chancel and altar steps, damage the floor, remove some brasses and destroy others
- 1645** the rood loft is removed; chancel walls and floor repaired
- 1650** Johnson ordered to take census of arms
- 1658** Johnson buried in the chancel
- 1660** Royal Arms placed on chancel arch above bailiff's gallery

18th century

- 1735** gallery made for musicians
- Late **1700s** to early **1800s** was a period of neglect
- The fishing industry fails and the sea floods the town

19th century

- Post 1806** bailiff's gallery removed probably in 1840
- 1824** lane from beach is the only path past church until now. Churchyard extends to middle of present road. Part of churchyard taken by town to make road.
- 1840** Royal arms removed to Moot Hall
- 1851** new east window installed
- 1853** chancel enlarged
- 1864** organ built and installed at west end of nave replacing minstrel band.
- 1870/71** chancel restored
- 1882** organ moved to present position
- 1883-1888** south aisle roof restored
- 1891** chancel restored again. East window replaced by present window. New heating system replaces stoves in nave
- 1899** new south doors in use for 1st time

Lifeboat Disaster

1899 7th December 'Aldeburgh' is launched to a vessel off the Sunk Light. Broadside seas capsize the boat which lands upside down. Five lifeboat men die in upturned boat. James Miller Ward floats out unconscious but cannot be revived

1900 24th March Allan Arthur Easter dies as a result of his injuries.

Their graves are snow-covered at the funeral

20th century

1900 new clock in tower

1903 organ rebuilt

1906 new high altar table. Restoration of tower

1908 wooden lectern replaced by brass. Renovation of chancel roof. 12 candelabra, originally candles or gas, installed in aisles of church. Mrs Money-Coutts (Lady Latymer) gifts new moulded chancel arch

1911 new communion rails carved by Miss Fotheringham of Kent

1914 electricity introduced in the church.

New diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich created

1917 lifeboat memorial moved to make way for installation of war memorial (Gilbert Bayes)

1929 Trinity chapel used for worship

1930 organ restored

1934 nave roof replaced as exact replica of rotten 16th century roof

1941 bombs blow out most of windows on south side of church

1942 Royal Arms returned to church

1946 south side windows restored with plain glass

1950 reredos placed in sanctuary

1951 new choir vestry built on north side of church
1952 south porch arches rebuilt, south porch re-dedicated
1955 west door becomes main entrance
1970 clergy vestry renovated but still small and behind organ
1972 new pair of west doors (Agate memorial)
1980 Piper window dedicated as a memorial to Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) at the opening of 33rd Aldeburgh Music Festival
1984 repairs to south porch roof and re-decoration of interior
1996 Visitors' Corner and Children's Corner created thanks to a generous bequest
1997 Royal Arms cleaned and repaired

21st century

2002 choir vestry rebuilt and enlarged; clergy vestry added
2005 church office renovated (formally sailors' mortuary)
2006 church redecorated and new sound system introduced
2009 new carpets in Trinity chapel and at main altar. Pews renovated and lightened. 37 candlestands added to allow for candlelit services, also two vestry roundels
2010 Trinity chapel chairs replace pews and bookrests added. Refurbished 100-year-old Steinway piano introduced
2011/2012 bells refurbished. Screen/projector system installed
2013 Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby, preached at opening of Aldeburgh Music Festival to mark the centenary of Benjamin Britten's birth
2017 Special service remembering Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, and plaque revealed in church.
2020 24th March We had to reluctantly close the church for a period of months on government request during the start of the Covid pandemic
2020 September – Churchyard major tidy up
2022 Wifi installed in the church which allowed us to also take card reader payments

St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard Revival

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

*'To everything there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under heaven;
a time to be born, a time to die;
a time to plant and a time to uproot.....'*

The Doomsday book shows that a church has existed in Aldeburgh since Saxon times.

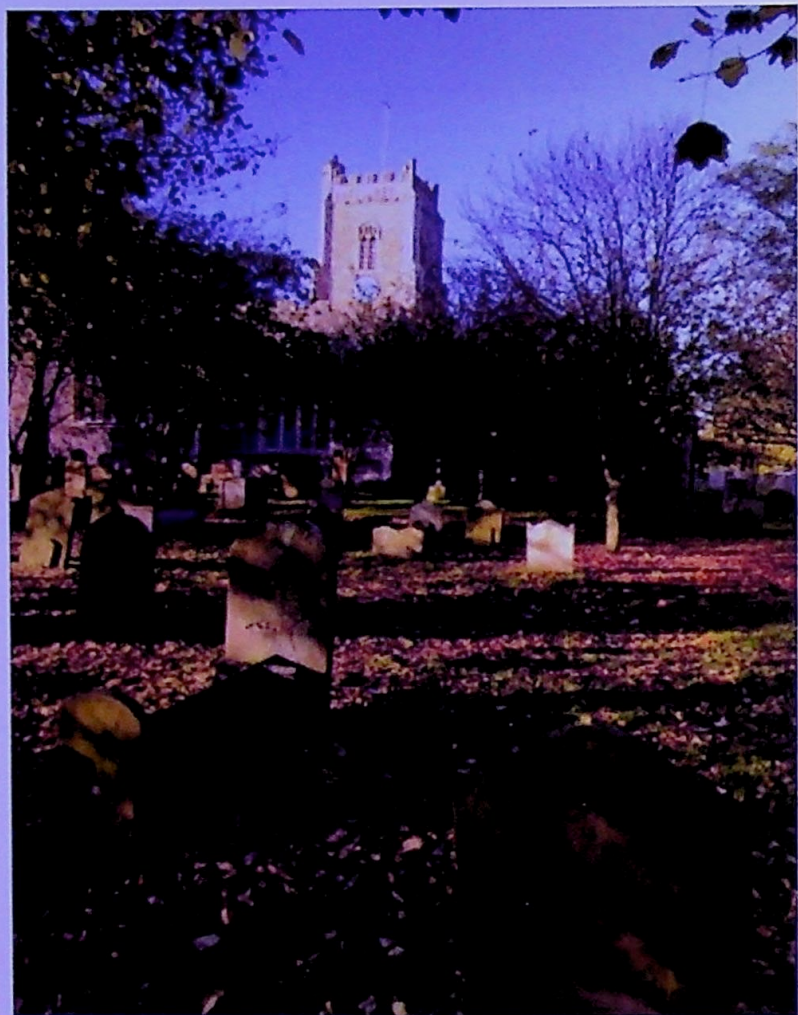
Agnes Neve left a will in 1476 asking to be buried in Aldeburgh Churchyard. 1558 holds the oldest existing records for the register of baptisms, marriages and deaths. In 1824 part of the churchyard was taken by the town to make the road. In 2005 the church office, which used to be a sailors' mortuary was renovated.

Aldeburgh Church and its surrounding churchyard are steeped in history and has many visitors but over the years the vegetation had grown and matured and for the most part, much of the churchyard had become inaccessible to visitors.

Work commenced mid-September 2020 to lift tree canopies and remove diseased and damaged trees and the self-set sycamore trees that were damaging tombs and monuments. Masses of brambles, nettles, climbers and weeds were removed revealing attractive flint and stone walls and over fifty long lost graves (one dating back to 1689!). These graves show an interesting history of the Aldeburgh community, from customs collectors, surgeons, mayors and ordinary townsfolk.

A mixed variety of native hedging was planted with an assortment of plants producing seasonal colour, flowers and berries and will provide the perfect structure to support nesting birds. A tree planting scheme to replace some of the trees is now in place.

We will continue to make improvements and maintain our churchyard for our community and all of its visitors for today and beyond. We would love to have more people to help with our venture in any small way they can. If you would like to volunteer your time to help maintain our historic churchyard, please get in touch with our Churchwarden or Priest in Charge, or email admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk.

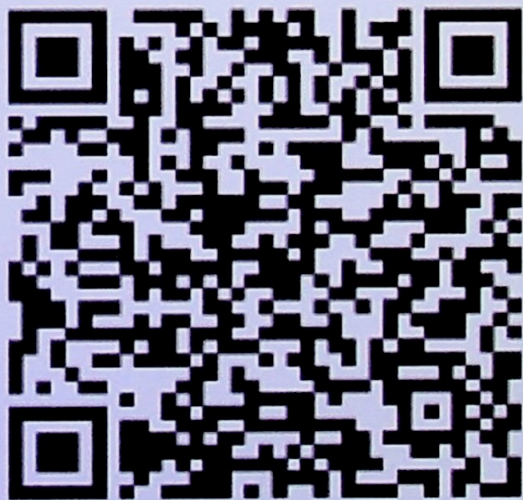


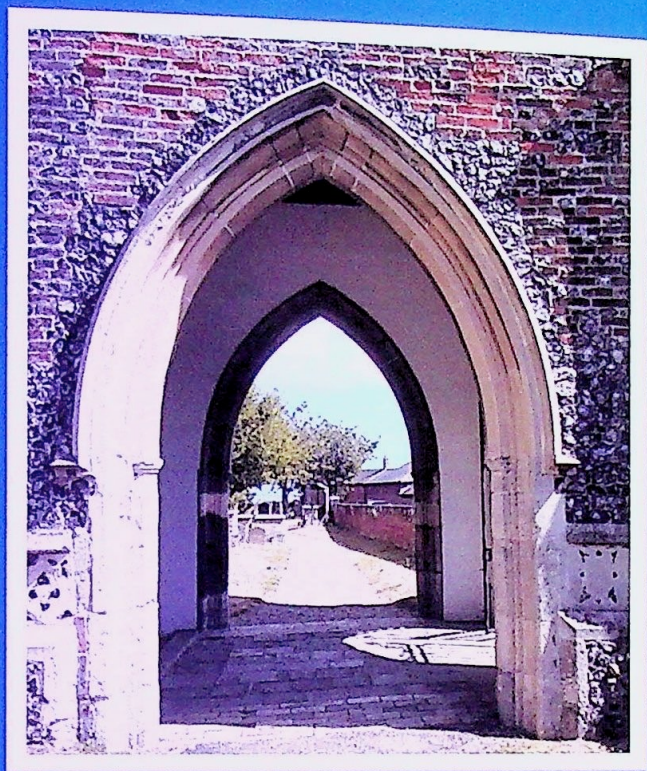
Please join us at any of our church services on Sundays or throughout the week. Check at www.aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk to find all the latest news and service times for all churches in the Alde Sandlings Benefice

As you will appreciate, it costs a lot of money to keep the church as an active place of worship and part of our community.
If you would consider giving, here is how you can. **THANK YOU!**

HERE IS HOW YOU CAN DONATE

- **Any of the contactless terminals in church**
 - **Parish Giving Scheme** – please email admin@aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk for details
 - **Bank transfers to:**
Aldeburgh Parochial Church Council
Sort Code 20-98-07 A/c No. 90119571 Ref: Donation
- **Cash or cheques** (made payable to Aldeburgh PCC) placed in a donation box in church
- **Scan our QR code with your smart phone**





Text and some photographs © 2014 Nigel Hartley, taken from his 2014 version of the Church Guide -NADFAS whose record of Aldeburgh Parish Church is an invaluable resource - Diana Hughes of Aldeburgh Museum, who offered advice in 2014 John Billing, Administrator of the Gilbert Bayes Trust. Our own Church archives and previous guidebooks - Records of the Borough of Aldeburgh: The Church Arthur T. Winn, Stephen Austin & Sons, Hertford, 1926 - English Church Craftsmanship F.H. Crossley, Batsford, London, 1941 - Suffolk Churches and their Treasures H. Munro Cautley, Norman Adlard & Co, Ipswich, 1954 'What I Remember' Millicent Garrett Fawcett, University Press of the Pacific, 2004 Doug Ireland for information about J.S. Collings Wells VC