

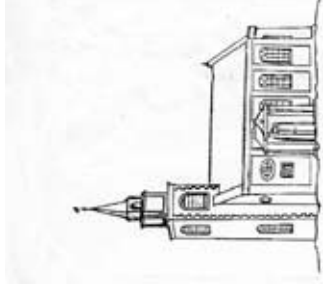
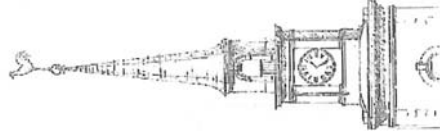
A large chest with a curved top stands at the back of the church and was made by George Lloyd Lewis from timber salvaged from the previous building.



It is oak, bound with iron in the manner of a medieval chest.

Mr Lewis died in 1952 before the building was started, but he donated this chest to the new church.

At the end of 1999 the parish completed the church with the installation of a tower clock to mark the new Millennium. Built by John Smiths of Derby, it is computer controlled, very accurate and changes between GMT and Summer Time by itself. This was paid for by the parishioners, well-wishers and with the help of a grant from Breckland District Council.



ALL SAINTS CHURCH, BAWDESWELL

The Rectors of Bawdeswell are recorded back to the year 1313, but foundations of an earlier oratory, possibly 12C, are underneath the present church.

Here are details of two churches that stood here -



Medieval church

In 1739 the tower fell down and ruined the medieval structure.
The four bells were sold to raise money to re-build it and a brick tower was built. In 1828 it fell down.

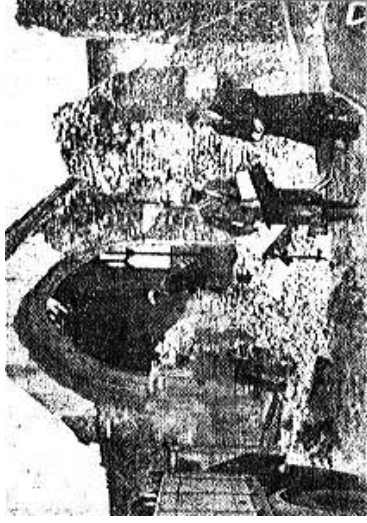


Victorian

By 1843 the medieval church was in such a bad state that it was decided to raise a fund to build a new one. At a public meeting it was agreed to levy a 6d rate on the parish raising £150 towards the estimated cost of £1400, the remainder of which was met by donations.

In 1944 a Mosquito aircraft returning from a mission over Germany, iced-up on its way back to Bexwell aerodrome at Downham Market and losing height, crashed into Bawdeswell's Victorian church and destroyed it.

Following the impact the blaze was terrific and much damage was done.



This was the only case of a Norfolk village church being destroyed in the Second World War.

Building of the new church

The War Damages Commission rebuilt the church in 1953: the design Neo-Georgian by J Fletcher-Watson, a Norwich architect. The Rector, the late Revd H G B Folland, who had arrived in Bawdeswell only a few weeks before the plane crash, showed great fortitude in organising the building of the new church.

The architect J Fletcher-Watson also designed the Bishop's House in Norwich. The Quantity Surveyors were Messrs Philip Pank & Partners. The main contractors were H C Greengrass & Sons Ltd. The foreman in charge of works was Mr Baldry.

War damage compensation provided £15,000 for the new building and the parishioners raised a further £5,000 for its furnishings and extras. The congregation used a Primitive Methodist Chapel in the village until the church was completed. Prime costs were £12,500 but the spire added almost £700, furnishing £1,000 and the organ £650. Other fittings and furnishings such as windows and electrics made up the balance.

Work started in March 1953. The foundation stone at the west end of the church was laid by Sir Edmund Bacon, Bt. on 21st July 1953.

The completed church was dedicated by the Bishop of Norwich, the Revd P M Herbert, on 27th September 1955.

There are six exquisite stained glass roundels in the main windows. Most of the glass was made in the Rhineland during the 16th & 17th Centuries and was given by R Q Gurney in 1970, in memory of his father Q E Gurney who was a churchwarden from 1912 – 1968.



Cleansing the Temple



The Crucifixion



Judas at the Last Supper



Samson & Delilah



Soldier piercing the Lord



The Ascension

The Exterior of the Church



The Neo-Georgian style of the windows is in sharp contrast to other village churches.

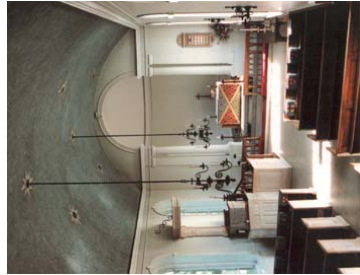


The stonework is done in an artificial stone, and the walls are constructed of natural Norfolk uncut flints arranged in herringbone pattern.

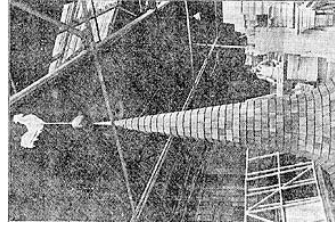
The organ is by Norman & Beard. It is a very fine instrument and came from the Dower House Music Room at Shotesham.



At the East end of the church there is a semi-circular apse in place of a Nordic style chancel.



Over the porch is a cross modelled from a broken capital in the St Menas Church in the lower Delta of Egypt



The spire was built in the Cringleford workshop of H E Taylor & Co mainly by Colin Kirk, Geoffrey Lister, and John Chittock. It was lifted into place in three sections and secured by four steel rods through the concrete roof of the tower.



Following the fire in 1944 a wooden cross remained standing on top of the bell turret, and this has been re-erected to the left of the porch on the site of the west wall of the Norman church; it is in memory of John Romer Gurney who died in 1932.

The entrance porch is flanked by Tuscan pillars and there are double doors of red mahogany.



Inside the Church

The font is made of Ancaster stone with a bleached oak font-



The pews are of limed oak and *their backs have different angles of slope* offering a choice so one can sit in comfort. The design is attributed to a *Professor Sherblom* of Sweden.



On the inside of the pew ends can be found the carved initials of the men who built the church.



The three-decker pulpit is a feature of the church.



The seat of the minister's desk is constructed with a lift-up seat like a misericord

The wood carving is in fact a rebus on the name of Bawdeswell, depicting a boar-des-well. *John Labouchere* helped in the carving of it.