

## Halesworth U3A Church Crawling Group 2014

We are now a group of about 20 and with all the commitments that happen to us during the summer months this means that about 15 of us turn up for each visit. This is a respectable number if we have a special guide. Our original plan for the summer was somewhat changed and we only made five visits but they were most interesting.

This season I decided that as we had covered the historical and architectural aspects of the churches we would look at **Churches in the Landscape**.

We started in April with **Halesworth** church that sits nicely in its medieval market place and site of the main manor on a spur of land above marshy ground. In June we went to two completely different sites of small churches with Norman features (apsidal east ends) just over the Norfolk boarder in **Heckingham** and **Hales**. They are both completely isolated in fields, the medieval villages having declined and moved away to more prosperous area. There might have been some influence of the Black Death but it might also be a commercial move. July saw us in Norfolk visiting **East Ruston** Old Vicarage Gardens and its lonely church and taking in **Ludham** church on the way. Ludham's interest was a canvas painted rood scene possibly done quickly after Mary I came to the throne and a rare E I Coat of Arms. Both of these had been taken down and hidden in the old steps up to the rood loft and rediscovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. **Framlingham** provided the classic church, castle and market site and an unforgettable guide. We concluded our summer with **Eye** church, Castle and Guild Hall where we met again the influential de la Pole family.

Next year we will find more interesting churches and members of the group will be taking on the arranging the visits. We will meet in the New Year to discuss plans

Altogether we have had an interesting and instructive season and I look forward to next year. Any new members are cordially invited to join us, as there is no limit to the numbers churches will hold and we try to car-share. Sometimes parking can be tricky!

June Brereton

Mary 1 Rood screen Ludham Church

