

**It's an action-packed weekend celebrating the village Millennium**

**Saturday 23 June**  
10.00 am - 5.00 pm

- Battle of Thetford (3.00 pm)
- Viking Living History Exhibition (throughout the day)
- Have-a-go archery
- Weapons demonstration
- Kiddie Vike
- Viking longship procession
- Medieval Fete (2.00 pm)
- Bridgham & Harling Band
- Ælfwaru pageant\* (4.15 pm)

**Sunday 24 June**  
10.00 am - 5.00 pm

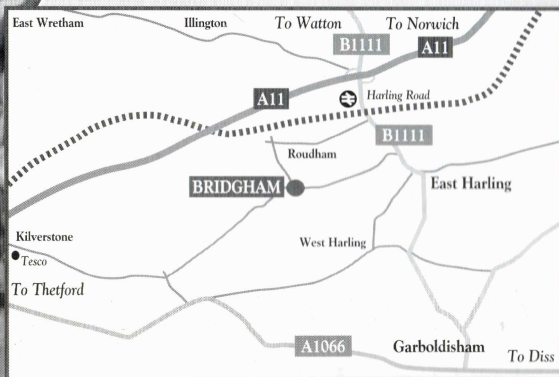
- Battle of Ringmere (3.00 pm)
- Viking Living History Exhibition (throughout the day)
- Have-a-go archery
- Weapons demonstration
- Viking longship procession
- Kiddie Vike
- Choral Evensong with Bishop of Norwich and Cathedral Choir (6.00 pm)

\* On 27 February 1007, the Saxon Lady Ælfwaru died, leaving the estate of Bridgham to the monks of Ely.



**minstrels gallery**

will be entertaining us on Saturday  
[www.minstrelsgallery.com](http://www.minstrelsgallery.com)



**where?**

Mill Field, next to Chapel Lane and rear of Bridgham Village Hall.

On the road between Thetford and East Harling, off the B1111.

(Car parking available and signposted)

Event sponsor **HUDSON**  
PROPERTY SERVICES

now's the time  
to celebrate

the **VIKINGS**  
**ARE COMING!**

Programme  
of Events  
£1.00

**Saturday & Sunday**  
**23 & 24 JUNE**

**10.00 am - 5.00 pm**

Two great days of family entertainment with everything from Vikings and Saxons clashing in battle to archery, horses, drama & music

**GUIDE DOGS ONLY**

**MILL FIELD, BRIDGHAM**  
between Thetford and East Harling

Come and see how the Vikings lived... and died!

[www.bridgham.org.uk](http://www.bridgham.org.uk)





## WELCOME TO BRIDGHAM!

The people of Bridgham extend a warm welcome to all their visitors over our Viking re-enactment weekend. Ours is a small village of just 132 houses and a population of about 330. However, we are used to doing things 'big'. From 1920 until 1964, the village hosted the annual Bridgham Flower & Horticultural Show. In the final few years, the numbers attending ranged from four to seven thousand – second only to the Norfolk Show!

We hope you enjoy your visit. Please make life easy for all of us:

- by using the Village Hall toilets whenever possible, to avoid over-use of the portable ones.
- by not taking dogs (apart from guide dogs) into the Playing Field Car Park nor the Viking Arena; and by keeping them on a lead elsewhere. Six horses are used during the re-enactments; any dogs should be kept well away from them as they are led towards the Viking Arena.
- by placing all litter in the bins provided or by taking it home.

Please note that **St. John Ambulance** will be near the large marquee.

## WHY IS BRIDGHAM CELEBRATING 1007-2007?

The first known event in Bridgham's history happened a thousand years ago. Bridgham existed before then, as it was in 1007 that the entire village was given to the monks of Ely by the dying Saxon widow, **Ælfwaru**. She was the eldest daughter of **Æthelstan Mannessune**, a large landowner in East Anglia. She died on 27 February 1007. Her Anglo-Saxon will has not survived, but a Latin account of it has in *Liber Eliensis* (Book of Ely) written about 1190:

There was a certain widow, named **Ælfwaru**, who was noble by birth and extremely rich. However – and this is more important – she had grown eminent as much by the increasing of her virtues as by her riches. When she was dying, she had her will confirmed in the presence of many people in a chirograph\* written out in the language of the common people [i.e. Anglo-Saxon]. And she gave to God, and the holy virgin **Æthelthryth** and her holy family [i.e. **St. Etheldreda's Abbey at Ely**] properties and gifts in abundance from her riches, her object being that she should offer back to God as an eternal possession, what He in his mercy had for a time granted to her, namely: **Bridgham**, with all things belonging to that vill, within the settlement and outside it, consisting in lands and waters, in woodland and field; she further added **Hengeham\*\*** and **Weeting**, and **Rattlesden** and **Mundford**, and a shrine with relics which they called a 'stepped reliquary', and two crosses wonderfully crafted from gold and silver and precious jewels, which Bishop Nigel later took away and broke up. ... Her body, having been brought to Ely, is, in fact buried here, and her name has a perpetual memory in the church, having been inscribed above the high altar with the names of the brothers.

\* = A writing which, requiring a counterpart, was engrossed twice on the same piece of parchment, with a space between, in which was written the word chirographum, through which the parchment was cut, and one part given to each party. It answered to what is now called a charter party.

\*\* = not necessarily **Hingham**

## A ROYAL CONNECTION WITH RINGMERE

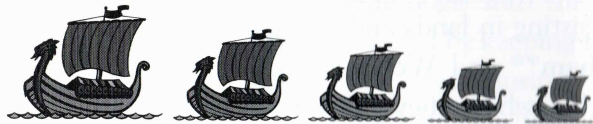
In 1010, An English nobleman named Æthelstan was one of thousands killed at the Battle of Ringmere (which is to be re-enacted on Sunday at 3.00 pm). He was the son-in-law, (or possibly brother-in-law), of King Æthelred the 'Unready', the 31st great-grandfather of The Prince of Wales. Ringmere is very close to the M.O.D. Battle Area on which Prince Harry was training earlier in the year.

### from Clarence House ...

Very sadly, long-standing commitments mean HRH The Prince of Wales is unable to join you. Prince William and Prince Harry are otherwise committed. They are all so sorry. However, Their Royal Highnesses pass on their best wishes for the success of the events over the weekend.

The Equerry to TRH Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall

## BRIDGHAM'S VIKING LONGSHIP



William Fairbank had the idea of building a longship as a way of advertising the weekend celebrations. This is not designed similar to those by the Shetland Islanders, which are incinerated at the end of the Up-helly-aa festivals. Instead, the inspiration comes from the Chinese dragon, which is controlled from the inside in procession. With the Viking longship, the 'rowers' speed along in Fred Flintstone-style! Fabric is used to suggest the sea and is not only attached to the ship but is also wrapped around 'floating villages' in the form of ponchos.

Longship builders and scenic designers are: William Fairbank, Gary Baker, Richard Cole, Josh Jackson, Bev Lawton, Peter Ragg, Tim & Josh Reeder, Cees de Ruyter & Colin Stammers. The Sea: June Aspinall.

## BATTLE OF THETFORD, 1004 A.D.

*'In this year Svein came with his fleet to Norwich and totally destroyed it and burnt it down. Then the mighty Ulfcytel and the chief men from East Anglia decided that it would be better to make peace with the raiders before they did too much damage, for they had come without warning, leaving no time for an enemy to be mustered.*

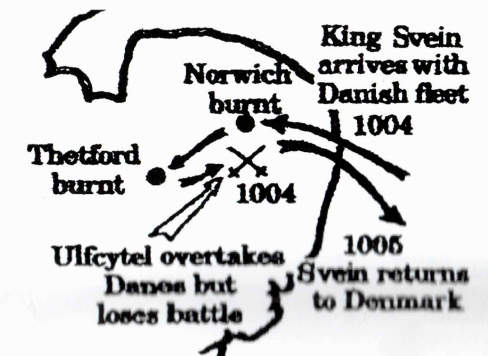
*However, during the third week after this truce, Svein broke the treaty. Undercover of the pact which should have been honoured between them, Leaving his ships secretly with his warriors, he invaded Thetford, ravaged it, and after staying overnight, burnt it at dawn.*

*When Ulfcytel discovered this, he sent some of the provincial forces to hew the Viking ships to pieces. But those he chose failed, whether by fear or negligence to obey him; so he mobilized in secret as strong a force as quickly as he could. The next morning, as the Vikings made for their ships, Ulfcytel came up with his forces and there was a fierce battle with great slaughter on either side. The flower of the East Anglian folk were slain there, the Danes escaping only by the skin of their teeth.*

*Had the East Angles met them with their full force, the Danes would not have made it back to their ships. For as they themselves declared, never before in England had they met such deadly sword-play as Ulfcytel offered them.'*

Compiled from the Anglo-Saxon and Worcester Chronicles

The Vikings called him Ulfcytel Snillingr ('Valiant'). The battle appears to have been a draw; neither side is recorded as keeping the field, although the Vikings succeeded in retreating to their ships. This all happ-ened within a few miles of Bridgham and it is hard to imagine that the village escaped unscathed before or after the battle.





## BRIDGHAM & HARLING BAND

Saturday 2.00–2.45 pm & 3.30–4.15 pm

*Conductor – David O’Neale*

The band was founded in 2001 for a Christmas concert at the suggestion of Bridgham resident, Mrs Pat Wright, who is now its patron. Its first major outing was at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of 2002. Since then, the band has gone from strength to strength playing at many venues in south Norfolk, Suffolk and even Essex. Bridgham and Harling Band is master-minded by another Bridgham resident, percussionist George Lawn, greatly supported by his wife Cherrie.

The music in Saturday’s programme has two themes: a celebration of England; and action music with a sense of warfare. Composer Rodney Newton links these themes in *Bridgham Salute*. This piece was commissioned to celebrate Bridgham’s millennial year, the world premiere is this Saturday at 2.05pm.

*Bridgham Salute* opens with a rather stark theme on the horns representing the Vikings. This gives way to a ‘Bridgham theme’ – a steady, confident march which grows (as did the village). There then follows a quieter passage consisting of religious chant mixed with warm, chorale-like music, representing the godly Saxon benefactress of Ely, Ælfwaru. As this passes, a brief reference to ‘Rule Britannia’ (Lord Nelson figured in the village’s history) leads to a lively fugal section representing the growth of the agricultural community in jolly folk-dance style. At the end, the ‘Bridgham March’ is played triumphantly by the full band, with a nod to Lord Nelson in the final bars. The whole essence is that the piece grows from very simple beginnings to a big climax, with signposts along the way referring to people and events of import in the village’s development.

## PROGRAMME

2.00 pm

H.M. Jollies	<i>Kenneth J. Alford</i>
<b>Bridgham Salute</b>	<i>Rodney S. Newton</i>
Barwick Green (The Archers)	<i>Arthur Wood</i>
Pirates of the Caribbean (1)	<i>Klaus Badlet</i>
Folk Song Suite	<i>Ralph Vaughan Williams</i>
1. March – Seventeen come Sunday	
2. March – Folk songs from Somerset	
Mars (from The Planets)	<i>Gustav Holst</i>

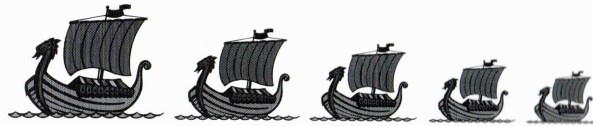
interval for the  
**Battle of Thetford, 1004 A.D.**  
at 3.00 pm

3.30 pm

Dambusters	<i>Eric Coates</i>
Floral Dance	<i>Katie Moss</i>
Nibelungen March	<i>Richard Wagner</i>
Second Suite in F – March & Dargason	<i>Gustav Holst</i>
First Suite in Eb – March	<i>Gustav Holst</i>
<b>Bridgham Salute</b> (repeat performance)	<i>Rodney S. Newton</i>

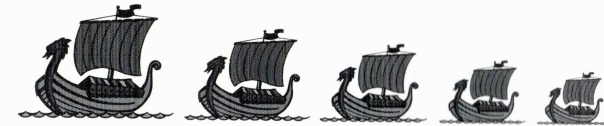


## SATURDAY 23 JUNE



- 9.30 am Viking Longship filming starts at White Gate Sculpture Park – volunteers in Viking dress required. The Longship will then be in procession throughout the festival
- 10.00 am Viking Living History Exhibition on Mill Field  
Have-a-go Archery on Playing Field (car park)
- 11.00 am Kiddie Vike / Hrothgar's Story
- 12 noon Skirmish/Weapons Demonstration  
*Minstrels Gallery* perform medieval music and demonstrate instruments until 5.00 pm
- 1.00 pm Drama: East Anglia prepares to meet the Viking threat in 1004
- 2.00 pm Village Medieval Fete (2.00 pm–5.00 pm)  
Have-a-go Archery  
Bridgham & Harling Band (until 2.45 pm)
- 3.00 pm Battle of Thetford, 1004. Who wins? (see page 5)
- 3.30 pm Bridgham & Harling Band (until 4.15 pm)
- 4.15 pm Ælfwaru Pageant (see page 2)
- 5.00 pm Show Closes

## SUNDAY 24 JUNE



- 10.00 am Viking Living History Exhibition opens
- 11.00 am Saga of Ringmere Pit (a la Hrothgar's Story)  
Have-a-go Archery on Playing Field (car park)
- 12 noon Skirmish/demo
- 1.00 pm Kiddie Vike  
Have-a-go Archery
- 2.00 pm Drama. East Anglia prepares for the Viking onslaught of 1010
- 3.00 pm Battle of Ringmere Pit, 1010. Viking victory  
(see pages 10 & 11)
- 3.30 pm Children's Fancy Dress Competition in Viking, Saxon or Medieval style (prizes for different age groups and whether hired/bought or home-made)  
Meet the Vikings  
Have-a-go Archery
- 5.00 pm Show Closes
- 6.00 pm Choral Evensong in Bridgham Church with the Bishop of Norwich & Norwich Cathedral Choir



## BATTLE OF RINGMERE, 1010 A.D.

described by the English

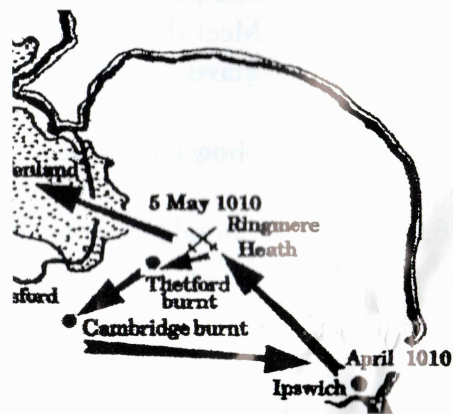
*In this year the Danish army sailed to East Anglia. Leaving their ships near Ipswich, they made for Ringmere where they knew that Ulfcytel was encamped with his army and they fought a fierce battle with him. This was on the first day after Our Lord's Ascension (May 5th). But when the battle reached its climax, the East Anglians fled.*

*And a certain Danish thegn, Thurcytel 'Mare's or Ant Head' was the first to take flight; but fighting manfully, the men of Cambridge stood firm. But at the end they were defeated and fled. And there was slain Æthelstan, the king's son-in-law, and Oswig and his son; and Wulfric, the son of Leofwine, and Eadwig, Aelfic's brother, and many other good thegns and countless other folk. It was Thurcytel 'Mare's Head' who started the flight and the Danes held the place of slaughter.*

*And they gained control of East Anglia; and, taking horses, for three months they harried and burnt that land, even penetrating into the uninhabited fens, slaying men and cattle, and burning wherever they went. Afterwards they pillaged and destroyed Thetford and Cambridge by fire and turned south again into the Thames Valley, those on foot taking ship but the riders going by horseback....*

*...Then they made their way back to the ships with their plunder. And while they were travelling to their ships, then the (English) army should have come out again, in case the Vikings wanted to go inland. Then, our army went home. ... In the end there was no leader who was willing to raise a force, but each fled as quickly as he could, nor even in the end would one shire help another.*

\* apparently, an Anglicized descendant of an earlier Viking invader



## BATTLE OF RINGMERE, 1010 A.D.

described by the Vikings

### SAGA OF SIGHVAT THORDASON

[Ella=English, Haarfarer's heir=Olaf]

To Ulfcytel's land came Olaf bold,	Hringmara heath
A seventh sword-fight he would hold;	Was a bed of death;
The race of Ella filled the plain,	Haarfager's heir
Few of them slept at home again.	Dealt slaughter there.

By OTTAR the BLACK, Sighvat's nephew:

From Hringmar field	The living fly,
The chime of war,	The dead piled high,
Sword striking shield	The moor enrich,
Rings from afar;	Red runs the ditch

The Viking ERIC HAKONARSON did so well in the battle he was singled out in the saga of THORD KOLBEINSSON:

The brave warrior	The bold Eric often diminished
Who frequently gave	The host of the English
Swollen flesh to the raven	And brought about their death.
Marked men with the print	The army reddened Ringmere
Of the sword's edge.	Heath.

Ringmere is on the left of the A1075 road from Thetford to Watton, at a lay-by just before East Wretham nature reserve. Bridgham, like many parishes, has a 'finger' of land reaching to Ringmere Pit.

And what of Ulfcytel the Valiant? Thord tells that Jarl Eirik claimed the killing of the East Anglian leader at the Battle of Assandun in 1016.

Gave the gladsome arm-ring giver	Awful blows got Ulfkel;
Battle west of London;	Over heads of thingmen
For the land fought	Bluish blades flshed out there
Lordly steerer of sea-steeds;	Bothn's-dear-flood I mastered.



## BRIDGHAM 1007-2007

- 1007 Ælfwaru bequeaths Bridgham to the monks of Ely on 27 February
- 1010 Battle of Ringmere
- 1086 Bridgham recorded in Domesday Book
- c.1190 *Liber Eliensis* describes Ælfwaru's will
- 1251 Great Survey of Bridgham by Bishop of Ely
- c. 1300-30 Present church of Bridgham built (Grade II\* listed)
- 1348/9 The Black Death (30% to 50% died)
- c. 1475 Major additions to church (porch, rood screen, font and pews)
- c. 1554 Rev. Risley sets up charity bequest – still exists
- 1558 Ely loses the estate of Bridgham to the Crown
- 1620 The Grove (Grade II listed)
- 1659 Dorothy Gawdy charity bequest for the poor – still exists
- c.1680 Red Lion built (Grade II listed) & fall of Bridgham Church tower
- 1736 Roudham Church destroyed by fire so they have to use Bridgham church
- 1737 Blomefield's '*Norfolk*', with a major, though flawed, history of Bridgham
- 1755 Thomas Martin describes and draws the church in his journal
- c.1770 Rectory built (Grade II listed)
- c. 1800 Manor Farm and Flint Farm built (Grade II listed)
- 1802 Stephen Comyn, Nelson's chaplain, becomes rector of Bridgham

- 1804 Bridgham Enclosure Act
- 1834 Wesleyan Chapel built – now the Village Hall
- 1845 The coming of the Railway: Roudham Junction, (which is in Bridgham)
- 1877 Bridgham School opens
- c.1900 Hall Farm burns down (medieval)
- 1914-19 23 men from Bridgham & Roudham killed in the Great War
- 1920 First Bridgham Horticultural Show
- 1947-52 Provision of mains water, electricity, made-up roads and pavements
- 1960-90 Rapid increase in private house building
- 1964 Red Lion Pub closes and the last Bridgham Flower Show
- c.1964-94 St. John Ambulance cadets flourishes in Bridgham under Tom Marlow
- 1972 Parochial Hall becomes Village Hall
- 1976 Post Office at Rose Cottage closes
- 1979 Bridgham School closes after 101 years
- 1983 Last shop in Bridgham closes
- 1990s Waste Recycling PLC & WREN offices – workers commute to Bridgham!
- 1995 50th anniversary celebrations for the end of WWII
- 1998 Bridgham United F.C. Div. 2 Champions & League Cup Winners
- 2002 Golden Jubilee Festival
- 2007 Bridgham celebrates a millennium of known history



## A THOUSAND 'THANK-YOUS'

It would not be possible to consider staging this re-enactment weekend, let alone all the other millennial events of 2007, without the support of the community. I am most grateful for all the help I have received since coming up with this rather extraordinary idea of celebrating 1,000 years of known village history. In fact, we are not only rejoicing in our heritage but re-writing history as well. In 1737, the Norfolk historian Blomefield mistakenly wrote that Bridgham was given to Ely by the Bishop of Winchester c. 975 A.D., rather than by Ælfwaru in 1007. All subsequent writers, without exception, have repeated his claim without checking it!

Back to the appreciations. As some wish to remain anonymous, I will not name people but instead mention the type of support given, including the generous folk of Roudham and West Harling as well as the residents of Bridgham. Those in the know, please forgive me if I miss off your particular involvement, there has been so much going on!

For this weekend alone, thanks for: access to private land; camping space for Vikings & Saxons; provision of marquees, toilets, tables, chairs, posts, rope, & bins; signage; stabling for horses; mowing mill field; improving back lane approach; fete produce; stall holders; BBQ for Vikings; photocopying; poster/flyer distribution; other publicity; costume provision; longship construction; fete & field preparation; auxiliary support for the band; millennium mug sales; car parking; programme selling; gazebos; First Aid; preparing the church for choral evensong; general all-round assistance (the 'salt of the earth') and, hopefully, clearing everything up afterwards! The Vikings have asked me to thank Fred and Catriona Robertson for their welcome-to-Bridgham BBQ, and to William Fairbank for his hospitality on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Thanks to those for contributing to earlier events such as: planning meetings from 2005 onwards; Millennium Tapestry (work in progress); Heritage Trip to Ely (10th March); choral evensong (18th March); Beating the Bounds & BBQ

(7th May); Open Gardens, Art, Craft & Photographic Exhibition (9th/10th June) and Vintage Tractor Display (10th June) – and here I must mention particularly those who opened or prepared the gardens, those who exhibited their work, the many tractor drivers from near and far (not forgetting the wonderful trailer) along with the three main organisers whom I will name: Dorothy Scott (gardens), Tony Dobbin (art) & David Boggia (tractors); and last week's stupendous concert in Bridgham Church by Ely Cathedral Choir. This was a phenomenal event, helped in no small measure by excellent refreshments and the extended loan of a pipe organ from E. J. Johnson & Son (Cambridge Ltd). Finally I must mention all those who have worked on the medieval fete in addition to the Vikings, particularly Nita Stammers.

Thank you, one and all, for everything you do to make Bridgham and its environs such a wonderful place and community in which to live.

David O'Neale, *Chair of Bridgham Millennium Group*

**And there are a few more events to go! Don't miss them:**

### **Saturday 11th August**

Bridgham United v. Bridgham Millennium XI  
Bridgham Playing Field, Kick off, 3.00 pm  
Bar & Burgers, etc.

### **Saturday 15th September**

Ian Cooper (classical guitar) in concert,  
Bridgham Church, 7.30 pm

### **Late Autumn**

*The Book of Bridgham* Book Launch

### **Friday 14th December**

Bridgham & Harling Band Xmas Concert,  
Bridgham Church, 7.30 pm

### **Sunday 23rd December**

'Christmas through the Ages' Carol Service,  
A celebration of English music and readings from the last 1,000 years  
Bridgham Church, 3.00 pm