



Friends of St. Mary's
Chartham

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of The Friends of St. Mary's Church Chartham.

20th September 2015 2.30pm held in St. Mary's Church, Chartham.

Welcome

The meeting was opened by Yvonne Hill, the Chairman, who welcomed the excellent turn out of members attending.

Present

The Committee – Yvonne Hill, Andrew Goddard, Tony Frost, Jill Hills, Sheila Finn

Members Attending – Joan Croucher, Pat Isard, Sheila Moat, Joyce Henderson, Gay Griffiths, Robert & Patricia Allen, Paul & Thora Wadhams, Margaret Baker, Vivien Pigott, Jo Groves, Steve Dungay, Tim Finn, Valerie Goddard, Jo Ratcliffe, Janet Onslow, Maggie Chadwick, Pippa Kiss, Nikko Hicks, Tim Kidd, Mary Mason, Dee Hickman.

Apologies had been received from – Chris Duncan, Neil & Hilary Campbell, Jim & Ann Sanders, Barry Snashall, Meriel Pickett, Julie Hoare, Ruth Harling, Wendy Ralphs, Sue Vernon.

Approval of the Minutes of the 2014 AGM

Yvonne asked if the minutes of the last meeting were seen as a true representation of the matters discussed, and these were approved by Pat Isard and seconded by Tim Finn.

Matters Arising from these Minutes

At the last meeting Simon Hickman had asked if there was a possibility of approaching Bill Street in the USA who had kindly donated the Sir Robert Septvan prints, with a view to twinning his church out there with St. Mary's Chartham. Sheila had emailed Bill with this suggestion during the course of the year but had not had any contact from him for some time, but would report back if a reply was received. The matter is still in hand.

Chairman's Report

This is the second AGM since the Friends of St. Mary's was launched in September 2013 and it has been a busy and successful two years.

Membership has remained fairly constant since September last year and stands at 62 subscribing members with a total of 85 which includes joint membership. There is still interest in becoming a member and we continue to hand out leaflets and encourage people to look at our website. This is kept up to date and relevant and is an important platform for advertising and information giving. The Newsletter was issued quarterly, (now moving to six monthly) providing another avenue for informing members of our activities.

During the year we welcomed two new members to the committee, Jill Hills and Tony Frost but sadly lost Gordon Stedman and Nick Radcliffe.

Despite the small committee we have managed to hold a number of events with a great deal of help from our friends and supporters. The History evenings have continued to attract a great deal of interest in the village and beyond. The Paper Mill evening in October 2014 was well attended and a number of retired employees took part. We were grateful to ARJO for lending us material from their archives to enable us to put on an excellent display. In March, Mystole House and Park was the topic and again well attended. Despite two unforeseen events during the evening, we had two excellent speakers and it was much enjoyed as well as being informative. In June we revisited St Augustine's Hospital with an exhibition of memorabilia and cream teas.

The Burns Night Supper was a huge success, particularly as there was an auction of promises. Our thanks go to Steve Dungay and Anna Hawkins for organising the auction. Our special thanks too, go to Julie Hoare, Val Goddard and Jenny and Richard Leach for spearheading the event.

Our regular monthly Book Lounge (now called Community Coffee morning) continues and has produced a steady flow of income and books!

Sir Robert de Septvan screen prints are still on sale and 4 have been sold so far.

As you will see in a few moments the annual financial statement shows funds have continued to grow steadily and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed in whatever way. The Quinquennial Report for the church has been published and no doubt, when priorities have been identified by the PCC and an action plan put in place, the Friends will be asked to contribute towards the cost of repairs. The requests for money will be considered at committee level.

Over the past year we have had an amazing amount of support and help. In particular Joan and Alan Croucher, Alan Griffiths, Jo Groves, Val Goddard, Tim Finn, Janet Onslow, Wendy and Sue, and Jill and Nikko Hicks who are always there to offer their time and help. In addition our thanks goes to Tim Kidd, Kent Sectional Buildings, Fenwicks and apologies to anyone that I have failed to mention.

I personally would like to thank Andreas Lawson for his enthusiasm and contribution to the history evenings. He has spent many hours researching and compiling material which he then puts into palatable and interesting formats.

If any of you have ideas on future events we will be pleased to hear from you.

Finally, our thanks go to all of you who support the Friends of St Mary's Church. Your encouragement and support gives the committee the motivation to continue to raise funds to ensure that the church is kept in a good state of repair for future generations.

Treasurers Report

Andrew reported on the figures as shown below as at the end of August 2015. He had recently been advised by HMRC who we are presently governed by, that as our turnover for the current year has exceeded £6500 to date, even though our overall profit was within the £5000 benchmark, we would now have to apply to The Charities Commission for full charitable status, and until that had been completed, we would not be able to reclaim the Gift Aid for the past two years. As this can be claimed for up to four years retrospectively this would not be a problem, but the application to the Charities Commission would take some time to complete. This will be taking place over the coming weeks.

Our registered accountant Mr Barry Snashall will be auditing our accounts within the next few weeks, and has been a constant help to Andrew over the past year. He does not charge us for this service, and it his way of donating his services to our charity.

Copy of the Financial Statement as follows;-

Steve Dungay asked what we had taken at the village fete, but the final amount had not been counted as Andrew had been away on holiday and only just received the takings. It was understood to be about £35.00, but this was not within the financial year that we were discussing and would show in next years accounts.

Andrew reported that the Quinquennial Report on St. Mary's Church had been received, but had not been discussed at PCC level yet and it was therefore not known what was included in that report, and we would wait to hear.

Nikko Hicks reported that he understood that there were roof and wall repairs required, and that St. Marys' would probably be eligible for a substantial grant from a government fund set up for roof repairs to churches, but there were wall repairs as well that the Friends Fund could help to provide a "springboard" for other grants to assist in these repairs.

Nikko also advised that monthly contributions from members would be beneficial to The Friends, and Andrew advised that we did have at least 5 members who did contribute by monthly standing order.

Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts

Barry Snashall has agreed that he is happy to accept The Friends accounts again, and this was proposed by Tim Finn and seconded by Val Goddard.

Election of Executive Committee

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer agreed to stand again. This was proposed by Sheila Moat and seconded by Nikko Hicks.

Jill Hills who was co-opted on to the Committee during the year was nominated to the Committee, and accepted. Proposed by Gay Griffiths and seconded by Joyce Henderson. She will become the events co-ordinator.

Tony Frost who was co-opted to the Committee during the year was nominated to the Committee and accepted. Proposed by Steve Dungay and seconded by Nikko Hicks. He will become the Marketing and Merchandise coordinator.

Yvonne asked if anyone else would like to join the Committee, and there were no acceptances.

PCC Representative

Nick Ratcliffe had to step down from the Committee on leaving to take up his new parish in Cliftonville, and at present the post is vacant. This position has to be nominated by the Priest in Charge, and will be sorted out when Phil Brown returns from his sabbatical leave.

Any other business

There was no other business to discuss.

Yvonne mentioned the History Evening in October, and that these would continue into next year with hopefully the history of St. Mary's Church next March.

The Meeting closed at 3.00pm, after which a tea party was given free of charge, to say thank you to all our members who have supported us so loyally during the past year.