



The Friends of
St. Margaret's Church,
High Halstow CIO

Registered Charity Number 1189941

Newsletter

Spring 2021

Dear Friends,

This Newsletter is designed to keep our loyal group of members aware of our events, past and planned, and the progress made in pursuing restoration projects maintaining and enhancing St. Margaret's Church.

Due to the Coronavirus Emergency Measures prohibiting meetings, all planned events were postponed with the exception of the Scarecrow Festival. An unexpected challenge as we complete our first year registered with the Charity Commission,

The Annual General Meeting is planned for 7.00pm, Monday 24th May. You will find the following documents attached.

- The Minutes of the 2020 AGM. (1.06.19).
- The Financial Report 2020 - 2021
- The Chairman's Report, contained in this Newsletter

Lockdown - Scarecrows!

This time last year we thought we might lose our Scarecrow Festival with no Garden Party to channel donations while the Scarecrows were displayed on mass. We went ahead as a community activity resigned to a loss of funds for our vital Church restoration work.

How wrong we were. The Village rose to the occasion and we had thirty more Scarecrows than the previous year and through the Post Office donation box and postal donations raised more than the previous year.

It would be a great shame if we lost our annual Scarecrow Festival and with no Garden Party planned again this year we intend to repeat last year's community celebration throughout the summer. This is not primarily a money making event. It's focus is community; but I will be asking Bob to accept donations in the Village Shop again. Posters will be printed and Facebook's "High Halstow Scarecrow Festival" page activated. Scarecrows can be displayed as soon as you like and stay on display until the end of the School Summer Holiday. Scarecrow Trails will be available. **Tell your friends!**

Scarecrow Nativity



In the absence of a Christmas Tree Festival some members redesigned their scarecrows to produce a floodlit scarecrow nativity within the church porch which proved very popular and raised additional funds in the process.

Chairman's Report. 2020 - 2021.

We have had a very successful year despite the pandemic. Scarecrows apart we had to cancel or reduce most events. This has limited our fund raising and our opportunities to recruit more subscribing members. Despite this we received a very generous level of subscriptions and donations which has allowed significant progress on the Window Project which is now nearing completion of the most serious restorations.

Events cancelled due to the pandemic were:-

The Christmas tree Festival.

The Christmas Concert with the High Halstow Community Choir.

The Coffee Tree.

The Christmas Market.

The Knit and Natter Group.

June and Ray Collins used the products of earlier **Knit and Natter**



Group meetings to construct an external "Remembrance Door" to replace the normal internal decoration which was not possible during the pandemic. It received many favourable comments. I thought the display of poppies was amazing.

High Halstow Christmas Cards

Cards were made available again this year sold by their designer, Ray Collins. A good number were sold to appreciative customers. £150 was raised.



High Halstow REAL Christmas Trees were sold and delivered in the village.

My thanks to Tamsin and Craig for organising the sale. The trees were much admired by their purchasers and nearly £160 was raised.

High Halstow Primary Academy.

The School has confirmed that we will work together in the future as in the past as the "Roadmap" allows.

Gift Aid.

It would be appreciated if anyone able to gift aid their donations who has not completed the necessary form could do so. It makes a significant difference to the income generated.

The General Data Protection Regulation - or GDPR

If you haven't already done so you are requested to give your permission for us to hold your contact information. If you don't we can't contact you. Most members have already complied with this request but new members and others who haven't found the time are requested to do so by contacting me at 4, Medway Avenue. If you have any concerns then please raise them with me by phone or e-mail.

Future Events

When life returns to normal we hope to return to our popular activities that were postponed last year and add to those events Historical Talks pertinent to the local area and held on a regular monthly basis. We have two ready for the autumn.

Amazon Smile

If you are an Amazon customer as many of us have become during Lockdown, you might wish to consider registering with Amazon Smile. It's very easy and point five percent of the cost of your total purchases go to a charity of your choice at no cost to you. I've registered and The Friends of St. Margaret's receives the benefit.

Membership.

Our membership has not grown this year and needs your active support if it is to increase. In order to build upon our success it is important that we recruit new members. Do you know anyone who cares about their church and wishes to help preserve the oldest building in the village so that it remains our distinctive landmark and is available for generations to come? Flyer/membership Forms are available. Please let me know how many you need.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Meredith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Meredith. Chairman.

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