

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH
SUNBURY-ON-THAMES
(Registered Charity No. 1048888)



NEWSLETTER
Autumn Issue 2017

Dear Member,

We hope you have enjoyed your summer with its somewhat typical un-settled British weather as we look forward to Autumn and then - on to Christmas. There went another year !

On the 24th May we held our A.G.M. which was attended by 21 Members, and chaired by Barbara Storer, who in her Report paid tribute to two Trustees who had died during the past year, long -time Chairman Charles Booker and Emma Dow, both sadly missed.

Membership was reported as 123, and it was proposed and adopted that the Annual Subscription should remain at £10 p.p. Trustee elections: Mollie Orr was re- elected (due by rotation); Ann Shepherd, Richard Moxon and Maggie Mold, stand. Barbara Storer and Tony Cull continue as the appointed P.C.C. representatives. With Ann and Maggie re-elected as Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

We had an update from John Mold on the activities of the Church Fabric Committee during the year, including future projects and particularly on the progress of the current plans for the cleaning and restoration of the art work in the Apse and Chancel, which is still awaiting Diocesan approval, as we go to press!

After which, Eric Champion gave us a very interesting presentation on the Story behind number 59 Thames Street, known to us all as the Riverside Arts Centre building. We were very grateful to him as he very kindly stepped in at the last moment as our advertised speaker (on the re-furbished Kempton Steam Railway) was unable to be with us. Nevertheless, judging by the discussions and chatter that went on while we were enjoying our 'refreshments' later, folk had found it an interesting and enjoyable talk. Thank you, Eric and congratulations on the 40th anniversary to all involved in the R.A.C. project which has so enhanced our community over the years.

Heritage Open Day this year is on the 9th of September 10-4.0pm, and follows our usual format of opening the Church and inviting the Sunbury & Shepperton Local History Society to bring along their display of photos and memorabilia of old Sunbury and area. Plus there will be other Church records held by FoSM Members. The S&SLHS are a fount of knowledge and always helpful with our queries, welcoming our stories and information to add to their large and comprehensive collection. The Tower

Captain, Dennis Brock has invited the Middlesex. Ringers to our tower for their practice session (10-12m.d.) which will give those in the surrounding area a chance to hear the bells ringing and afterwards, there will be an opportunity to have a go and also to tour the tower and bells. There are self-tours to follow trails around the Churchyard and on the inside of the Church, looking at the history of yester year. And, of course, tea/coffee and ice cream to refresh. Do come - tell your friends !

Regrettably our concert on Saturday 7th October, when we were so looking forward to welcoming back again the very popular Newport (Shrops.) Male Voice Choir, has had to be cancelled . They were very sad that, due mainly to various health problems, they felt unable to perform for us. They obviously have quite a journey to get to us and a choir does need to have a balance of voices. We wish them well and hope that sometime in the not too distant future, we may be able to welcome them to Sunbury once again.

Having had the problems with our speaker for the A.G.M., we thought that was enough, but, no. We knew we had a problem for our planned 'mince pie evening' on the 2nd December, when the second entertainment fell through, but as the Church social programme was starting to fill up, we decided to let that one go and hope our future bookings would be more successful. So we move on and hope to bring you dazzling events next year !

I don't know if you caught the article on FoSM by Monica Chard in the September issue of her excellent community publication, Sunbury Matters. If not, and in case you are not familiar with the background information of FoSM, I thought you might be interested in the following:

A Friends of St Mary's scheme was originally set up in 1978 by the then Vicar, Revd. John Tucker, to help raise funds for the restoration scheme which included amongst other works the provision of a completely new roof to the Nave, the original 18th C. triple vaulted ceiling and timber beam construction having been considered unsafe. This Committee continued to raise modest sums for building maintenance throughout the following 16 years, but in the light of a long list of essential repairs highlighted in a Quinquennial inspection in 1994, a feasibility study was commissioned and it was decided that an independent charitable society would appeal to both parishioners and local people who perhaps had different or no beliefs but were interested in preserving the building as a historical and local landmark. The Friends of St Mary's was subsequently registered as a Charity on 26th August 1995.

In the last 23 years, some £135,000.00 has been donated and used by the P.C.C. to rebuild or restore the roof; the tower cupola; re-hang the bells; the organ; the tower clocks; drains & gutters; handrails etc. Including £31,000,00 towards the new roof in 2012. Our current fund-raising project is to clean and restore the wall paintings (by Geo. Ostreham 1892) in the Apse and the Scraffito murals (by Heywood Sumner 1892) in the Chancel.

If you feel that you would like a little more involvement, we would be really pleased to hear from you. We are in need of 'new blood' and, by chance, have room for two more

Members on the Committee ! All you need is an interest in preserving the fabric of the Church building and possibly some ideas about fund-raising. We meet informally

about 4-5 times a year, so not too onerous! Please speak to any Committee member. Our Chairman is Tony Cull on 01932 782608.

Meanwhile, the support of the Friends via your Membership and presence at the various events we do manage to run, is vital to keep our beautiful Church building in good repair.

We are so grateful for all your help.

M.M.

September 2017