



FRIENDS FOCUS

FRIENDS OF SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCH NEWSLETTER
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CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

It has been a quiet year for the Friends without a major project for which to raise funds, but it has involved a change of Chair. I took over from Professor Ronnie Mulryne in November 2017.

Ronnie has Chaired the Friends for five years and a fuller appreciation of his achievements is given on Page 2. But I must pay tribute to his amazing work for and dedication to the Friends and to the church. He will be sorely missed on the committee and, for me personally, he is an incredibly hard act to follow. Thank you Ronnie for all that you have done.

Looking slightly ahead, three committee members are stepping down having served their terms of office. We will soon be saying farewell to Josephine Walker, Catherine Penn and Mike Warrillow. I would like to thank them all for the wonderful work they have done for the Friends but I also have to note that they leave three very large gaps to fill. Jo, Cathie and Mike have worked tirelessly for the Friends and, as noted last year, Jo in particular stepped in to fill on a voluntary basis many of the activities previously carried out by the paid clerk. We are now looking for new trustees to take the work of the Friends forward. If you are interested, please let us know.

I am glad to report that work has now started on repairing the gable of the South Transept. This is vital work that is slightly overdue and, as Mike Warrillow reports on Page 3, will cost about £67,000. It is gratifying that the Friends have been able to contribute £40,000 of this amount but we should note that that was really only possible because of a significant legacy received in 2016. Our normal level of income from all sources is modest when compared to the very large sums that can be needed to repair a building such as Holy Trinity. One of my goals is to try to increase our regular fundraising so that we always have funds on hand to at least start any major project.



Alan Haigh:
New Chair of The Friends

Fundraising is very difficult and hitherto a large part of it has fallen on the shoulders of the congregation. We need to expand the scope of our regular support going forward by getting outsiders (such as me) involved. Holy Trinity is one of the best known churches in the world because of the Shakespeare connection. We already benefit hugely from tourists visiting the grave and giving chancel donations, but perhaps we can do more?

I see my role as being that of trying to get people who are not part of the usual church circle interested in supporting and helping to maintain this beautiful and iconic building. This is not going to be easy because we are not the only group looking for support and funding nowadays, but we must try to widen our support base. *Please turn to Page 3*



“ It’s been a great pleasure and privilege to work with very many church members over the last five years, and to share their prayerful concern for our wonderful Church building. I’m certain that everyone connected with Holy Trinity – especially those who have supported the Friends by joining as members – will want us to go on to even greater enhancements of our beautiful place of worship over the coming five years – and beyond. ”

RONNIE BOWS OUT: See Page 2

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Trustees

President
Revd Patrick Taylor

Chairman
Alan Haigh

Vice Chair
Josephine Walker

Treasurer
Graham Poole

Committee

John Cohen

Jane Hornby

Catherine Penn

Bill Lowe

Patrick Pilton

Richard Hartley

Mike Warrillow

Patrons

Mr Jasper Britton

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Cocksworth, Lord
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Dame Judi Dench

Mr Gregory Doran

Sir Martin Dunne

Sir Antony Sher

Sir Patrick Stewart

RONNIE'S LEGACY: A PLACE OF PRAYER AND HEALING

When approached by the then Vicar and Friends' President Martin Gorick to fill the challenging post as Chairman of the Friends, Professor Ronnie Mulryne acknowledged that he had big shoes to fill. Under the guidance of Dr Philip Cheshire and Sir Brian Follett, in its first ten years as a charity the Friends had raised a staggering £1.1m towards the continued preservation, restoration and beautification of Holy Trinity Church.

Urgent repairs to the chancel roof and parapet had stopped water from pouring in; the landmark tower, golden orb and spire (in danger of falling into the church) had been expertly restored and twelve huge North Clerestory windows cleaned, releaded and repaired. Skilful cleaning and conservation work had transformed the Clopton Chapel and much of the church's stained glass restored to its former glory.

Phase One successfully completed. "An extraordinary achievement", said Ronnie at the time. "Yet there is still much to do before we can feel confident of being counted good stewards of our wonderful inheritance".

Not surprisingly, the Professor Emeritus of Warwick University, distinguished Shakespeare and Renaissance scholar and church deacon, focused trustees' attention on the historic, sacred and significant areas of the church. The Shakespeare ledger stones in front of the High Altar and the bust of the poet himself had undergone alteration and fallen into disrepair. The Combe and Balsall monuments were in need of conservation whilst the Becket Chapel – founded in 1331 – looked nondescript. Projects all happily now successfully undertaken.

But it was Ronnie's drive and determination to transform St. Peter's Chapel that will mark out his tenure of office. In the Friends' newsletter in 2013, Ronnie wrote: "St. Peter's Chapel has become cramped since the installation of a clergy vestry and other developments have obscured the transept's beauty and the visibility of the American window. In tandem with the PCC's South Side development, I believe we



Transformed: St Peter's Chapel now ... and then



should attempt to restore and enhance this potentially beautiful and sacred space."

It was another leap of faith for the Friends. Some £70,000 needed to be raised in quick time if the opportunity was to be seized to undertake the work in conjunction with the South Side extension. When the builders moved in, the Friends were still some way short of the target figure. In addition to the structural work, a new altar, lectern, pews and lighting needed to be purchased and the Richard Hill tomb and other ancient monuments restored.

Thanks to imaginative fund-raising events, the generosity of congregation and Friends, legacies, gifts and support of church groups like Trinity Players and Hospitality Teas, St Peter's was completed on schedule. Today it is the much-used "lovely, tranquil and sacred space" that Ronnie envisaged. "A place of prayer, a place of healing," as Bishop Christopher said at the service of re-dedication. *Turn to next page*



Rowan Williams Fund raising evening

Continued from previous page

Yes Ronnie's legacy, but he would be the first to acknowledge that St. Peter's – and other transforming projects during the past five years – could not have happened without the creativity of church architect Stephen Oliver, the valued input and support of Mike Warrillow, as Chair of the Buildings Team, and the Vicar and fellow trustees.

Looking back over his stewardship, Ronnie will have fond memories, too, of a fund-raising dinner in 2016 with Rowan Williams which was to lead to performances by Trinity Players of the former Archbishop's play *Shakeshafte*. Also the Friends' re-publication of an 1894 tale, *Skulduggery*, since reprinted several times; the 2014 Taste of History lectures giving us new insight into the heritage of our church and, not least, the securing of the beautiful Reich curtains that now enhance both Becket and St. Peter's chapels. To paraphrase Wren:

If you seek the Friends' achievements, look around you!

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

Continued from Page 1

The annual Birthday celebrations are a good focus for our activities and we need to see if we can build on the already strong support base we have. This year, the Friends received a total of £1,800 from the lunch and Shakespeare Service collections. Can we turn some of those annual supporters into regular supporters? That is the challenge.

Most of you will not know me and I look forward to welcoming you to the AGM on the **10th of June**. My background is in finance and after 22 years with Thomson (now Thomson Reuters) as a senior finance executive, I stopped work nine years ago. Since then I have been a trustee of several charities and was the Chair of the Town Trust for three years. My main interest is theatre and we split our time between Stratford, London and travelling elsewhere

Alan

THE VICAR WRITES



A FRESH PAIR OF EYES



Jo Walker



Mike Warrillow



Cathie Penn

Jumped into a tour organiser in the North porch the other day. He had come to make arrangements for a group to visit and confessed to me that, whilst he had been to Stratford many times, he had never actually set foot inside Holy Trinity Church. I invited him in and, as he looked up, he stopped in his tracks and said, "wow — what a beautiful church!" I looked through his eyes, as it were, and saw afresh for myself what a wonderful building this is.

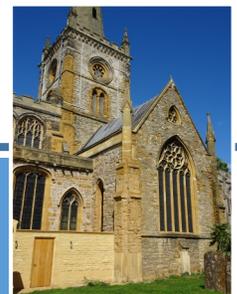
It's been good to welcome Alan Haigh as a "fresh pair of eyes" at the helm of the Friends. He brings considerable experience in fund raising and also fresh vision and ideas. His desire to widen the reach of the Friends to more people beyond the church congregation and to see regular fund raising events will enable us to build on all that has been achieved to date.

I would like to express my own thanks, as President of the Friends, to Ronnie for his years of service as Chair and in particular for his sensitivity to the historical significance of the lesser known features of the church. My thanks also to Cathie, one of the original founders, and to Jo and Mike for all they have contributed.

It's time to build up the new team now and I look forward to exciting projects to come which will mean that future generations of visitors to Holy Trinity continue to say, "wow — what a beautiful church!"

Patrick

**Do join us for the Friends AGM
at 4.30pm on Sunday June 10
in Holy Trinity Parish Centre**



GETTING TO THE POINT OF RESTORATION

The restoration of St Peter's chapel created perhaps the most beautiful part of the Holy Trinity church. But above the barrel roof, out of sight of those gazing at the American window, all is not well. Take a look from outside and it is clear to see that the top of the gable wall is leaning. On the ground there are pieces of mortar and the cross that once adorned the roof fell some years ago.

The Friends of Shakespeare's Church is playing a major part in its repair. Thanks to generous donations from members and visitors to the church, the stonework of the top six feet of the South Transept will be removed and rebuilt. In addition, individual stones that have become badly weathered in the walls of the transept will be replaced. Finally a new cross, matching the cross on the North Transept, will be set in place. The work, costing £67,000, will take place behind massive scaffolding and is planned to be finished by August 2018. Once complete, St Peter's Chapel, dedicated as a World War I memorial chapel, should be ready for the commemorations leading up to the centenary of the Armistice in November.

Mike Warrillow

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR *FRIENDS*...



Life Members

Lady Alexander
Mrs Tina Allen
Sir Eric Anderson
Mr Howard Antwiss
Mrs C. Argyle
Dr R. Barbour
Mr David Barnes
Mr A.P.M. Bird OBE
Mrs A V Brook
Mr David Brook
Miss Geraldine Caulfield
Mrs Anne Charlton
Mrs Pamela Cheshire
Dr Philip Cheshire
Mr Arthur Chinery
Mr John Cohen
Mrs Sally Cohen
Mr Michael Coveney
Mr William G.R. Davies
Mrs Phyllis Davies
Dame Judi Dench
Mr Peter Dingley
Mr Mrs Eileen Dunn
Mr Ray Dunn
Mrs Margaret Edwards
Mr Howard Epstein
Mrs Jane Epstein
Mrs Jenny Farrell
Mr David Geldard
Mrs Eileen Geldard
Miss Christina Goodall
Mr Lionel Gorick
Mrs Gabrielle Gott
Miss Sarah Gretton
Mr Alan Haigh
Mrs Ros Haigh
Mrs Susan Hart
Mrs Heather Hawkes
Mr Will Hawkes
Miss Mary Helyer
Miss Vikki Hayward
Revd. Peter Holliday
Mr Graham Hopkins
Mrs Jane Hornby
Mr Robert Hornby
Mrs Pam Howes
Miss Wendy Huter
Miss Margaret Kingston
Professor Langman
Dr Geoffrey Lees

A sincere thank you to all the *Friends of Shakespeare's Church* listed below. Your continuing support has helped us to raise more than **£1.1million** over the past 15 years. If you are not a member of the *Friends* and would like to help us ensure that Holy Trinity is preserved for future generations, please consider joining either as a Gold (£60), Silver (£40) or Bronze (£20) member. *Friends* enjoy free entry to the chancel, discounts in the Church Shop, invitations to *Friends'* events and a newsletter. Application forms are available at the back of church or, for further information, please go to www.shakespeareschurch.org.

Santina Levey
Mr Colin McDowall
Mrs Jill McDowall
Mrs Gloria Mole
Mrs Elizabeth Murphy
Mr Richard Murphy
Ms Judith Nedderman
Ms Ruth Ors
Mr Matthew Penn
Mrs Catherine Penn
Mr Nigel Penn
Mr Graham Poole
Mr Jeremy Pragnell
Mr Timothy Raistrick
Lady Susie Sainsbury
Mrs Judith Standing
Mr Paul Standing
Mr Peter Summers
Ms Valerie Thompson
Mr Brian Vince
Mrs M. Viney
Mr Michael Warrillow
Mrs Mary Wells
Prof. Sir Stanley Wells
Mr John Wimbury
Mrs Margaret Wimbury
Ms Julia Woodhouse
Mrs Gillian Woods
Mr Philip Woods
Mr Anthony Woollard

Gold Members

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Mr Michael Anderson
Mrs Bette Ashley
Mrs Anne Blair
Mrs Patricia Butt
Mr Robert Caddick
Barbara Chapman
Miss Davis
Miss M. Elizabeth Dixon
Mrs Judith Dorricott

Mr Norman Dorricott
Sir Brian Follett
Mr Paul Hopkins
Mr G. Hubbard
Mrs G. Hubbard
Mr Bill Lowe
Ms Sue Martin
Christine Mlynek
Prof. Ronnie Mulryne
Mrs Mary Phillips
Mr Patrick Pilton
Mrs Ursula Russell
Mr Herbert Tuckey
Mrs Dorothy Tuckey
Kate Walshe
Penelope Westwood
Mr Tim Wightman
Mr Graham Workman

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Mrs Danielle Bengé
Mrs Cilla Burgess
Mr John Burgess
Mrs Dallin Chapman
Mr Peter Chapman
Olga David
Mr Stephen Dodsworth
Mrs Beryl Dyke
Professor Ian Heggie
Countess Jellicoe
Mr Chris Kennedy
Mrs Viv Kennedy
Prof Lindsay Macdonald
Mrs Sandra Macdonald
Mrs E. Morgan
Mrs Gillian Nussey
Mr James Stredder
Mrs Catherine Stredder
Mrs Gwendoline Tindall

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Mrs Monica Beckett
Dr K. Bengé
Mrs Sue Billingham
Mr Brian Brazier
Mrs Hazel Brazier
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Dr Paul Edmondson
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Ms Christina Horrocks
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Ms Alison Kingsley
Mr Richard F. Lane
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Melissa Lougher
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Mr Alan Patterson
Revd Diane Patterson
Mrs Bobbie Pearce
Mrs Andree Perry
Mr David Prescott
Mr Robert Pringle
Dr John Rees
Mrs Jean Rees
Ms Audrey Rhodes
Mrs Brenda Rossington
Mr Peter Rowland
Revd Jenny Rowland
Mrs Beryl Sainsbury
Mr D. Scuton
Mr John Styler
Mrs Anne Sutton
Dr. K. Symonds
Mr Paul Talbot
Mrs Caroline Taylor
Ms Heather Thompson
Mrs Pamela Vaughan
Mrs Josephine Walker
Ms Mary A. Weddell
Ms Betty Wilson
Mr Charles Wilson

The year 2017 was a quiet one in terms of activities and fundraising for The Friends following major efforts in 2016 to raise funds for St Peter's Chapel. Our income of **£13,628** consisted principally of membership subscriptions, donations, a final balance from a very large and generous legacy from Ralph Smith and a £2,000 grant from the Church Buildings Council for monument conservation.

Costs in 2017 totalled **£14,906** of which **£13,826** consisted of grants to Holy Trinity for lighting and monument cleaning in St Peter's Chapel, for fabrics and a provision for repair of the church hatchments. Cash balances at 31st December were **£66,446**, but since the year end we have agreed to contribute £40,000 towards the cost of the South Wall gable repairs and have set aside further funds for another potential project in the pipeline which will be unveiled shortly.

GRAHAM POOLE *Honorary Treasurer*