

THE FRIENDS OF SAFFRON WALDEN PARISH CHURCH

St Mary the Virgin

FIRST NEWSLETTER SPRING 2017

Welcome to the first Newsletter from the Friends which we hope you will enjoy.

As you know we have a mission to fulfil the duty that is ours of preserving this Church in all its beauty for those who come after and this year we have completed a few projects to that end and we have some exciting plans for the near and distant future which we have expanded on in this our first Newsletter.

Recent Projects completed

- 1) The Ladies of the Sewing Circle completed excellent work on a new Friends Banner and nine further kneelers which were all dedicated at the Patronal Service in September 2016.



Many of you will know some members of the Sewing Circle who do such excellent work throughout each year but you may not be aware of them all, so here are some photos of them at work so that you can recognise and congratulate them when you see them in Church next time.

They are :- Jo Huddleston, Katherine Ingamells, Farida Read, Mary Duxbury, Petronella Oelman, Rita Philips, Jean Wooderson, Margaret Helmore, Jean Bradley, Tessa Hawkes, Anne Wilson and Juliette Welch.

- 2) A replacement Remembrance Book has been bought and will soon be in place.
- 3) A new card stand is in place in the North Chapel, to display small cards depicting the Magnificat Statue by Tessa Hawkes.
- 4) A new Friends Leaflet was launched in the autumn of 2016 which has been well received.
- 5) New kneeler hooks have been fixed throughout the Church thanks to the hard work of Lawrence Gooderham and Joe Hordern.
- 6) Drip trays have been provided for the main candles.
- 7) The new leaflet holders at the end of the pews really tidy the view down the aisle and look very impressive.

Most recent Project

The Remembrance Garden fence posts have now been replaced with longer, stronger, oak posts, which although pale in colour at the present, will weather in six months or so to be the same as the originals. The chains, which were previously painted and peeling, have been acid dipped and look great. Thanks go to Steve Hasler for his organisation of the works and to Trevor Start for completing the excellent job.



Future Projects

****Breaking News!** The Friends will be contributing £26,000 towards the Major Building Project currently in hand. We will be paying for Welcome Furniture in the West End and at the South Door together with the North Aisle Magazine Cupboard.

Work is in hand by John Read to reproduce and update the 2000 version of the St Mary's booklet. The current drawings will be replaced by photographs and an upgraded paper will be used with a glossy cover. This booklet will also be on sale in the TIC and should be published during the summer. An announcement will be made in the Grapevine once copies are available.

Discussion of plans for the Muniments Room have commenced although work will not be considered until after the current Building Project is completed. The Friends have expressed an interest in contributing in some way once more detail is available.

The Tomb of Lord Audley, dated 1544, who was Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor and first Lay Patron of the Church, will be re-sited back into the main body of the Church maybe next year as part of the current major Building Works. This will be a major task, mainly due to the weight, and therefore costly and with this in mind the Friends have offered to contribute £5000 towards those costs. The Tomb is of great architectural and historical value and the re-siting will be one of the early steps in enhancing the educational facilities available in the Church and therefore of great interest to us all. As well as making the Tomb available for public viewing the re-siting will provide much needed space for the Choir in their Vestry.



Archive Work

The Friends was founded by Isaac Marking and Geoffrey Barnard back in 1933. Isaac Marking was Church Warden at the time and had a butchers shop and abattoir on the corner of Church Street and Museum Street. Barnard Close is where Geoffrey Barnard had his seed merchants business, both of these being close to the Church. Geoffrey Barnard effectively ran the Friends from 1933 until his death in January 1968.

We have noticed with interest the many contributions the Friends have made over the years to St Mary's Church. In excess of £17,000 towards restoration and redecoration work, over £22,000 towards Sound Systems and amplification, almost £15,000 for lighting, £18,500 for the West Door, and over £9,000 for the Noticeboards. Contributions have been made towards the Organ, the Garden of Remembrance, the Chapel of Remembrance, the Muniments Room, the Roll of Honour and list of Incumbents. Actually the list goes on. Of course the work on the kneelers, banners and altar frontals has been progressing over all of those years largely funded by the Friends.

The Friends have been fortunate enough to receive over £72,000 in legacies over its lifetime which we are sure you will agree have been put to good use. Other income is from substantial donations, annual subscriptions, sales of books, cards and prints.

The Chapel of Remembrance, which was dedicated on 2nd November 1998, was one of our major projects costing in excess of £15,000 but we received the majority of the funding from generous donations.

There were some amusing notes from reading through the minutes which we thought might be of interest.

Back in the 30's £50 bought some 'heating apparatus' for the Church, we don't know quite what that was. £3.11s.11p bought 48 hymn books, £5 bought a new Hoover vacuum cleaner and we contributed £30 towards the restoration of the Tower, which presumably was a lot at the time!

During the war years we helped to pay for insurance to cover the organ, furniture and hangings and for 6 guineas we purchased a ladder to get to the roof of the Church 'in case of fire'. It was noted that there had been great interest in the Church from the American Forces .

In 1939 the first refreshments were served at an AGM and the first proposal was made by the Friends Council for a Children's area in the Church.

Joining the Friends

We do hope that you have found something of interest in our first letter and maybe, if you are not a member already, **then perhaps you would like to join?** There is an application form on the back of our leaflet, or you could check the Church website www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org and find us under 'Groups' or ask one of our Council Members. A gentle reminder to all our members that subscriptions are due by 31st March.

Message from our Chairman

Our very able secretary has highlighted many of the projects which have been made possible by the support of the Friends.

On reading through the list I felt that I should pay tribute to the work of Dominic Burns who died in 2000. He was an eminent retired architect and much loved member of our Council. So many of the pieces of furniture were designed by him including the inner West Doors and the Chapel of Remembrance. We designated him our Honorary Architect which saved a great amount in professional fees.

Whilst the Church is undertaking a very extensive Building Project the work of the Friends comes into its own. We are able to deal with so many small to medium matters which might otherwise be put aside.

The work goes on and the more members we have the stronger we will become.

Lawrence Gooderham

The Friends' Prayer

We thank Thee O Father, for the precious heritage of our Church of St Mary the Virgin, and for the privilege of Enrolment as Friends of Thy House of Prayer.

We pray that, increasingly, we may value, and use this sacred trust, and with loving reverence, care for Thy House.

May it become more and more, a spiritual home, and a means of blessing to this town and neighbourhood.

Guide us as Friends of the Church, in all our efforts for the promotion of Thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Who's who?

Patron: Lord Braybrooke, **President :** The Rector Revd. Canon David Tomlinson

Chairman : Lawrence Gooderham Secretary : Pamela Mugliston Treasurer : Christine Lawrence

Council Members: Robin Betser, Michael Dix, Kathryn Fiddock, Revd Paula Griffiths, Tessa Hawkes, Joe Hordern, Rosanne Kirkpatrick, Gill Lovegrove, Robin O'Neill, John Read, Anne Rhodes, Denis Tindley,