

Friends of St Peter's Church

Chairman's Review of 2010 - 2011

The work of The Friends is as important to our parish church now as it was in 1996! The funds raised are essential to the ultimate survival of St Peter's! You, our members, are hard working and inspiringly generous in raising funds every year for our historic parish church and churchyard.

You will have seen the recent financial figures for the Parish "Housekeeping" in the February Parish Magazine, the negative balance of Income over Expenditure. The Friends' donations are not included in these figures; the funds we supply to the PCC are not used to cover the church's running expenses but pay for, or assist in paying for, repair and maintenance. The PCC value our contribution, financial and social, to life in the parish.

During the past year we have had our usual pattern of events plus a new and very real treat on St Kenelm's Day. We particularly have to thank Shane O'Neill for the use of Hayrick Orchard; a full report below reflects the success of the day. Friends and supporters of all ages, some very young came. About £1500 was raised. There is a clear breakdown of figures elsewhere and it is good to see the regular favourites doing so well.

It is some time since we had a recruitment drive and the passing of time has had a profound effect on membership; we have all got 15 years older and some good Friends have passed on. To put it simply we would welcome more signed up members especially from younger families and those who have recently moved to Winchcombe - presumably they appreciate its heritage and many joined us on Hayrick Orchard! (Our sub. has not changed in all these years, £7.50 p.a.) Why not persuade someone new to join us at our AGM and dinner? When we were first constituted the focus of the PCC's fundraising had been on the purchase of St Peter's Centre. The 500 year old Church itself stood next door quietly accumulating problems. Remember! "All buildings deteriorate from the moment the front door goes on!" Our new charity (The Friends) was drawn up and was well timed. We were soon in business granting funds to correct major and minor problems - the major ones included basic work on the aisle roofs, a major restoration and renovation of the organ, the re-gilding of the tarnished cockerel weather-vane and the building of the internal porch.

Such needs were not visible in 1996 but they were there. To this day we ensure a contingency fund is kept for emergencies. It is because of the delay between planning a project and its completion that our accounts show a strong balance. We have pledged money towards PCC projects to the tune of £33,509. (Reference: our accompanying Financial Report) The Friends hope to have installed external lighting of the church tower for Her Majesty's Jubilee.

I must thank the committee for their total commitment and this year I turn the spot light in particular on Margaret Jarvis who for ten years has been our Minutes Secretary and is standing down. She is a real hero.

As in 1996 the church does not appear to need much repair work now but neither did it in 1996. Please carry on helping us with ideas and your physical presence at our events, bring your friends, and perhaps volunteer to help plan an event. Meanwhile as a charity we are custodians of those funds, we will spend them wisely - A word of warning though... We always have a warm feeling when you remember us in your will and we receive a legacy - but please don't do as David Jefferies did in 1503: [he left] a pig to the Blessed Mary! Do you think they had a pig roast?