

Friends of St Peter's Church

Chairman's Review 2013

This is the sixteenth Annual Report of the Friends and we are still working hard for the welfare of St Peter's. The figures show that we have had another successful year of fund raising. Thank goodness, because the upkeep of the church and churchyard could swallow every penny we have. As I write this William Hall's finely finished oak cabinet covering the electric switchboard has been installed; it epitomises the way we add that little something to a project which, but for our contribution, might have just had a basic cover made or carried on without, remaining an eyesore. We have thereby helped to enhance the appearance of the church, complementing the nearby entrance lobby, to which we contributed £12,500 a few years ago.

In the last fifteen months we have funded the upgrade of the electrical capacity, and we have sponsored and helped devise a history trail at the west end of the church. The work included the repair of the Lucas memorial, the housing of Mac Yates' Abbey model and the rearrangement of bits of the Abbey. It will finish, very shortly I understand, with a display depicting the history of Winchcombe Abbey and a series of notes and photographs which show how St Peter's has changed since its original founding to the present day. By the time this series of jobs is completed we will have spent approaching £25,000. Our members and supporters over the years have been most generous in enabling these lasting features to be installed.

You may well have studied our Financial Report and the bottom line. We keep £30,000 ear-marked for emergencies, which must be comforting to the PCC when the quinquennial inspection is due. The balance (bolstered by money from legacies, which can be a most imaginative way of helping the Church and one which we would encourage) can be utilised for the benefit of the Church and Churchyard but within the bounds of our Constitution (quoted elsewhere). Generally speaking projects emerge as requests from the PCC but others have arisen in committee or at our AGM. They are then taken to the PCC. At the moment we are investigating two major jobs: the drainage and general improvement of the drive and the external illumination of the Tower.

The Friends are important to the Church and those that use it - not all members attend for worship. We wish to carry this work forward and therefore make a plea for more active help. This would not be just at events, where we do sometimes find ourselves stretched at the moment. I would like you to seriously consider joining the committee. We have about five meetings a year. Our events are regularly scheduled: the AGM in the spring, Open Gardens on the second Sunday in June, usually a Summer party, an Autumn lecture, and a social event on the Friday in February before Ash Wednesday. In addition we get some income and raise our profile by running bars for concerts etc., although that is more a service to the Church. All these are labour intensive.

We would like to greet new members, particularly young ones, and to have a greater turnover in the committee and bring new ideas and enthusiasm. We have room for about four or five new committee members, of which two should come from the PCC.

Finally I would like to say "Thank you" for all your help this year especially those on the committee, and may I pick out especially the Secretary and the Treasurer. I look forward to the formal AGM and the less formal supper party that follows. If you are a regular attendee we shall enjoy seeing you again but if it is your first time you will be showing us we have done something right.

Christine Lainé