

## **Annual General Meeting of the Friends of St Mary's Church, Polstead**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 7.30 p.m. on Friday 30th November 2007 at Polstead Village Hall**

#### **Welcome**

The Chairman, Bill Wigglesworth, welcomed all to the meeting including our new Honorary President Mrs. Sue Wigglesworth and a special welcome to two of our Honorary Vice-Presidents Dr. Ronald Blythe and Mr. Henry Engleheart.

#### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr. and Mrs. Bob Derbyshire, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Dodd, Mrs. Doreen Gorrod, Mr. and Mrs. Parry-Crooke and Mr. and Mrs. Sparkes

#### **Minutes of the AGM held on 19th January 2007**

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting had been previously distributed to the Friends and were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

#### **Annual Report**

Bill Wigglesworth reported that our income had increased since the previous year and this was a tribute to how the work of the Friends was valued by the community. We had begun making grants to the PCC to help with repairs and maintenance to the fabric of the Church. The membership total had gone up and particular mention was made of the value of Gift Aid Declarations.

The Committee had met four times during the year and the Chairman thanked the Committee members for their support. During the May Bank Holiday we had taken part in a Craft and Flower Festival in the Church. Sadly the weather was very bad, but the upside of the heavy rainfall was that the Chairman was able to see for himself where the leak in the roof was. The event helped to publicise the Friends and £ 700 was raised which was divided between the Friends and the PCC.

In June there had been a coach outing to Bury St. Edmunds, where the Dean welcomed us to the Cathedral. The event was successful and two Polstead treasures were on view: a 15th century wall hanging, now thought possibly to be an altar carpet as it

exactly fits inside the Polstead altar rails; and the Breeches Bible, now on loan to the Cathedral library, which would have deteriorated if left as it was in St. Mary's Church. Later in the afternoon a visit was made to the Unitarian Meeting House.

Mention was made that the Friends are now on the Polstead website, which is easy to find - just Google Polstead!

We have paid for the relaying of the South Aisle floor. This was found to have a layer of plastic sheeting under the flooring which in fact caused damp to gather. This would have spread further if not put right. It was noted that where there was no plastic sheeting, the flooring did not suffer from damp.

Advice had been received from Tobit Curteis, and was continuing, regarding the wall paintings and we expected a programme of conservation during next year. A further wall painting had been discovered during redecoration. This was thought to be a post-reformation bordering for a text and probably not very significant. We were paying for the inspection of roof timbers, one of which the Chairman had seen for himself was in particularly bad condition. The Friends would help the PCC with the costs. Further work was needed to the North wall of the Churchyard, and the repair of the Boutell chamber tomb which hopefully could be done by volunteers.

### **Treasurers Report**

Lea Blackham referred the meeting to the statement of the accounts on page 6 of the Annual Report. The total income exceeded that of last year and the surplus was £ 7,467. 98p. Two items differed from last year, one being the income received from Gift Aid declarations which was £ 1,092. 48p. based on last year's donations. The Treasurer reiterated the value to the funds in tax paying members making this declaration. The second change was that we had opened a deposit account, an Anglo Irish Bank 7-Day Notice Account, which paid a comparatively good rate of interest to charities.

There were no questions arising.

### **Election of Officers and Executive Committee**

The honorary officers and elected Committee members all offered themselves for re-election and the Chairman was delighted to announce the additional nomination to the Committee of Dr. Roger Bray. On a proposal by Mr. John Buck and seconded by Mr. Henry Engleheart the Committee and new member were duly re-elected.

There was a vote of thanks to the Honorary Vice Presidents for giving their names to our cause. It was emphasised that every penny raised by the Friends was devoted to the fabric and surroundings of the Church, the PCC deciding on priorities.

There were no questions.

## **Future Events**

Two possibilities were mentioned. First, a proposed visit to St. Cedd's chapel at Bradwell-on-Sea in the summer. A show of support was requested before going to the expense of hiring a coach, otherwise the trip could be undertaken in private cars. Secondly, a visit to Ely Cathedral, possibly taking in Evensong, in the late summer or early autumn.

Bill Wigglesworth invited other ideas from members present. He also enquired if anyone was interested in receiving information by email, as it was quicker and easier than the post.

## **Any Other Business**

The Rev. Michael Tillett, on behalf of the PCC, thanked the Friends for their hard work and support.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm.