



THE FRIENDS OF TILSHEAD CHURCH
NEWSLETTER No 10 – April 2010

Annual General Meeting 2010

This year's AGM is on Thursday 29th April in the village hall with formal business starting as usual at 7.00pm. This year we have invited Simon Firth from Codford to talk at 7.30pm about the work of Alabare Care and Support. Alabare provides accommodation for homeless people and helps people with learning difficulties, drug and alcohol dependency in 40 centres across the South and South West of England. The talk will be followed by the usual supper, arranged by the Friends committee members. There is no cost to the Friends' funds, but committee members would appreciate donations to help defray costs.

The past year

Last Spring and Summer were sad times for us in the village. After months in hospital, Peter Painter died on Maundy Thursday; Frank Blighe became seriously ill in April and died on 14th May. Ruth Armstrong followed him on 13th June and most unexpectedly Beth Smith on 23rd July; Pat Lonergan in early September, then after a long illness Margaret Johnson died on 20th January. They have all left big gaps in our community and we offer their families our sympathy.

Our membership numbers are slightly down on last year, without counting the deceased. Two regulars have moved away; a few have overlooked their subscriptions! I continue to look for new members, but sincerely thank all who subscribe from year to year.

The AGM was, as usual, well attended and afterwards Richard Osgood, the Defence Estates Archaeologist resident in Westdown Camp, gave a most interesting account of the more recent (post 1900) archaeological remains he has been excavating on the Plain. He described some of the 'colonial' soldiers who trained here for the Great War; even the Canadian black bear 'Winnipeg', from which animal our very own British Winnie the Pooh got his name.

Events in 2009

Village tea party Beth Smith had been the prime mover in launching a free village tea party with the object of informing people in Tilshead of what the Friends do and also to meet our two new churchwardens. When Beth died we felt that to hold the party so close to her funeral was not appropriate, even though Beth would probably have said 'go ahead'; so it was postponed until 18th October. A terrific tea had been laid on by the ladies of the committee and others, and there was a raffle for 'Help For Heroes'; well attended, but sadly we didn't reach the number of people we had hoped for.

Tower visit In early September a party of intrepid Friends braved the 350 steps up to the tower of Salisbury cathedral and by all accounts greatly enjoyed themselves.

Croquet tournament As you will remember, we decided to leave the tournament out of our calendar for the time being, but hope to revive it in the future.

Events in 2010

Church Fete Saturday 22nd May

The fete, organized in co-operation with the PCC will be held as usual in the Old Vicarage garden on Saturday 22nd May starting at 2.00pm.

Trip to Dorset Saturday 31st July

It is proposed that the Friends pay a visit to South Dorset to see two churches and Laurence of Arabia's cottage at Clouds Hill. The day would go something like this, timings to be confirmed by letter nearer the date:

8.45am - Meet at Tilshead church gate

9.00am - Leave Tilshead

10.30am - Arrive St Nicholas's church, Moreton. From 10.30am to 12.30pm we should be given a tour of the church to see the spectacular windows engraved by Laurence Whistler; and for those interested, afterwards look round the gardens of Moreton House. There is a good tea rooms in Moreton, where we can get lunch, or take a picnic.

1.45pm - Leave for St Mary's church, Puddletown for a conducted tour. It is described as 'like a Dickensian law court ...with furnishings, box pews and pulpit, dating back to 1634', with a superb panelled roof and a connection with Tilshead you will hear about.

3.15pm - Leave Puddletown for Lawrence's cottage, Clouds Hill [National Trust (NT)]

5.00pm - Leave for home

The day will be self-funding and transport in members' cars (some spare seats will be available). The day is likely to cost in the region of £10 per person, excluding transport, gardens and lunch, based on a contribution of £3 each per church, and £3.60 for Clouds Hill (NT members free). **Details will be sent to members in late June asking for commitment, but let me know in advance (01980 621329) if possible, so that I can gauge overall numbers.**

Visit to the Wiltshire Heritage Museum, Devizes, Sunday 19th September

Our Treasurer, Bill Perry, has kindly agreed to arrange a visit to start at 2.00pm. A short illustrated talk on aspects of Tilshead's history would be given. There are some 93 objects and photographs in the collection to view and handle. Transport will be in members' own cars with lifts available.

The financial year to 31st March 2010

Income for the year was £5,865, which included generous contributions from mourners at funeral services and including Beth Smith's most generous legacy of £2,500. A special project is envisaged in her memory. Our treasurer continues to collect gift aid on contributions from those who pay tax and the total will appear in our accounts at the AGM. Our consolidated funds as at 31st March stood at £18,898. During the year a grant of £1,262.25 was made to assist the PCC in meeting the cost of repairing and making safe the Edwards memorial on the south side of the chancel.

Your Committee looks forward to the Spring when it is hoped that the Diocesan Finance Committee will have passed the specification for the interior redecoration of the church. Once received, tenders for the work can be obtained and a start made. It will be of interest to know that the 'Royal Arms' painting, which hangs above the nave arch, is to be cleaned while scaffolding for the interior work is in place.

Lastly I should like to thank most sincerely all those Friends, who have generously given their time and effort to keeping the church clean and in good order and to those who have regularly given and arranged the flowers. Friends have also made a real contribution to the running of the fete in company with members of the PCC. Thank you everyone.

I draw your attention to Bill Perry's interesting and entertaining account of how the pews have changed in the church, attached to this newsletter.

I look forward to meeting you if possible at the AGM on Thursday 29th April and that you will stay on for the talk and supper afterwards.

**Michael Teale
Chairman of the Friends
April 2010**

Friends Executive Committee: Nicki Blighe, Becky Carter, Simon Wilson (Churchwarden and PCC Representative), Brian Meeke, Bill Perry, Marilyn Redshaw, Barbara Newell (co-opted as Secretary), Jane Smith, Michael Teale.