



Friends Of St. Catherine's

(Founded in 1993)

Registered Charity Number 1041950

Friends of St. Catherine's Church - Newsletter No. 10, Spring 2022 The Chairman's Report

Dear Friends,

Hello, and welcome to the Friends of St. Catherine's Spring newsletter. It's been a while since we've been in touch so we thought it was time to bring you up to date. The Friends of St. Catherine's Church in Ludham are a secular group who work to cherish and improve our historic Church building. Since 1993 the Friends have raised vital funds for countless repairs to stonework, windows and walls, but also fundamental work, like the installation of the heating system, and most recently, the installation, after waiting 700 years, of a loo and a kitchen. We raise our funds through you. Our volunteers are the heart of "The Friends". We keep our membership fee to just £5 because we want as many as possible to join us and become part of our Ludham team.

Since 2001 we have organised the Ludham Open Gardens. The first Open Gardens had 12 gardens, we charged £2 for entry, and cleverly, we introduced the ferries across Womack. It was an immediate success, attracting an eye-watering 800 people and raising £2,450. Since then the event has gone from strength to strength, passing the £10,000 mark in 2015, and this year, who knows? The Open Gardens event is every two years to allow our brilliant garden owners a year to recover. But the Friends also organise boat trips, train trips, barn dances, a festival of sail and most recently, "The Illuminated Boat Parade".

FRED ROGERS

Fred Rogers has retired as chairman. He led the Friends to our most successful Open gardens ever in 2019, and steadied the ship while we all went through the trauma of Covid. We send our love and thanks to him for all his work, and we're thrilled that Little Holland will continue to be one of the key sites in this year's Open Gardens.

VERNON ENEVER

There are two vital aspects to the Open Gardens, the gardens themselves, and the Classic Car Show. The Classic Car show was the work of Vernon Enever. Many of you will know that Vernon has left us, tragically taken by cancer in November 2021. He was vital, and full of energy to the end and was determined that the Classic Car Show should continue. His friends at The North Norfolk Classic Vehicle Club and volunteers in Ludham have stepped up, working with Graham Roll who worked with Vernon from the start, to make sure the event continues. On June 26th the NNCVC will be staging the "Vernon Enever Memorial Run to Ludham Open Gardens Day", from Sheringham to Ludham. Vernon's passing has been a huge loss to the village, but his legacy will live on.



THE LUDHAM ILLUMINATED BOAT PARADE

This new event was proposed by both Tim Oldman at Barn Owl Cottage and Ali and Kim Brett within days of each other.

As Open Gardens 2021 had just been cancelled, and surely we'd be done with Covid by September 2021, we set out to make the boat parade happen. How hard can it be? Well, - it's surprisingly complicated to organise a few boats driving up and down Womack at night - covered in fairy lights. There are laws.

Having decided to go ahead with the event, one of the first calls was to the Broads Authority. It was quite possible the answer would be "No!" and that would be that. But they couldn't have been more helpful. Like everyone else, they thought, "That sounds fun" and worked with us to make it happen. It also took the Police, Broads Beat, NNDC Traffic Manager and Uncle Tom Cobley, but everyone got on board.

Next, we needed boats. Bang! In no time 20 were joined up. The Womack Staithe Trust got on board, being brilliant, saying "yes" to everything we suggested, and we got wherries, The Blakeney Old Wild Rovers, the Big Shop on Womack Staithe, the Kings Arms/Falgate catering truck, a field donated by Matt Monk for parking, and 901 Troop Marine Cadets to park the 50 or so cars we expected. But how many would come? 100? 200? We guessed at 500 as a maximum. So, the event started officially at 6.00pm, and at 5.55pm the team in the car park radioed to say it was full - we had 300 cars. All was perfect, the weather was clear and bright, we had 1000 people spread far enough apart to be Covid safe, and the parade was a joy. The parade was lead by the Hunter's Yard safety boats, the crowd whooped, the lights dazzled, and the boats looked fabulous. Immediately we started planning the next Illuminated Boat Parade which will take place on September 23rd 2023, so don't forget to put it in your diary.



THE NEW YEARS EVE FIREWORKS

The annual Ludham New Year's Eve Fireworks are organised brilliantly by the Ludham Parish Council. But on the night, the Friends man the barricades and shake the buckets. We feared a low turnout but as 12 o'clock approached the streets filled, and as every year, the display was truly impressive. The people of Ludham were their usual generous selves, raising a superb £597.05 with the welcome addition of a one-off donation of £100 from Angus and Jessie Fuller. Huge thanks to them, to those who shook the buckets, and to anyone who put a pound in.

LUDHAM OPEN GARDENS — 26th June, 2022



After cancelling the 2021 event due to Covid, we are excited to be going ahead this year. Our garden owners are already hard at work. Without them there would be no event, and we never underestimate how much we owe them. The ferries will run again, but with the help of The Womack Staithe Trust we will add a new crossing point across the top of Womack Water from Womack Staithe to Barn Owl Cottage. We also welcome The Manor to our menu of gardens. The house is in the middle of a huge refurbishment, but the grounds will be open to visitors for the first time in many years. Matt Monk has lent us his field again for an

overflow car park, and will also make it available as a campsite, for tents not vans, if anyone wants to make a weekend of it.

We plan to close Horsefen Rd and Staithe Rd, from the Caravan site up to Stocks Hill to all traffic - except residents - with manned barriers so if you live there, you will retain free access. This means our Ludham Butchers can serve food from their own shop, or you can nip across to the church for delicious tea and cakes. And, Womack Staithe will be a car-fee picnic area. In fact, there will be more food and more stalls, spread around the site better, to spread out the flow of people. There will be more entertainment, from Ukuleles to Salsa dancing, in more places.



JOIN IN

If you have a Ludham group who would like to perform or create a stand or do a demonstration of your sport, craft or hobby, please get in touch. To make it happen, we need your help. There are so many things to get involved with - from selling cakes to manning a ferry point. If you would like to get involved please call 01692 678996 or email foscludham@gmail.com

FUTURE EVENTS

We will be staging an event in the Autumn, which might be a re-starting of the Ludham Fun Run. If you have an idea for an event you would like to see, please do let us know.

EASYFUNDRAISING

You can raise money when you shop online. Go to easyfundraising.org.uk and sign up to donate to "Friends of St Catherines Church Ludham" when you shop on popular sites like M&S.

MEMBERSHIP

It's Membership renewal time. Membership of The Friends of St. Catherine's is just £5 per person. Forms were sent out in last months Parish News. Please return them to Ludham Butchers, or FOSC at Tanglewood, Staithe Road, Ludham NR29 5NP. If you wish to get in touch, call 01692 678996 or email us at foscludham@gmail.com

BILL GRIST, Chairman, February 2022

KEEPING OUR PARISH CHURCH IN GOOD ORDER (PART 11)



My last report, in March 2021, covered all the work which was under way for the construction of lavatories, a kitchen and some storage cupboards in the church. While there are one or two finishing touches yet to be completed, the job is now done and our church has, at long last, a normal WC, an accessible WC which can accommodate wheelchair users, and a kitchen with mod cons - all underneath a new ringing gallery for our bell ringers. We also have two large new storage cupboards - one for the flower arrangers, complete with a water supply and sink.

The whole construction is faced in fine light oak panelling and the new gallery has a balustrade made from a really ancient wooden screen which once, we believe, formed the central part of an earlier chancel screen. The current screen was installed in 1493 and the one it replaced was cut down in size to make a screen across the tower base. It must be at least 700 years old and is evidence that in Norfolk, we never throw anything away (at least, not in churches!). The Fabric Officer would have liked a more decorative balustrade, but this venerable piece of timber simply could not be discarded.

The connection of our new drain to the sewer in Norwich Road was quite a performance. On excavating the hole, it was found that the sewer pipe was under about 3 feet of water - the water table being high due to recent rainfall. A special 'water removal device' had to be hired, to suck out the water long enough for our connection to be made. This was an unwelcome and very expensive 'extra'. but thanks to "The Friends", the cost of £3,500 was found.



The kitchen, which has a large hatch allowing service into the nave of the church, is fully equipped with a hot water supply to the sink and boiling water for making tea (without which the Church of England would collapse). It has a fridge and a dishwasher and is already much appreciated by those on the after - service refreshment rota.

The flower arranger's cupboard is also much appreciated by our gallant band of arrangers, who no longer have to fetch water from the outside butts.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is planning regular monthly coffee mornings and afternoon teas in the hope that these will also become popular village social events.

What's next? The PCC is considering the next modernisation project - a major refurbishment of the Church Room. This much loved village meeting place has suffered from the ravages of time and badly needs an overhaul.

Ken Grapes (St. Catherine's Church Fabric Officer)