



The Friends of St Peter and All Hallows Church West Huntspill

Newsletter No.11 Spring 2022

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter for 2022.

With some easing of restrictions made possible to a great extent by the distribution of vaccinations we were able to continue with some interesting events during 2021 which were well supported and reported in previous Newsletters.

In this year of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee we are hoping to contribute in some way to the celebrations planned in West Huntspill for the four day holiday period in June. These will involve various groups in our village, including of course St. Peter and all Hallows Church who will be holding a special afternoon service for the occasion, followed by a tea. It is envisaged that the Friends will be involved in helping with this event. We will let you know as details are finalised.

In the meantime we are hosting another skittles evening on 1st April at The Orchard Inn. This proved popular when it was our first event in 2019 and we hope it will again. See below for more details on how to get tickets.

We were all pleased to learn from recent announcements that the church has been granted a substantial amount of funding to cover the long awaited restoration and reordering project. David Lemon has provided an update on the project which is included below.

As David points out, there continues to be the need for ongoing general maintenance and repairs outside of the scope of this project. It is the purpose of the Friends to contribute towards these costs where external funding is not available. We also aim to fund specific smaller projects as requested by the PCC for the preservation of this wonderful building. An example of this was shown by the repair to the Reginald Wade window in 2020 which the Friends paid for.

Although we stage some events and fundraising efforts, a major part of our income comes from Membership Subscriptions. With numbers having fallen since our inauguration for various reasons I would encourage existing members to please continue your support when your renewal becomes due. Without this we would not be able to survive as an organisation. We also, of course, welcome new members.

Looking forward to meeting up again in this very special Jubilee year.
With best wishes on behalf of the Friends Council and myself

David Hill, Chairman.

Skittles and Buffet at the Orchard Friday 1st April at 7 p.m.

(You'd be a fool to miss it!)

In a repeat of the first event we held three years ago, we will be hosting an evening of Skittles at the Orchard, West Huntspill on Friday 1st April. A delicious hot and cold buffet will be provided.

Tickets cost £12.50 (including food) and can be purchased by contacting Janet Hill, or by going onto our website, where we can now accept payment by credit/debit cards or PayPal.

The Church restoration and restructuring project.

An update from David Lemon

I have been asked to update you on the progress of our tower repairs and the reordering of the West end of the Church.

You have probably heard that we have been fortunate in securing a large grant of £678,600 towards the restoration and reordering project from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This coupled with other funding now means all the funds are in place, and with all the necessary faculty and planning permission also agreed, the project can now start, some seven years after the original idea was first mooted. In fact we are hoping building will start on the 28th of this month.

During the first few weeks, work will start on the reordering inside the Church and scaffolding will be erected around the tower. It is hoped that the inside will be finished first and the whole project completed by the end of the year.

I would like to assure you that even with all this work being done on the tower and inside of the Church we are, and hopefully will in the future be, very grateful for the support we receive from the 'Friends'. Your support allows for the general maintenance of the building (of which there is much on this fine old building) to continue. The project addresses major and very necessary work on the stonework of the 600 year old tower, and the reordering inside the Church adapts it for our needs in the 21st Century as identified in the two village questionnaires. Although the money raised seems enormous to me, every last penny is needed for the project; with your contribution allowing for general repairs to continue.

The 'Friends' are essential to the future of the Church, and as such if anyone would like to get involved in the actual running of this fine old building, you would find a warm welcome, worshipper or not, your help could be invaluable.

Thank you again for your continued support.

David Lemon.

Phillip George Clemett RN

The churchyard at St Peters and All Hallows contains a number of war graves, each one representing a story of duty, sacrifice and loss of a loved one.

One of our members, Steve O'Hehir, here tells the fascinating story of how one young man, Phillip Clemett, came to be buried here and remembered in the roll of honour.



Phillip George Clemett, served in the Royal Navy, K17998, Stoker 1st Class and is buried in the churchyard of St Peters and All Hallows. He was born in Fulham, London on the 5th December 1891, the son of Mary Jane and Albert Clemett. They are recorded as living at 2, New Road, Huntspill, Highbridge.

Phillip served on *HM Submarine C16* from 11th February 1917 to his death on the 16th April 1917.

HM Submarine C16 was one of 38 C-class submarines built for the Royal Navy by Vickers at their Barrow-in-Furness shipyard. It was laid down on 14th December 1906 and was commissioned on 5th June 1908.

In 1909 on 14th July, *HM Submarine C16* collided with *HM Submarine C17* south of Cromer, Norfolk when the collier *Eddystone* drove through the flotilla colliding with *HM Submarine C11*. Tragically, *C11* was sunk with only three survivors. Attempts were made to salvage the stricken submarine but they were abandoned in September 1909, after only a single body had been recovered.

C16 was undamaged and later that year participated in the Lord Mayor's Pageant between the 17th and 24th July.

In March 1916, one month after Phillip had joined its crew, *HM Submarine C16* together with the destroyer *HMS Melampus* were attached to the 8th Submarine Flotilla, part of the Harwich Force.

Just over a year later, on 16th April 1917 *HMS Melampus* was exercising with submarines *C16* and *C25* off Harwich, when *C16* crossed in front of *HMS Melampus* at periscope depth.

HMS Melampus sighted *C16*'s periscope and attempted to take evasive action, but it was too late and the destroyer accidentally rammed the submarine, sinking it.

C16 bottomed out at 60 ft. The 1st Lieutenant, Samuel Anderson, was fired through a torpedo tube to try to escape but unfortunately drowned. He was later found by salvagers with the following message tied to his wrist in a waterproof bag. "We are in

16 feet of water. The way to get us out is to lift the bows by the spectacle and haul us out of the boat through the tubes. H.Boase.”

It appears that all the crew survived the collision and the bottoming but through a series of misfortunes, all attempts at escape failed and the whole crew was lost.



The captain, Lieutenant Harold Boase, tried to flood the boat in an effort to escape through the fore hatch, but the fender jammed the hatch, so the crew was trapped.

The escape attempts were recorded by the commanding officer and were found corked

in a bottle lying near him when the hull was salvaged. All members of the crew of C16 died.

The submarine was later recovered and refitted and saw further war service. It was eventually sold for scrap to C A Beard of Upnor on 12 August 1922.

HMS Melampus was originally laid down for the Greek Navy by Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Company at Govan in 1914 as *Chios*. She was launched on 16th December 1914 and completed for service in the Royal Navy as *HMS Melampus* on 29th June 1915.

HMS Melampus was cleared of all blame in the resulting enquiry. It was eventually sold for scrap on 22nd September 1921 and broken up in Germany.

Steve O’Hehir, Winchester

If you have any information about people who form part of the Church’s history and would be willing to write a short piece, we would love to hear from you.

Can you help out?

As well as our own events, the Friends try to have a presence at Village events such as the Vintage Car Show – and of course this year at the Jubilee celebrations. Would you be willing to help out, perhaps by manning a “Friends Table” for a few hours? If so, please let us know. You get to meet lots of lovely new people!

Want to contact us?

Telephone the Membership Secretary, Janet Hill on 07840 072351 or email: hello@friendsofspaahc.org

See our website: <https://friendsofspaahc.org> for more information, the latest news, new membership and renewals, ticket purchases and more. Follow us on Facebook

 for news.