



The Friends of St Peter and All Hallows Church West Huntspill

Newsletter No.18 Spring 2024

Dear Friends,

Spring is now getting into full swing, it is really uplifting to feel the warmth of the sun once again, and nature is responding. We are very fortunate to live near the Heronry in the grounds of the old rectory; there are once again Cattle Egrets, Little Egrets and Herons nesting in the ever diminishing Ilex tree, they are also nesting in adjacent trees. Most people will see Egrets and Herons on the edge of rivers or in fields, they seem such quiet birds in those locations, but when they nest they make up for lost time by nattering all through the night. The noise is something we get used to, what we don't get used to is the smell of fish that comes in the next few weeks as they feed the youngsters!

The last year or so has been tough financially for all of us and it seems to be having an effect on our membership which held steadily from our formation and throughout the Covid Lock Downs, but has dropped by about a fifth over the last year; I am pleased to say in spite of that our fundraising for the Tower Hand Rail is doing well, more of this from Anne below. If you may know anyone you think might support us by becoming a member please encourage them to join.

We are looking into a trip to Wells Cathedral later in the year, hopefully having some tours and a lunch in one of the City establishments; date and details will be announced when we have sorted the planning.

Update on the Tower Handrail Appeal



Last Summer, we announced the launch of the Tower Handrail Appeal in response to a request from the PCC (Parochial Church Council) for a grant of £5,000 to pay for the manufacture and fitting of a replacement handrail for the Bell Tower steps. The rail is to replace the existing rope "handrail" on the steps and will improve safety and accessibility.

We set ourselves a target of raising additional donations of £2,500 for the Appeal, to be matched £ for £ from general funds raised through membership subscriptions to the Friends and events and activities, such as the recent skittles evening at the Orchard and the raffling of hampers at local events.

We invited people to "Sponsor a Step" for a donation of £25, with 97 numbered steps available. We are delighted to report that so far, 38 steps have been sponsored. This, together with other Appeal donations, brings the total raised for the Appeal so far to £1,087.50. With Gift Aid and the funds

matching from our General Fund the total Appeal Fund currently stands at £2,320, so we are very nearly halfway there!

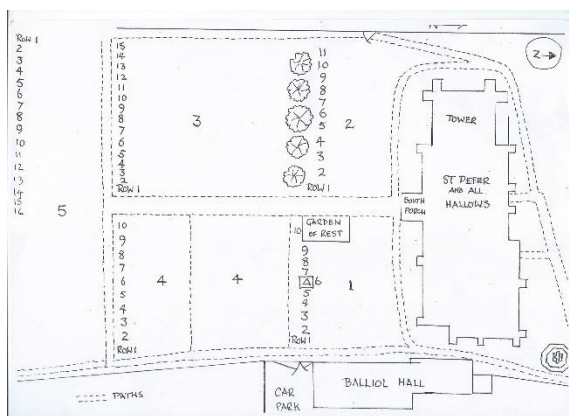
How long do we have to reach our target? Well, we do not have a firm timescale yet. Due to the strict controls exercised by the Church of England, the Church Wardens are working hard to get the necessary "faculty", the Church's equivalent of planning permission. This is a complex process as you would expect with a building of this age and importance (being Grade 1 listed) and is not known for being particularly swift!

Meanwhile, we will continue to work to achieve our target with your help.

Anne Paul

Grave Records

Over the Winter I have been working with Nigel Maddocks to get the digital Grave Records into a position where we can add them to the interactive screen by the South Door of the Church. It has been quite a challenge but we are nearly there. We will send the records to the company that has put together the display software soon, but there is still work to be done tidying up the data! This may have to be added later with further updates.



The Graveyard is split into 5 main sections South of the Church, with 2 small sections North and South around the Church. Part of section 1 is now designated as "The Garden of Rest" which incorporates Sarah's Garden. See Map on the left.

Sometimes there are trees and bushes that have grown in grave spaces. All this makes finding particular graves quite difficult. I have a further project to add a 'what3words' identification to each record, this app has split the whole world into 1 metre squares, each square has a 3 word id e.g. ///hill.frost.grow. With an app on your phone that has GPS (Global Positioning System) you can navigate to that square metre exactly. With the number of records it will take a while to add the details!

Here are a few facts about the records.

- As at 24th March 2024 there are 1397 records.
- There are 7 War Graves.
- The oldest grave record is 1805 – John Jennings
- The oldest person buried was 99 – John Burnett
- The person with the furthest away Address – Shanghai – Edward Arney

I hope that all this work makes it easier to find the resting place of loved ones. When it is up and running you can catch me at the Hub on Monday mornings with questions.

Dave Paul

SAVE THE DATE – FUTURE EVENTS

Saturday 6st July – West Huntspill Summer Fete in the Church Grounds

Saturday 14th September – West Huntspill Classic and Vintage Vehicle Show

Saturday 16th November – Christmas Fayre at the Balliol Hall

Please let us know if you would be willing to give up an hour or two of your time to attend one of the tables, or would be willing to make a donation cost of the Hampers we will be raffling.

Round up of recent activities

On 15st March, we held an evening of **Skittles at the Orchard**, for the fourth time. As before, it was well attended, 30 people enjoyed the evening. A big thanks must go to Mark Saunders who once again conducted the proceedings and kept the troublemakers in check.

Even though the cost of providing the buffet has understandably increased again, the evening still added nearly £125 to the funds.

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On 23<sup>rd</sup> March we had a table at the **Spring Fair**, the raffle prize was an Easter Hamper, which was won by John Davey (although his family had dibs on much of the produce!) We made £55 on the raffle, but more importantly we had 5 more steps sponsored.


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Want to contact us?

Telephone 07557 103443 or email: hello@friendsofspaahc.org

Friends' Council Members:

Chairman: Dave Paul	Secretary: Christine Stephens
Membership Secretary: Vacant	Treasurer: Anne Paul
Elected Member: Michael Hopkins	Elected Member: Ann Hopwood
Co-opted Member: Janet Hill	PCC Nominee1: Bronwen Wright
Co-opted Member: Ian Fleetwood	

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