

FRIENDS OF LEIGH CHURCH (FOLC) NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2016

Dear Members

This is our first newsletter written nearly a year after FOLC actively started engaging with the community. Much of the money raised has been used to underpin the building conservation and repair programme, and funds are also being used to develop a community room (the Tower Room) to house a Friendship café, with a toilet facility available. FOLC is made up of a dedicated committee of trustees and a wide membership of individuals from Leigh on Mendip and beyond.

The first AGM of FOLC is at 7pm on 9 November in the Memorial Hall; we do hope to see you there but if you are unable to attend please let us have any comments you wish to make.

Many, many thanks for your support, now and into the future.
FOLC Committee

Fundraising & Membership

Several exciting events have been organised over the last year by FOLC:

The Christmas Fair followed by the Christmas Tree Festival in December 2016 raised nearly £750, Shelagh's Super Supper in January raised just over £600, the Spring Fair held in the Memorial Hall in April raised nearly £550, the Church Bazaar in July raised over £430 and the Flower Festival and local history exhibition raised over £750. A big thank you to everyone who has supported these events and helped raise over £3,000 this year.

We currently have 173 members and supporters, raising over £2,000 in membership subscriptions, with donations towards The Tower Room Appeal of £13,600, plus another £7,550 in other non-specific donations. Soon we will be contacting members who paid by cash/cheque to see if they would like to renew their membership in 2017. Thanks to those who set up a standing order as this reduces the amount of administration.

We have also been very fortunate in successfully inviting two important local folk to support FOLC as donor/patrons. Michael Samuel is the owner of Mells Park and through his foundation, the Peter Samuel Charitable Trust, has made a significant contribution. Kevin McCloud, of Grand Designs fame, has also kindly come on board as a patron with generous support. He had the following words to say on acceptance of the invitation to be a patron, "I lived in Leigh on Mendip for eighteen years during which time St Giles Church was an important and large part of my life. I have sung in that building and prayed there.

I have gazed in awe at its carved oak angels on the ceiling and daily looked up to pause at the tower in all weathers, snow, hail, fog and haze, from my farmland below, never ceasing to be amazed at the quality of its elaborate design and construction.

It is still the focus and compass of that small village, an architectural beacon in stone of staggering quality, an exemplary place that deserves and demands to be cherished and polished."

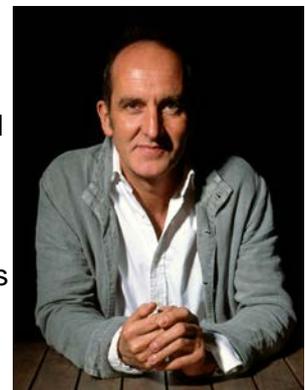


Photo: Glenn Dearing

We offer our sincere thanks to both these generous and kind hearted men and look forward to their continued support for many years to come.

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 9 November

7pm

Memorial Hall, Leigh on Mendip

Bidding Success!

The FOLC Bid Manager has worked with both the FOLC committee and the PCC to manage the submission of seven grant applications (bids) in the first year, some fairly small to help meet the café servery costs but two major bids to seek to conserve or repair a significant proportion of the roof of the church. We are pleased to announce an award from the Listed Places of Worship: Roof Repair Fund of £93,700 for work on the Chancel roof (east end of the church), planned to start in March 2017. More news on successful bids in the next newsletter.

The presence of bats in the vicinity of, and inside, the church has been taken into account in the bidding and reflects on the work programme. Studies of bat movements were undertaken at dusk on several evenings in the spring so, if you happened to see shadowy movements in the churchyard, it probably wasn't the ghosts on this occasion. They can be seen, we understand, emerging from the gravestones recently marked with red tape, as reported by the school children passing by!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Murder Mystery Supper

SATURDAY 29 OCTOBER 7PM

MEMORIAL HALL

Tickets £12 including 2 course meal from Sarah 01373 813707 or Caroline 01373 812889

Christmas Fair

FRIDAY 9 DECEMBER 6-8PM

MEMORIAL HALL

Christmas Tree Festival

SATURDAY 10 & SUNDAY 11 DECEMBER

ST GILES CHURCH

Race Night

18 FEBRUARY 2017

MEMORIAL HALL

Open Gardens & Heritage Trail

JULY 2017

The community fundraising has raised enough money to be able to create the Tower room by putting a glass/oak screen across the front of the bell tower area, a highlight being the large glass doors which will link the church with the room, and the room with the church. We have obtained the necessary permission so that we can build the Tower room, together with the servery for the café plus necessary utility supplies and a heritage hub (more next time). A bid for funding to build a superb oak/glass ceiling, complete with inbuilt lighting and heating, has also been successful. Several bids have been submitted towards the servery costs, with one of these already gained.



Artist's impression of the Tower Room

What does the next year hold – we hope to continue to submit and win bids from time to time and it will be very exciting to see the development of the community room and establishment of the café, starting from early next year. The toilet facility will follow as soon as possible afterwards. Also in spring 2017, seeing the scaffolding going up around the Chancel roof will represent another milestone.

Priest in Charge, The Reverend Anthony Dickson

“I am really grateful for all the hard work that has gone into getting the funding applications right, which has led to our success. I am completely delighted.”

Supported
by



LISTED PLACES OF WORSHIP
ROOF REPAIR FUND