

### Society looks forward to another strong year

Following the success of the Summer Fete, the Society had a busy winter with highlights being the History Talk and Exhibition in October, the Christmas Tree celebration in December and the Spring Line Dance evening in March. The monthly Beach Clean and the Old Rectory Gardens Work Groups have both continued through the winter and winter, making a significant contribution to the community. Now we are looking forward to the Summer with the Quiz Night in June, Picnic in the Park in July and the Hanging Baskets going up in May for the whole of the summer.

A lot more has been taking place within the Working Groups. The History, Heritage and Archive Group meets regularly every month and is looking at new projects archiving businesses and services. The Conservation & Development Group has been busy with the Felpham Conservation Area Review and Blake's Cottage.

On the financial side we had the Summer Fete revenue, grants from JWAAC and Felpham Parish Council and a strong membership. Now we have built up a better reserve we hope to give back to the community through various projects.

### Road relief measures still needed

It's great to have the new road open and it would seem this is reducing traffic flow through the Village. However, the Society was disappointed to see the cancellation of the long awaited road mitigation projects. We very much hope that the main elements will be reinstated at some stage. Clearly, snarling up the traffic in the days leading up to Christmas was never going to work. At the same time the diverting of traffic round Vicarage Lane was ill conceived.



*Speeding means danger to pedestrians round these blind corners*

The main issues in the Village are the rat run, traffic speed and pedestrian safety. The main essentials are sorting out the area outside the Post Office, slowing down traffic through the chicane by the church and installing a crossing at Snook's Corner. The introduction of a 20mph zone was also lost and this needs to be revisited to reduce speeds generally within Felpham.

### Blake Cottage purchase

Blake's Cottage was bought by a newly formed charity, The Blake's Cottage Trust, in September 2015. More money is now needed to renovate the cottage. It is understood that the thatched cottage will be retained but the 60's extension will be demolished and a new building built along the back wall of the garden with a new entrance to the rear of the cottage.



The Society wants to ensure the development is in keeping with its heritage and importance to Felpham. The Cottage is not only sited in the Conservation Area but is also a Listed Building. We would like to see the Cottage open to local people from time

to time. However, we do not want to see large numbers of people and associated traffic and parking issues. The Society hopes the new Trust will work with our own local the Big Blake Project.

### 'Picnic in the Park' on Saturday 9th July

The Felpham Summer Fair in Old Rectory Gardens last July last year was a great success. But it took a huge amount of effort for just a few volunteers so it has been decided to stage it every second year rather than annually. However, in its place the Society will be hosting a 'Picnic in the Park' also in Old Rectory Gardens from 12-5pm. There will be entertainment and a Tea Tent and families will be invited to bring their own picnics and enjoy the music and the afternoon. There will be children's games, a raffle and Tombola and

local organisations and businesses are being invited to sponsor.

Come and join us on the day. It's free to all with fun for all the family

### New projects for the History Group

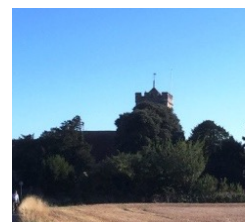
The Society's History and Heritage Group has been meeting regularly through the winter following their highly successful October Talk and Exhibition. The guest speaker was local Archivist, Sue Tressler who inspired people to think of our time as an historical period.

As a result, the next project will be to involve the village Shops, Public Houses, etc. to look at 'The Way They Were'. Businesses will be asked for a brief synopsis of approximately 50 words of their time in the village. They will also be asked if they have any history of past services and any photographs before and now of their premises.

The Group has also started looking into the Servicemen who had lived in Felpham during the First World War in order to create a definitive list of those service personnel from the local area who served in that conflict. We hope to obtain this list from various memorial locations, e.g. the Archive Offices in Chichester, Church records, Felpham Memorial Hall, etc. Further progress to be discussed at the next meeting so if you are interested come along and join in. Contact HHA Group leader Joyce Pritchard (583603)

### Conservation Area Review

The Conservation Area was first set up in 1985 after pressure from the Society. Now 30 years on it is being reviewed by Arun District Council. The Society held a public meeting to review the proposals. Around 100 people attended and the main issues discussed included:



*Views across Church Field*

- The proposed inclusion of Church Field into the Area
- The proposed inclusion of Manor Close into the Area
- A review of negative properties within the Area
- A concern about the restoration of the old flint walls
- A concern about traffic through the Area

Arun's Conservation Officer, Martyn White, reassured residents of Manor Close that there would be further consultation before decisions were made about the inclusion of their area.

### AGM set for Monday 25th April at 7pm

The AGM will be on Monday 25th April at the Felpham Sailing Club and we hope as many members as possible will attend this important meeting to review the accounts, hear about what has been achieved in the past membership year and to look forward to this year. It's your opportunity to ask questions and contribute to plans. We are also looking for three new committee members so if you would like to be more involved please put your name forward. There are 15 committee members so the work load doesn't fall on just a few

## Quiz Night on Saturday 11th June

Back by popular demand. 7pm at the Village Hall. Quiz master Bob May. Special Felpham category. Look out for tickets on sale at the Village Post Office from May 1<sup>st</sup>

## Reclaiming Old Rectory Woods

The Society, through its 'Friends of Old Rectory Gardens' Group, has already done a lot of work clearing the Woodland. The vision is to keep it as natural woodland, as a habitat for wildlife but also to make it accessible to the public in a safe and meaningful way.

This will need a mix of light and heavy work. Initially, the 'Friends' will clear more ground area to allow new growth and to be able to plant wild flowers. Alongside this, Arun will be doing some heavier tree work to create more light, allow existing trees to 'breathe' and make safe a large fallen tree in the centre of the woods. The Friends are also planning to install 'Bat Boxes' and the tree work will allow direct flight routes for them.

To enable public accessibility, a wildlife trail is planned to meander through the woods. The pathways will be lined with larger logs and chipped for safety.

On an historical note we are still looking for the 'wishing well' that many older residents say is 'in there somewhere'. The Society also has an aspiration to restore the collapsed section of the old flint wall and discover the original purpose of what was definitely a walled area. This work will take time and money, hopefully through grants of one sort or another.

Visitors to the Gardens will already notice the ash stakes along the track side to the Woods forming the beginnings of a natural 'dead hedge'. This will surround the woods and give it definition and protection. To compliment this new hedge, the existing high live hedge at the entrance from Vicarage Lane will be cut down to waist height allowing light and sight lines into the wood.



*Creating the new dead hedge with ash stakes from Worms Wood*

Volunteers are needed to join our regular monthly work party at 2pm on the fourth Friday of the month. Next session is on Friday 22nd April.

## Monthly Beach Clean

Our thanks go to the hardy volunteers who have braved all weathers in order to participate in the Monthly Beach Clean. A whopping 85 bags of rubbish and 12 of recycling was collected in 2015, along with a variety of discarded ropes, netting, pots and even some roofing material blown off in the recent high winds! Locals young and old, and a few willing dogs, joined in with fine community spirit every month to help maintain our beautiful beaches and beach front greens, which we



*Christmas spirit at the Felpham Beach Clean*

are so lucky to have on our doorstep.

We meet every second Saturday of the month at 10.30am outside the sailing club. FVCS will issue you with bags and pickers but bring along your own gloves. Our thanks also to The Lobster Pot Cafe in providing a welcome hot cup of tea or coffee for all volunteers after the work is done. We also have juice boxes for the little ones and there's often a treat or two to be had!

Look out for the monthly email reminders in your Inbox or 'like' our Facebook page to receive notifications of future events.

## No response on Shabby Areas

One of the initial tasks tackled by the Society back in 2014 was to identify shabby areas dotted around the Parish and submit these to Arun District Council. They have the power under Section 215 of the 1990 Planning Act to investigate these areas and raise them with the

relevant property owners to agree improvement plans. To date there has been no response to our submission. We have been very patient recognising that there has been a lot of work on the Arun Local Plan. With so much elapsed time we will now press for some action.

## Felpham Christmas Cheer

The Society again provided the Felpham Village Christmas Tree and annual lights switch-on and outdoor Carols at Grassmere Parade. We again put on this wonderful display of cheer for the community at the beginning of December giving Felpham its very own start to Christmas.

Once again round 400 people attended this year's event with free mulled wine and mince pies and lots of Santa cheer. For safety reasons we got permission from WSCC Highways to close the road for a couple of hours. The carols were again beautifully sung by children from both Downview and Bishop Tufnell school choirs. For the first time there was an FVCS Choir to lead the community singing after the switch-on. Father David from St Mary's Church blessed the tree.

The tree was thanks to Butlins. The new lights were bought with a grant from Felpham Parish Council. The hanging of the lights was kindly done by JAM Electrical from Bognor Regis.



*Putting up the new lights*

The event had again been preceded by a children's (and mums and dads) Christmas workshop making laminated Christmas decorations all of which were used on the tree.

## Hanging Baskets back in the Village

The Society is putting up the traditional hanging baskets through the Village again this summer. We hope to have 52 baskets in pairs on 26 lampposts. The baskets are in fact a Holestar planter system bought by the Society in previous years. We already have 42 and are in the process of purchasing a further ten.

For those horticulturists among us, the baskets will hold a mix of surfinias and ivy geraniums. For those just interested in the display, they will be a mass of red, white and blue. They will go up late May and there will be a ceremony at Grassmere Parade to mark the occasion -. date and time to be announced. Everything is being prepared at the moment. The plants are being 'brought on' and will eventually go into compost, on capillary matting designed to hold moisture.

Watering and feeding will be done about three times a week throughout the season from late May to October depending on weather conditions.

The hanging baskets are a big commitment but we have found ways of keeping down the costs using a local person on a fixed cost. We are using some of the money raised at last year's Summer Fete and we also received a small grant from Felpham Parish Council towards the costs. Some local businesses have also already offered to 'sponsor a lamp post'. So, once again, it will be a 'village affair' and we hope you will approve when summer finally comes and the baskets are up.

**Annual renewal due on April 1<sup>st</sup>.** Members will get their renewal notices together with this Newsletter. We very much hope you will renew for 2016/17. Your support is not only important financially but also to give us a body of people to give weight to the Society. We are keeping the membership fees the same at £10 for individuals and £15 for couples. We will also continue to honor Life Members some of whom have been with the Society since its formation in 1980. We just ask that they confirm their membership annually so we know they are still in the village. If Life members want to make a donation it would be most welcome.

To contact the Society please email  
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