

Carlton on Trent Village Hall Committee - Annual Statement May 2018

2017 saw us welcome Alison Fairhurst as an ad hoc member of the committee in charge of the historical archive, and Janet Sheridan as a full member following our Annual Meeting. Both have proved valuable contributors to village life.

2017 saw us continuing to make the upstairs of the Hall more easily accessible and converting the store rooms and office into usable space for the History Archive. Grants have enabled us to buy shelving, storage materials and a laptop so the history group can begin the task of putting the archives, which they spent so much time last year ordering and scanning, online. Special thanks must go to Alison Fairhurst, our archivists, John Whate and Doris Drabble, for their regular work sorting and maintaining the archives. Because Carlton's parish records were largely destroyed, the archive represents an important source for people wanting to trace their ancestors in the area.

The film club and history afternoons on Sundays have continued to be very well attended. Generous grants from the Co-op have helped us afford outside speakers to expand the range of topics covered, although we continue to focus very much on local history. Murray Martin has worked hard to scour the BFI archives for material that relates to North Nottinghamshire and he and Tanya have spearheaded the search for relevant speakers. 2018 promises a very exciting programme. We hope to continue to offer these free events for the next two years thanks to the grants obtained by Fiona Jerome, as well as developing our archive outreach. Only last month we were able to report the receipt of two more grants, from the Lincolnshire Co-Op for £800 and from Tesco Bags for Life for £1000.

Bookings have been strong, with the addition of a prayer group at the end of the year who look set to use the hall regularly and the return of several training companies to use the hall. Our keep fit guru has added a general exercise class as well as his seated aerobics, occupying Friday nights, and the Pilates group continues to grow on Thursdays. Tai Chi continues to be over-subscribed and extra classes are being put on using videos made by the teacher on the projector screen. A more recent addition has been a Boogie Bounce class on Monday nights before the Tai Chi.

Computer classes have been particularly valuable, with Murray running several extra drop in sessions and holding Q&As at the coffee mornings, in addition to his regular intro sessions. Next year we will continue to build on the skills some of our residents have already gained with photo-manipulation and communications classes, while continuing to help those for whom basic computer usage is a struggle. Windows 10 is still causing many people troubles! Tanya Grimes has run several successful follow up classes to her initial Genealogy course, and Saturday mornings have also seen a number of specialist workshops being run for crafters.

The craft club continues to run for four hours on Tuesdays and the sewing group continues to meet on Wednesday nights. The Monday afternoon Rummikub sessions are also popular and we must thank Margaret Eley for organising craft and Rummikub, and also selling so many tickets for our fundraising meals and quizzes, which continue to be very popular.

The Village Hall has continued to support the Carlton Fete in June, with most committee members running stalls, and we gratefully received a donation of £1200 from the Fete's organisers.

Autumn saw the launch of a trial run for Fiona Jerome and Tanya Grimes' lunch club for the over 60s. This provides a two course meal for £3.33, and is regarded by attendees as exceptional value given the standard of the food provided. We have agreed that Carlton

residents should be prioritized, but are pleased to welcome people from all the surrounding villages when there is room. It has proved to be a very good social mixer, attracting lots of different people and providing a fun afternoon, good nutrition and good company. John Whate has undertaken to provide games for after the lunch and Fiona Jerome has provided prizes for the next six months from things left over from 2016 Christmas hampers and the Fete. Currently there is a waiting list into next year and we have agreed to fund some 'industrial' kitchen equipment to enable Fiona and her team to cook and serve more easily.

Although we did not hold our usual fundraising BBQ this year, we have raised significant funds from the Winter Warmer, coffee mornings, quizzes and especially the Christmas Fair, which has paid for film licensing and all the free refreshments we provide at social events as well as paying towards improvements to the upstairs and the front door. Lettings have covered our running costs.

I would like to thank the whole committee for their dedication to the Hall's future, their work maintaining the physical structure of the hall, for providing refreshments for all the events, cooking meals for fundraisers and the lunch club, for upgrading our computers and keeping our archive in order. Special mention to Edna for keeping the hall clean and tidy. 2018 looks to be a very good year for us. If we can keep up this level of hire both from locals and companies we will break even on running costs and be able to use our fundraising money to keep going and even expand our free events to ensure everyone has access to entertainment and social activities whether they can pay or not.

I feel we are pushing forward developing the hall and am happy to report that we are often told it's the nicest village hall visitors have seen. The only thing really holding back further usage is timings because we now have something most evenings, and volunteer fatigue. Our mission for 2018 must be to recruit more 'well-wishers' who are willing to help out with particular aspects of running the hall and its activity programme and devolve some of the jobs currently done by a small group of people.

With the interior of the hall in good physical condition we must now turn our attention to roof repairs and raising funds to carry out a complete overhaul. We are also going to look at soundproofing the shared wall in order to reduce nuisance to our neighbours and deal with minor damp issues there. Once again Fiona will spearhead surveys and grant applications for the project as well as continuing to seek funding for our ongoing clubs and groups. It will be a busy fundraising year, but an enjoyable one.

Nigel Fletcher