

WALPOLE OLD CHAPEL

*In the care of the Historic Chapels Trust
(Registered charity number 1017321)*

Annual Newsletter 2011

Right *The Chapel in the snow* by Jeremy Henry



NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS

The new gates have been installed and are a great improvement on the rather unexceptional wooden gate. They are wider, thus allowing easier vehicular access for disabled visitors to the Chapel. They were more expensive than the original costing as matching the finials proved impossible. New castings had to be made, which we now own, so the replacement of any damaged ones in the future will be a simple matter.

Routine maintenance work has been undertaken during the last year. A building of this age and fragility requires a considerable amount of ongoing work and we are proud to say that as a local group, thanks to the support we get from you all, we have been able to cover the percentage of costs not available from the English Heritage Maintenance Grant and to pay the day to day expenses of running the Chapel. We hope to be able to tell you next year that we are actually self-supporting.

One very exciting project is the placing of the archival material, collected diligently and painstakingly over the years by David Holmes, onto a computer programme which will allow access to the records. Simon Weeks and Anne Thomas have undertaken this work and we all look forward to viewing the results in due course.

Visitors to the Chapel sometimes ask if they can support the Chapel by joining the 'friends'. We do not have an official group of friends for Walpole alone, but please consider joining the subscribing friends of the Historic Chapels Trust. The HCT is an acquirer of last resort and now owns

20 chapels including Walpole Old Chapel for which there was no reasonable alternative use. The subscribing friends form an important part of the support for that work. If however you live fairly locally and would like to be involved in the running of Walpole Old Chapel by, for instance, Chapel-sitting on a Saturday afternoon or two during the season, do please contact the secretary.



The new gates

New castings had to be made for the finials



2010 EVENTS

I think it only fair to say that our adventuring into Saturday afternoon events was not a great success. We are very grateful to Michael Cole and Peter Purvis for speaking to a very small but appreciative audience.

The Quaker Meetings for Worship were appreciated and will continue next season.

Poetry thrives at Walpole; the Grey Hen Press came for a second visit and a visit by the Halesworth Café Poets

has now become an enjoyable annual event. A first for the Chapel was the recording by James Knox Whittet, triple winner of the Crabbe Memorial Prize, reading his own work accompanied by Colin Tait playing traditional Scottish music. They will be performing in the Chapel on the 29th of May 2011 at 3.30. Not to be missed!

The preacher at our Annual Ecumenical Service was the Rev Alan Ashton whose homely, humorous and wise

words were inspirational.

Our old friends from the Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble not only played for our annual *Songs of Praise* but, as 2010 marked ten years of their visits to the Chapel (that's what I mean by 'old'), were kind enough to play a benefit concert for us early last season.

An approach from a splendid group of West Gallery singers from the Wye Valley, The Village Quire, resulted in one of the highlights of the season when they performed a

combination of music and story reflecting life in our village churches and chapels in bygone days. This included readings from Thomas Hardy, Parson James Woodforde, Laurie Lee and Francis Kilvert, and the really good news is that they are returning this year.

The Carols & Readings were certainly the coldest ever, but it didn't spoil the atmosphere, in fact it probably added to it.

THE 2011 PROGRAMME

We will be opening for longer this season; on Saturday afternoons from the 30th of April until the 24th of September between 2.00 and 4.30 p.m.

The season opens with a service when the Revd Dr Peter Lemmon will speak, giving us all an opportunity to hear a not uncontroversial preacher who will explore the relevance of what a rediscovery of the words and work of John Wesley have for us today.

There is a pretty full programme of events planned for this season including drama, poetry, music and art. An exhibition of art work inspired by the Chapel and organised by the Halesworth Gallery will take place over the August Bank Holiday. The project will celebrate the atmosphere and design of the building, both inside and out. The response from the artists involved will include paintings, drawings and 3-D works and will form a three week

exhibition in the Gallery from July 30th to August 17th, moving to the chapel over the Bank Holiday weekend.

Neil Lanham has been touring Suffolk with his narrative *Ruby & Her Horses* for some time now and this is to be the last season, so come along and see this acclaimed presentation of rural life between the wars. It will be your last chance.

Poets love the old Chapel so there is plenty of poetry too. What is more, to our delight, the Village Quire who visited the area last year are returning to the Chapel for a performance and a workshop.

The preacher at our annual service will be Rev Andrew Kleissner from Christchurch, Tacket Street in Ipswich and the organ will be played by Tony Percival, who is the music director at Tacket Street. Of course, don't miss our rousing *Songs of Praise* accompanied again by the Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble.

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| 9 April | 10am—Singing Workshop <i>Angels Descend with Songs Again</i> |
| 30 April | 3.30pm—Service with Revd Dr P Lemmon <i>Wesley for Today</i> |
| 29 May | 3.30pm—James Knox Whittet <i>Dark Islands</i> , poetry and music from the Western Isles |
| 18 June | 6.30pm—Poetry readings from <i>Oversteps</i> |
| 26 June | 3pm—Annual Ecumenical Service |
| 24 July | 3pm—Poetry readings from <i>The Shoestring Press</i> |
| 14 August | 5pm—Annual visit by Halesworth Café Poets |
| 26–29th August | 11am to 4.30pm daily—Exhibition of artwork inspired by the chapel |
| 4 September | 3pm—Grey Hen Press readings from their new anthology <i>Get Me Out of Here</i> – poems for trying circumstances |
| 10 September | 9am–5pm SHCT Bike Ride & Heritage Open Day |
| 11 September | 11am–4pm—Heritage Open Day |
| 18 September | 3pm— <i>Songs of Praise</i> with Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble |
| 23 September | 7.30pm— <i>Ruby and Her Horses</i> |
| 30 October | 10am—workshop with The Village Quire 2.30pm—The Village Quire present their new program entitled <i>High Days & Holidays Along The Welsh Border Marches</i> |
| 17 December | 3pm—Carols & Readings for Christmas |

OPENING TIMES & CONTACT DETAILS

We will now open on Saturday afternoons from 2.00 to 4.30 from 30 April until 24 September.

For all further information please contact the secretary to the Friends of Walpole Old Chapel, Christina van Melzen, on 01986 798 308 or chrisvanmelzen@btopenworld.com

Walpole Old Chapel is in the care of the Historic Chapels Trust, St George's German Lutheran Church, 55 Alie Street London E1 8EB 020 7481 0533. www.hct.org.uk.
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