

WALPOLE OLD CHAPEL

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

Annual Newsletter 2012



NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS

It has been a really good year at the Old Chapel. Some of the usual maintenance work needed on a building of this age took place during the summer and the notice board (*right*) has been beautifully restored by **Nick Ashwell** ready for our new season.

The Time Line Project progresses and we are very excited about it. **Simon Weeks** who, together with **Anne Thomas**, has been delving into all the available sources and getting it ready to go 'live', says that it will be an on-going project but a considerable section should be on our website very shortly.

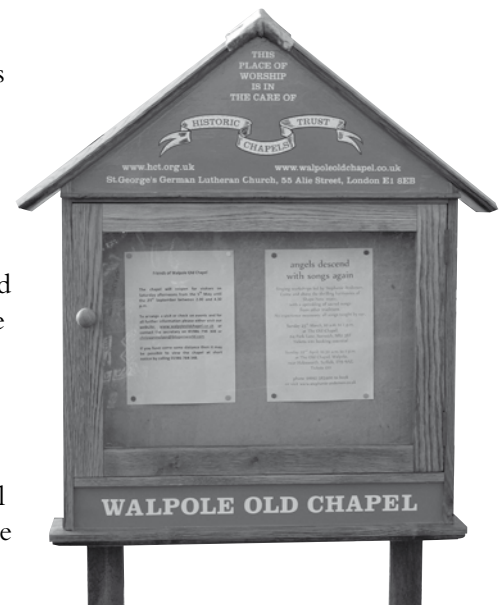
One sad piece of news is that our ex-chairman, the **Rev Kenneth Maltus-Smith**, has decided that age and distance make it impossible for him to continue his involvement in activities at the chapel. We will particularly miss his leading of our annual *Songs of Praise*.

As you know, poetry and poets flourish at the Old Chapel and this season a small anthology of some of the poems inspired by the chapel will be available. The work of a dozen or so poets is being made ready for publication by **Linda Holmes**. We are so very fortunate in having such a wealth of talent ready and willing to work for the Chapel.

We have welcomed some new volunteers for Saturday 'Chapel sitting' and could use a few more. So if you

feel that spending a few hours welcoming visitors to the chapel is something you would like to be involved in do contact me (details are below).

Finally we record the retirement of the director of the Historic Chapels Trust **Dr Jennifer M Freeman** who has given direction to the HCT since the beginning. Walpole Old Chapel was the second building the trust acquired. HCT has since gone on to care for a total of 20 churches, chapels and meeting houses in England. Jenny has been indefatigable in working for their restoration and maintenance. She has been a special friend to Walpole Old Chapel and I am sure that you will join in wishing her the very best for her retirement, and expressing the hope that we will still see her at Walpole events.



2011 EVENTS

It has been in many ways our best year ever. Certainly the number of visitors has broken the record: over 1200 people passed through the doors this season. Undoubtedly the Art Exhibition, organised and initially displayed in the Halesworth Gallery before coming to the Chapel for the August bank holiday weekend, boosted the numbers. It was a remarkable display of local talent inspired by the Chapel. We are very grateful to the Gallery Committee and to the artists involved for their vision and commitment to the project. It was a joy to see it come to fruition and to see that many of the art works were sold. One artist, who wishes to remain anonymous, very generously donated the proceeds of the sale of

one item to be shared between the gallery and the Old Chapel. This sort of goodwill is fantastic and enormously encouraging.

Being the venue for one of the final performances of **Neil Lanham's** moving story of his mother, *Ruby and her Horses*, performed by the Bumpstead Boys, was a great privilege. The songs, the stories and the photographs of Ruby's life in rural Suffolk during the agricultural depression of the 1930s let us experience living history at its very best.

We had a first for the Chapel in the recording of a poetry collection by **James Knox-Whittet** called *Dark Islands* accompanied by traditional Scots music; this was

later performed in the Chapel. There were four other poetry events: readings by poets from publishers **Oversteps**, the **Shoestring Press** and **Grey Hen Press** as well as the annual visit by the **Halesworth Café Poets**.

The Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble played for our

Songs of Praise, and we were delighted to welcome **The Village Quire** from the Wye Valley again for a workshop and performance. The *Carols & Readings for Christmas* was very well attended and interestingly the outside temperature was 20 degrees C warmer than it was in 2010.

THE 2012 PROGRAMME

We will open on Saturday afternoons from 2 to 4.30pm from the 28 April up to 29 September.

The Annual Ecumenical Service this year will be held at 3pm on Sunday 24 June. It will be led by our chairman the Rev Bill Mahood and to our delight the Rt Revd Clive Young, Suffragan Bishop of Dunwich, has agreed to preach the sermon. This year marks the 350th anniversary of the introduction of the *Book of Common Prayer*, or in non-conformist historical memory the Great Ejectment, in other words the beginning of dissent. I would like to quote from an article Bill wrote recently; '*I hope we will all find good cause to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the Book of Common Prayer. I hope we will find reason, in this more ecumenical age, to repent of past church divisions, looking to the*

future with greater hope of being one people in Christ. This we need to do in our separate groups and congregations but even more so in united acts of worship'.

Your opportunity to reflect on our shared past and celebrate our future will be at this service on 24 June. Please join us (the cakes aren't bad either).

There will be poetry and music, two weddings and a baby naming in the Chapel this summer, and a new event: David Holmes, whose Chapel concerts in the late '80s helped concentrate minds on its future, will present three programmes of historic classical recordings from his own collection. As usual there will be Quaker Meetings at 10.30am on the first Sunday of each month from May to September.

22 April	10.00 am Singing workshop – <i>Angels Descend with Songs Again</i>
12 May	7.30pm <i>Past Masters 1</i> – Historic classical recordings with David Holmes
26 May	3.00 pm Concert from Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble
24 June	3.00 pm Annual Ecumenical Service (see above)
14 July	7.30pm <i>Past Masters 2</i> – Historic classical recordings: David Holmes
22 July	3.00pm <i>A Fox Assisted Cure</i> – Kate Foley's new narrative poem, with Oonagh Seagrave-Daley
5 August	3.00 pm The Norfolk Gallery Quire
12 August	3.00 pm Indian Classical Music – Raga Meditation: Chris Doddridge
19 August	5.00 pm Halesworth Café Poets annual visit
2 September	3.00 pm Poetry reading – The Grey Hen Press
8 September	9.00 am–5.00 pm SHCT Bike Ride and Heritage Open Day
9 September	11.00 am–4.00 pm – second Heritage Open Day
16 September	3.00 pm <i>Songs of Praise</i> – Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble
22 September	7.30pm <i>Past Masters 3</i> – Historic classical recordings: David Holmes
15 December	3.00 pm Carols & Readings for Christmas

The West Gallery Music Association will be holding their annual meeting at Belsey Bridge Conference Centre in October and will be playing in the chapel on the afternoon of the 20th.

Christina van Melzen

CONTACT DETAILS

For all further information please contact the secretary to the Friends of Walpole Old Chapel, Christina van Melzen: 01986 798 308 email 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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