

# WALPOLE OLD CHAPEL

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

## Annual Newsletter 2013

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### NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS

We were delighted when the retiring Director of the Historic Chapels Trust **Dr Jennifer Freeman** accepted our invitation to launch our poetry collection early last season. We have met **Roland Jeffrey** her successor, who has already visited the chapel once and will be visiting again shortly.

There is work to be done, as there always will be on a building of this age and fragility, but we are proud to have managed to find our share for everything that has needed to be done over the last 17 years. Thanks of course to our supporters.

The **Carols & Readings** was interesting in that, the week before, we discovered that a large piece of plaster had fallen from the gallery ceiling into the box pew that

we use for storage. So we cleaned that up but on the afternoon of the service the fire alarm decided to misbehave and had to be manually switched off each time it began to squeal.

The print of the **Assembly of Divines** has been reframed in a less decorated style which is more fitting to both the subject and the chapel. Also we have an anonymous benefactress who has made a number of comfortable and sober brown velvet cushions.

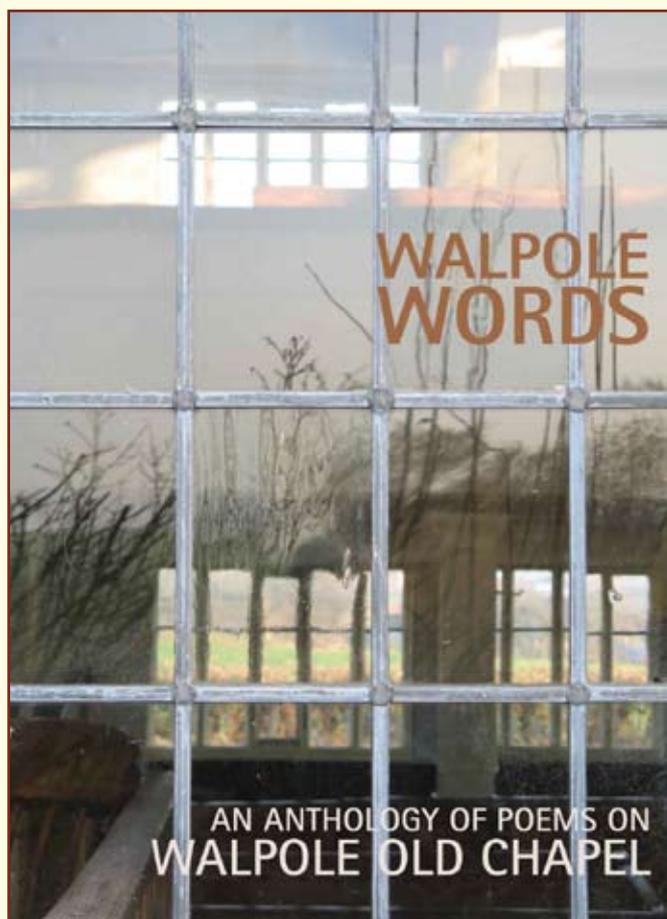
We would like to remind you all that the chapel is available for **weddings, funerals, baby blessings** and any other suitable events. **Quaker meetings** continue to be held at 10.30am on the first Sunday of each month from May to October.

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### 2012 EVENTS

We had a very good season with more than 1500 visitors on Saturday afternoons and at the various events held throughout the summer – and of course at the **Carols & Readings for Christmas**, which is always very well attended. It is always difficult to pick a highlight of the season but I think that the visit in October by members of the **West Gallery Music Association**, who were holding their annual gathering at the Belsey Bridge Conference Centre at Ditchingham, has got to be it for 2012. The robust and tuneful music of our forebears played by around sixty musicians and singers from all around the country filled the chapel. **The Norfolk Gallery Quire** had revisited earlier in the season, whetting our appetites for this style of music with their costumes and original instruments.

The launch early in the season of our first poetry collection *Walpole Words* was a happy time, with the retiring director of the Historic Chapels Trust doing the honours. The collection has sold well but there are some left which will be available in the chapel this year. However you will have noticed that I have mentioned 'first', we are planning perhaps a second collection in the future. So poets: keep writing and if some aspect or other of the Old Independent Chapel inspires you, do let me



have a copy for inclusion.

**Simon Weeks** and **Anne Thomas** have worked hard on our records and there is much now available on the **Time Line** section of our website. This can be accessed via the History section and clicking on the Time Line. There is still much to be added but it will all be available in time.

The **Annual Ecumenical Service** was led by our own **Revd Bill Mahood**. The **Rt Revd Clive Young**, Suffragan Bishop of Dunwich, preached the sermon.

Together they made the events of 350 years ago, the introduction of the *Book of Common Prayer* and the Act of Uniformity resulting in the Great Ejectment and what was to be the true beginning of non-conformity, into a celebration. It was truly an ecumenical experience not to be forgotten.

The *Songs of Praise*, accompanied by **Waveney Valley Brass**, had a 'Queen & Country' theme which certainly raised the roof.

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## THE 2013 PROGRAMME

**A**nother varied season opens on **Sunday May 12th** with **The Riotous Assembly**, the collective name for a group of musicians who are researching, writing and producing performances in song and narrative exploring local history. *An English Revolution* is the story of the local riots in 1816, which were the precursor of the Captain Swing uprisings that took place all over the country in 1830. The soldiers returning from the Napoleonic wars brought back wounds and grievances to a changed countryside. This is the story in song of what John Constable did not present in his paintings, English poverty and rural unrest.

In **June** the **Suffolk Poetry Society** are visiting the chapel with a programme entitled *Transpositions* in which members of the SPS will read poems inspired by other forms of art. We are delighted that the **Revd Paul Whittle**, Moderator of the Eastern Synod of the United

Reformed Church, has accepted our invitation to preach at our **Annual Service**. Our old friend and benefactor **Tony Percival** will be playing the organ.

On **July 21st** three readers will present a programme entitled *What the Dickens*. Extracts from Charles Dickens' novels, letters and journalism will be read giving a wide picture of the real man behind the successful novelist.

On the **18th of August** the *Halesworth Café Poets* return for their annual tea party. Local poets will read either from their own work or from poets of choice. All welcome and if you would like more details about the Café Poets call me for contact details.

The season proper finishes with our old friends from the **Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble** who will accompany our ever-rousing *Songs of Praise*. But do keep the afternoon of **December 21st** free for our **Carols & Readings for Christmas**.

*Christina van Melzen*

12 May	3.00pm The Riotous Assembly: <i>An English Revolution</i>
16 June	3.00pm <i>Transpositions</i> : Suffolk Poetry Society
30 June	3.00pm Annual Ecumenical Service
21 July	3.00pm <i>What the Dickens</i> : readings from his books, journalism & letters
18 August	5.00pm Halesworth Café Poets' annual visit
14 September	9.00am-5.00pm SHCT Bike Ride and Heritage Open Day
15 September	10.00am-5.00pm Second Heritage Open Day
6 October	3.00pm <i>Songs of Praise</i> Waveney Valley Brass Ensemble
21 December	3.00pm Carols & Readings for Christmas

## 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](mailto:chrisvanmelzen@btopenworld.com)

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