

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETINGS – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

### **Reports from Club's and Organisations.**

#### **REPORT FROM SEEND & DISTRICT RAMBLERS for APM on Wednesday 5th May at 7pm.**

This year has been like no other for the Ramblers, the Covid 19 pandemic has meant that all but a couple of walks were cancelled along with all other activities and socials. We were able to hold an evening walk in August where members enjoyed a walk followed by a socially distanced picnic. The annual weekend away was postponed until March 2021 but has now been put to October 2021, fingers crossed this will be able to go ahead.

Many members have been keeping up their walking locally and looking forward to being able to go out with the group again and share new found paths!!

The 34<sup>th</sup> AGM was not held but reports and balance sheet were sent to all members via email. We are hoping as restrictions begin to lift we will be able to resume a full programme of walking and some of our social events.

Sandra James  
Secretary of Seend & District Ramblers

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#### **Report on the Seend Community Bus for the Annual Parish meeting 2021**

Like everything else the use of the Seend Shuttle has been greatly reduced during the Covid pandemic. However, thanks to Robin Thornton and his school run drivers, the bus has been able to take children to Seend School in the morning whenever the school has been open to all pupils. Primary age children are allowed to fill the bus but anyone older has to wear a mask and socially distance. This has meant that only five passengers plus driver can be taken. The bus also has to be sterilized after each journey. We decided that sadly this made our timetabled shopping runs and private hires impossible. We continue, however, to run a Tuesday morning trip to Asda in Melksham driven by Pete Wallis with up to five passengers mostly from Angel house in Bromham. They were the people with the least alternative transport.

Pete has had regular Zoom meetings with the other community bus groups to keep up to date with changing regulations and to support each other. Some groups have suffered severely financially to the point where they can't continue especially those running several buses or relying on trips that have been cancelled. We have been lucky as up until now Wiltshire council has continued to pay a bus fare refund based on our passenger numbers before the pandemic. They have also given us our annual grant and Seend Parish council has donated £400 each year for which we are very grateful. Our expenses for maintenance and fuel have obviously been down with the bus used so little so we are still in a healthy financial position.

Of course we would love to get back to full use of the bus whenever this becomes possible. Unfortunately government regulations suggest that public transport will not be allowed to run at full capacity before October. If all continues as expected with a relaxing of restrictions in June pressure will be put on them to change their mind. For now, if you are waiting to hire the bus or looking forward to your shopping trips, I'm afraid you will have to be very patient.

Anita Shea – secretary for the trustees

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## **Short Report on Holy Cross Church for 20/21**

Like everyone else has found, this has been a challenging year, and for many months services were only held via Zoom. As well as a Sunday service, the range and variety of worship has changed and in some cases for the better, bringing the five parishes closer together. We have had mid-week services with very interesting talks from people in all parts of the world. We have held benefice wide services in the open air including a successful Drive in Harvest Festival held in a field in the pouring rain, which didn't dampen the spirits of those attending one jot. The travelling nativity that toured the villages at Christmas, instead of carol services, was very successful attracting a lot of support from villagers and some great singing.

Our ministry team was expanded with the addition of a curate – Rev Adrian Burholt. We continue to be led by our Rector, Rev Ali Bridewell, supported by our part time vicar, Rev Joshva John, 3 retired priests and a lay preacher. We are very blessed with all of them. The number on the electoral roll fell to 71 due to a few deaths in the year including the sad loss of Walter Mayell a former Churchwarden.

During the year some maintenance issues to the fabric of the building needed addressing, including roof repairs to prevent further water damage, and an extensive overhaul and clean of the organ. This year we are having the clock face repainted and repairs to some of the lead windows. We are hoping to source some grant funding for this work. Being responsible for the care and maintenance of a 600 year old building is not without its challenges.

The annual meeting of the Church was held on 20th April this year. Len Murray was re-elected as churchwarden for a further year. He will be supported by the Parochial Church Council Secretary, Anne Ewing, and Treasurer, Neil Yockney, as Deputy Churchwardens. We also elected two new members to the PCC in Tina Yockney and Jenny Phillips. They are most welcome. There were a number of reports submitted for consideration and approval, including on the financial situation of the church. The accounts showed that in spite of a very difficult year, with no fund-raising events, we just about managed to pay our share (£21,000) to the diocese, the overhaul of the organ and the normal running costs of the building, including some maintenance issues. At the meeting a great number of people were thanked for their service to the church and particular mention was made of those who quietly give service, and are often not active church members, especially the volunteers who help to maintain the churchyard in various ways.

Anne Ewing

PCC Secretary



## **The Royal British Legion – Seend Branch**

### **Report for the Annual Parish Meeting**

We started our current year with high hopes of another successful and profitable year for the branch looking forward into the 2020/21 period. These hopes however were dashed by the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic which has affected the lives of all of us.

As the planned events to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day were cancelled in May 2020, our Standard Bearer, Kevin Toft, took part in a 'virtual parade' on the morning of May 8<sup>th</sup> and some members organised "social distanced" street parties with houses and gardens dressed overall. On August 15<sup>th</sup> we paraded at the War Memorial to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VJ Day. That afternoon, a few people, suitably 'socially distanced' engaged in afternoon tea, sheltered from the rain.

Due to Covid, the income from our annual Poppy Appeal was greatly reduced as the Royal British Legion would not allow collectors to handle cash and no collection tins/boxes could be distributed. Donations had to be made via Text or QR code for 'cashless fundraising' and Gift Aid envelopes were inserted into Spotlight magazine. Kevin and his wife Karen made 120 face masks which they sold online and his employer agreed to match the proceeds £1 for £1. Sale of the masks and other small donations produced a total of just over £894.00 which the Company doubled.

Kevin is our Secretary and Poppy Appeal organiser who works tirelessly in supporting our members and at the virtual County Conference held on March 6<sup>th</sup> this year, he was awarded a County Certificate for his efforts.

All our quarterly meetings have been held via Zoom conferencing and at the beginning of this year, a new Royal British Legion logo was introduced. Our new Welfare Secretary, Christine O'Reilly, has been very active in supporting those who have been unwell or suffering bereavement. Sadly, our long serving members Leo Coley and Colin Carr passed away this year.

I think it is worth recording at this time, that in the year before Covid took hold, 71 serving military personnel and veterans took their own lives following mental health struggles. This death toll exceeds the number of battlefield fatalities in 11 out of the 13 years that British troops were in Afghanistan. More than one third of those who took their lives had suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, caused by very stressful, frightening or distressing events. They and their families, comrades and friends should always be in our thoughts and prayers.

I am determined that we members of Seend Branch must and will always carry on our small part in helping to safeguard the welfare, interests and memory of those who serve and have served in our Armed Forces.

Robin D Heatley, Chairman, 5 May 2021

## **Seend Footpath Working Party May 2020 – April 2021**

I'm afraid that there is very little to report largely due to Covid 19 restrictions being in place and voluntary footpath work suspended for most of the year. Some paths were cleared and kept tidy in the Summer including Bradley Lane .However, now that restrictions are easing and we are now approaching the growing season and lighter evenings, we hope that we will soon regroup to maintain local footpaths as necessary.

We do rely on people reporting overgrown paths and will respond to any requests, working closely with Carol Vince, Parish Footpath Officer. So please report any problems to Carol via the Parish Council and we will mobilise the volunteers into action !

We are really pleased to see the Rights of Way page on the Parish Council website which includes a link to the interactive map of all the rights of way in Wiltshire. By zooming in on Seend you can identify specific paths by path number. It is also useful to have the guidance documents relating to landowner and walkers responsibilities in the countryside.

West Wilts Footpath Working party, under the guidance of the Countryside Access Officer and his team, have been very active in the North of the parish , re-establishing and opening up several paths by clearing, erecting two sleeper bridges and installing new stiles. We thank them for this excellent work.

Penny England

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## **Seend Playgroup Report for the Annual Parish Meeting.**

Despite the pandemic Seend Playgroup has had a successful year. We were closed from late March until June. We re-opened in July with slightly reduced numbers of children and staff. Some of our routines and activities were altered or curtailed to abide by the government restrictions, and lots of cleaning was done each session. The pavilion floor has never been so clean for so long!

We were sad to say farewell to Amy Haines in July, but welcomed Val Rodgers in September to take her place.

Christmas was different with no parents and friends in to watch our Nativity Play. The play was videoed on different days to involve all our children, and put on memory sticks for parents to purchase. This worked well and the children enjoyed it.

Our numbers have increased over the year, and in January we extended our opening hours on a Thursday. We are now open Mon, Tues, Thurs, and Fri from 8.45 am to 2.45 pm. We would like to thank the Lye Field Committee for accommodating us at the Pavilion. We also thank our dedicated members of staff and all the families supporting their local community Playgroup.

*Liz Futter (Chairperson)*

## Seend Community Centre – report to the Parish Council 2021

The Community Centre has been closed for most of the last 12 months. We did open the bar in the main hall in line with Covid restrictions for use in the summer, along with the garden and the lounge bar on very quiet nights, however it soon became apparent that the Centre can not make enough income to cover its costs without large-scale events and more people coming to the Centre on a regular basis.

With no information about when restrictions would be lifted, we made the sad decision to close the Centre and make the Centre Manager position redundant. This took effect in November, by chance at around the same time that bars and pubs were obliged to close again anyway. Since the government's roadmap was published, we have started to consider reopening fully and appointing a full-time staff member, though all of this is contingent on the roadmap continuing as planned.

We have had a small amount of use by a support group in recent months and we are now taking bookings for the second half of the year, in the hope that these can go ahead. The Treasurer has applied successfully for those grants which have been available, which has covered the costs incurred during 2020 when our losses exceeded our income, allowing us to reopen with the books balanced.

We have been very grateful to various organisations such as the Panto group, Short Mat Bowls and the Parish Council itself for donations which represent all or part of the money they would have spent hiring the building.

Hatty Stafford Charles

Chairman, Management Committee, Seend Community Centre

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### Friends of Seend School (FOSS)

It has been a very unusual year for FOSS with many planned activities curtailed and opportunities for fundraising limited, however things haven't been static, we have elected a new Chair after Peter Kay has stepped down after years of hard work. We also elected a new Treasurer, Lottie Gill, who takes over from Sam Barrett, who did an excellent job previously. Despite restrictions and lockdowns we managed a few events, such as the harvest pumpkin trail, Christmas online raffle raising £544, buying each child a lockdown hero teddy bear for their hard work in difficult times adapting to home learning, or being in key worker bubble, and last but not least paying for a circus skills video conference for the children. Hopefully as things start to return to a more familiar normality we will be able to announce many more events and enrichment activities for the wonderful children of Seend School. Looking forward with positivity to the rest of the school year and beyond.

Nick Collinge-Cubberley - FOSS Chair

## **REPORTS FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 5 MAY 2021 from Tessa Doe**

### **Seend Fawlty Players**

Since our report for the 2019 annual meeting, we provided the entertainment for the WI Centenary party – a well-received selection of (mostly comic) songs and readings about the various stages in women’s lives, culminating in a rendition of ‘WI’ to the tune of ‘YMCA’ with appropriate actions. Fortunately, we performed our 41<sup>st</sup> village panto, Jack and the Beanstalk, a month or so before the first lockdown began, raising £300 each for Friends of Seend School, Lavington School and Alzheimers’ Support – the latter in memory of Mike Ridgway who was a Fawlty Player and scenery designer for a number of years as well as being an activist and fundraiser for that charity. Because of Covid, we were unable to put on the planned St George’s Day entertainment for Seend Branch of the Royal British Legion, or produce a pantomime in February 2021, but we very much hope to be back on track for 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Proceeds from this panto will all go to Seend Community Centre as it has lost most of over a year’s income during the pandemic. In the meantime, we plan to produce a much-delayed ‘Not the Panto Show’ early this summer, consisting of readings, sketches and songs with buffet supper.

### **Seend & Bulkington Spotlight**

Ten issues of Spotlight magazine per annum have continued to be published regularly since the 2019 annual village meeting, although for several months during the spring and summer of 2020 we published online only to ensure our volunteer deliverers stayed safe. This initiated the continuing production of an online colour supplement to accompany each edition so that we can share colour photos of events and sights within the villages. The whole team was greatly saddened by the death of Joanna Goddard last November. We are grateful to Jan Field for taking over Joanna’s duties as printing team leader.

### **Seend Poetry Group**

Seend Poetry Group has continued to ‘meet’ during the pandemic but only via one evening every six weeks or so of emailing poems to the group reflecting a topic chosen in advance, including a few poems written by the members themselves. We hope to meet up in person again from an outdoor May meeting onwards when we shall continue to share a wide range of poems – anything from Shakespeare to John Cooper Clarke - but once again accompanied by wine, nibbles and face-to-face conversation. We are currently working our way through the senses and our next topic is taste and smell.

### **Seend WEA/Day Schools**

The group’s most recent Day Schools have been organised independently, outside the governance of the WEA (Workers’ Educational Association) largely because some of our most popular tutors no longer offer courses through that organisation. On 9<sup>th</sup> November 2019 Paul Chapman provided an excellent insight into the life and work of Stanley Spencer, and on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2020, Allan Phillipson gave us a wonderful session on Shakespeare’s version of the

Wars of the Roses, comparing the history with the plays. We hoped Paul Chapman could return to us in autumn 2020, when lifting of restrictions looked promising, but that of course had to be cancelled. We hope to be able to organise another event this autumn – either through the WEA or independently again. This will be advertised in Spotlight, via the Community Centre, on posters and on the village facebook page.

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## THE SEEND FUND

### REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 5.5.2021

The fund's income in 2020 was £3,231 – all of which was from our investment with the CCLA.

Donations were made to parishioners and others closely associated with the village. In addition there were expenses of £6.62 for a publicity campaign and, as is required by the fund's governing document, one-quarter of income from the previous year was paid to the PCC. In all, expenditure amounted to £3,417.

So expenditure was very slightly greater than income for the year but we have a reserve of some £15,000.

Detailed accounts are normally circulated at the annual parish meeting. These have been presented to the Parish Council but if anyone else would like to see them please contact me, either directly or through the clerk to the council, and it will be arranged.