



F O L S C News

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| | Caroline Astington | 241159 | Kevin Robinson | 241266 |
| | Jane Farenden | 241454 | Jock Lyon | 241762 |

Chairman's Report 2017

2016 is probably a year that most of us will want to forget with the consequences of various elections and referendums yet to unfold but we will have to wait and see.

However, 2016 was an excellent year for FOLSC both in terms of income and success of our events. Expenditure has been nil. The PCC have made no requests for financial assistance. As minimal work regarding the quinquennial report was carried out a while ago, this year should be time for the second stage, which of course will be rather more expensive. As time flies by it will soon be time for yet another report to be carried out.

We did make a request to the PCC for a meeting so that we could explain our limitations as to what we can assist with. This has not yet come to fruition but I am sure would prove fruitful and helpful to both parties if it does.

There are more Chinese whispers regarding the proposed toilet installation. FOLSC would like to be kept abreast of the situation. Apart from a general interest in the project once it is up and running, the structure I presume would become part of the fabric of the building and thus enters our remit.

Again, we had a wonderful Harvest window with our thanks to the girls. I do not know how the male trustees could cope without the very artistic talents the ladies possess.

As I have said before the people to thank is endless but I must mention spouses, both male and female. The village shop again came up trumps by acting as our box office.

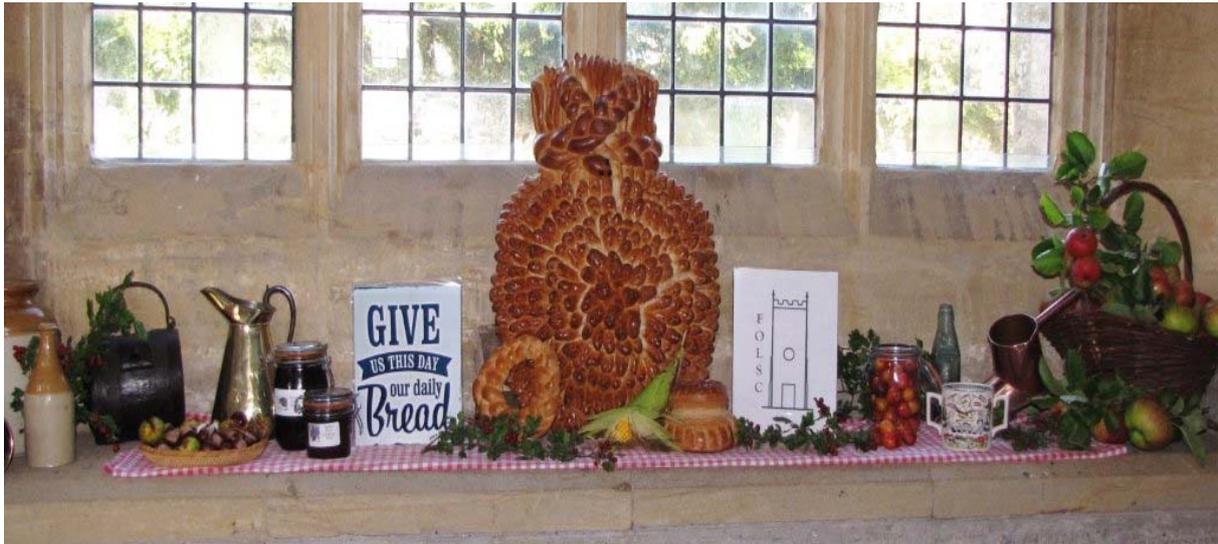
We have received another donation from Tom's Place at Bridge Barns. Thanks again, we must get you to one of our events sometime.

We have a Trustee standing down this year - Alec Lyons. I think the amount of wine we have to get through at our meetings was too onerous for him!!! Thanks for your support Alec. We therefore have a vacancy for a trustee. If anyone would like to join us, please contact me or any trustee. If we are inundated, we will have a vote at the AGM.

Once again thanks to all who support us throughout the year. I look forward to seeing you at the **AGM Thursday, 23rd February at 7.00 for 7.30pm at the Village School.**

David Aitken Chairman

FOLSC Harvest Festival Window 2016



Treasurer's Report

During 2016 we have been well supported by members and guests resulting in three highly profitable events, two of which contributing more than a thousand pounds each to the maintenance fund. Subscription income is slightly down on last year largely due to members moving on but it is sad to report the death of two of those members.

During the year we were not called upon to fund any work on the fabric of the church. As a result, we have seen the fighting fund break the £50,000 mark which is a very impressive result and ensures that we will be able to react positively to all but the biggest emergencies. Indeed, we are aware of some substantial remedial work that needs to be undertaken during 2017.

At the end of the year we had £8,884 in our current account and £42,887 in our deposit account. As you will all be aware, interest rates are at an all-time low. Our deposit account interest at CCLA is competitive with the high-street banks.

During the year, we lost 4 members and gained two so the Membership now stands at 62 for the end of the year.

Final accounts are in the process of being audited and will be presented to the members at the AGM.

Long Sutton PCC Report

How time flies! It only seems a few weeks ago that I was writing the churchwarden's report for FOLSC and yet a complete year has passed by.

Once again the PCC has not needed to call upon FOLSC for funds and any changes or improvements that have been undertaken have been financed by the PCC or personal giving. I would also like to thank everyone involved in their voluntary roles keeping our beautiful church in such good condition including cleaning the interior of the building, brightening the brasses, arranging the flowers and tidying the churchyard. There are so many people who do so much and so it was wonderful to have a Volunteers Thank You event last November for all those who play vital roles in keeping our church in A1 condition.

There have been many discussions about reordering the church and there are still plans to make the building fit for a twenty-first century community. Discussions are underway to make any changes as appealing to all users without creating a division in our ranks.

We are fast approaching the end of the current quinquennial and so the PCC will be asking builders to tender for the outstanding minor repairs required before the next inspection in 2018. Once the estimates have been obtained the PCC will ask FOLSC for assistance in funding the necessary works.

Like last year, numbers attending regular services remain steady. Special services continue to attract good attendance and this past Christmas saw 250 adults and children attend the carol service.

Tim Creegan, Churchwarden
January 2017

Faith: Hope: Charity

Holy Trinity Church, with its impressive pulpit and rood screen, attracts visitors from afar, to which the Visitors' Book bears witness. Margaret Beaufort, known as Mother of the Tudors, owned several manors in Somerset and is reputed to have helped the people of Long Sutton build their church in 1490. Exactly 500 years later, at the end of the last century, £70,000 was raised by the parish to restore the building. Past and present residents gave their generous support to the project. Twelve years later, further demands on our pockets were made to repair the tower to the tune of £22,000.

Thanks to the initiative and goodwill of a group of parishioners, Friends of Long Sutton Church (FOLSC) was formed in 2005 as a registered charity, governed by a Board of Trustees, with the objective of making funds available to help maintain the fabric of the church. Since then thousands of pounds have been raised and we are grateful to the Trustees for all their efforts.

We do not need reminding of the two thefts of lead from the church roof, resulting in the ruination of the organ. FOLSC came to the rescue by paying for the installation of an alarm system and footing the bill for the second theft. The generosity of our village is enormous, generous in both time and effort as well as cash. Long lists of volunteers who clean the church, polish the brasses, decorate, run coffee mornings and cater for every conceivable occasion, all help to ensure that the church is the centre of the community.

In this day and age, it is right that the building should be used for other occasions. We should also remember that the church is a house of prayer which sends out a message of hope and is still treasured by many to celebrate family occasions – baptisms, weddings, funerals and thanksgiving services. During term-time school children attend every week and it is a joy to welcome members of other churches on special occasions. The “faithful few” attend Sunday and/or mid week services with unfailing regularity. The church stands as a witness to the world of the faith of succeeding generations. Long may it remain.

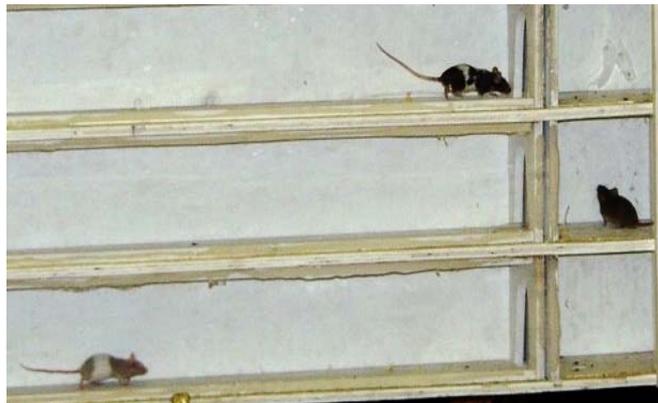
Roger Cox FOLSC Member and Villager

Grand Mouse Race - Spring 2016

What a night we had! On Saturday, 9th April the Long Sutton Village Hall was packed with a loyal band of FOLSC members, supporters and friends all out to enjoy themselves while making money for a great cause.



The evening was organised by FOLSC trustee Kevin Robinson. Those who had attended our last mouse event 6 years ago knew exactly what to expect, whilst those who did not had a treat in store! The logistics were slickly handled by the Masquerade Carnival Club who clearly know a thing or two about rodent racing! Eight lanes were visible behind a Perspex screen and we all had the opportunity to become owners by purchasing a mouse and lane for each race by way of an auction. Each of the 8 races on the card was sponsored by local businesses and to add to the fun we could bet on the 8 runners having first checked out their form, whiskers and tail!



Our vocal supporters, encouraged by a freely flowing FOLSC bar, soon got into the swing of things and the evening was deemed a huge success by all who attended. Rumour has it that a select few (perhaps with insider information?) backed sufficient winners to walk away with a profit. Others departed with rather less money than they arrive with but still with smiles on their faces knowing that they had had an excellent evening while helping build the FOLSC fighting fund. The event



delivered an outstanding profit to the bottom line of £1,132 many thanks to all who attended.



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FOLSC Shorts & Shades Summer Party

Our earlier publicity advertised the FOLSC 'Shorts & Shades' party as the event of the local summer season and judging from feedback received from our guests this was no mere exaggeration.



The village Hall was decked out to reflect summer holidays and our Pimms' bar quickly put arriving guests in the party mood. We were royally entertained with two excellent sets by local band **Twisted Vinyl**. Dressed in slick dark suits combined with low lighting, smoke on stage and a sultry night, the parallels with the Fab Four were clear and the atmosphere was much as it would have been in Liverpool's Cavern Club 50 years ago. Despite their youth the band performed some fantastic covers of hits from the Shadows, Elvis and much else besides, finishing with what else but 'Twist and Shout'!



In the interval burgers and sausages were served, complemented by a fine array of salads; many thanks to Martin Underwood for being our BBQ Chef for a second year. 'Pudding' was provided in the form of 'stop me and buy one' ice cream which certainly hit the spot on a sticky July evening. The financial result on the night delivered a stunning profit of £1,180; this in turn means the FOLSC "fighting fund" has now tipped the scales for the first time ever with a credit balance in excess of £50,000! We would like to thank all our members and others in the community who turned out in strength to party with us and also to the hardworking team at the Long Sutton Village shop who helped to make this a sell out event.



Autumn Outing with Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde

To conclude the 2016 season FOLSC scored another first by bringing live theatre to Long Sutton on Sunday, 16th October. Our capacity audience forsook the attractions of 'Poldark' and 'Strictly' and instead enjoyed the Pantaloon Theatre Company's unique interpretation of Robert Louis Stevenson's murky tale of murder, mystery and transmutation.



A talented young cast of just three actors retold the 1886 tale when Jekyll discovers a drug that transforms him, thus enabling him to unleash his dark side onto the streets of Victorian London. He soon, however, discovers the price of his double life and the production explores the struggle between good and evil, the conscious and unconscious until it is finally revealed the honourable Dr Jekyll and the dastardly Mr Hyde are one and the same person. The minimal but effective stage props, supported by creative lighting and with interludes of music, comedy, panto and audience interaction, meant the show had something for everyone. We received a subsequent message from the cast to say how much they had enjoyed their visit with such a brilliant village hall and friendly and welcoming audience!



Postscript: The Strange “Case” of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde takes on whole new meaning!

Long Sutton is a quintessential English village, nestling on the edge on the Somerset Levels with a population of about 850. It has a classic village green, a single shop, an excellent pub and a fine church dating from 1493. Not too much happens in Long Sutton. The local constabulary rarely visit this rural community other than occasionally setting up a mobile speed trap on the A 372. Crime is minimal and talk amongst the locals over the bar in the Devonshire Arms at a weekend is more often of sheep rustling, poaching or this year’s cider apple harvest! The most exciting incident in recent years was when a lorry load of illegal immigrants were found hidden in a passing truck and the Village Hall acted as a temporary holding area, whilst the authorities decided what to do with them. Long Sutton appears to have more synergy with Ambridge (without the odious and recently departed Mr Titchener of course!) rather than Midsomer. But all this was all about to change!

The peace of this rural idyll was shattered early Monday morning 17th October, 2016, as the children were arriving for the new week at Long Sutton primary school. Many took the short cut through the adjacent Village Hall car park when one of the pupils spotted a black attaché case, apparently abandoned. Being children one of the more adventurous decided this needed to be investigated further, picked it up and arrived at school with the immortal words: ‘Look Miss what I found in the car park!’ Taking no chances, a school administrator removed the bag to a secure holding area, the children were all evacuated to a safe place and a call put through post haste on 101 to report the find to the local ‘plod’. The staff were understandably worried in these times of heightened security for the safety of their young charges and were influenced by airport warnings that state ‘any unaccompanied luggage may be a security threat and will be removed and destroyed’.

The call was answered remarkably promptly (by local standards) and in record time not one but two squad cars raced through the village, blue lights flashing and sirens wailing. The uniformed officers initially secured the area and then approached the mystery case. It did not appear to have any device attached and an Officer gingerly released the lock. The contents, however, raised more questions than answers. A Victorian style glass phial was discovered (some reports state this contained a green liquid) and was of the type used for medical purposes in the 19th century. This was accompanied by a jar of a white powder of indeterminate type, and finally a painted sign reading simply ‘Intermission’. The police determined the find to be suspicious rather than life threatening and the case and contents were removed, one assumes for further laboratory analysis.

Following some local investigation, the truth can now be told. It appears when loading their van late on a cold October evening, one of the Pantaloon Theatre Company actors, Dr Jekyll’s (or was it Mr Hyde’s?) portmanteau slipped and fell from the back of the vehicle and remained unnoticed until discovered by young hands the following morning. FOLSC Trustee and event organiser Geoff Pringle called Chris Keyna, who took the part of lawyer George Utterson, Dr Jekyll’s friend. The players were unaware either of the loss or the fact ‘The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll’ had taken on a more literal meaning and brought more than a little Monday morning excitement to an otherwise sleepy Somerset village! In response to Pringle’s questioning Chris advised the phial was Jekyll’s potion to metamorphose into Hyde. The mysterious ‘white powder’ that had worried the Somerset Constabulary was, Chris stated, simply baby dusting powder used as a stage prop. But he would say that, wouldn’t he?



The mystery within a mystery is now solved. The Pantaloons acquired a replacement case, phial and powder in time for their next performance. Geoff Pringle called Somerton Constabulary who advised the contents had been declared safe and as no illegal or explosive substances were found the case could be released to him from their custody (having been signed for in triplicate!) and will be restored to the Pantaloons when they are next in the area.

So, without meaning to mix our metaphors 'All's well that ends well' and the children (and staff!) of Long Sutton School enjoyed an unusual bit of Monday morning excitement.

By your local correspondent



FOLSC Present a 2017

**Another FOLSC interactive April Fools'
Quiz Extravaganza
1st April, 2017
Long Sutton Village Hall**