**FRIENDS OF HOLY TRINITY BLYTHBURGH**

**Chair’s Report for the year 2019**

As the Friends of Holy Trinity our aims are to sustain a broad membership in order to support the fabric and thereby the ministry of Holy Trinity and to spread information and increase interest in this historic church.

**Trustees**

In January 2018 our Trustees were: Meryl Doney (Chair), Sue Powell (Secretary), Sonia Boggis (Membership & Treasurer), Jenny Allen and Terry Goss.

In March, Sonia Boggis indicated that due to other commitments she would not be able to continue as a Trustee. The Trustees thanked Sonia for all her work on the 2019 accounts and membership. Meryl Doney resumed the role of Treasurer and Membership Secretary temporarily. In October 2019, Sue Gerrard, who has been a Friend since 2014, joined as a Trustee and took over the role of Treasurer. She was welcomed at our meeting on 14 October. We have subsequently had some difficulty in transferring a mandate for Sue with Barclay’s Bank, but this has now been arranged.

**Membership**

At the end of 2019 we had a total membership of 72 Friends. It was a bumper year for new members with eight people joining us during the year: Diana Shaw-Cotterell, Brenda Motley, John O’Brien, Peter Crowle, Richard Slawson, Malcolm & Meryl Doney and Michael Foster.

**Friends Open Afternoon**

A record crowd of some 60+ people attended the afternoon to hear Roy Tricker’s reminiscences of a lifetime of interest in historic churches. He lived up to his reputation as an entertaining and enthusiastic speaker and storyteller. Most people were able to stay as he conducted a tour of the church. After expenses, we were able to add £126.10 to our funds.

**Initiatives**

Early in the year it was decided that the Friends should offer a substantial grant towards the reglazing of the East window of the church. This was conveyed to the PCC and will contribute to their discussions about this project.

After the Open Afternoon we inaugurated a new category of Honorary Friend. This was offered in the first instance to the speaker, Roy Tricker, who happily accepted.

As part of a drive to recruit new members, we printed 200 cards with information about becoming Friends. These are now distributed in the church pews.

Colin Huggins took on the production of a Christmas card for the Friends, and Mary Gundry supplied a beautiful painting of the church in snow. Approximately half the run was sold and the profit of £652 was transferred to our funds.

Sadly, planning for the Open Afternoon and a Wine Tasting in 2020 had to be cancelled due to Coronavirus.

**Thank you**

I would like to say how very grateful and encouraged I am by the Trustees’ willingness to get involved in all these activities and plans. It is vital work for Holy Trinity.

MFD September 2020