

CANS REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 19TH MAY 2014

Margaret Hogg is now deputy chair with Barbara Rich also offering to come on the committee.

The last meeting we had was to discuss the notice board and whether there was an agreement to partly fund this from CANS, this was agreed and reported at the following PC meeting.

Memorial book

Having spoken with Mike they have set a dead line of November to try and finish the memorial book, they are hoping to have a draft version to see sometime in June.

Notice board

We have raised the monies needed for the Notice Board apart from the final £500.00; it is unfortunate that we could not have this in place for the May Fair but perhaps next year.

We did write to a number of local businesses asking if they wished to contribute but unfortunately received no replies, we are at the present time waiting for replies from a grant application.

We are concerned that the longer it is left the more chance of the cost rising and we will forever be chasing a goal we may not reach.

May Fair

Following the success of the first May Fair seven years ago it was decided to try and make this a regular annual event and at that time The May Fair became a CANS project. So far we have been relatively successful and next year will be the eighth May Fair.

The organisation of each year's May Fair is carried out with assistance from the Parish Office and without the support they provide it would be impossible to stage the May Fair at all. We are extremely grateful for their help and the support of the Parish Council.

This year we had another successful day and once again the weather was very good.

Thanks must also go to Bob for keeping the entertainment running smoothly for the whole day.

We started with the opening of The May Fair by our twinning guests and then the children from the school entertained with Country Dancing, a group put together especially for the May Fair.

After complaints that there was not enough for the little ones in past years, we arranged for Molly Muddles to present a show and this was a great success.

Once again we had Punch and Judy throughout the day, QMTC sang some favourite songs.

After lunch we had Skin Tight Samba liven up the Cross with their drums etc. It was lovely to see the younger children dancing in the road.

I think the majority of the children who visited the fair also had their face painted by Angel Art, again this proved to be a great success.

Molly, Angel Art, Skintight and Punch & Judy have all been asked if they will come again next year.

We had the 1610 climbing wall and although it cost a lot of money to hire it I am sure you will agree it was a great attraction to the fair, we had some sponsored climbs as well as individuals climbing for the fun of it. With more time I am sure we can attract more people to participate thereby covering the cost of the wall and hopefully a small profit to go towards local projects. We have asked them to provisionally book the date for next year.

The day was only marred by the thoughtlessness of two people who could not be bothered to move their cars despite adequate notice and several reminders to do so and Castle Windows who decided they could leave early and drive through the crowds, they will not be invited again.

We now have such a number of regular stall holders that most people know what to do and where to go.

We need to have more volunteers on the day to man the barriers and the office as we struggled this year and some people had to do a few extra shifts.

Although the May Fair does not make huge profits it does showcase our village as it attracts people and stall holders from a wide area of the Southwest, this year we even had a brewery from Cambridgeshire. People see our village as a thriving and active community with all the local amenities.

Lastly on the May Fair we would like to thank all those residents who removed their cars etc. from the streets, this was a superb effort, thank you.

Blue Plaques

I was asked in the PC meeting on 12th May if I would be happy to have new project and this would be for the plaques for houses of interest in the village. This is something we will look into very soon and hope to involve other people from the village.

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Report to the Nether Stowey Annual Parish Meeting – Monday 19 May 2014

The past twelve months have been a very good year for the village hall. With the help of villagers who have given up their time voluntarily, the main hall, toilets, stage and small hall toilets have all been decorated, with new curtains and stage curtains purchased for the main hall to complement those in the small hall. Externally, replacement soffits and fascias have been fitted to the front of the hall and the kitchen has been equipped with a new dishwasher, pans, utensils and glassware. Revenue from fund raising has increased to almost £2250 although overall revenue has reduced due to the loss of QMTC to Stogursey and reduced Brownie camps, Dance sessions, Yoga, Zumba and Parish Council use. Revenue from parties, Kick Boxing Stowey Bears and the bouncy castle has increased. With an increase in children's parties to 15, the bouncy castle has drawn in new users to the hall broadening village participation and increased revenues.

Other achievements last year included renewing the Quality Standard Hallmark 1 and gaining Hallmark 2. During November the committee distributed a questionnaire to every home in the village seeking information on areas of the hall we could improve, events or clubs that villagers would like to see introduced to the hall and guidance on the future of the hall. Although the response was a little disappointing, much interest was shown in the introduction of a movie night and a farmers' market. The committee has sanctioned a trial of a movie night over a three month period later this year and we are seeking volunteers to help with this and to consider a farmers' market.

We continue to work to attract other local groups and trust that the Parish council will be able to use the hall more frequently in the coming year.

Attendance at our AGM was higher this year and the new committee was asked by villagers whether we would consider partnering with the Playing Field committee in a new hall. This was not an option put to the village in our questionnaire last autumn but the committee thought that this should nevertheless be investigated as the benefits to the village of a combined venue would be high and it would ensure that modern facilities were available to both groups and keep running costs minimized. We have consequently written to the Playing Field Committee seeking their participation in a series of meetings to consider this proposition. We believe that in a short period of time (4 months perhaps) a combined group should identify what each group would ideally like in a combined hall, draw up an outline plan, identify a potential location, benefits, drawbacks, problems and obtain budgetary costs. The village hall committee would like to seek the help in this from an experienced retired builder who acted as project manager for Burtle village hall if this is agreeable to the Playing Field committee.

As always, we welcome additional people to help in any way you are able to and if you were kind enough to respond to our survey saying you would help, thank you. We will be in touch!

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who has attended events in our hall or hired it for private events, helped with fund raising or redecoration and DIY work last year, the clubs that hire our hall and the Parish Council for their support as without you the village would lose this facility and community asset - a meeting place for all

.

Ray Brooks

Chair

Nether Stowey Recreation Ground Charity No.304590

<http://www.netherstoweyrg.co.uk/>

Report to the Parish Council May 2014

The committee of 6 volunteers undertake various fund-raising events through-out the year to provide for the regular maintenance of the playing fields and to support grant applications to pay for the regeneration of the facilities.

In the last 12 months the committee has undertaken the following:

- Organised the annual Party-in-the-Park, Car Boot Sales and the PFR Club (formerly the lottery) – all essential fund-raisers.
- Delivered a new Multi-Use-Games Area with funding from Viridor, Sport England and Sedgemoor District Council. The official opening event was very successful and included a fun dog show as well as taster sessions of a variety of sports.
- Co-ordinated the long-overdue clearance of the hedgerows and borders. Thank you to Magnox and Cannington College for their part in this.
- Purchased 2 new benches.

Also a community spirited benefactor has replaced the main gates and provided a new roof for the shelter.

Our thanks go to all of those people in the village who have helped make the last 12 months so successful.

The next 12 months will focus on continuing to organise fund-raising events and pursue grant applications for the regeneration of the children's play area and the new pavilion. At the same time maintenance will continue to be undertaken and we are exploring the possibility of offering a part-time paid position to someone to manage the MUGA.

Our meetings take place on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month 7pm in the Portacabin on the playing field (or in The George in the winter). Everyone is welcome.

Nether Stowey Annual Parish Meeting

Active Living

Report from Margaret Hogg

2013/14 was again a busy year for us with many interesting speakers. Comment from attendees being very appreciative, with an average mixed audience of seventeen every month.

We are still receiving a grant from SCC but we are not sure of the level of grant for this year as yet. We would like to thank NSPC for their grant support in the past in setting up Active Living, which is now self supporting.

Our monthly attendance fee has risen slightly from £2.00 to £2.50 which was accepted with good grace considering the quality of our speakers and the 'tea and cake'.

We are pleased to welcome two new volunteer helpers for this year, Sandy and Lucille.

We have a full program up to Christmas except for August when we are all on holiday, details of which can be found in the local shops and library and at the Parish Office.

We would like to thank all patrons for their continued support.

On behalf of Active Living
Margaret Hogg, Treasurer

NETHER STOWEY UNITED CHARITY

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2014

The Trustees met twice during 2013.
44 Christmas gifts were awarded, at a cost of £249.63.

W I Report 2014

In 2013, we celebrated our 90th Birthday with afternoon tea in the Village Hall. The County Chairman and our W I Advisor came along, and also members from the Quantock Group. Each month we have a speaker on topical subjects. The outing for 2013 was a visit to the American Museum in Bath.

We had our stall at the Nether Stowey May Fair, held a Flower show and a Christmas Market in the Village Hall and had Skittles at the George. We ended the year with our annual Christmas dinner.

We meet every second Thursday of the month in the Village Hall at 7.00pm. Annual membership is £34.70 or come along as a visitor for a small fee.

M. Harris - President

Quantock Players ▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼▲▼

Wendy Hobbs • Secretary • 6 Exeter Close • Nether Stowey, Bridgwater • Somerset TA5 1NR • Telephone 01278-733197

ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2014

Last year's Pantomime, Peter Pan, was a very successful show - no doubt due to the sudden influx of new members. At the auditions last July we were surprised and delighted to see seventeen new faces. Yes, seventeen! That left no doubt that, at last, we had enough members to perform Peter Pan. For several years the juniors had wanted us to do this show, but we never had a big enough cast to do so.

The script for this year's show has already been chosen, and we will be performing Puss In Boots. (Script provided by NODA Pantomimes) And, as always, any offers of help will be very much appreciated.

Wendy Hobbs, Secretary

Nether Stowey Annual Parish Meeting

Quantock Musical Theatre Company

Report from Malcolm Hogg, Chairman of QMTC

2013 was again a busy year for us with a concert to celebrate the 90 years of Disney. This was followed by our now annual visit to Dunster Castle to entertain visitors for the two evenings of Christmas songs during the Dunster by Candlelight weekend, once again we have been invited to return in 2014. We sang again at Bridgwater Angel Place and Hestercombe House Christmas Fair..

As chairman, every year I must make thanks once again for all the hard work by the organisers, directors, musical directors and the performers, back stage crews, front of house, Tea ladies (most important), last but not least our hard working committee, without their great input we would not exist. Thank you.

2014 sees us almost ready to start (June) our run of concert tours, title to be announced. We will be planning a new Christmas season as soon as this one comes to an end.

So, QMTC is alive and well, but you will note that we have moved house and are now based in Stogursey Youth Centre. We made the move in light of financial expediency but also in sad realisation that we were lacking in audience numbers in Nether Stowey. The committee made this decision based upon the viability of the Company

On behalf of the committee
Malcolm Hogg, Chairman
Quantock Musical Theatre Company

FRIENDS OF NETHER STOWEY LIBRARY

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2014

During the past year Committee Meetings have been held regularly, with our Committee membership rising from 7 to 10. There is usually a member of the Somerset Library Service in attendance. We continue with our aim of promoting increasing use of the Library, with the following events held on a regular basis.

Book Sales

Sales have been held, at monthly intervals, selling those books that have been donated by residents, but have not been taken into Library Service stock. The final Sale was held at the recent May Fair and the total amount raised through the sales, for the purchase of new books, is £941.31.

Tall Tales

Members of a U3A creative writing group read their short stories to an adult audience. These story-times for grown-ups are held bi-monthly on Friday mornings.

Family History Research

Following training in the use of the Ancestry website, Friends committee members help those interested in family history to use the website - free to Library users - and further their research.

Knit and Natter

Sessions in the Library every Wednesday morning. Considerable numbers of clothes for new-born babies have been knitted and sent to Eastern Europe and Africa.

Embroidery

This group meets twice a month, on Tuesday mornings.

Scrabble

Players meet weekly, on Friday afternoons.

Childrens' Storytime

A Class from the School visits the Library every Friday afternoon to choose books and then have stories read to them by one of the Friends.

100 word story Competition

A successful competition with entrants of all ages, run during August/September

Mah Jong

A Mah Jong group has been established, meeting on Wednesday afternoons.

Programme of Monthly Evening Talks

A programme of evening talks, held on the second Wednesday of each month and open to anyone, began in September 2013, and will run until June 2014. A programme for 2014-2015 is being prepared. The talks cover a wide range of topics. Average attendance is just over 30, with 57 people attending one of the talks.

Stall at the May Fair

A stall taken to promote the work of the Friends and the Library itself.

Nether Stowey Twinning Association

Report to Nether Stowey Annual Parish Meeting 19th May 2014

The twinning association exists to promote and foster relationships between the village and similar communities outside the UK, in the belief that exposure to another culture benefits the village and all those who participate. The aim is to encourage visits by individuals and groups between linked communities, particularly by children and young people, and the development of personal contacts so as to broaden understanding of each others' cultural, educational and commercial activities.

The present

At present Nether Stowey is twinned with the French village of Theillay, which is about 150 kilometres south of Paris, but consideration is being given to adding twinning arrangements with other EU countries. Theillay has a similar population to Nether Stowey, and is set in a beautiful rural area, densely wooded and surrounded by scores of ponds and small lakes. It is ideally placed to explore the chateaux and wine areas of the Loire.

The association receives no external funding at present (unlike our counterparts in Theillay) and relies on subscriptions and social events to fund its objectives. Adding more twinning arrangements in Europe may bring access to EU funding but the Association remains solvent at present.

The Association currently has around 60 members from Stowey and outlying villages. Annual fundraising events this year include an open gardens day in June, a Barbecue & Boules evening in September, a Safari Supper and monthly pub quizzes in the winter.

A small group from Nether Stowey visited Theillay in October 2013, and Nether Stowey hosted a visiting group of eight from Theillay in May this year.

The future

The association has suffered a decline from its peak a decade ago when large groups could fill a coach. The Association believes it needs to attract a younger generation to take up the reins and we are keen to work with other bodies in the village to bring the aims and benefits of twinning to a wider constituency. The committee is kept busy with the organisation of trips and events so there are plans to set up an advisory group, hopefully with younger members, and possibly including representatives from other bodies in the village, to consider and advise on the way forward. In particular we see potential in building a relationship with the school, with children and parents participating. A visit by a French class last year was very successful and it would be good to think that a similar visit from Nether Stowey could be arranged. (The requirements of DBS checks are seen as an area to be better understood and addressed.)

Initial contacts have been made with Stogursey Twinning Association, who have a very successful and long-standing relationship with a village near the Normandy coast. They have been very welcoming and we are keen to work with them, to learn from their success. Further in the future, Williton is twinned with a village less than thirty minutes from Theillay and we will explore ways we can collaborate in areas such as insurance and travel arrangements to save costs.

The Association would welcome approaches from any of the groups, clubs and associations in Nether Stowey to share, both to advance twinning and if they believe twinning can contribute to their own activities.



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www.mybooks4life.co.uk Mob:07503475861 (no reception locally)

ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

Charity begins at home and that has always been the foundation principle of the charity since it was formed in 1997. We have always been very much aware of the support that we have received from everyone locally, both financially and with donations.

Our venture into Eastover, Bridgwater taught us a great deal of what people needed and were looking for. So now that we are permanently back here in Nether Stowey. We are no longer a bookshop! Yes, we do have a tremendous wide variety of books but we now sell a vast variety of clothes to suit all ages. Many these items still have their labels on.

Many years ago there was a dress shop in this village and now with the cost of transport and the time also. We feel it is right to concentrate on serving the local people with a constantly changing stock of clothing. Eventually summer will come! In the meantime, you will find over 200 items of warm clothing including items to keep you dry. We have expanded our floorspace at the rear of the premises so that we can have permanent displays. These will include a vast range of household goods and appliances, including electrical. We have just sold a working Dyson for £35. The generosity in the surrounding area in giving us good quality items certainly encourages Margaret, who is loving the atmosphere that this village has. It took some time for her to get used to leaving the shop and premises unattended while she sorted out items for sale. In Eastover. There was never a day that passed without us having to apprehend someone who was attempting to steal. So Margaret has gradually relaxed and enjoys meeting the residents and visitors and it is very rarely a dog manages to get past the shop without an animated greeting.

We were able to support a number of local organisations again this past year (you do not need to be a charity to qualify for getting support from us. Our mandate is education and health, so we can be very flexible).

We are not a rich charity but we are a very efficient one in making money out of anything that we can recycle and we now make regular runs to Johnson's metals with scrap of all types including batteries. I personally enjoy these visits because it is quite surprising to see what is thrown out. I recently returned with over 20 kg of brand-new screws and drills of all sizes at scrap price!

Our bric-a-brac ranges from antique to modern and we have a good range of pictures in all mediums and reprints of old postcards to take you down memory lane. Our online turnover is growing slowly because we're not concentrating as much as we should do

because a lot of my time at the moment is being taken up with restoring the house itself and making the outbuildings watertight.

Our overseas projects are doing very well. On our last visit to India in 2012-13. We stayed with the Brothers at the Vocational Training Centre and Margaret was very keen to see more skilled training for girls. This was taken up immediately and now an outside company that specialises in beauty products has set up classes and training within the school. Again this is no cost to us as it will be financed by this company and this, of course, applies to all the other trades. The local community and government support the training centre because of its positive input of employment locally with a continued 100% pass rate since 2002. The government approached the Montfort Brothers and asked them if they would facilitate special classes for boys and girls who had failed their 10th standard mostly because they had been looking after their elderly parents or other children. This is a unique project because at the moment it is not within the normal government education program and therefore their future employment was very bleak. They are now achieving exam results of 84-87% each year. Many of these students are then staying on to qualify in a skill which of course will give them the opportunity of treble the income of an unskilled worker.

The first floor of the of the new school at Shildi in the state of Pune is now complete and is taking in children from the local area and the deaf children are no longer a segregated.

The new director St Joseph's has had to be quite strict with discipline to improve the standard of the exam results. Too much time had been given for recreation and sport but children in these cultures are very respectful naturally and in a very short time there has been a very good improvement in exam results.

We feel very honoured to be part of the Montfort Brothers because it has enabled us to witness the tremendous changes in these children's lives without the enormous cost this entails when an Western organisation sets up a school/orphanage because they do not get any help from the Indian government and this is the case in other countries as well. We do not have to pay for teachers because they are government funded and this means that proper wages and pensions attract quality teachers.

This year we will introduce the style of fundraising that we used in Bridgwater, where Marion Evered ran with volunteers the shop for a day and kept every penny that they sold. So if any organisation is interested, please get in touch with us and we will give you more detail.

Mervyn S Todd: Margaret E.Patel: Trustees

P.S.-URGNETLY WANTED FABRICS/CLOTHS/FOOTWEAR IN ANY CONDITION AS WE RECYCLE RAG AS WELL (must be clean). Used stamps & postcards.

**URBAN SAINTS REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2014
(combined report for Urban Saints Minis, Juniors and Inters)**

Urban Saints (previously Crusaders) is a national Christian interdenominational youth organisation. In Nether Stowey, we run three groups, Minis – for children in school years 1 and 2 (around 6-7 year olds), Juniors – for children in school years 3, 4, 5, and 6 (around 7-11 year olds) and Inters (for those at Secondary School), with a total of around 45 children and young people. Minis and Juniors meet weekly in term-time, in the Stable Loft and/or Church Centre, with Christian teaching, fun, games, crafts, and a multitude of different activities. Inters meet fortnightly in term-time for fun, Christian teaching, games, discussion and cake. Trips to Hollywood Bowl and Kilve Court, an annual camp in Devon, and a barbecue at Ramscombe have also been popular.

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Mrs Kerry Trout
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Mrs Kathryn Pike
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