

**Friends of the
Church of
St Mary Magdalene
Huntshaw**

Annual Report

1st February 2019

Report compiled by Audrey Alimo and Lorraine Hooper

Joint Chairs

January 2019



SUPPORTED BY:



The Bideford Bridge Trust

**The Diocese of Exeter's
Growing the Rural Church
Project**

Details of Officers

Co Chairs:

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Treasurer: Leslie Wall



Secretary: Jacqui Banfield

Committee members



Emma Barrow



Michael Barrow



Mark Hooper

Summary of objectives as set out in the constitution

- a) To raise and administer funds for the maintenance and improvement of the fabric and contents of the Church of St Mary Magdalene Huntshaw and the churchyard in which the church building is situated.
- b) To encourage enjoyment and appreciation of the Church and its use by the whole community.

Membership

The Friends of the Church of St Mary Magdalene Huntshaw was formally established on 16th February 2018

Any person who supports the objectives of the Friends may become a member

Introduction

Well what a first year for the Friends! We have said goodbye to 2018 and are now well into 2019 and our second year as a group. Back in February we hit the ground running and have achieved an incredible amount in a short time. Someone recently commented that we have taken Huntshaw by storm! We have forged strong links with the PCC and seen congregations increase significantly at our services. As part of the Growing the Rural Church project we have had great support from the Diocese and have a clear vision of where we want to be in five years from now. That is to see the church restored to its former glory and back at the centre of village life as a flexible community resource.

What have we achieved in 2018?

1. Our congregations have increased

We have helped to implement a monthly family-focused and inclusive All Age service which was very different to what many of us were used to but we

found it refreshing and engaging. The

more traditional evening service continues, and both services have seen

congregation numbers increase. We

have celebrated a range of festivals

including the Harvest Festival which saw

the church festooned with fruit, vegetables, grain and hay.

On 11th November, Huntshaw hosted the Remembrance

Sunday service and welcomed congregations from our

neighbouring churches. The service was a moving tribute to the brave soldiers

who *gave their today for our tomorrow*. The service began with the laying of

wreaths, crosses and photographs which was followed by a two-minute silence

and the Last Post. The names of soldiers from the five local villages were read

out with many of their descendants listening. Watching

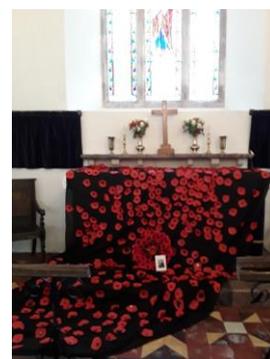
silently were our Tommy silhouettes which form part of a permanent exhibition entitled 'There but not there'.

Christmas was busy with a carol service and evening prayers

with carols. Again the church was beautifully decorated with

floral displays and candles along with a stable complete with

the three wise men and Mary and Joseph who watched over a crib containing the baby Jesus.



We joined the Church of England's #FollowTheStar campaign which was a journey through the 12 days of Christmas that invited everyone to travel in the footsteps of the Wise Men to meet Jesus. It offered fourteen daily reflections that began on Christmas Eve and finished on the Epiphany (6 January). The daily messages were each accompanied by a picture, a short Bible passage, a prayer and an action to reflect on. As part of #FollowTheStar campaign, we became a **Star Church** and displayed a star in the South window of the church.

2. We have launched a programme to get essential repairs carried out



As most of you will know the church needs a partial new roof, work to the tower to make it weatherproof, upgrading of rainwater goods, masonry repairs and internal floor repairs. We have achieved three estimates for the work from local contractors and are seeking around £200,000 (inc. of VAT) to fund the work. In other words we have a mammoth task ahead of us! To make the fundraising manageable we have split the work into two phases:

Phase 1 includes the tower work and the internal floor repairs. We hope to complete this work in 2019.

Phase 2 consists of the remainder of the work: a new roof on the north aisle, vestry, chancel and the porch, upgrading of rainwater goods and masonry repairs. We anticipate carrying out this work in 2020/21 pending awards from grant funders.

We have had a successful year of fundraising and are very grateful to the Coastal Recycling Community Fund for provisionally awarding £25,000 towards the tower repairs. We expect to sign the contract in the coming weeks with a view to carrying out the work later in the year. We are also grateful to the Bideford Bridge Trust for awarding us £1,000. Other grant applications have been submitted.

3. We are creating a flexible community space in the church

We are well on the way to creating an open space at the rear of the nave for prayer groups, Sunday schools, meetings and other events. Broadband equipment is soon to be installed in the tower (through Rural Reach Ltd) which means that we will have internet access. This opens the possibility of arranging film nights, training courses and networking with other groups across the globe.

We intend to permanently remove three pews and furnish the area with a carpet and comfortable chairs. The pews will be used elsewhere in the church. A Faculty (permission from the Diocese) has been agreed in principle and we have completed a 28-day public notification period. Pending the granting of the Faculty we hope to do the work in June/July with a formal launch of the area in the Autumn.

4. We installed our first exhibition “There but not there”



On Sunday, 11th November (Armistice Day) we launched a permanent exhibition of Tommy silhouettes. The project is part of a national campaign sponsored by the Armistice and Armed Forces Communities Programme. The project’s aims are to commemorate those who died in the First World War through installations of silhouettes and Tommies wherever there is a Roll of Honour and to educate all generations, particularly today’s younger generation, born nearly 100 years after the outbreak of WW1, to understand what led to the deaths of 888,246 British and Commonwealth service personnel. We have installed six Tommies in the church. At the moment they are seated at the rear of the nave but they are mobile and will be moved around to other parts of the church in due course.

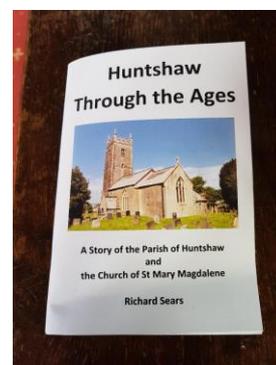
5. We have produced our first book “Huntshaw Through the Ages”

Richard Sears, local boy and historian has written an informative book about bygone in Huntshaw.

Read about:-

- The poetry under the carpets
- Why the President of France wrote to the people of Huntshaw in July 1918
- The part Huntshaw played in the Battle for Torrington in 1646
- The rebuilding of the church in 1439
- Over a 100 years of Huntshaw School
- The Bronze Age dagger found in the burial fields at Huntshaw Cross
- Huntshaw's pub: the Maltscop Inn

£5 a copy with all proceeds going to the church. Available from the church, any committee member or contact: rsears2017@gmail.com



6. We are looking after our bats in belfry

As part of preparation for the repair work to the church, we have commissioned a bat survey. This has confirmed that we have bats with a possible breeding colony. Species include Brown long-eared bats, Serotine, *Myotis*, Common Pipistrelle, Barbastelle, Noctule, Lesser horseshoe and Greater horseshoe. The fact that our church is home to such a variety of bats is to be celebrated and we are hoping to put on a display on bats later in the year. However, the presence of bats has implications for any repair work we do and there is currently an ongoing surveillance programme in place. See our website for the report on the bat survey.

7. We have hosted a range of fundraising events

Our fundraising events programme kicked off with an Open Day on Saturday, 21st April. Around 70 people came along to find out about the essential repair work and to hear about our plans for raising the necessary funds. There were reports, plans, drawings and photographs for people to inspect. The day included a book signing of "Huntshaw Through the Ages" by Richard Sears.

In early June we held a flower festival entitled "Reflections on War and Peace: Commemorating 100 years since the end of the First World War" Magnificent floral displays around the church highlighted the horrors experienced by the soldiers on the front, those left at home and the animals that played such an important part in the war.



Later in June we joined up with Alverdiscott Friends to host a drinks, canapes and barbecue. The evening started at Huntshaw and finished at Alverdiscott. It was a sunny and warm evening with great food (apart from the odd burnt banger!) and plenty to drink. A merry time was had by all.



The good old British weather forced us to cancel a summer barbecue, but we held it in September as part of the Devon Historic Churches Trust "Ride and Stride" event where we raised £41 for the Trust. In October we enjoyed the annual harvest supper and in December we held a Christmas party in which we were entertained by Truffetete, a talented five-piece band who played French and English folk music.

8. Restoring the bells



Many of us would like to hear the three bells ringing again and Richard Sears is taking this project forwards. He has met with the Diocese Consultant on Bells and the Bells and Bellfries Advisor to the Guild of Devon Bellringers along with representatives that restore church bells. The first thing to say is that the three bells and the wooden casings that house them are listed by ChurchCare and there are strict restrictions on any work that is done on them. Two of the bells are 'out of tune' while the third has a crack in it. The work will involve removing the bells either through the roof of the tower or by lowering them down into the church and then transporting them to a bell foundry in Loughborough. As the heaviest bell is half a ton this will be a major undertaking. Discussions are ongoing.

9. What else did we do?

One of our key aims is to reduce the carbon footprint of the church and our first foray into this arena was to implement a policy of no single-use plastics in the building. We got our website up and running and started a graveyard survey (to be continued when the better weather arrives). And we have put a new roof on the shed at the back of the church which means that we have a dry place to store equipment.

10. What next?

We have planned a busy programme of events and services for the coming year and you can see our plans on the website. As a taster of what is to come, we are hosting an exhibition entitled "Living Churchyards" produced as part of the Exeter Eco Diocese work in partnership with Devon Wildlife Trust. Confirmed dates are Sunday, 10th March, 12:30 – 3 pm and Sunday 24th March 12:30 - 3 pm. To include complimentary tea and cake.

ACCOUNTS FROM 16TH FEBRUARY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2018

<u>Income</u>		<u>Running total</u>
Open Day 21st April 2018		
Membership	£42	
Donations	£55.94	
Teas	£ 101.30	£119.24
 Book Sales from 21st April 2018		
Initial	£365	
Ongoing	£80.00	£564.24
 Flower Festival 2nd/3rd June 2018		
Donations	£119.77	
Teas	£ 135	£899.24
 Joint barbeque with Alverdiscott 30th June 2018		
Canapes	£110	
Barbeque	£169.64	£1178.65
 Donation from Bideford Bridge Trust 25th September 2018		
	£1,000	£2178.65
 Barbeque after Harvest Service 9th September 2018		
Donations	£53.50	£2232.15
 Christmas party 8th December 2018		
	£847.50	£3079.65

Friends of the Church of St Mary Magdalene Huntshaw

Expenditure

Donation to the Devon Historic Churches Trust £41.00

Opening Bank Balance as at 16th February 2018 £0.00

Closing Bank Balance as at 31st December 2018 £3079.65

Creditors:

To date there is an outstanding amount of £72.60 owing to Huntshaw Village Hall (Hire for Christmas party) Cheque not cashed at time of writing this report.

Expenditure for events/the book etc was covered by public donations

Audrey Alimo

Lesley Wall

Joint Chair

Treasurer

Conclusion

So, after an incredibly busy and successful year we want to thank everyone who has supported us by helping with events, donating refreshments, giving flowers to decorate the church and carrying out practical tasks. Your generosity and commitment have been outstanding and we are truly grateful. We would also like to thank everyone who has visited the church and supported our events. It wouldn't have been the same without you! Our thanks go to the Parochial Church Council members who have guided and supported us during our first year. Finally, we thank the Coastal Recycling Community Fund for a generous provisional grant award and the Bideford Bridge Trust for their award.

Audrey Alimo and Lorraine Hooper

Joint Chairs, Friends of the Church of St Mary Magdalene

Further information

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or visit our website: <https://www.huntshawchurch.com>