Birlingham News online

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No. 273/4 Wednesday 13th April 2022

Editorial

With the Queen's Platinum Jubilee just seven weeks away, the programme of events is beginning to take shape.

A range of activities are being planned, beginning with a Quiz Night on the Friday.

The Saturday sees the main event, a street party to be held on the roads between the Village Hall and the church. This will include the children's 'Fit for a Queen' competition. A Music Night will be held during the evening.

On the Sunday morning the Parochial Church Council is organising a special Platinum Jubilee service. Following on from this there will be a traditional Pram Race around the church, always a firm favourite in Birlingham. The weekend will be rounded off with a Treasure Hunt around the village.

Full details of times and locations for these events will be circulated once the details have been finalised.

Although a number of families are taking the opportunity of the extended bank holiday to go away, the survey showed that there will still be plenty of people left in the village and that they are keen to take part in the Jubilee weekend. Support was particularly strong later in the week and as yet no activities have been planned for the Thursday.

A number of possible events were proposed and included in the survey. Almost everyone said they might attend the street party and most of the other activities looked popular. However, it was decided that the scarecrow competition and duck race had not attracted sufficient support to make them viable, given the amount of preparation involved.

Commemorative mugs and a village photograph are also being considered.

Of those who completed the survey, 73% said they would be prepared to help in some way, which is a tremendous boost for those organising the various events.

Providing the weather is kind to us, it looks like we should have be able to share an enjoyable few days.

Platinum Jubilee Meeting

Monday 25th April *by Steve Morris*

The next meeting to discuss arrangements for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations has been set for Monday 25th April at 7.30pm, with wine or soft drinks and light refreshments available from 7.15pm. Please come along, or let us know at news@birlingham.org if you would like to be involved.

At the last meeting the results of the village survey were discussed. Thank you to all those who took the time to complete the survey and make their preferences known. As a result, a provisional programme was agreed, including the following events:

Friday 3rd June

◊ Quiz Night

Saturday 4th June

◊ Street Party, 3.00pm–5.00pm
◊ Children's Fit for a Queen competition
◊ Music Night

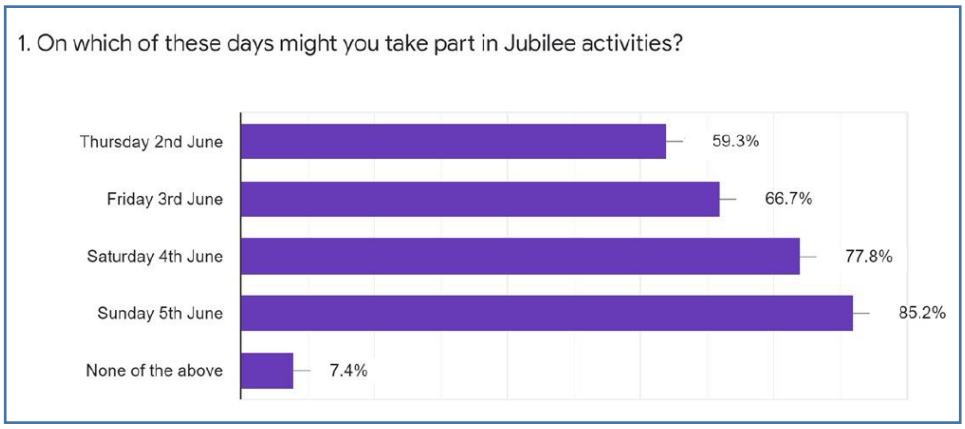
Sunday 5th June

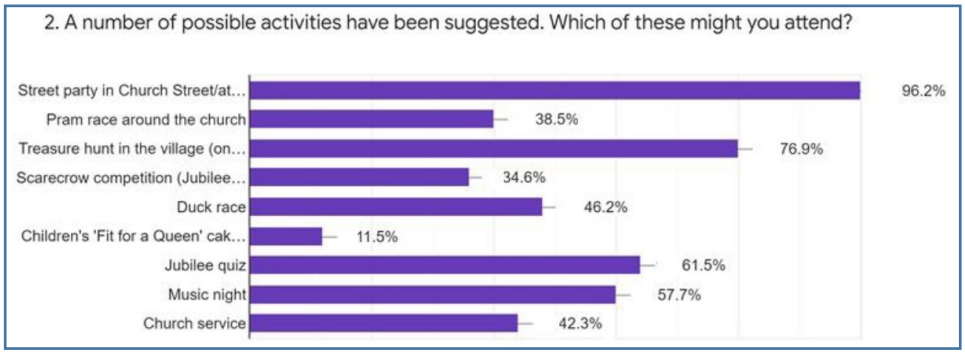
◊ Church Service, 10.30am – organised by PCC
◊ Pram Race (after Church service)
◊ Treasure Hunt (afternoon)

Full details of all these activities will be publicised nearer the time.

Survey Results

The main results of the survey are shown below.





Birlingham IW

Thursday 21st April

by Caryl Mills

We are back! Birlingham Independent Women will be restarting on Thursday 21st April and we will be really pleased to welcome old and new members to this social evening in the Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm. Join us for drinks and canapés to find out what the Committee has already planned but also to help decide the programme for the next year; your suggestions and ideas are important. If you have moved into the village since our last meeting in February 2020 then do come along and meet other villagers and make new friends.

IW meets every third Thursday in the month. Evening meetings are held in Birlingham Village Hall but we do like an outing during the summer months. Outings may take place during the afternoon but partners are then welcome to join us.

There is a membership fee of £25 for the year or you can pay a guest fee of £3 per session. Come and see what we offer – you will be most welcome.

St James' Church



Churchwarden: Adrianne Woodward (Tel. 01386 750936)

Come and celebrate Easter at St James':

* **Sunday 17th**: Easter Day Holy Communion, 10.30am (led by Revd Alma Organ)

All are welcome to attend. There will be Eggy refreshments following the service.

There is also a full programme of services leading up to Easter, **held at the Abbey**. For details see the church noticeboards.

Ukrainian Accommodation



In an extra edition of the *Birlingham News* email last week we reported that a family of five from Kyiv was looking for temporary accommodation to escape the war in Ukraine. They were friends of another family that is being helped in Worcester by someone with connections to Birlingham.

We immediately received a very generous offer of accommodation in the village. Unfortunately, the family found it too hard to get visas for the UK so they have decided to stay in Poland for the time being and hope to go back to Ukraine eventually. Thank you to all those who expressed concern.

Bring and Buy Sale for Ukraine

by Adrianne Woodward

A big thank you to all of the helpers and to those of you who supported the Bring and Buy on Saturday 26th for the Ukraine appeal.

The total so far raised is £1150 but there is still more to come! Thank you again for supporting such a worthwhile cause.

Daffodils and primroses in Rectory Lane, 23rd March (Photo: Nikki Hollier)



Eckington Stores

We have a range of locally produced products:

- Fladbury meat pies
- LDA fresh meat
- Drapers bread and cakes
- La Parisienne French style bread & cakes
- Pegoty Hedge ready meals
- Pegoty Hedge organic beef
- Bennetts ice cream
- DJ Perks fruit and vegetables
- Meat Company sausage and bacon
- Happy Chucks eggs

We open 7 days per week:

- 0600 to 1830 Monday to Friday
- 0600 to 1800 Saturday
- 0600 to 1300 Sunday

John, Sue and Mark
Tel 01386 750266

Friends of St James' Church AGM

Charity Registration Number 1094752 **Tuesday 26th April**

The Annual General Meeting of the Trust will be held on Tuesday 26th April in St James' Church at 6.00pm. All are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

The agenda for the meeting, accounts for 2021 and reports from the Chair, Treasurer and Trustees are included on this and the following page. To view the text you may need to increase your browser display to 200%.

FRIENDS OF ST JAMES'S CHURCH BIRLINGHAM

Charity Registration number 1094752

The Annual General Meeting of the Trust will be held on Tuesday 26th April 2022 in St James's Church at 6.00pm

AGENDA

Welcome and apologies

1. To approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 5th May 2021.
2. To receive the Chair's Report for the year ended 31st December 2021.
3. To receive and approve the Accounts and Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31st December 2021.
4. To elect Trustees.
5. To elect a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.
6. To appoint an Independent Examiner for the year ended 31st December 2022.
7. Any Other Business.

Receipts and Payments Account
Year ending 31 December

	2020	2021
Opening balance as at 1st January		
Lloyds Bank	19,750.14	38,239.56
CCLA	4,295.58	4,306.88
Scottish Widows	5,184.00	5,184.00
	29,229.72	47,730.44
Receipts		
Subscriptions	750.00	2,095.01
Fund Raising (Bulb Teas/tea towels/snowdrops)	2,361.64	202.00
Fund Raising (Garden Party)		1,404.00
HMRC Refunds	121.54	373.90
Donations	18,000.00	850.00
Interest	11.30	5.70
Total Receipts	21,244.48	4,930.61
Payments		
Printing	117.60	0.00
Fund Raising (Bulb Teas/tea towels/snowdrops)	818.16	0.00
Fund Raising (Garden Party)		155.97
Church Maintenance	1,808.00	1,950.67
Opening Up work (architect, pipes etc)		6,509.09
Total Payments	2,743.76	8,615.73
Surplus for the year	18,500.72	-3,685.12
Closing balances as at 31st December		
Lloyds Bank	38,239.56	34,548.74
COIF	4,306.88	4,307.38
Scottish Widows	5,184.00	5,189.20
	47,730.44	44,045.32

CHAIR'S REPORT

Despite all the national and international difficulties of the last twelve months, this has been a positive year for the Friends of St James'. We have seen a significant increase in our numbers, a successful garden party just after the relaxation of pandemic controls and, most recently, the return of the popular snowdrop teas. On the less positive side, it has been a time of frustration as the project to "Open Up St James'" has made frustratingly slow progress.

The Treasurer's report sets out the encouraging growth in the number of regular contributors, following the delivery of letters throughout the village about the Opening Up project. This increase in support demonstrates the deep affection for the church among the wider community, well beyond both regular and occasional worshipers. Once again our thanks go to the indefatigable Ian Yates for his hard work collating the information in his report, claiming Gift Aid refunds from HMRC and ensuring we comply with all Charity Commission requirements.

This loyalty was again apparent at the July garden party held at the Manor House by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Stephen Byrne. A large team of volunteers helped prepare the tables, chairs and marquees, baked cakes, cut sandwiches, hauled tea urns, cutlery and crockery to the right place and, just as importantly, helped to clear up afterwards. A special word of thanks to Pollyanna at the Old School House for the garden games and table decorations which helped provide just the right atmosphere.

The snowdrop display in the churchyard was particularly spectacular in 2022, with the crocuses flowering while the snowdrops were still showing strongly, but the weekend teas in the Village Hall were something of a gamble given the uncertain pandemic timetable and the always variable weather. In the end, the restrictions were eased sufficiently for the first three February weekends to proceed and they had been lifted entirely by the final weekend. The aftermath of Storm Eunice led to a power cut on the third Saturday which did dampen spirits and takings quite significantly, but the final weekend saw glorious sun, enabling a successful conclusion. The snowdrop sales at the church were particularly strong and, together with the teas, the weekends made their traditional valuable contribution to our funds. A big thank you to Caryl Mills for her efficient organisation of these weekends. Two TripAdvisor five star reviews were welcome and prompt me to wonder how we could encourage donations from visitors who come to see the snowdrops on weekdays as well at weekends. This is something I will be discussing with the Friends before next year.

This income was all much needed as there have been many calls on our funds in the least year, with more in prospect. The Treasurer's report sets out the income and expenditure of the last twelve months, and we can expect to spend some £6,000 to £7,000 in the early part of our new financial year on providing a basic water supply. This has been an agonisingly slow process, in part due to the church of England's detailed 'Faculty' process, but mainly due to the extraordinarily protracted negotiations with Wychavon's planning department. The current expectation is that the pipework will be installed in the first week of May and connected to the Severn Trent main in June.

The next stage in the Opening Up project is intended to be the provision of a small new ramp to the south door to improve access for the disabled and the provision of improved access to the bell ringing chamber, freeing up the space below it for future use as WCs. I will be making an application for a Faculty, on behalf of the PCC for this work; planning permission has been granted for the ramp already, but we may need building regulations approval for the bell chamber access. A silver lining of the water supply saga is that we know know the subsequent connection to the main foul sewer in Rectory Lane, when it is needed, will be much easier as it passes for only a short distance through extensively disturbed soil and is, therefore, an area of low archeological interest.

A major expense of the Opening Up project has been the development of detailed architectural drawings. The lack of available grant support in the post-Covid world is a principal reason why it is not clear how much of the vision incorporated in these drawings can be achieved. With costs in the order of £100,000, it is very unlikely that the full vision will be implemented in the near future, but with such detailed proposals to hand, we will be able to move quickly to implement all or part of the remaining work if new circumstances make it possible and desirable to proceed.

Regardless of this longer-term aspiration, the Friends continue to provide essential support to St James the Great, meeting or helping to make possible both routine maintenance and major works.

I end with a request and a final expression of gratitude. Sue Hermon is standing down from the Trustees after a long period of service, including serving as Secretary for many years. While we were fortunate to obtain the services of Jayne Mackenzie as Secretary last year, we have vacancies for new Trustees. The contribution of the ordinary Trustees is crucial, but not onerous. Most of the work of the Friends falls largely on the shoulders of the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Chair and the organiser of any fundraising events, but we need a full complement of Trustees to oversee the charity and agree grants to the PCC. I hope we will have some new names to put to the Annual General Meeting.

In conclusion, I am immensely grateful to Ian Yates and Jayne Mackenzie for their support over the past year, to the armies of volunteers who made both the garden party and snowdrop teas possible, and to all those who contribute to the Friends. It is thanks to you all that our church looks so splendid, at the heart of our village.

Peter Luff
Chair
April 2022

Treasurer's report for the calendar year 2021

2021 was a difficult year again due to ongoing Covid restrictions but there were many encouraging signs.

- Income from subscriptions increased to £2095 compared with £750 in 2020 and £915 in 2019. With encouragement from trustees, around 80% of these subscriptions are now paid by standing order giving a more predictable income stream.
- The number of Friends who subscribed increased to 63 from just 31 in 2020 and 41 in 2019.
- Unfortunately the continuing Covid restrictions meant that the bulb teas in February had to be cancelled which was disappointing as this is the Friends' major fund raising event. However as members of the public were still seen visiting the churchyard, posters were put up encouraging donations and several were received.
- As Covid restrictions eased, a garden party was arranged in the summer as an alternative fund raising event. Income from this was £1249 after costs which was only 20% less than was raised at the bulb teas in 2020.
- Total income for the year which also included Gift Aid payments, individual donations and sale of tea towels and snowdrops was £4930.
- Expenditure included £6269 on architect fees for the 'Opening Up' project, £240 for exploratory drain work, £1146 for an electrical inspection, £804 on an asbestos survey and £156 in garden party expenses. Total expenditure for the year was therefore £8615. Over the last 7 years the Friends have provided a total of £17850 towards the maintenance of the church.
- Overall reserves for the year reduced by £3685 giving a total of £44,045 on deposit in Friends' accounts as of 31st December 2021.

I'd like to thank all those who have given so generously. I'd also like to thank the trustees, committee members and volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of the Friends.

Ian Yates, Treasurer

Report of the Trustees

The members of the Executive Committee as Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ending 31st December 2021.

Objects

The aims of the Trust are to promote the Christian religion by assisting the maintenance, repair, preservation, improvement, beautification and reconstruction for the benefit of the public of the fabric of the Parish Church of Birlingham in the Diocese of Worcester.

Activities

These are detailed in the Chair's report for the year.

Trustees

The following served as trustees and members of the Executive Committee during the year.
P Luff (Chair). I Yates (Treasurer). Jayne Mackenzie (Secretary). M Dyer.
S Hayward. S Hermon. J Luff. C Mills. A Woodward. Rev'd C Lording (ex officio).

Finance

Income was £4,930.61 in comparison with £21,244.48 in the previous year. Expenditure was £8,615.73 producing a deficit of -£3,685.12 compared with a surplus of £18,500.72 in 2020. At the year end the bank balances totalled £44,045.32 (2020 was £47,730.44) of which £1,000 was Endowment Capital.

Reserves

The appropriate level of reserves is considered each year by the Trustees.

Investment Policy

The Trust's reserves are all held in current and deposit accounts which provide an acceptable level of security.

Risk

The Trustees consider that the measures in place are adequate to protect the assets of the Trust.

Public Interest

The Trust seeks to maintain the ancient listed church which is an important feature in the centre of the parish and as such is enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. From time to time the Trustees run events which are open to the general public and help to promote community spirit.



Evening sun over Swan's Neck, 23rd March
(Photo: Nikki Hollier)

Letters to the Editors

We welcome brief letters to the Editors on any subject relating to Birlingham. The Editors reserve the right to shorten letters and we cannot guarantee that all letters will be printed.

Please send letters to:
news@birlingham.org

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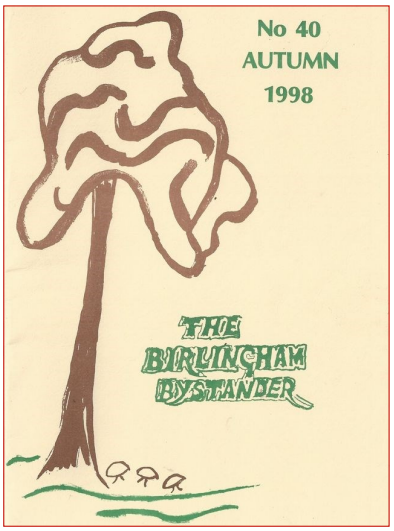
Call Lauren to make an appointment: 07554 732815

email: loz.jade1998@gmail.com

Personal Ads

Personal adverts should consist of one paragraph of text, maximum 100 words, and will be included in a single issue of Birlingham News. Please note that advertisement text will be published exactly as received. Personal ads should be sent to news@birlingham.org no later than the Monday before publication. Birlingham News is published on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Bystander Archives



The Autumn 1998 edition of the *Birlingham Bystander* begins with an article about the Worbys and the Hills and their steam train holiday in Sardinia. Other articles include an account of Margaret Jeavons completing the Three Peaks Walk, Graham Revill's aircraft collection and the Easter flood in Lower End. Towards the end of this edition is a report of a two-day tandem cycle ride by Wally and Frances Wood from Birlingham to Great Torrington in Devon.

Village reports include the Flower & Produce Show, the Parish Council, the Millennium Committee, the Car Rally and the Evening Fete at Rough Hill Farm House.

Five weddings and a ruby wedding were recorded. Among the four obituaries was one for Eric Mitchell, who lived in Field Cottage from 1947 until 1998.

Issue 40 of the *Bystander* can be viewed at:
www.birlingham.org/village/bystander/issues/bystander040.pdf

Dates for your diary

April

Sun 17	Easter Sunday Holy Communion, 10.30am, St James' Church
Thu 21	Birlingham IW, 7.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Mon 25	Platinum Jubilee open meeting, 7.15pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Tue 26	Friends of St James' Church AGM, 6.00pm, St James' Church

May

Sun 1	Morning Praise, 10.30am, St James' Church
Wed 4	Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Sun 17	Holy Communion, 10.30am, St James' Church
Wed 18	Birlingham Parish Council Annual Meeting, 7.00pm, Birlingham Village Hall, followed by Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm

June

Wed 1	Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Fri 3	Platinum Jubilee – Quiz Night (venue/time to be confirmed)
Sat 4	Platinum Jubilee – Street Party, 3.00–5.00pm
	Platinum Jubilee – Children's Fit for a Queen competition
	Platinum Jubilee – Music Night
Sun 5	Platinum Jubilee Service, 10.30am, St James' Church
	Platinum Jubilee – Pram Race, after church service
	Platinum Jubilee – Treasure Hunt (venue/time to be confirmed)

Birlingham News online is available at www.birlingham.org. Details of future editions will be emailed to subscribers of *Birlingham News*. These emails are available to residents of Birlingham, their families and friends. If you know anyone who would like to receive these emails, or have any comments or items for inclusion in either the email or online edition of *Birlingham News*, or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please write to news@birlingham.org.

Birlingham News online is open to any organisation or business within the parish to promote events. Inclusion of an event does not imply that Birlingham Jubilee Committee supports either the event or the views of the organisation promoting it.

The copy date for the next edition is Sunday 24th Apriil (for publication on Wednesday 27th April). We regret that we cannot guarantee to include any items submitted after that date.

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