



# Friends of Halesworth County Library Annual Report 2017-2018



# Annual General Meeting

Friends of Halesworth County Library

*Registered Charity No. 1153765*

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018

To be held in Halesworth Library, at 6:30pm

## Agenda

1. Welcome by Alison Britton, Chair
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the 2017 AGM, 4 May 2017, and any matters arising
4. Annual Report, Chair
5. Library Manager's Report, Alison Hopkins
6. Treasurer's Report, David Borer
7. One Hundred Club Annual Report, David Olds
8. Proposed amendment to our Constitution (See below).
9. Election of Trustees
10. Any other business
11. Close of formal business
12. Our guest speaker this year is local writer **Julia Blackburn** who will talk about her writing and about her use of libraries.

### **Proposed amendment to our Constitution.**

It is proposed by the trustees that Clause 16 of the current CIO constitution be amended to remove the restriction on the number of terms a trustee may serve. Clause 16 would then read "Any person who retires as a charity trustee by rotation, or by giving notice to the CIO, is eligible for reappointment".

## Friends of Halesworth County Library

### Minutes of AGM held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Trustees Present: Alison Britton, Sheila Freeman, Alan Holzer, Evelyn Lindqvist, David Olds, Andrew Payne (in the chair), Mike Stephens.

Trustees Apologies: Wendy Bowden, Natalie Evans, Ali Hopkins.

1. Minutes	Minutes of 2016 AGM were read and approved. Proposed by Alan Holzer, seconded by Sheila Freeman
2. Matters arising	None
3. Chairman's Report	Andrew Payne presented his report, thanking the Trustees, Friends and Staff for all their tireless efforts over the year.
4. Report by Sylvia Knights	Sylvia Knights, Bungay Library and Vice-Chair of Board of Suffolk Libraries presented her report, setting out the position that Suffolk Libraries will take up the option to renew the contract with SCC to provide library services for another 5 years, to 2022, in the face of ongoing budget reductions. A customer user survey and staff consultations are taking place. Improvements (and cost savings) were being introduced with Self-Service and IT systems plus income generation from new business sources. Initiatives such as Suffolk Libraries Local and Suffolk Libraries Extra bring enhanced services Ms Knights gave her thanks to all the Staff, Trustees, Friends and Volunteers who make such a valuable contribution to their community.
5. Financial Report	Mike Stephens (Treasurer) presented his report and financial statement. The Library was successful in bidding for funds from the Town Council (£3000), which with other fundraising activities raised over £11,000 in the year. Thanks were given to Sheila Freeman and her Events team for all their hard work.  Total assets amount to £20,000 and plans for a major refurbishment of the Junior Library were well advanced. Competitive quotations have been obtained and the preferred scheme which will cost in the region of £12,000, was circulated for discussion.
6. Report on the 100 Club	David Olds presented his report on the 100 Club and Quiz Nights. More members were needed to join the 100 Club (£350 having been raised). Quiz nights could also have been better supported (£228 raised) and Friends were urged to support both activities.
7. Report on the Events Committee	Andrew Payne thanked Jenny and David Olds and Evelyn Lindqvist for their fundraising contributions. Sheila Freeman presented her report on Events carried out during the year, both fundraising and non-profit making. Highlights were table top sales, book launch, Antiques Street Market stall (£581 raised), magic shows for children and adults, Kinetic Adventure Sensory experience, and Board Games afternoons. Sheila thanked her team for all their behind the scenes work.

Andrew Payne thanked Jenny and David Olds and Evelyn Lindqvist for their fundraising contributions.

Sheila Freeman presented her report on Events carried out during the year, both fundraising and non-profit making. Highlights were table top sales, book launch, Antiques Street Market stall (£581 raised), magic shows for children and adults, Kinetic Adventure Sensory experience, and Board Games afternoons.

Sheila thanked her team for all their behind the scenes work.

Andrew Payne gave our thanks and appreciation to Ali for her total commitment. Printed copies of Ali Hopkins's report were distributed (her apologies were noted for this evening)

The report highlighted how the Library offers activities for a wide range of ages, as well as being used most evenings by various groups.

Money raised by the Friends has been spent on a new storage shed, racks and computer screens, with plans for the refurbishment of the Junior Library well advanced

Ali thanked the Trustees as well as her loyal Staff and volunteers, not forgetting the customers who support the library.

Alan Holzer is standing down this year and the Chairman gave thanks for his contribution and he was presented with a small gift

Tamsyn Imison is also standing down due to ill health and the Trustees all send their thanks and good wishes.

Andrew Payne is also unable to continue due to work and travel commitments and was thanked and presented with a small gift.

David Olds is standing down but wishes to stand for re-election

Nominations for up to 4 Vacancies had been invited and 2 had been received from Irene Thomas and Yvonne Sandison who were duly elected and welcomed to the Trustees

Existing Trustees are available for re-election (Mike Stephens, Sheila Freeman, Alison Britton, David Olds, Wendy Bowden, Natalie Evans, Ali Hopkins (ex officio), and Evelyn Lindqvist). Alan Holzer proposed, and Andrew Payne seconded, that they be re-elected en bloc.

From the floor, thanks and appreciation for all staff and volunteers was given by Frederica Phillips.

Appreciation of artwork displayed in the library was given by Helen Rolfe

Evelyn Lindqvist mentioned the Library Facebook page (which Sylvia Knights called a "Beacon of Excellence" among Suffolk Libraries) and gave thanks to Alison Britton for maintaining it and posting so many interesting articles and photographs over the year.

Meeting closed at 7.27 pm

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 5.45 pm

# Friends of Halesworth County Library

## Who are we?

FoHCL is a membership organisation and currently (April 2018) we have 460 members.

Some of these members are among the nearly 50 volunteers who help our staff to keep the Library running by contributing between them approximately 175 hours a month on a regular basis. Volunteers take on routine library and administrative tasks. For example, they shelve the returned books and sound and vision items; they tidy the shelves and items for sale; they locate requested books and do general stock work; they unpack new books and process withdrawn stock.

Other members are among the dozen or so people who make up the Events Group which works to put on activities and events for Library users and the wider community. We organise fundraisers to contribute towards major refurbishments and to provide the 'extras' which help to make the library a welcoming community resource as well as a place to find books and information. The Events Group also organises a range of free and low-cost activities for the local community designed to entertain and educate, or just for fun and companionship.

The Trustees are the management group of FoHCL and all members are eligible to stand as a trustee. In 2017-1018 the trustees have been:

- Chair and communications officer: Alison Britton
- Vice chair and events coordinator: Sheila Freeman
- Minutes secretary: Evelyn Lindqvist
- Ex officio trustee: Alison Hopkins
- Trustee: Natalie Lloyd-Evans
- Trustee: David Olds
- Trustee: Yvonne Sandison
- Trustee: Irene Thomas

David Borer has served as Treasurer.

# Fundraising

2017-18 was another very successful year for fundraising. We owe a big thank you to **Sheila Freeman** who has headed the Events Group since 2013 and has now stepped down. She will be a hard act to follow!

As usual our Friends have been very generous with donations which has added to the money we have made from events and activities. We also must give enormous thanks to our treasurer, **David Borer**, who took on a very tedious task of re-claiming Gift Aid for us. We registered for this some time ago, but we failed to get ourselves sorted to claim it. David must have spent many hours sorting it all out. He has retrieved back payments from 2013 to 2017 and has now moved on to sorting 2017-2018. David will be giving us more details on the money in a moment.

## **Here is how we have spent some of the funds.**

- Obviously, the refurbishment of the Junior Library was the major expense last year (we thank Halesworth Town Council for granting us £3,000 which was used towards the work).

Other expenses have included:

- Financing (or partially financing) events and activities: for example, the Kinetic Adventure Sensory dome a year ago, and a storyteller at the Junior Library opening.
- We bought our own gazebo to be used for events – it had its first outing at the Antiques Street Market last August.
- Then we bought some banners to advertise ourselves as the Friends and as a charity. Not all the public, or library users, realise this.
- We have new window transfers above the main door – look as you leave!
- We have some smart new plastic display equipment to hold posters and leaflets.
- The Friends agreed to the purchase of Readyspex and Halesworth Library pens – investing to raise money. Both have proved popular.
- Our most recent purchase has been some smart plates – we decided it was high time we stopped using throw-away ones. (We tried re-usable disposable plates, but they were time consuming to wash properly and get fully air-dried). This purchase probably sneaks into 2018-2019 but it seemed timely to mention it!

# Our Plans for 2018 and beyond!

The successful refurbishment of the Junior Library in 2017 has resulted in the rest of the Library looking a little shabby and dull in comparison! We have ambitious plans for the next year or two and these comprise:

## **Re-arranging the ground floor to make it more attractive and accessible.**

- The Friends paid in 2014 to put wheels on all the fiction shelving and this has made it possible for us to hold more events in the Library. This year we have added wheels to the lightest shelves in the non-fiction area. But to make all the non-fiction shelves moveable (and give us even more space) we will have to have new lighter shelving. As a start the Suffolk Libraries stock librarian has advised us on reducing/refreshing our stock in an age when less non-fiction books are consulted or borrowed.
- In the meantime, we are discussing ideas: could some of our shelving be curved to fit the natural shape of the Library's walls? How can we make the initial entry into the Library more attractive?

## **Facilities for Young Adults**

- We hope to move the Young Adult area and its stock to the ground floor (it is presently on the mezzanine). The stock has been refreshed this year. We want an attractive area for teens where they will be encouraged to use the facilities rather than just come to the Library to get out of the rain. We plan to consult with them!

## **Mezzanine/Gallery**

- We want to then re-arrange the mezzanine so that it will be even more useful for meetings, activities, exhibitions etc, for which there is a growing demand. Although the FoHCL (with support from the Town Council) paid in 2015 and 2016 for decorating and carpeting throughout and the addition of blinds to the mezzanine windows, much of the furniture dates to the opening of the Library 21 years ago and needs upgrading.
- We need to purchase new tables and chairs. Not top of the range furniture, but we do want items which will be durable and last for at least twenty years, as the present ones have.

Our belief is that these can help us to provide a twenty-first century Library service which will meet the needs of a wider range of customers, including young adults. Needs and demands have changed considerably in the last twenty years. We aim to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment where all our customers feel valued and respected.

# Events and Activities

It has been another busy year for activities and we hope that you have been able to come along to share in some of them. Here are some highlights.

**APRIL – KINETIC ADVENTURE SCIENCE ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN**



**MAY  
– PLANT SALE IN COLLABORATION WITH  
THE MILLENNIUM GREEN TRUST**

**JUNE – BOARD GAMES CAFÉ (9 TOOK PLACE DURING THE YEAR)**



**JULY – LAUNCH OF THE JUNIOR LIBRARY**

**AUGUST – ANTIQUES STREET MARKET STALL**



**SEPTEMBER –  
QUIZ NIGHT (WE HAVE TWO A YEAR)**

**OCTOBER – HALESWORTH SCARECROW WEEK AND FRANCESCA'S HERO, FENN HALFLIN, WAS IN OUR WINDOW**



**NOVEMBER – CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS WORKSHOPS**

**DECEMBER – CHRISTMAS FAIR**



**JANUARY – ADVERTISING THE FEBRUARY 4<sup>th</sup> MURDER MYSTERY IN OUR WINDOW**



**FEBRUARY – WINTERLIGHT FESTIVAL IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MILLENNIUM GREEN TRUST & THE MOLLY DANCERS**

**MARCH – OUR EASTER RAFFLE.  
RAFFLES WERE GREAT FUND-RAISERS THIS YEAR)**



Some of the other events supported or hosted by the Friends included sales, book launches, more craft workshops, more board games cafes, regular i-pod and laptop lessons – and regular stalls to recruit more Friends!

During the year Halesworth Library was represented at three of the Community Forums organised by Suffolk Libraries. These are meetings which give members of Friends Groups the opportunity to meet with those from other libraries to exchange ideas and discuss successes! They are also an opportunity for Suffolk Libraries to update us on developments. Also, in 2017, four of us from Halesworth (the library manager, two trustees and a Friend) attended the Suffolk Libraries AGM.

## REMEMBERING LOST FRIENDS

In July 2017 we held an event at the Library to commemorate Jenny Gray, who died in October 2016. Jenny had been a regular and popular volunteer on Friday mornings in the Library. She was also always willing to join in when needed – both in the Library and elsewhere in the town. During the event we planted some flowers in the garden in Jenny's



memory. One was a rose bush, and this was planted by Tamsyn Imison, of Halesworth in Bloom. Tamsyn was a valued Friend of the library, active in the early moves to support libraries in Suffolk when they seemed under threat. She went on to be one of our first Trustees in 2013, staying on in that role until the 2017 AGM. Very sadly, just 3 months after the plantings, Tamsyn herself died.



*Photos of Jenny and Tamsyn at an Easter celebration in the Library in 2014.*

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND ON-LINE RESOURCES

Not everyone realises that there is plentiful information about the Library available on-line. The **website** for the Library is contained within the larger Suffolk Libraries website where one can access all sorts of useful resources. If you haven't already, take some time to explore this site – it is far more than a place to order or renew books. <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/> Look at our site too: <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/libraries/halesworth-library/> You can find information about the Friends – a useful resource if you are trying to recruit new members for us.

Have you looked at our **Facebook** page? Maybe you are one of the 560 people who have now liked us and follow our posts. Discover what is happening in the Library, but also read a wide range of posts about reading and books and related topics. You do not have to be a member of Facebook to see the page. Put *Halesworth Library Facebook* into your search engine. Lastly visit our **Twitter** account. It is not updated every day but still worth a look! Put *@HalesworthLib* into your search engine. Explore these resources and pass on the word!



## **Ways you might contribute to the Friends.**

(We know that many of you already do some of these things).

- Recruit other Friends to the group – right now we have 460 members. Imagine if each one of us found another “Friend” we could be heading towards 1000 Friends by the New Year!
- Volunteer to help recruit at our by-monthly recruitment stall. (We recruited 23 new members at the April stall).
- Support the Hundred Club.
- Cash donations, however small, are always welcomed. Don’t forget you can gift aid them and give us 25% more!
- Donate items to our sales and raffles. We always need good quality retro and bric-a-brac (or even an antique!) for our Antiques Street Market stall.
- Do you have links with any local businesses? Might they be willing to donate raffle prizes? Could you approach them? (Tea and cake at a café; £5 or £10 voucher for goods from a shop, etc).
- Buy our raffle tickets – and/or offer an hour or two to help us to sell them!
- Attend our events and tell others about them.
- Point out to others the information available on our website and on Facebook. Remember you do NOT have to join Facebook to simply view this page with its daily updates.
- If you are planning to attend an event, check if you can come along early and help us to get set up – or offer to help clear up at the end! Not always, but sometimes, we could use some extra help.
- We often need refreshments for events, do you like baking (savoury and sweet)?
- If you live in one of the villages, would you consider taking posters to place in a village hall/pub/local noticeboard? Give us your name if you can do this regularly.
- Suggest places where we could advertise our information for free: local magazines, websites or newsletters. Or, better still, offer to do this for us.
- Come up with ideas for events - or for items we might want to sell in aid of the Library. Better still, help to organise some events! Not just staffing on the day but planning beforehand.
- Do you have interests or skills that might be built into a regular Library Group or lessons? For example, in the last 2 or 3 years we have established Board Games and Chess groups and the laptop and i-pad support sessions.
- Can you help us with our admin? Keep the FoHCL noticeboard up to date?
- If you want to get really involved, consider becoming a Trustee where you will have the opportunity to really shape the future of the Library, help make decisions about its physical layout and its provision for all age groups.