

Bluebell Vineyard Barn Dance 20th May 2023

The vineyard is a beautiful place in May, with its succession of small lakes, rows of vines in blossom up the hill with the woods behind. It has become a lovely wedding venue, either in the marquee or in a converted barn. We are privileged that Barry Tay, the proprietor, has offered us the use of the barn for a Barn Dance. The sun will not set until nearly 9 o'clock that night. It will be a family night to remember.

Open Gardens Day 24th June 2023

The day varies from year to year as different gardens take part (though there are many hardy annuals). Perhaps this is the year for you to consider joining in. But whether as a garden opener, or as a visitor to other gardens in the village, please make a note of the date.



Margaret Davey and her late husband Brian lived in Horsted Keynes for many years - at the Old Police House opposite Lucas. Sadly, in December last year, Margaret joined Brian and her active personality will be sorely missed. She was a driving force behind City Lit, a London adult education centre in Covent Garden. In due course, that commitment reduced allowing her to spend more time enjoying village life. She was a keen gardener with a much-admired allotment and was encouraged to join FOH KC and to put her energy and horticultural skills to good use. In this regard, she succeeded John Thraves in tending the roses and perennials that border the main church path and make for such a lovely entrance to our church. Margaret was an accomplished linguist and she and Brian were keen travellers. They particularly liked Spain and bringing old ruins there back to life. Their final restoration was in north-eastern Spain, near Girona, a true "homage to Catalonia", where Margaret's cultivating prowess ensured a good crop of local produce. FOH KC was grateful to have her on board contributing to its work.

As they say, in Catalan.....*adeu M.*

Tim Westlake

Our Committee

Sarah Cooper – 791571 Phil Green – 791030 Dawn Hitchen – 790744

James Nicholson – 790777 Mark Wallwork - 790105

Alice Wintergold - 790669



NEWSLETTER — Spring 2023

Our Twelfth Year

Dear Friends

**You are warmly invited to the Annual Meeting of the
Friends of Horsted Keynes Church
at 7.00pm on Thursday 16th March in St Giles Church**

Come along to hear of the works completed in 2022 to enhance and maintain our beautiful old church and churchyard, and of the events we have run to help to finance them.

We will complete the meeting formalities quickly and then move straight to our guest speaker, **Steve Hitchen**. Steve has lived close to our church for many years now. He and Dawn have raised their children here and he is an active member of our congregation. He is also (with all his family) very active with FOH KC. One of the many attractions of this village to him was the crusader's heart shrine in our chancel. Steve always had a strong interest in the crusades, and as students he and Dawn walked to Jerusalem, just as those on the First Crusade had done. He is now a senior British diplomat specialising in the Middle East. Soon he'll leave us for another tour of duty there.

Steve (right, climbing down with dignity) has entitled his talk:

Adventures in Arabic —

*Misunderstandings and Mishaps in the
Arab World*



The Year in Summary

2022 saw the country and FOHKC fundraising returning to some form of “new normal”. Total income of £33,748 included excellent results from both the Auction of Promises and the Plant Sale, as well as a very generous bequest from the late Sarah Bailey, a long-term supporter. 2023 started with a bang with *Aladdin*.

Annual Meeting May 2022

Postponed from May 2021, because of Covid, **Peter Harknett** was our guest speaker. He had led the repair of our steeple and become something of a local celebrity. The meeting was very well attended and he regaled us with many highly-entertaining stories of his 73 years working as a steeple jack, all very well illustrated, some with drawings of his own.

Peter brought with him two boxes of the book he'd written about his experiences, which he invited us to sell for FOHKC funds. They all sold fast and we gratefully banked £382.

Platinum Jubilee Celebration 2nd June 2022

Along with most village organisations, FOHKC were very happy to support the efforts led by our Parish Council to celebrate the Queen's 70-year reign. We helped in many ways, but in particular at the Martindale bonfire event, so well organised by Kevin Coulson. Songs from our musicals, *Joseph* and *Oliver!* were reprised along with very many other songs. A variety of events for all ages took place. The attendance was enormous. We also organised the bar and were kept frantically busy for the whole evening, until the procession to the Green for the lighting of the Beacon. It was a pleasure to see so many people there, and to clear £748.

The Plant Sale 24th June 2022

Our plant sales were once part of an Open Gardens Day. During the pandemic, guidelines allowed sales before they allowed garden visits, and we saw that the events could exist apart. The Tuesday Group hold an excellent plant sale in Spring. But it seems that there is room for another, later in the year. Once again, we were very grateful to the many people who grew plants especially for us to sell, to all our generous customers, and to Sue and Steve Markwick, who provided the beautiful backdrop. We were pleased with a profit of £588.

The Auction of Promises 8th October 2022

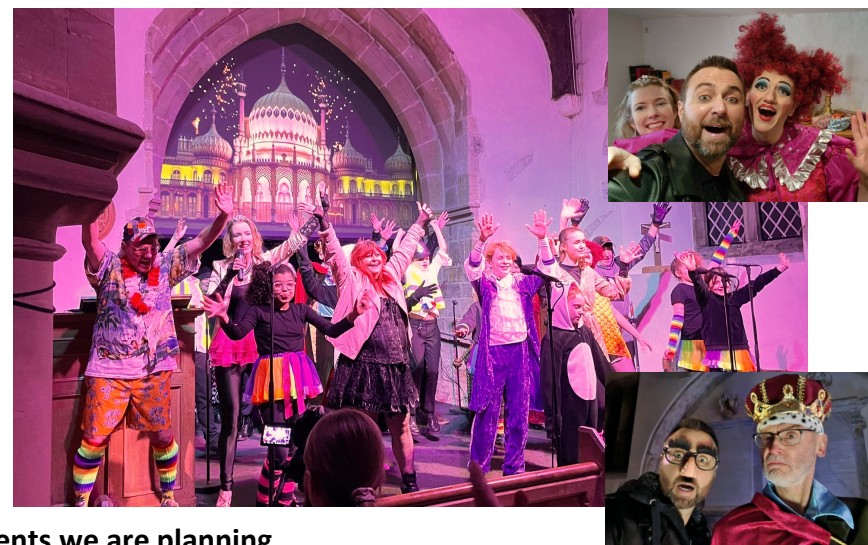
Because of pandemic, this was our first auction since 2017 and we were concerned about its timing. But people were very generous despite the straitened times, both in their promises and in their bidding for them. We were strongly supported as always by businesses locally. As usual, the event was a celebration of people's talents, interests and resources, and we compiled a list of almost 100 lots. One sold



for a spectacular four-figure sum, and many for three-figure sums. Some bid extravagantly to be generous, but, happily, there were bargains enjoyed as well. Martin Emmerson is a punctiliously careful auctioneer and also highly entertaining. It was a very enjoyable evening, and **One lucky bidder won a “Steam-lights” run on the Bluebell** earned us over £6,000.

Aladdin January 2023

Producing a pantomime was an ambitious choice, after previous successes with musicals. But it proved well-chosen. With Kay as the inspiration, Alison as director and Nikki leading the music, a varied and talented cast — involving seven-year-olds, septuagenarians and every age of performer in between — brought us a traditionally merry show. There was some very fine singing and dancing, accomplished overacting, slapstick comedy and witty heckling. The spectacle was greatly enhanced by artful projection on to a screen perfectly filling the chancel arch. Peter and David provided their light and sound expertise. The church was filled for all three performances and we raised £3,000.



Events we are planning

Coronation Celebration

We plan to join other village groups again for the celebration (Sunday 7th May 2023) on the day that follows the King's Coronation. Once again, we'll be running the bar at the Martindale Centre.