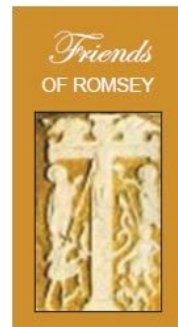


NEWSLETTER

Summer 2014

Issue 11



A message from the President, the Revd Tim Sledge, Vicar of Romsey

Dear Friends,

At our AGM this year, we were treated to a wonderful talk by Professor Peter Toyne. He enthused about friends from his experience with the Friends of Cathedral Music. Actually, he was something of an evangelist! His passionate endorsement and enthusiasm and his sheer energy in sharing the good news about friends got me thinking, and I wonder if something of what he was about could perhaps rub off onto us.

The best way to become a friend is by word of mouth, about sharing the good news of the friends. We are not a club. Yes – we do have members - but The Friends of the Abbey is a movement, a force for the good of the abbey and the wider community. We have some wonderful events for the rest of the year – and I am sure that the Ethelflaeda Lecture in October given by Kate Adie on Christian Women in World War 1 will be a memorable event to both attend, but more importantly, to invite someone to come along... and then encourage them to become Friends themselves!

So release the evangelist in each of you! Share the good news of the Friends with your friends! It makes a huge difference!

With thanks for all your support and enthusiasm,

Tim

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The photo below shows the small Saxon Rood - our logo - with the dark oak screen removed, making it far more visible.

This is stage one of the re-ordering of the Chapel, which will be a major contribution by the Friends.



VISIT TO BROOKLANDS MUSEUM

March 2014

It was rather damp and cold on Tuesday 25th March but we were all on board the TVCS minibuses for a prompt start at 9.30am and thanks to our volunteer drivers, Dick and Tim, we arrived at Brooklands on schedule at 11.00am. We were met by Maddy, our guide for the first part of our visit. A most knowledgeable lady who rapidly talked us through the early days of Brooklands in relation to both its motoring and aviation history. She set the scene very well, enabling us to concentrate on the areas of special interest for each of us.

There was indeed so much to see and learn but for me the wonderfully presented examples of the cars and motorcycles were particularly interesting, especially the monstrous Napier Railton built in 1933 for John Cobb and fitted with a 24-litre aero engine. This car still holds the Brookland's Outer Circuit lap record at 143 mph. A truly remarkable feat. The other highlight of the visit was our 'virtual flight' aboard Concorde. We took our places in the luxury of the original seating to follow an excellent video recreation of a Mach 2 flight (twice the speed of sound) complete with vibrations.

A wonderful piece of aviation history indeed and something we can be proud of even today!

We all departed feeling there was still much to see but our drivers had been set the task of returning us to Romsey before dark, which they achieved with time to spare – many thanks, Tim and Dick.



Report by John Twigg

Hilary Gould preparing for take-off

VISIT TO BLETCHLEY PARK

May 2014

Our trip to Bletchley Park saw 42 dedicated travellers enter the secret world of the World War 2 'Codebreakers'. Arriving on one of Coliseum's luxury coaches we were greeted by our own Guide, who took us through a 60-minute tour of the site. This included a presentation in the Chauffeurs Hut followed by a brilliant walking tour.

Bletchley Park was one of Britain's best kept secrets during World War 2, home of the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS). Brilliant mathematicians were recruited from Cambridge and Oxford Universities as codebreakers, to penetrate the secret communications of the Axis Powers, especially the German Enigma and Lorenz cipher machines.



Ultimately 10,000 staff were employed at the site as the work grew in importance. The Friends were able to view much of this activity in the various Huts and the Museum, which contained original Enigma and Lorenz cipher machines. The weather can always be counted upon to make Friends trips varied and this trip did not disappoint. Thunder, lightning and torrential rain combined



*Hut 14 at
Bletchley Park*



*World War 2
offices at
Bletchley Park*

to make a lively 'sprint' between the various Huts! The afternoon drew to a close with even heavier storms, resulting in a rush to the tea rooms followed by a fast and comfortable trip home to Romsey.

The trip was led by Friends members John and Julia Slade and a very big thank you to both of them.

Comments from Friends:

"I met a long lost friend - the paper tape computer I was programming in 1963"

"Brilliant day out, well managed and very interesting, when's the next one!!"



"Whether one was computer literate or not, an informative and fascinating day was had by all"

Report by Ken Gibson

Talk by Revd Tim Sledge: The Benedictines, their ethos and importance to Romsey Abbey

June 2014

The Friends of Romsey Abbey had a fascinating and informative talk about the Benedictines and their influence on our lives today. We discovered that the rules drawn up by the Benedictine monks are as relevant today as they were for the monks and nuns of Romsey in 907. At the time of Domesday, the Abbey and the Brewery industry were under Benedictine rule and the Benedictines owned 70% of church property.

St Benedict adopted a solitary life when he forsook the world and became a monk. However when he came to write his own Rule for the monasteries, he used his early experiences to combine the old and new including 'nothing harsh and nothing burdensome'. The emphasis was on education, hard work, community, caring for the sick, the old and the young and adherence to the rule of law.

His rule provided stability for the community over the centuries, when there was social upheaval and unrest. He was a founder of our desire for work/life balance. Most interestingly, he encouraged us to receive all guests and newcomers as Christ himself. His legacy stands firm today.



In more modern times the Inspector Morse series was influenced by the Benedictines and the Cadfael mysteries were filmed in the medieval Benedictine Abbey of Shrewsbury.

We are very grateful to Revd Tim Sledge for his time and his inspiring and entertaining insight into the life of the Benedictines.

Report by Jill Hall

Annual General Meeting 2014

The AGM was well attended by the members and we also welcomed the Town Mayor of Romsey and the Mayor of Test Valley, who are our Honorary Vice Presidents. New members have been appointed to the committee. The new Treasurer is Michelle Twigg who takes over from Tim Rogerson. A very big thank you to Tim, especially for steering us through our first few years as a new charitable organisation. Fortunately, Tim has agreed to remain on our committee, where I am sure we will benefit very much from his financial and ecclesiastical knowledge.

Our new Chairman of the Projects Sub Committee, John Thompson-Hall, has been serving on this recently formed subcommittee since its inception in October 2013. As a full committee member, he will take over chairmanship from Roger Rowe. It is a real pleasure to welcome back Ken Gibson who has been involved with The Friends since its inception. As an existing member of the PCC and a regular helper at FRA events, I am sure his enthusiasm and undoubted communication skills will be a great asset to our work.

Ria Skelton has taken on the task of FRA Newsletter Editor and produced our winter 2013 edition. The rapidly growing importance of electronic communication today is both a challenge and opportunity and it is therefore a very great pleasure to welcome John Compton into our team as Webmaster for the FRA website.

Our Speaker at this year's AGM, Professor Peter Toyne CBE DL (one time High Sherriff of Liverpool and Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool John Morres University) gave an inspirational talk, especially appropriate for us as a relatively new 'Friends Organisation'. His enthusiastic encouragement to "get involved" was so apt for the Church we know as The Abbey, and the way he conveyed his understanding of what that meant, and should mean, left us in no doubt as to the path we should now be treading.

Report by John Twigg



Tim Sledge, Peter Toyne and John Twigg at the 2014 AGM

Friends of Romsey Abbey

Events still to come in 2014

July

Fri 18th Coffee Morning in the Town Hall

10am – 12 noon

Non Members welcome

August

Sun 24th 4.30 pm Strawberry Tea in the Vicarage Garden

Followed by Friends Evensong in The Abbey at 6.30 pm

Tickets: £5.50 per person, cheque with booking please

September

Wed 10th 3.30pm in The Abbey: A guided tour for The Friends

Tickets £5.00 each or £6.00 each on the door including tea and biscuits in the Church Rooms afterwards.

Non Members welcome

Fri 19th Coffee Morning in The Town Hall

10.00 am – 12.00 noon

Non Members welcome

October

Tue 7th FRA Annual dinner at Berties, Romsey

Two courses and a welcoming drink will be included in the price, which is £30 per person (please note, wine with the meal is not included).

Speaker to be confirmed. Bookings now being taken!

Mon 13th to 16th inclusive - 3 day visit to York led by Tim Rogerson

The approximate cost will be £280.00 per person to include rail fares and B&B.

Please see separate information/booking form available from Jill Hall or John Twigg

Ethelflaeda Festival and Lecture—dates to be confirmed

Kate Adie OBE will be giving the lecture, based on her book: *Christian Women in the First World War*. Other events planned for the festival include an Ethelflaeda musical for children, a performance by the Girls choir, and a tour of the Abbey based on women.

November

Fri 21st Coffee Morning in the Town Hall

10am – 12 noon

Non Members welcome

Tue 11th Visit to Whitchurch Silk Mill led by Colin and Rosemary Davis

Conducted tour with coffee on arrival.

Followed by pub lunch

Cost: £14.00 per person

Please note – pub lunch is not included in the cost

December

Sun 21st Service of Nine Lessons and Carols in The Abbey

To book any of these events, please contact John Twigg:

01794 521966

Email: littlecopse@btinternet.com or office@romseyabbeyfriends.org

How have we been able to help the Abbey recently?

New computer display system

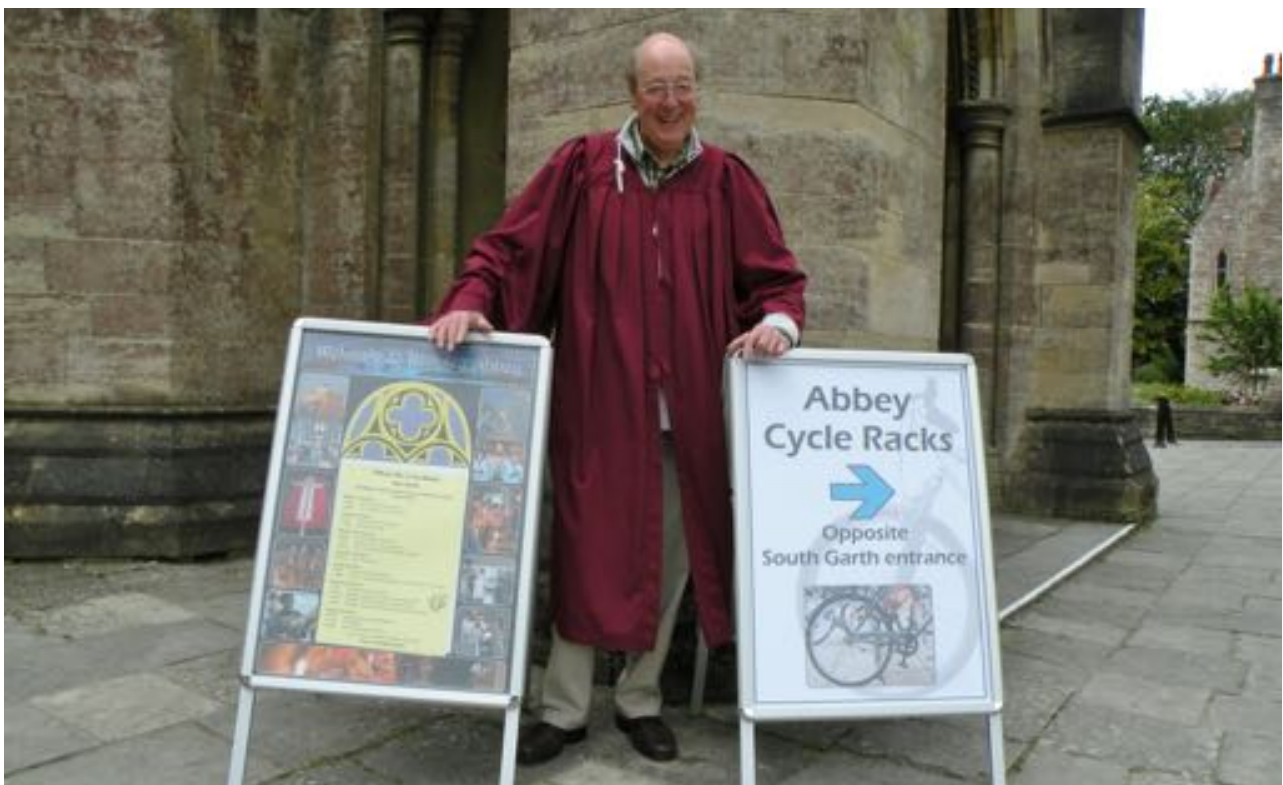
The Friends has bought a computer display system together with a stand which was used recently for the 'Celebrating Community' weekend, when 30 local voluntary organisations set up stands in the Abbey showing their work. Each organisation provided photos and these were shown as a rolling slideshow—an added interest which would not have been possible until we had the gift of this equipment. *Report by Liz Hallett*



The Friends Sign the Way.....

The Friends of Romsey Abbey recently purchased two new 'A' Boards to replace those damaged in the great storms of last spring. The Boards do an excellent job in 'signing the way' with 'What's on in the Abbey' information for our many visitors and members of the congregation. In addition, the Friends funded the new cycle racks recently installed opposite the South Garth entrance of the Abbey. To make it even easier for visitors to use the new cycle racks, the Friends have purchased another 'A' Board and had new directional posters created. Our picture shows John Twigg, Chairman of the Friends, 'modelling' the new 'A' Boards!

Report by Ken Gibson



The Friends' Prayer

Loving Lord, we thank you for blessing us with the beauty of Romsey Abbey.

We pray for the life and work of the Abbey; that you would inspire all who visit with a vision of your beauty.

Guide and strengthen the Friends that they might be a generous and supportive group for the benefit of the Abbey and that the beauty of your love may be made more widely known.

Your Trustees: President, The Revd Tim Sledge, Vicar of Romsey; Chairman of the Main Committee and Events Sub Committee, John Twigg; Vice-Chairman, The Revd John Clarke; Chairman of the Projects Sub Committee, John Thompson-Hall; Secretary, Jill Hall; Treasurer, Michelle Twigg; Membership Secretary, Roger Rowe. Other members: John Compton (Website Manager), Ken Gibson, Chris Harpham, Phil Hutchings, Mike Perfect (Events Sub Committee only), Tim Rogerson, Ria Skelton (Newsletter Editor), Liz Speck.

Contact us by email: office@romseyabbeyfriends.org

Our Vision

The vision of the Friends is 'to further projects which enhance the building and its place in the community, bringing together all those who love the Abbey and wish to support its life, work and ministry'.

Registered Charity No. 1134191



A mid-summer view of the north transept and tower, when the late evening sun reaches this side of the building.