



# Friends of St John the Baptist, Aylmerton

## Autumn 2015 Newsletter

*Helping to protect the building's future.*

Issue 1  
FriendsSJTBa.org.uk

### Welcome from Chairman John Rampling

The Friends of St John's have much pleasure in presenting their first half yearly newsletter. It is pleasing to recall that the launch in April far exceeded our original expectations. It has become evident that we tapped into a fund of goodwill, both in the village and beyond, with people who have a genuine affection for our medieval church and who wish it to be well maintained for future generations.

### Membership

With two new members registering within the last couple of weeks, our membership stands at 91. To put this into perspective, the average membership of a Friends Group across the country is around 50, so there's good reason why every Friend of St John's should feel well pleased.

There has been a good take up of Life Members. This has helped to swell the coffers considerably and to date total membership fees for all types of membership stands at £3,165. It follows that annual memberships remain most important for the subscriptions for Life Members, which currently total £2,280, will not appear in future years. In broad terms the Friends are likely to generate around £885 per year in membership fees, but on top of that there will be income from fund raising activities. Our current bank balance, including the proceeds of the concert now stands at £3,900

- 78% Friends are from Norfolk, with 22% Friends are from outside Norfolk
- 43% of Norfolk members are from outside Aylmerton
- 30% of Friends are life members

### First Fundraising Event: Music for a Summer Evening

Our first fund raising event was arranged with some haste and coincided with the Patronal Festival. It raised a very useful £500.

Special thanks go to Organist, Kevin Drury, for giving up so much of his valuable time to perform so brilliantly on the night.



*Kevin Drury,  
Organist,  
playing at the  
Concert*

A big thank you also to Jane Idiens and Judith Carter for their considerable efforts in rehearsing the specially formed St John's Singers who gave of their very best. And a thank you also to Connie for producing such an appetising supper for everyone.



*Enjoying supper  
at the Concert*

In future we will have rather more time to organise fund raising activities and we'll liaise closely with the PCC to avoid any possible clash of dates.

### Next Fundraising Event: Dinner, Talk & Auction (Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April)

In the last few days we have been fortunate to receive confirmation that Martyn Fox, MBE (a well known local auctioneer) has agreed to provide an amusing talk of his experiences over a long career. This will be preceded by a two course dinner in the Village Hall and Martyn is happy to host an auction at the end of the evening to help swell the funds. It looks like being a fun and entertaining evening. The date is Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April (a week after Easter) when hopefully some of our second home owners will still be around. If you have any items or pledges that you are willing to auction or are able to help out in the organization of the event please contact us via email [contact@FriendsSJTB.org.uk](mailto:contact@FriendsSJTB.org.uk)

More details will be announced, but please put 1<sup>st</sup> April in your diary, if you would like to attend.

Later next year we intend arranging a concert, but right now this is work in progress.

### Money Raised by the Friends

The Friends are committed to continuing to liaise closely with the PCC as to their priorities concerning the fabric and future of the church, but we can confirm that we will fund the new handrail at the steps to the main church gate when the required faculty has been obtained.

On behalf of the PCC we have applied for a specific grant from the Church Council for repairs to our nationally listed medieval bell. Unfortunately these things take a considerable time, as the grants committee only meets annually, and we have been advised that their decision will not be made known until late July next year. Of course, full discussion with the PCC will occur before committing to any repair costs. The Friends are simply acting as fund raising agents, something that is readily appreciated and understood by the Church Council. We should add that Peter Trent, the Diocese of

Norwich Bells Advisor who produced the report to the PCC on the failure of the bell, is delighted that a grant is being sought and has offered to assist wherever possible.

We have an exciting time ahead and, aided by support from the Friends, there's little doubt that the future of St John's is looking a little brighter.

John Rampling  
Chairman

[FriendsSJTB.org.uk](http://FriendsSJTB.org.uk)

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*Exhibits of Gresham Village School Flower Festival held in the church, in July.*

