

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

FRIENDS OF WEST BARNES LIBRARY

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This report summarises the Friends' activities this past year and plans for the year to come. Covid restrictions and lockdowns necessarily prevented us from holding events in the library itself for most of the past year-and-a-half. But despite that:

- a new Friends' website is up and running—thanks to Madeleine Maguire;
- we continued to issue Newsletters to the Friends;
- the Committee met twice, once via Zoom and once (when the library had reopened) in person;
- several author talks were organised, by Joy Kluver and Sarah McAlister;
- one of the Book Clubs—organised by Penny Price—continued online, via Zoom;
- we obtained some new display boards, and these are now in the Library;
- a display about Motspur Park/West Barnes history in the 1920s and 1930s was presented at this year's Merton Discovery Day, at Morden Library on 21 August, and is now on view on the display boards at West Barnes;
- Theresa Clarke and her colleagues in the Events team have been planning a range of events, now that Covid-related restrictions are relaxing (details below).

During lockdown it was not practical to issue new Friends' membership cards. But Theresa is kindly arranging for new cards to be printed now. Rather than gave a new card every year, we intend that the new cards will, like the Friends' membership itself, be for life.

As always, the Friends have worked closely with West Barnes' dedicated and enthusiastic permanent staff: Danny, Roz and Jogen. I would like to thank all the committee—Rev. Rachel Taylor, Dan Griffiths, Penny Price, Theresa Clarke, Madeleine Maguire, Sarah McAlister, Mary-Jane Jeanes, Brenda Brevitt and Alison Honor, and our ex officio members Councillors Hina Bokhari AM, Eloise Bailey and Carl Quilliam—for their continued hard work and support; Joy Kluver (the first two of whose splendid novels were published in the past year—another is due in January 2022) for her arrangement of author talks; and Karen Baker for her super posters. We look forward to being able to be more active in the coming year.

One particularly sad loss to the West Barnes community during lockdown was Pat Mitcheison, who had long organised the Library's Knit & Natter group. As well as being a great friend to the Library, Pat was always very supportive of the Friends.

Toby Ewin

Chairman

Friends of West Barnes Library

Friends Membership

Our total membership now stands at over 300 life members at the financial year end.

Treasurer's Report

Due to Covid restrictions and lockdowns there was no AGM in 2019-20. The most recent financial statement approved by the auditor therefore is for the 2019-20 financial year. At 31st March 2020 the total funds held by the Friends (cash in bank and petty cash) was £2,025.81.

Publicity

The Friends' monthly email bulletin has almost 400 subscribers. The website was redesigned and relaunched by Madeleine in May 2020 and has been especially helpful through lockdown and library closures to keep everyone up to date with news and events. Thanks to Madeleine, Theresa and Sarah for their hard work in this important area.

Library Manager's Report

Since I have taken over as Manager at West Barnes library on a secondment basis whilst Karren Whyte has been on her secondment with the senior team, I have been overseeing the gradual transition from our 'click and collect' phase to a more 'normal' level of service which has allowed us to resume the brilliant activities at West Barnes. It has really drawn the attention to myself and others within the council how essential these activities have always been. I have been making every effort to make sure all health & safety aspects have been covered to allow a safe return to these activities and I'm very happy to see these considerations are taken into account by our attendees. We are still working on rebuilding our activities, with Suzanne's infamous Kiddiramma returning in November, with more dates than there were pre-pandemic.

In terms of income, we should start to see an increase in revenue as we have now restarted our streams (which were on hold during the pandemic), through borrowing services such as library fines, as well as a return from our library space hirer on Fridays.

On A personal note, I would also like to say how impressed I am by the amazing support from all the Friends of West Barnes library. The dedication of this group has been an absolute lifeline to the residents who are using the library, and myself when I have had to disappear for whatever reason during the library's open hours.

Events

The disruption of Covid and library closures has made it impossible in the last year to maintain our usual schedule of regular events. However now that Covid-related restrictions are relaxing, Theresa Clarke and her colleagues have been planning a range of events, including the following for autumn 2021:

- Craft & Chat (Make do and Mend), Sat 9th October, 2 – 4pm. Hosted by Sarah McAlister.
- Christmas Flower Arranging: 27th November, 2 – 4pm. Hosted by Alison Honor and Theresa Clarke.

Joy Kløver is keen to get the author talks up and running again, in the library, and will liaise with library staff to confirm how many people will be allowed to attend.

The following events have been proposed for 2022. No dates are yet set, and we will review the list on a regular basis, depending on whatever Covid-related restrictions may apply:

- Quiz night: possibly in January 2022.
- Easter Flowers: March 2022.
- Photography Talk & Photograph Competition: (to be confirmed).
- *Spice Up Your Life*: a talk and possible demonstration on Indian spices (TBC)

Conclusion

The Friends Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Anthony Hopkins and our professional librarians Danny MacDonald, Karren Whyte and Roz Banks of London Borough of Merton for their hard work and continued support of the Friends and West Barnes Library.

Special thanks are due to Danny and Karren for their hard work, enthusiasm and many achievements in support of the library especially in these recent, challenging times. We truly appreciate everything you and your team do for West Barnes Library.

Final and special thanks go to all our members and our dedicated Library volunteers, who support the library and the local community in so many ways. If you can spare a few hours each week to volunteer for the library or support the work of the Friends, please let us know.

It remains critical to promote the library and encourage friends and neighbours to use it regularly.

FRIENDS OF WEST BARNES LIBRARY

Financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2020

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
	£	£	£
Membership Subscriptions	15.00	0.00	15.00
3 Folding Tables	0.00	107.85	-107.85
18 bottles of wine	0.00	79.37	-79.37
Domain renewal 18/06/19-17/06/21	0.00	14.38	-14.38
Author Event 14/05/19	38.00	29.25	8.75
Event 03/05/19 Marsden Charityevent?	0.00	21.45	-21.45
Author Event (A Murder Most Indian)	24.00	35.00	-11.00
Quiz 15/06/19	125.00	107.86	17.14
Bingo	94.00	78.53	15.47
Author Event 01/10/19	24.00	31.90	-7.90
Quiz Night 21/11/19	140.00	106.56	33.44
Xmas Decorations		16.00	-16.00
Author event 18/11/19	40.00	20.00	20.00
Author Event 27/01/20	53.00	38.50	14.50
Quiz Night 27/02/20	148.00	81.07	66.93
	<u>701.00</u>	<u>767.72</u>	<u>-66.72</u>

Cash at Bank @ 31.03.20	1992.75
Cash in hand @ 31.03.20	33.06
	<u>2,025.81</u>

Cash reserves b/fwd at 01.04.19	2092.53
Net expenditure 2019/20	-66.72
Cash reserves @ 31.03.20	<u>2025.81</u>

I have examined the accounts and related paperwork for "FRIENDS OF WEST BARNES LIBRARY" and confirm that they represent an accurate indication of the financial position of the FOWBL as at 31/03/2020.

Brian Lewis-Lavender 05/11/2020

