

THE 2017 REPORT BY THE LAYHAM LOCAL HISTORY RECORDER

There has been no significant happening to report during 2017. The life of the village has unfolded month by month in a fairly gentle way.

THE PARISH COUNCIL

- The 30mph and 40mph speed restrictions on the B1070 where it passes through the village have been put in place. Their installation has not stopped accidents occurring along this road. The council is now working towards the installation of vehicle activated or average speed measurement signs.



- A third defibrillator has been installed in the unused telephone box on Upper Street. A series of Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training sessions have been held for some 20 volunteers led by Dr Simon Daunt and Charlie Panting.
- An arrangement with SCC Highways Department has ensured that the Parish Council is informed in advance of the visits of the road sweeping lorry – giving the opportunity to notify residents in order that most cars are moved off the road and the work is more effective.
- The tree burned down when a vehicle went up in flames at the entrance to Brett Green has been replaced by the Parish Council.
- The Parish Council has offered small businesses located in the village free advertising on the village website.
- The Parish Council Green Team ran the annual Village Spring Clean again – with a good turn-out of volunteers. They also seeded a wild flower area and built a large 'insect hotel' in the Conservation Area.



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

- A range of social activities organised by the PCC, provide valuable social contact in the village and raise much needed funds. These include hot Sunday lunches; coffee, cakes and chat; a tea party; plant sale; Spring evening concert by the Hadleigh Community Choir and a Christmas concert.
- Ten Victorian oak pews were sold by the PCC in order that space could be created in the body of the church for social activity.

THE VILLAGE HALL

- The restoration of the hall continues. Over the last twelve months the floor has been sanded; window blinds have been installed and 72 new folding chairs, with a storage rack, have been purchased. Together with the new ceiling and lighting installed last year the building has been transformed.



THE PLAYING FIELD

- Apart from ongoing general maintenance (grass cutting, hedge cutting, the felling of a diseased ash tree etc) there has been a programme of rabbit culling to combat the 'scrapes' that have appeared all over the playing surface.
- A hardwood bench was provided by John Gurr in memory of his late wife June. It was installed by voluntary labour – all friends of John.



LAYHAM LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

- In the second year of the life of this group the ten members obtained a grant of £722 from the Suffolk Rural Fund via Suffolk Community Action. The grant was to fund the purchase of twelve display screens and to print 100 enlarged photographs in order to mount an exhibition called 'Marriages in Layham' over the May bank holiday. 250 local people visited the exhibition when there was a constant hum of voices as these visitors studied the photographs and enjoyed meeting up with people they had not seen for some time. Refreshments were provided by the PCC.



- Ninety photographs were tracked down covering the period 1912 to the present day and since the event the collection is closing in on a hundred. This is half of the potential 197 marriages that have taken place in St Andrew's Church since photography became usual. To add interest to the photographs there were wedding dresses on display together with wedding ephemera – all livened up with floral displays. A welcome outcome was a profit of over £1000 for the PCC.

VOLUNTARY WORK AND SOCIAL GROUPS

- The Men's Club and the mixed Social Club run regularly, but low key, bringing people together for social activity. The Community Lunch Group organises three lunches in the Queen's Head each year – always fully booked and great value for money (two courses and coffee for £6). The landlord of the pub asks no payment for the use of his kitchen where volunteers prepare and cook the food and wash-up. There is a charity fund-raising group based in the pub (known as the Old Queen's Social Club) that raises money for several local charities.

More detail of the life in the village is available in 'Letter from Layham' in the monthly issues of 'The Hadleigh Community News', copies of which are stored in the Layham Archive.

Michael Woods
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