

## **Wickham Skeith Village Hall Committee. Chairman's Report to PC AGM 2015.**

I feel that we have made some good progress this year with strong support from the village, positive fundraising and a substantial improvement in facilities.

Highlights have been a brilliant Fete, raising nearly £2500, led by Joy Homan and her team, a superb Burns Night supper organized by Margaret Knights and her friends, a money spinning jumble sale and November Fayre run by Sheila Hempstead and her helpers.

In addition the garage sale set up by Margaret Horne, the Produce Show run by the Gardening Club principals - Rosie Bassett and Carol Goldsworthy and the Children's Halloween Party organised by Cas, Trina and Katie have all brought people into the hall.

Kevin Knights took over the responsibility of the Bar from Nigel West and we have had seven Pub Nights, the popular Plum pudding walk and the Quiz.

Katie Durrant has taken over from Joy as Fete Chairman and that sub-committee is working hard in preparation for June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Obviously the main achievement of the year has been the hall improvements. The Hall is now over a hundred years old and much of it is in its original state, hirings have reduced, whilst the running costs have soared and hirers demand better facilities.

The improvements: at first glance you would be forgiven for thinking that we have just put in a false ceiling and decorated. All the walls have been re-plastered and the outside walls lined with insulation under the new plaster. (Tristan Collins)

The suspended ceiling is covered with a foot of rock wool and has low input LED lighting. The new heaters are convector radiators and the total electrical requirement in here is now 5 kw instead of 13 - and with all the insulation – the heat stays in here!

The members of the committee have done the rest of the work, decorating, renovating the shutters, cleaning and varnishing the panelling, painting the fireplace, renewing the pin-board, insulating the emergency door, replacing the door locks and many more smaller items. My thanks to all who have helped, in particular Kevin and special mention to Dave Challenor who has kept us up to a very high standard.

In the main the improvements have met with approval. The big question will be what we do next!

I want to thank Denise Alexander, our caretaker and bookings secretary, Jocelyn Bryant (minute secretary) and all the committee for their hard work during the year..

Two longstanding members have retired. Margaret Horne has been treasurer since 2006 and Dave Mugglestone has volunteered to take on the job. Andi Goodacre has joined the committee.

Sheila Hempstead has been the backbone of this committee for over 40 years. She has literally raised thousands of pounds for the Village Hall. She would always sell the most draw tickets for the Fete and also run the stall that made the most money. We will miss her.

Nigel Merriam