

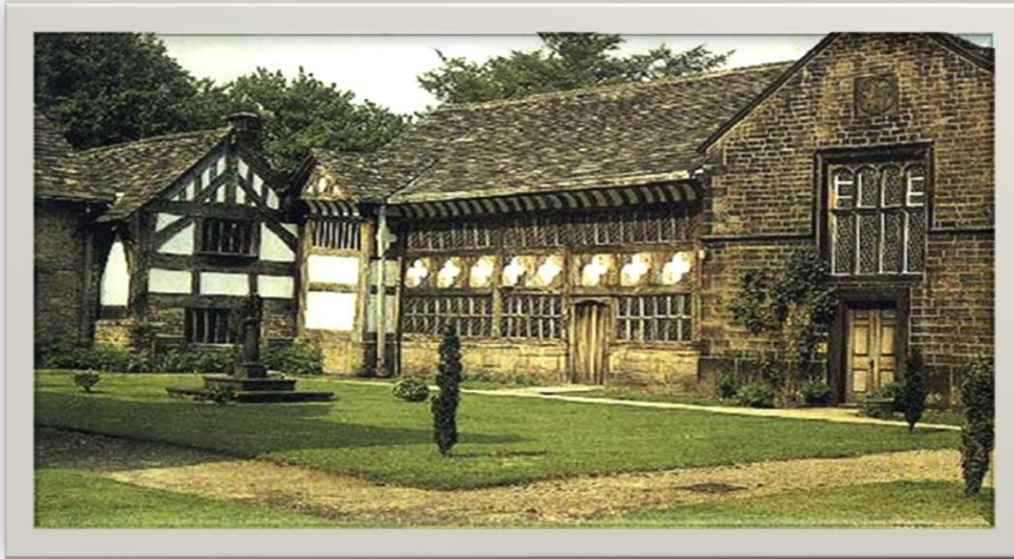


# .....Friends of Smithills Hall.....



Patron: The Duke of Norfolk President: Sir William Goring Bt.  
Smithills Hall\*Smithills Dean Road\* Bolton\*Lancashire\*BL1 7NP  
Tel (01204) 338722 Registered Charity No. 1038507

[www.friendsofsmithillshall.co.uk](http://www.friendsofsmithillshall.co.uk)



## FRIENDS BULLETIN 46

*Winter 2021/22*

Friends of Smithills Hall Executive Committee:

Chairman: David Williams, Vice Chairman: Joan Sheppard, Secretary: Sue Priest, Treasurer:  
Wendy Edwards, Members: Ruth Ellison Janette Rix



*My old grandmother always used to say, Summer friends will melt away like summer snows, but winter friends are friends forever.”*

— George R.R. Martin, *A Feast for Crows*

### **Introduction**

**W**elcome to the Winter edition of your quarterly newsletter. I hope you are all doing well. Your Executive Committee has continued to look after your interests at the Hall, but, as you can see from the names on the banner above, we have not been unaffected by events and have

had changes with valued Executive Committee members leaving. They were Elaine Fletcher-Cowen, Dorothy Lee, and Margaret Koppens who sadly passed away on the 19<sup>th</sup> September, and we will miss their valued contributions and support over the years, whilst we have welcomed to our ranks former Hall Manager Janette Rix. *If you feel you could help us by becoming a Committee Member please get in touch.* Happily, we have been joined by new members to the Friends to keep our membership numbers at around 100. We have also had some sad news about Ron Yeo, former Chairman of the Friends, who died suddenly on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

The Friends were represented at both Margaret and Ron's funerals and paid our condolences to their families. In recognition of the many years of valued service they have given unstintingly to the Friends there is a supplement included with this Bulletin with some background information on both.

Thank you for your continuing support. Contributions or comments will always be greatly appreciated.

**David Williams** ([dewilliamz@hotmail.com](mailto:dewilliamz@hotmail.com)), or via [enquiries@friendsofsmithillshall.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@friendsofsmithillshall.co.uk)

## ***Contents***

- ***Service Review***
- ***Catering at the Hall***
- ***Garden volunteering***
- ***Friends Events***
- ***Trivia***
- ***Future Events***
- ***In Memory of Margaret and Ron***

## ***Service Review***

**B**olton Council Libraries and Museums Service recently undertook a Service Review public consultation as they have to find savings for the financial year of £430,00, with the main impact falling on library services.

One of the costs reviewed was staffing and how savings could be made. Being considered was the way the Libraries and Museum Service organisation is structured and proposals to reassign responsibilities in a new structure. We know that the main costs at Smithills Hall are the running costs (heating, lighting, and maintenance costs etc.).



One immediate result is that there will be no longer be a full-time manager based at the Hall, but the Hall will be managed as part of a

cluster of managerial responsibilities. Catherine Chappell has decided to seek pastures new and has joined Bolton at Home. Catherine has been Manger at the Hall for 18 months

We would like to thank Catherine for her support and wish her every success in her new job.

At the time of writing the proposals, we understand, have to be presented to the Council's Cabinet for final consideration. We will keep you informed as the situation becomes clearer.

## ***Catering at the Hall***

**T**he Cakery has started providing refreshments under licence from the Council who hope to start the search for a new provider for the café later this year through a tendering arrangement. The Ainsworth Dining Room is now empty and awaiting a new caterer.

## ***Garden Volunteering***

**T**he Friends and Council Garden Plan has been discussed and will provide a firm basis for volunteer work on the gardens to continue to provide such impressive results, much admired by the public.

A Risk Assessment has been carried out and public liability insurance provided for volunteer coverage. Thank you, Bolton

Council, for your significant contribution towards the cost. A budget has been confirmed by the Friends to help provide volunteers with ability to buy plants or bulbs etc.



Have you been to the Hall recently and have you noticed how smart

the entrance gates up to the Hall car park are? This is because, with Council permission, Friends volunteer gardener Alison Whittaker spent a lot of her time sanding and rubbing down the metal gates, and then repainting them in their original black. They now look splendid. Alison, thank you.

### ***Friends Events***

#### **Ghost and History tours.**

The first of the Ghost and History tours run by the Friends for some time took place on the evenings of Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October and 25<sup>th</sup> November and signalled the return of an amount of normality to Hall touring. Over 55 members of the public came with a mixture of excitement and nervousness. The tours were led by three Friends guides; Ann Marie, Dorothy and David. The usual interesting photographs were taken and shared and from our feedback the evenings were much enjoyed.

A further large tour of members of U3A was guided on the morning of 25<sup>th</sup> November by Friends guides; Ruth and John Ellison, Pat Leontieff and David

Williams. Also present were Wendy Edwards and Sue Priest.



*Wendy, David, John and Ruth*

#### **Memorial Wreathlaying**

The Friend's annual Wreathlaying ceremony was held on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November in Smithills Chapel. David Williams, Chairman, introduced the event welcoming those attending. This was the sixth time this event has

been held by the Friends, and it was nice to return after this event was not possible last year during lockdown.



*Bill and Joan Sheppard*

David talked about the little booklet 'The Gospel according to Saint John' and entitled 'Active Service'. Before her passing Margaret Koppens gave David two copies of the booklet which had been reproduced to celebrate 100 years



since the end of the War. He described the contents and how the booklets were used and how many of them had been passed down

the generations. Joan read the Poem in Flanders Field; Dorothy read the poem The Soldier. Bill Sheppard, now 101 years of age, spoke the exhortation. 'They shall not grow old.....' before placing the Friend's Wreath on the Memorial. Two minutes silence was observed at 11am. Poppies were laid outside the Chapel entrance by the group.

### **Trivia**

#### **Why?**

Why is shifting responsibility to someone else called 'passing the buck'?

#### **Because**

In card games, it was once customary to pass an item, called a buck, from player to player to indicate whose turn it was to deal. If a player did not wish to assume the responsibility of dealing, he would 'pass the buck' to the next player.

### **Website**

Those of you who have seen the Friends website recently ([www.friendsofsmithills hall.co.uk](http://www.friendsofsmithills hall.co.uk)) may have noticed some changes to the 'Contact Us' page. In a collaboration between the Library Access Officer (Information and Digital) Steven Hartshorne, the Friends advisor Dave

Jones and David Williams, we have revamped the information on the page to direct, we hope more effectively, enquiries the website attracts. Many were not appropriate for a response by the Friends, and some had to be forwarded on. Some that had been forwarded had again to be redirected. By making clear who enquiries should be sent to we hope to make the process more efficient and effective for all concerned. We will review the results in due course to see how effective these changes are.

### **Future Events**

#### **Carol Service**

The Friend's Carol Service will be held in Smithills Chapel on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December. Doors will be open from 6.15pm for a 7pm start. Minced pies and mulled wine will be served after the service.

*Details are given in the letter enclosed with this Bulletin (UK residents only)*

#### **Other Activities**

A further public **Ghost and History Tour** will be considered for Jan/Feb if interest is thought to warrant one.

A **Friends Social** Event (replacing the Friends normal Christmas event) is also under consideration for the new year. Members will be notified should a decision be made to go ahead with one. We are delaying to see how variants of Covid affects Christmas activities generally, and whether we can get a speaker.