

## Friends of Leatherhead Parish Church Chairman's Report 2010



It gives me enormous pleasure to report that in the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 the Friends were able to approve a record sum of £11,498 in grants to the PCC in support of our principle objective to assist in the maintenance and improvement of the fabric, fixtures, fittings and grounds of the Parish Church. This is the largest sum ever contributed by the Friends in a normal year.

Early on in the year and in addition to our by now traditional annual contribution of £2,000 towards the substantial upkeep costs of the churchyard, the Friends paid the full £2,688 cost of installing a lightning conductor on the Tower. This was followed in the autumn by £4,809 for re-wiring and bringing up to the required regulatory and insurance standards of the electrical supply and circuitry within the Church. Fund raising during the year enabled us to make a further payment of £2,000 this spring towards completion of the work

Following a more than usually successful membership renewal and expansion campaign led by our new Membership Secretary Fran Fleming, we end the year not only with 150 members up from 133 in March 2009 but with sufficient funds to start the new year with an initial grant to the PCC of £1,000 towards churchyard maintenance. Together with the contribution made "on the ground" by working parties organised by Frank Haslam this not only adds greatly to the beautiful setting of the Parish Church but we know is also much appreciated by parishioners and visitors alike.

The success of our fund raising during the year – a total of £2,423 from three events – the Spring Plant Sale, October Bridge Tea and February 2010 Quiz – cannot however hide the fact that the raising of meaningful sums, even for such a worthy cause, is becoming increasingly difficult. We urgently need to expand our small group of dedicated local volunteers and committee members. New ideas take time to develop and it is with the utmost regret that we have been led to drop some longstanding events such as the Spring Plant Sale. The effort required to prepare and organise was increasingly disproportionate to the funds raised. It may be re-introduced if additional help is forthcoming. Meanwhile we very much hope that our new initiative this year of an evening of French themed food and entertainment "Venez au Cabaret" in the Parish Church Hall on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July will not only appeal to a larger number of people but generate the same enthusiastic participation and enjoyment as our already highly successful annual Quiz and Bridge Tea.

Any assistance, however small of any sort during the year is always welcome. Please contact any member of the Committee if you feel you could help with events planning and organisation, administration or catering.

I end my report as usual by thanking our Treasurer, Frank Haslam, our Honorary Secretary Jackie Hampton, Churchwarden representative Navin Mehta and committee members June Robinson, Peter Ford and Sonya Grove for their continuing hard work and support. Particular thanks also go to Bernard Salsbury who although retired from the Committee in 2009 provides us with invaluable help in administering Gift Aid. It was with profound regret that we learned during the year of the death of Ron Presley, committee member and past Chairman of the Friends.

We look forward to seeing and talking to as many as possible of our members and their friends at fund raising events during the year and in particular at the AGM – where we will be delighted to welcome our new Rector Graham Osborne – and at our French evening in July. Yet another date for your diaries is the Bridge Tea on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2010!

Chris Evans. Chairman FLPC