**Friends of Brixham Library**

**Annual General Meeting 16 July 2019**

1. Alasdair welcomed the members and apologies were received from the following:
* Avis Bruten
* Vanessa Fitzgerald
* Sheilagh Butlin
* Mike Langman
* Alison Lodge
* Andrew John
* Roger & Gill Strong
* Chris & Wendy Coote
1. The Minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.
2. There were no Matters Arising.
3. Alasdair presented his annual report (a full version can be found on the FoBL website)

Alasdair started his report with something to ponder over! Which of the following organisations had the highest attendance – Premier League Football games, Cinemas, top 10 UK tourist attractions or Public Libraries? The answer was given at the end – Public Libraries of course!

Alasdair made mention of many opportunities and occasions that occurred during the year, including receiving a Level 4 commendation in the Britain in Bloom competition with thanks to Marian Parker and her helpers. The Library also celebrated being in the current building for 25 years with a special coffee morning.

The events programme has been varied and as Brixham Library has now started to organise their own events we have agreed that in future an integrated programme will be produced to avoid possible confusion. Among the highlights this year were Cosgrave and Banks concert, and the Alarum Theatre’s production of ‘Idle Women’. A first was a coach trip to the Eden Project, which we hope to build on for next year.

The First Friday Coffee Mornings continue to be a great success both socially and financially. The children of Furzeham School at the Christmas Coffee Morning were a particularly memorable occasion.

FoBL embraced “Walking for Health”, and Mike O’Donnell will be giving more details later. Thanks must go to Berry Head Hotel for sponsoring the printing of the walk leaflets.

Later Phil Trayhorn will tell us about the St Mary’s Graveyard Project, but Alasdair expressed our thanks for the work he and his team have done. His dedication must be admired and applauded.

Alasdair then went on to talk about the changes that have occurred in the Library with the contract for the running Torbay Libraries being granted to Libraries Unlimited (LU). This has seen a change in attitude and a willingness to look at using the Library in other non-traditional ways.

The defibrillator which was purchased by sponsorship from local groups has been used in earnest over the past year, which is very gratifying. Our thanks to Helen and latterly Sarah for looking after it for us.

Although LU now manage the Library, the building is still under the care of Torbay Council and FoBL have lobbied for the repair of the lift and swipe card among other things. We also pressed Torbay Council to release S106 monies that were set aside specifically for Brixham Library, which is now in hand with the planned refurbishment.

Since LU took over the management of Torbay libraries, there has been support and leadership for their management, with committee members attending workshops to exchange ideas with other Friends groups.

Alasdair thanked all the members of the committee for their support and help during the year, together with Eleanor and Emma (who was called away but should have been attending) and other Library staff. Anne Alcock joined the committee this year, but Alison Lodge, Sheila Watt and Andrew John have left us. Our thanks to them.

Special thanks were given to Eleanor and Emma for their hard work and commitment to the service, the people they work with and for the town of Brixham.

1. The report was adopted.
2. Presentation of Treasurers Report by Jo Gales (a copy of the accounts can be found on the website)

No 1 Account

Income was £1,106.91 less than last year, but we also had less expenses. There was an overall surplus of £176.78.

As some of the events have changed over the years some of the categories have changed.

The coffee mornings have been very successful financially generating £836.37 profit. The other notable success was the Idle Women performance.

Capital items purchased this year:

Demonstration CPR dummy, glasses, microwave.

We have also supported children’s activities

We no longer pay insurance as the Friends activities are now covered under the LU insurance.

No 2 Account

Although this appears in deficit this is due to the Lottery funds being deposited in the previous years accounts.

Jo then thanked the Library staff for their work in booking events, taking money, and making sure the admin runs smoothly.

Bank Balances at 31/3/19:

No 1 A/c £7,419.88

No 2 A/c £4,058.21 (less £337.00 uncleared cheques)

Cash in Hand £73.05

1. The Accounts were adopted.
2. Library Managers Report

As Emma was unexpectedly called away Eleanor gave her report.

Emma thanked all the FoBL committee for their help and support over a what has been a challenging year. Sue and Helen have left but Becca and Michelle have settled into their roles. We also have Helen and Sue volunteering to stack shelfs which has helped enormously.

Emma congratulated Phil on his work on the St Marys project.

Congratulations also went to the Coffee Morning crew and to everyone who has made them such a success, including the cake bakers (that’s why it’s Emma’s favourite day to work!)

Emma gave an especial thanks to Alasdair for all his support and apologies for the volume of e-mails!

1. Report on the St Marys Graveyard Project

Phil Trayhorn outlined the history of the project which started out recording the Victorian graves in the churchyard, but soon grew to include all the 15,000! Phil said he had never met such a group of compulsive enthusiastic individuals.

The project has produced a web site which is undergoing final tweaks but will be searchable, a full scale model of the church and graveyard has been made by Paul Bennett which can now be viewed in St Marys, leaflets of walks around the parish, packs for Primary Schools and exhibitions have been staged at St Marys, the Library and the Baptist Church. An end of project party will be held at Brixham Rugby Club on 17 July.

1. Report on Bay Walks – Mike O’Donnell

As Alasdair has said the FoBL have adopted the Walking for Health Bay Walks. Mike outlined the scheme and the success of the walks with over 30 regularly attending the Monday morning walk to Berry Head, with fewer joining the shorter Tuesday afternoon walk. The take up of the Dementia Friendly walks has been low, but those who have taken part have enjoyed them. It was noted that a final coffee stop was an essential element of these walks!

Mike hoped that other walks may be added over the next few months and a walk is already planned on 21 Sept in aid of Alzheimer’s.

1. Report by Steve Turner of Libraries Unlimited

Steve started by reading a message from Rachel Gee, the LU Friends Co-Ordinator, giving us LU news over the past year:

* A new website for Torbay libraries is being built, which will enable links to Friends groups.
* Elections for a new community trustee will take in September when Friends from Torbay can stand.
* Regional meetings have been held with Friends groups which have been attended by members of FOBL.
* A new LU Chair has been elected in Prof Will Harvey
* Ciara Eastell, the LU CEO, stepped down at Easter, Alex Kitto has been appointed and is now in place.
* A final thank you to all the support given by the FoBL over the past year.

Steve then went on to outline the plans for the refurbishment of the Library. He acknowledged that this is possible, in no small part to the FoBL pressing the Council to release the S106 monies.

Unfortunately, he was unable to show final plans, as these had not been received from the appointed fit out contractors The Design Concept. However, it is planned that the Library will close on 9 Sept and reopen on 30 Sept with the whole Library redecorated, new carpeting and shelving to the ground floor, and a new children’s area. The existing shelving from the ground floor will be reused upstairs.

Steve is planning to have a consultation period when the final plans are available, however concern was raised from the floor that this would make the proposed time frame very tight.

Clarification was also given on how LU is set up and funded.

1. Election of Officers and Committee

Chairman – Alasdair Anderson

Secretary – Eunice Dodd

Treasurer – Jo Gale

Web Sec – Kim Jackson

Committee Member – Anne Alcock

All were willing to stand for another year to the agreement of the meeting.

Alison Lodge is stepping down as Membership Secretary and Angie Robson has agreed to join the Committee in that role.

We have been looking for someone to liaise with the Library staff when organising events etc. and Helen Kelly has offered to take on the role and stand on the committee.

We are also looking for a Volunteer Co-ordinator

1. Any Other Business

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 7.15.

The meeting was followed by a very interesting and thought-provoking talk by Lin Williams titled “Malawi – the warm heart of Africa” describing her visits to Malawi and the work that has been done helping the women and children of Malawi. Alasdair gave our thanks, especially as she stood in with only a day’s notice. Lin was presented with an arrangement of flowers in thanks.