



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
AGM
Monday 15th October 2018

Ladies & Gentlemen, welcome to the 2018 AGM of the ALMH
This has been my 4th year as Chairman, and despite that, I'm happy to report that the Memorial Hall continues to be in good shape financially, in good shape structurally and in the very good hands of a great bunch of Trustees. As we do every year, we have continued to maintain a high level of care to the Hall's upkeep, inside and out.

I would like to start this year's report with some thank you.

First of all; to our cleaner Anna Grotek for keeping the place clean, spotless and tidy each month.

A big thank you to Chris Willoughby for keeping the grass cut and the garden in good order
To Steve Tomlin who kindly trimmed the Christmas Tree for us as it was touching the overhead electricity power cables and he also did a lot of hard manual work levelling the new garden area.

And finally to Richard Murray for letting us use their field for car parking at the August Feast.

The Trustees are responsible for the up-keep, maintenance and care of this Memorial Hall and so one job we have just completed was to replace all the old plastic guttering on both sides as it broke at the start of the year due to the heavy snow fall. We now have a new one-piece aluminium design and I think you will agree it looks great.

Thanks to Fenella for all her help and advice, amongst all the other things she does for us too.

This year, we purchased a small piece of land from Shirley Holland to extend the garden. The old stone wall was crumbling in places and was dangerous to the touch. Something needed to be done about it - so we felt it was sensible to combine the two.

I think you'll agree that the extra space with the new simple post and rail fence is a great addition to the Memorial Hall as we saw at the August Feast when we had Jim Smiths Band, 'Rough Cut Ruby' playing for us.

We have the three main events each month that are designed to bring our community together, young and old.

The successful 'Film Nights', which started back in January 2013 and continue to get good and appreciative audiences. Thank you to Euan & Geraldine for all the time, hard work and effort that you put into these evenings.

The monthly 'Villagers Lunch', which attract many local people, both young and old to the mid-day gatherings and provides a welcome chance to meet and chat with neighbours and friends, while eating a hot meal for just £5.00. Thanks to Rachel Jones, Sandra Bowen, Sheila Sumpster and to all the other Ladies & Gents that help out and cook each month.

And finally, there's our old faithful friend, the Pub Nights, the 'Astally Arms', which started back in September 1999 - 19 years ago, it's still going strong and continues to be the main contributor to the Memorial Hall funds each year. My thanks go out to all those members of the community that offer to run the Bar each month.

I would just like to add a personal thank you to, Angus and Jeanie who ran the bar for the first time at this year's August Feast, - our busiest Pub Night of the year. Also, I really want to publicly thank, Andy & Ali Trevaskis for cooking for over 70 people at the August Feast. They do a difficult and stressful job, but make it look easy - and the BBQ food not only was delicious, but raised a lot of money for the Hall's upkeep. Thank you so much.

Talks @ The Memorial Hall continues to be another popular evening and are always well attended and enjoyed. My thanks go to all the contributors who come and give us their time and share their experiences. We have another one coming up on the 3rd November; *Fields of Battle - Lands of Peace* which will be the start of our events, celebrating the end of the First World War.

The Freeview TV System is yet another facility that enables us to gather and meet from time to time and has continued to be a great community success. Back in February this year, we showed all the England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales games from the Six Nation Rugby matches, 'LIVE' - and in June, the England football matches at the World Cup in Russia. Last Christmas, we showed the Strictly Come Dancing Final, which we are doing again this year in the week before Christmas, so get your dancing shoes out.

One of my favourite nights of 2018 was the Burns Night Super back in January where we also celebrated Alastair Howatson's 90th Birthday. It was a truly great night, celebrating two great men.

It's largely thanks to the Trustees, a brilliant group of men and women who are so very important to me, to the Memorial Hall, and also to you - the local Community and the reason that this Memorial Hall is at the heart of the Parish. They are a great team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them so much for all they do and the support they give.

I try and remember to send out the emails to remind you what's on and when, But the Memorial Hall's Web Site; www.asthalleigh.co.uk. continues to be the focus of information for the Memorial Hall and I'd like to thank Andy for looking after it and keeping the site updated.

Apart from informing the community what's on, there is a page about the villages, Photos, and the Names of the Fallen who this Memorial Hall was built for. AND We must never forget that this is a Memorial Hall and was built to remember those men and women who fell in the 1914-18 and 1939-45 Wars, and to those that returned - and because of that, we all have a duty to keep this place alive, So that they may never be forgotten. This year in particular is very significant, as it's the 100th anniversary of the end of World War 1 and we have several events planned which I hope you will be able to make at least one of them.

On

Saturday 3rd November - we have a powerful talk and photographic exhibition, by Michael Sheil - Fields of Battle / Lands of Peace; 1914-18, which tells of the *Healed Scars* of the First World War through our only remaining living witness: The fields of battle themselves...

To mark the closing year of the First War Centenary, Mike will reflect upon the participation of all nations, both from the Commonwealth and the wider world.

One hundred years ago a veteran of the conflict said that in time, *"the country would come back to life, the grass would grow again, the wild flowers return and that the Fallen would lie still, and at peace, below the singing birds and beside the quiet flowing rivers"*.

This Talk is not to be missed.

Friday 9th is Film Night - '*Journey's End*'

Set in a dugout in France in 1918, it is the story of a group of British officers, led by the young officer Stanhope, as they await their fate...

One Review said; *Journey's End* is a bleak, sobering experience that puts audiences through a ringer. An emotional powerhouse you will not forget.

Saturday 10th - It's Party Time to Celebrate the end of WW1 - 100 years on.

The Bar will be open from 7pm and we are encouraging you to dress up in the period around the 1st or 2nd world wars and wear your poppy with pride. We shall have a good old sing-a-long with tunes such as; Pack Up Your Troubles In Your Old Kit Bag - Keep The Home

Fires Burning - It's A Long Way To Tipperary - If You Were The Only Girl In The World - and many more. . . With lots of Flag waving, it promises to be a great night

Finally our last event is on Sunday morning, the 11th November when we will be standing shoulder to shoulder at 11 o'clock, in a short ceremony and 2 minutes silence.

I do hope you can join us at one or more of those events.

As you have heard, there have been so many great days and nights here, BUT, as I come to the end of my report, I cannot let 2018 go by without saying something about the very sad loss of our dear friend Nick Jones, who passed away so suddenly in May.

Nick was a past Trustee - Chairman, and the Memorial Hall's best supporter.

He, was always there to help, weather it was leading from the front or support from the back.

The news of his death came as a sudden and terrible shock, BUT, we will never forget him or what he did for the building and so we are planning to have a Memorial to our friend, Please watch this space in the coming months for news of that.

Nick's last report as Chairman, ended with these words;

"Lastly it is to you, who are here tonight and all the community that we thank, so much for your continued support, in so many different ways in making THIS MEMORIAL HALL, NOT ONLY A PLACE TO MEET, BUT THE PLACE TO MEET.

So, I now say to you, who are here tonight, and to your friends, your neighbours, To all the Community and to all the Trustees, it is up to each and every one of us, to continue to keep this Memorial Hall's Heart Beating - Not just for those who died in the two world wars, but also for Nick and Keep it, not just A place to meet, but THE place to meet - for ever and ever.

Thank you.

Apologies for Absence

Andrew Preece

Andrew Wingfield Digby

Nigel Hephherd

Lynne Hughson