

January 2007

Issue 20

A new hall for Linslade



Dates for your diary:

Sat. 21st April: South Beds. Concert Band

Good Friday (6th April): Stainer's Crucifixion with the Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers (N.B. entry is free)

Sat. June 9th: Concert

Sat. July 14th: Wine appreciation evening

To be confirmed: quiz night, race night

Overleaf

Festive cheer for hall fund

Gas dispute ended

Our vision

Did you know?

The recently completed link is the first significant alteration to St. Barnabas church since 1913 when the north aisle was added together with new gas lighting. The Leighton Buzzard Observer reported (1st July 1913) as follows: "Linslade, as is well known is a comparatively poor parish and much as these improvements were desired ..., thy were not possible until Mrs Forster-Simpson (...) bequeathed a sum of about £8,000 for enlarging and beautifying the Church." "The general opinion is a favourable one" concluded the LBO. You can find out more by buying John Vickers' "History of St. Barnabas" for only £10.

Building the future in our community



Building to start on stage 2

Last November, the hall committee acting with the advice of our architect, John Hardern, asked three companies to tender for the work to rebuild the hall roof. Stage 2b of the project will also involve new windows facing the park (slightly lower than the existing ones) and repairing the stonework.

The decision bringing forward stage 2b was taken because of the need to use the WREN landfill grant by next March.

3 tenders were received: from Newport Pagnell

Construction for £126,000, from Patrick Baird for £140,000 and from Apex for £130,000. Based on our experience of working with Apex, theirs was the tender that we accepted to do the work.

Once formal contracts are agreed with our funders, WREN, and the builders, we expect work to start within the next few weeks.

During work on this stage, the hall can continue to be used although we apologise for any disruption due to noise.

"We are delighted to be able to move on to phase 2b of our project and hope to have the funding soon to enable the rest of stage 2 to be completed"

– Keith Saunders, Project Co-ordinator

Appeal brings tremendous response

Thanks go to all those who responded to our latest appeal for donations. Over **£45,000** has been raised by donations from individuals in November and December. We were grateful to those who gave larger sums in excess of £10,000 but also to those who gave smaller amounts.

Although it seems that this will enable us to continue with stage 2b (see above), we need the gifts to keep coming to enable us to move forward with the rest of the project.

Visitors to the church's Christmas Tree festival, the first for two years, helped boost the project fund by a

marvellous **£915**. Thanks go to Jo Thomson whose sterling efforts produced a dazzling display of trees from a wide range of local organisations. A great way to get into the festive season.

There has been a huge range of activities going on over the past few weeks. A chocolate sale in December raised £85 and the jazzercise donated £85. The church is always pleased to welcome a number of groups who hold annual Christmas celebrations at St. Barnabas. This year

the Barclays bank pensioners Christmas service donated £90 and one of our local lower schools, Greenleas School, raised £133.50 through their carol service.

A highlight of our fundraising campaign over the Christmas 2006 period was a series of concerts – for full reports, see page 2.

Linslade Hall Re-development project

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Events box office

To reserve tickets for any event listed on page 1, please contact Nick and Sandra Moore:

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n.moore@bbk.ac.uk

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.linslade-parish.org.uk>

Give as you spend

If you buy goods on the internet, your e-retailer will pay us a commission if you first visit

<http://www.buy.at/linsladeparish>

EBay Charity Auction

Auction off your unwanted items at EBay and donate to the project:

st_barnabuzz@yahoo.co.uk

Festive Cheer for the Hall Fund

A huge thank to all the local musicians who entertained us throughout December. Our festival opened on 1st December with delightful performances by the **Milton Keynes wind ensemble** and the **Vandyke Barbershop singers**. 8 nights later saw the latest visit by the **Linslade Singers** who treated us to a wonderful performance of Vivaldi's Gloria, conducted as usual by Dennis Pim. We were also delighted to welcome the South Bedfordshire Youth Voices under the baton of Susan Cox, delighting the large audience with the high quality of their singing. Overall the concert raised **£800**.

More music was on offer

on 23rd December for the annual **St. Mary's concert**. 105 people, a record for this tiny church, packed in for a festive treat including Alex Nash's masterful performance of the "*Winter*" concerto from Vivaldi's "*Four Seasons*". David Booth deployed his inimitably English arranging style in a range

of less familiar carols and other Christmas music. Dennis Pim and his "Octad" were in action with local string players and soprano Christine Levey, raising a total of **£750**.

Left: David Booth and Dennis Pim; **below left:** Octad and St. Mary's Players; **below:** violinist Alex Nash



Gas dispute ended

We are pleased to report that the long-running dispute with Southern Gas networks has been concluded with a promise of a full refund.

The saga started in March when our contractor, Apex, asked SGN to disconnect old meters in the hall and provide supply to two new meters. After several repeated phone calls, a quotation was received for just over £3100. Sourcing our own

meter boxes reduced this bill to a quarter of the rate charged by SGN.

When the work was eventually completed on 10th June, we were charged £1769.32 for exactly 80 minutes work.

We complained to Energywatch that this equated to over £1500 per hour. A second offer was made to treat the work as a "new connection" rather than "alteration to existing

supply" which would have reduced the cost to just over £1100.

In his letter of thanks to SGN, project leader Keith Saunders thanked the company for its donation, adding his view that companies in monopoly situations should provide a "fair price for a good job done".

Our Vision: putting Community at the heart of all we do

St. Barnabas church is looking to put Community at the heart of all its work. Our aims are to:

- Foster activities that will reduce social isolation
- Offer an affordable, accessible, social meeting place
- Nurture a community spirit and to be a

focus for community pride

- Be an economically viable but non-profit-making facility

Our project will provide for the complete rebuilding of the hall including:

- New link between church and hall with disabled access and disabled toilet (stage

1 – complete)

- new kitchen, bar and offices (stage 2a)
- new roof covering and repaired stonework (stage 2b)
- completely refurbished interior (stage 2c)
- new extension with counseling and conference facilities (stage 3)

"St Barnabas Parish Hall seeks to become the centre of the community of Linslade and a resource for the wider area of Leighton-Linslade."