

I.M.M.C. - Chairman Ann Williams Report for 2009.

We finished 2008 with our weekend of events to mark the 40th anniversary of the closure of Ifton Colliery.

Lantern workshops were held at St.Martins Centre on Saturday and Sunday 17th & 18th November and at Ifton Heath School during the coming week.

Friday 21st saw us at Ifton Meadows when the lanterns were lit and Rhyn Park School Drum Band lead the procession to the Shadow Panels which were narrated by Ruth Moore- Williams (storyteller), then on to the top of the meadows where we were entertained by a Fire Eater, Fire sculpture of a Pit head tower and fireworks. The band then lead us back down and everyone made their way to St.Martins Centre where the Fire eater became a juggler and entertainer and we all enjoyed a barbeque.

Saturday 22nd we attend the unveiling of the Youth Club mosaic at Ifton Meadows followed in the evening with a concert by Rhos Orpheus Male Voice Choir and Storyteller Ruth Moore-Williams in St.Martins Miners institute.

23rd A second lantern parade lead by Ifton Brass Band proceeded to the Church the church yard was alight with lanterns and the path to the front door was illuminated by tee lights. A full church awaited the procession, I am sure many would have lined the route if the weather had not been so appalling The Ref Stewart Jermy then led a service of remembrance to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Closure of Ifton Colliery.

Everyone seemed to appreciate our efforts to mark this occasion the only problem was the weather which we could not control.

My thanks for all who helped over the weekend and in particular those who braved the weather to decorate the churchyard in rain, wind, sleet and lightening on the Sunday.

December we enjoyed our annual meal at The Greyhound and I would like to thank you all for the lovely gift of tub complete with a camellia, pinks, and heathers which I have enjoyed throughout the year. I think it was probably one of the few times I have been speechless. Thank you again for your thoughtfulness and generosity it will serve as a reminder to me for many years to come of the hard work we have all done over 2008.

In December I received a letter asking if I would like to apply for another 'Breathing Places grant' this was only open to applicants that had already been successful. Application time was short, register interest the week before Christmas, Form arrived in middle/end of January and needed to be completed and returned by 6th February. We managed to complete this and at the of April we were informed that we had been successful and received a cheque from 'Breathing Places Phase 4 ' for £4895 which needed to be completed by 30th September 2009. This we have managed and are now the proud owners of new equipment which includes a laptop, A3 printer, bat detectors, ID books and cards, Professional training

courses plus many other items. We are in the process of finalising this and will be sending the completed form in the next few weeks.

One of the reasons we were able to complete the application so quickly was that some of the items included had already been included in an application to Shropshire Community Chest Fund which had only partially been successful. The Community Chest Fund provided us with a new shed and base plus labour to prepare site and erect site. This has meant that we can store much of the equipment that we have accumulated in one place.

Neil & I attended Chirk Gardening Club on 23rd February to give a talk about Ifton meadows L.N.R. and how we operate.

Spring Fair was held at Ifton Meadows on 9th May. The House of the Black Star Re-enactors, Greyhound Rescue and Shropshire Disabled Holidays/walks joined us along with the Scouts and Brownies who provided the refreshments. The Brownies danced around the Maypole and later were joined by men in chained mail and other adults. A low key but enjoyable day which everyone seemed to enjoy.

A display board has been erected at the Colliery entrance (part of the awards for all grant) which is updated regularly. Our thanks to Harvey and his volunteers for erecting this for us.

Bird boxes were also erect and mapped by Andy Mathers and his Scouts who will be monitoring them throughout the year. The Beavers have also done a litter pick on site.

Brownies planted 40 Rowan and Cherry saplings on 19th April near the Railway entrance this was part of a national tree planting event held last winter. Due to the size of the saplings structure of our soil and the weather these were cared for by Colin Chapman during the winter and planted out in April. Thank you Colin for looking after these trees.

As part of the new Breathing places grant Maggie and I attended a Media training day at Radio Shropshire on 27th May. Maggie and I also attended a meeting at AVOW Wrexham 18th June this was in conjunction with ongoing changes to Child Protection. We have also been involved with Springwatch Open weekend when we arranged Guided bird walks with the Rev. John Webb and Teddy Bears picnic unfortunately this was washed out by the weather.

June saw a changeover due to Shropshire County going unitary Shaun Burkey is no longer our liaison officer. We become part of the larger organisation and are now under Caroline Healey. Ellesmere Rangers are now responsible for our site and our new officer is Harvey Morgan (Ranger).

We attended the launch at Ifton Meadows of the new edition of Shropshire Wheelchair Access leaflet we are featured on the front, promoting the new pathway to the disabled.

This years Summer Fayre was held with a completely new and separate committee in charge. We donated £200 to help kick start this new committee. They worked hard and put on a large scale event. Our part was to promote Ifton Meadows L.N.R. and its history. A good dry day which changed suddenly

towards the end to a heavy down pour with a lot of the water diverting to form a river through our marquee.

Our thanks to Alex for making a Case and Mounting for the new IMMC banner which is now residing in St.Martins Centre.

26th July we attended Whittington Castle Archaeology event held by Oswestry Hill Fort Group again the weather proved a problem.

St.Martins Parish Council have provided us with a grant of £1000 this year which we are very grateful for this will go a large way towards funding the Lantern Parade in October.

Following the Media training day Radio Shropshire came out to interview us at the Meadows and while they were there I also record a piece about 'Radar Keys' this was used both on the radio and Radio Shropshire's web site. Harvey has also placed a notice about the use of a radar key to access the site near the gate at the Colliery entrance.

The Green Gym is attracting new members which include Naomi who is helping us as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award. They have worked hard during the year we have cleared a large area of ragwort and this week have completed the clearance of the lower pathway on the right of main path from Colliery entrance along with helping the Brownies plant their saplings and other jobs that needed doing.

Further improvements to the site are in progress two new kissing gates, drainage and new boardwalk for the Dingle are being funded by Joe Penfold with money from Big Lottery/Living Well Project.

Guided walks have taken place with Pete Boardman (insects, bees and butterflies) and Fungi with Harvey Morgan. More to be arranged.

We also attended in October, Trevor Basin as part of the celebration of the Fron aqueduct, canals etc being made a World Heritage Site.

I would like to thank everyone for their help and support over the last twelve months.

Ann Williams

Notice/Information board will be erected at Ifton Meadows in May 2009.