

November Newsletter WHC

Another lock-down! At least it should only be a month this time, so I'm counting the days but remembering that it may not be the last. In the meantime, we continue with our work at the Centre.

Henry is doing a lovely job on the first of the large original windows. As always, close inspection revealed more problems than we thought but he has nearly finished that one and can then move on to the next and then one more! As you might expect those windows have stood the test of time much better than some of the newer, smaller ones in the more recent parts of the building. Because he is working alone he has been able to continue throughout the traumas of the last few months even although it is taking longer.

Each time I visit the building I'm struck by what a lovely, light space it is and how fortunate we are to have the use of it despite the worries of financing it. In company with every other organisation we have suffered a big drop in income because of not being able to hold talks, exhibitions and other events but we are sustained by the grant we were given in April and that is holding out well, enabling us to continue to look after the building and pay the bills.

We have lots of plans for when we are allowed to re-open, including talks, a garage sale, exhibitions, including one with the radio boys upstairs so that you can view the large collection donated to us by the late Stewart Orr and an opportunity for you all to see how we have been working on our archive. We are still having papers, C/D's, tapes, reminiscences and so-on donated regularly and our three trainee volunteer archivists are making good progress with cataloguing, aided by the professionals from the Archive Centre in Norwich. We are of course having to work on-line with the Norwich people, which is a shame really because we would have loved them to come in person so that they could really see what treasures we have.

One of the few compensations of all the uncertainty and sadness surrounding "the virus" is that it has given us time to think, review and consolidate, which, given that we all have families and other commitments, is a good thing!

Yesterday we discovered that part of the green boundary fence at the front of the building had fallen down. All the footings along the entire fence are rotten and we have to decide whether to replace it. Given the probable cost of doing so and the fact that the original purpose was simply to stop the children from escaping, we think we might not. We are deciding whether to plant a hedge or just to leave it all for now, given that there is no sign of any movement of the bank and plenty of tree and shrub roots to consolidate the soil I think waiting is a good option! You are welcome to give us your opinion on this or any other matter if you wish, so it's up to you!

You may be wondering how we are getting on with our charity application. At first we were told that we hadn't sufficiently demonstrated educational and community benefits, despite our efforts to do so. We have now provided even more details, including explaining how we select our speakers, what their qualifications may be and whether we ensure we are open to all! We've sent even more details and await developments. Watch this space!

Keep well and very best wishes to you all.

Mary Thompson and your fellow directors.