

# Chair's Report on activities and achievements in 2019-20

## Chair - Samantha Thorburn

Wednesday 30th September, Zoom online meeting

Welcome everyone and thank you for joining us on our very first online AGM!

The Friends of Great Rollright School is a registered charity and we follow a Constitution which sets out the rules and procedures which our committee members follow. The AGM is the only formal meeting of our year and deals with the formalities of elections, financial audits, reviews and plans for the future.

The aim of the Friends is to raise funds for the school to buy things to benefit the children, that the school would otherwise not be able to afford within their budget.

We are formed mainly by parents, but everyone is welcome: teachers, teaching assistants, grandparents and other family members. As a committee, we tend to meet at least once every term. We discuss our social and fundraising ideas, and importantly we also take on board ideas from other parents and supporters. We take our lead from Miss Hastings on how we might allocate funds raised and every decision is made by a simple majority of votes.

I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge and thank the current Committee:

Michelle Jones – Treasurer

Charlotte Robinson – Secretary

Members at large – Kate Drake, Martene Midwood, Rebecca MacRae, Kat Loughheed, Lisa Williams and Miss Hastings.

Thank you all so much for your continued dedication to Friends through your consistent commitment this year, which has certainly thrown us a curve ball.

And of course, a big thank you to all the parents, grandparents, carers, friends, teachers, TAs, staff who support, donate and contribute to our events to help us to achieve our objective and fundraising targets.

I would like to make a special mention to Jen Stephens for all her help with artwork and Y6 Yearbooks, Jo King for support in the office, and Nick Jones who's company Britvic support our social events with drinks and a matched funding donation.

## Highlights

I am not going to go into all the details of how much each fundraiser made, I will let Michelle cover this in her report next, but I do want to high light some of the events that we did manage to squeeze into a very short academic year.

**Chastleton House Teas**, which up until this pandemic, has formed the backbone of our fundraising. For those who don't know what this is, we hosted a cafe at the local National Trust house and sold tea and cake to tourists. This was a winning combination for us as a small school, it is always social when running the cafe you get to meet other parents, and the tourists are always grateful for homemade cakes and a hot cup of

tea in such a remote place. Also, this is a low cost fundraiser as parents donate the cost of the ingredients and their baking time, while the tourists happily paid £4 per person. Thank you to all who contributed their time, bakes and helped us in this fundraiser. We hope that this fundraising opportunity will return in some shape or form as it was great to raise funds outside of our direct school community.

**Yard Sale** - We hosted a Yard Sale at the start of last year, a new event for us, which was fun and brought both the school and village together as a community.

**Glow Party** - The Glow Party was a particular success for us last year. We were delighted that it was so very well attended, and are sad that we won't be able to host one this year as it was a wonderful way for the new starters to meet old hands - and I do mean both in terms of the children and their parents! I know that it will be one of our first events to return once we are free from Covid restrictions.

**Tea Towels** - a wonderful little project, done with the support of the teaching staff (thank you!), the children drew portraits of themselves and we printed a school tea towel and coasters.

**Bingo** - One of our school parents, Duncan Midwood, hosted a monthly village bingo for local charities, and we are grateful for his efforts and support - thank you again Duncan, and we hope that you are able to restart in the not too distant future.

**100 Club** - Our school lottery, which is open to all who have a connection to the school, has had a good year for fundraising, one Covid didn't cancel. I hope that you've all heard that the 100 Club has reopened its doors again until 15th October in time for the November draw, an exceptional move in exceptional times, so make sure you get in before the doors close again.

**Online activities - Animal Competition & Virtual Summer Fete** - Then we were all locked down, which was a trying time for everyone. As such all our usual activities were cancelled. Our Summer Fete with Dog Show, has a fantastic, local reputation and always seems to land the hottest weather and as such it is/was our largest fundraising event. However, not to be totally held back by lockdown we hosted an online Virtual Summer Fete, which we hoped the children would enjoy. During lockdown, The Friends also wanted to provide something lighthearted for the children and we had an online animal competition. Both these online events were purely done to try and provide a sense of community and fun for the school children and were not fundraisers.

## What have these funds supported?

The full list of spending is detailed in Michelle's report. I wanted to mention:

- Workshops, including visiting poets for 'Book Week'
- Coaches for school trips & swimming trips
- Sports coaching for KS1
- Brass instrument lessons for KS2
- Library books for all
- Class Topic Books

## The year ahead

We have ongoing financial commitments and we will be continuing to raise and save up funds for the early years outdoor area, which has recently received a facelift, but is in desperate need of more fun stuff put back. We will of course continue with our 100 Club and who knows, maybe turn it into a 200 Club?! Look out too for details of how you can fundraise while you shop online with Amazon, as the Friends sign us up for Amazon Smile. I know that the new committee members will have much more to reveal to you once they are in place.

## Goodbyes

And this is the sad part, where we acknowledge that it is time for change on the Committee.

Firstly we say goodbye and a big thank you to Lisa (aka Miss Williams) who has been involved well before I joined the Friends. She has been a wonderful link with the school and always so helpful in sorting out many of our practicalities. I must also mention her dedication to the Dog Show at the Summer Fete. A tough task with lots of people and dogs to please; she managed that always with a smile and maybe a little sunburn! She will be greatly missed. Thank you, Lisa.

And we say goodbye to Michelle Jones too. Michelle has been involved with the Friends ever since her eldest came to the school (she now has two children in Top School!), so to say that she has put an enormous amount of energy and time into Friends is very much an understatement. I have been trying to work out just how much money she has helped raise for school over those many years and it must be well over £100,000! Quite some achievement! Well done! She has worked hard to contribute funds towards the school extension, which we know as the Ocean classroom; school trips both local, afar and residential; sporting activities, Chrome Books, new interactive white boards, a library renovation.; she also helped Friends secure local Coop funds to help fund the upgrade to the children's play equipment at the bottom of the playground. She has been relentless in her dedication to the committee and she leaves big boots to fill! Thank you, Michelle.

It will also be a goodbye from me as I stand down as Chair. When I look back at my time on the committee, I feel an overall sense of satisfaction and pride at what a small group of people in a small school has achieved. We have all experienced an incredibly turbulent year, but what I do know is that the Friends are always there to provide a positive contribution to the school community and that the year ahead will not be any different.

Thank you for joining us today on our first online AGM. Thank you for listening and I ask you to show your support this year in whatever shape or form you can, for we have a lot to fundraise for! And we simply can't do it without you!