

Friends of Goring Library Committee Report 2019-2020

Committee Members

Jacqui Gray (Chair)	Gaye Walsh (Events Organiser)
Sarah Chambers (Vice-Chair)	Kate Herbert
Jacky Underwood (Secretary)	David Beddall
Alan Terney (Treasurer)	Ed Christie
Mary Carr (Volunteer Co-ordinator)	Tina Marinos
Jo Nicolson (Membership Secretary)	

Changes to the Committee

After several years on the committee, Alan Terney is stepping down as Treasurer. He has done invaluable work over the years, not least of which has been making the necessary changes to the constitution to enable us to register with HMRC for gift aid. Andrew Smith has agreed to take over the role and will be working with Jo Nicolson over the coming year to contact members and submit our first claim to HMRC. All other members of the committee are standing for re-election.

How We Supported the Library

Over the past year FOGL has greatly increased the amount of financial support given to the library. We raised this money and used it to support the library as outlined below:

- **Supporting our Library Manager:** our continued funding of Gill's post has enabled Kate to run an exciting and varied programme of events for children and adults over the past year including setting up a monthly Stay & Play session for babies and toddlers and hosting regular IT help sessions. Further details on these events are included in her report. Thanks to a generous grant from the Lucy Woodward Trust, we were able to take advantage of the opportunity to host a visit from Rhubarb Theatre to entertain children during October half-term. We were all immensely pleased when Gill decided to renew her contract at the end of November 2019 for another year.
- **Purchasing Books:** we donated £500 to spend on books and, as always, a display was put up in the library when they arrived.
- **Events:** we ran a varied programme of events throughout 2019 including our summer party in the Garden Room of the Village Hall and several coffee mornings in the library itself. We also hosted talks in the library from local authors, Sylvia Vetta and LP Fergusson, as well as Alan Winchcomb talking about the 'Writers, Artists & Musicians of the Goring Gap'. Our programme for 2020 was just getting underway when the arrival of Covid-19 meant that we had to cancel our forthcoming events. All of our speakers have agreed to reschedule their talks when the opportunity arises so I am sure that you will find something to catch your interest in 2021.

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- **Fundraising & Donations:** in addition to the generous grant from the Lucy Woodward Trust mentioned above, we also received £300 from the Waitrose Green Token scheme. Warmingham Estate Agents continued their long-standing support of the library, enabling us to keep our subscription to *The Times* newspaper, which is delivered for free by Westholme Stores, as well as providing funding for the children's activities in the library. We used the funds to purchase a colourful circular rug, specifically for the Stay & Play sessions. We also invested in black-out blinds for the library windows so that it would be easier to have slides and videos projected during author talks. We were also very grateful to receive a donation of £300 from Simon Fitzherbert Jones, in memory of his mother, Lilian.
- **Publicity:** we are indebted to Mark Baker, who designed our marvellous new logo and has also produced colourful, eye-catching posters to help publicise our events. You may have seen the logo on our new banner, which is on display whenever a FOGL event takes place in the library or elsewhere. It also adorns our new membership leaflet and our sky-blue tote bags which can be bought in the library.
- **Website:** thanks to Dorothy Hirsch and Sara Benbow the Friends of Goring Library website was launched towards the end of last year. It has been an extremely useful resource during lockdown as Story & RhymeTime has been able to move online. Dorothy and Sara have been working hard to keep it informative and up-to-date and I would urge you to take a look at www.fogl-oxon.co.uk for all the latest library and FOGL news.

Membership Numbers

There are currently 190 members of the Friends of Goring Library. This includes 53 family memberships. Over the course of the last year we have made 12 new members. We will be asking Friends to renew their membership next April in line with our usual renewal time-frame.

COVID-19

And, finally, the elephant in the room. There has been an immense amount of work going on behind-the-scenes to reopen our library. Kate has been appointed to a working group which has been looking at how to manage the safe reopening of community libraries. She has kept FOGL fully up-to-date with all developments and it looks as though we are finally coming to the end of what has proved a lengthy and frustrating process. An unexpected side-effect of the Covid-19 crisis is that we were gifted £500 from Nikki Bateman, which she raised selling face coverings from Barbara's Bric-a-Brac. The committee will be discussing how best to use this money and I look forward to reporting further on the matter at next year's AGM.