

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on 4 June 2008 in the

Salisbury and South Wilts Museum Lecture Theatre

The Chairman, Jennifer Bowen, welcomed everyone particularly the Very Reverend June Osborne, Dean of Salisbury and Trustee Helen Marriage.

Representing the Chairman of the Trust, Helen Marriage thanked everyone for coming. The cost of maintaining the Water Meadows is around £35,000/year and she expressed how important the Friends are, their constant support and financial contribution. Rose Cottage is proving an ideal centre and has enabled many more educational walks to take place. The plans for the new Education Centre have been withdrawn, but it is the intention of the Trustees to look at this again in a few years time.

The Dean told the meeting how important the Trust and Friends are to the Cathedral. She said 'It is a special year to celebrate 750 years and everything planned is based around the powerful, spiritual force of our landscape. We will support each other, it is important that we work together. Cathedral enterprises should benefit rather than detract from Water Meadows money.'

Peter Luton, Treasurer, circulated the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2008. There was an increase in subscriptions and donations and together with income from various events it enabled £2500 to be handed to the Trust. A bequest from Mrs Ellis of £2000 was received and had been given to the Trust earlier in the year.

Jennifer Bowen, Chairman of the Friends reported on the activities and arrangements of the past year-

"Work during the year inside and out has made Rose Cottage an attractive headquarters. The garden has been redesigned to form an ideal area for stalls and displays when required and was used for the Family Environment Event in May.

The Cottage is now in frequent use as a reception point, a start point for walks and a 'classroom' for educational purposes. It also has a "reference library" of literature on water meadows generally.

Thanks to the Dean's very strong belief that the Water Meadows are a very important part of the wider environment of the Cathedral, we had a stall on the Cathedral's Open Day in April, which attracted around 4000 people and resulted in a lot of interest.

During the year there were several walks on the meadows, talks and other fund raising events. Memorable talks included one on a Pilgrimage to Jordan and Syria, given by the Chairman, a moving talk on childhood in Holland during WWII and a wonderful talk given by the Managing Director of 'The Lost Gardens of Heligan', Peter Stafford, who was so impressed with our work that he has agreed to

come back and speak to us in 2010. We have also had 2 Open Days at Rose Cottage.

There are many people to thank for their help and contribution towards fund raising and caring for the Water Meadows. Among them Admiral and Mrs Gueritz, who opened their lovely garden, Hemyngsby in the Close; The Hon. Peter Pleydell-Bouverie, who invited us to have a Garden Party at Newcourt; the team of volunteer helpers collecting litter, joining working parties on the Meadows and at Rose Cottage and those involved in giving educational talks in schools and public lectures. We now have an up and running Education Committee, under the chairmanship of Rosemary Allen, and have forged strong links with the Museum.

A Memorial Seat to Susan Harris, drowned in 1966 saving a boy's life, was unveiled outside Rose Cottage near the spot where it happened; it was a very moving occasion. Coffee was served in the Old Mill afterwards, emphasising how close our links are with Steve and Simon of the Old Mill.

A new seat was placed in the garden of Rose Cottage, commemorating the Treasurer's recent special birthday. It was paid for from a collection made instead of presents and was made at the Building Craft College as Peter Luton is a Past-Master of the Worship Company of Carpenters.

The website is very active and is updated and expanded, it has links to other local websites, particularly the Cathedral. We are grateful to Michael Cowan for his work in achieving this. www.salisburywatermeadows.org.uk

We will shortly have a new, and greatly expanded, History, written by Michael Cowan, Hadrian Cook and Tim Tatton-Brown. This will be launched at our Open Day on September 14.

A report on Management of the Meadows by Hadrian Cook and a Management Report by Sholto Moger (Strutt and Parker), given at the AGM follow.