



Farleigh Hospice Open Gardens Terling & Fairstead

Given the numbers involved, it would be invidious of me to thank everyone individually. So I will not do that! Instead I would like to formally acknowledge the roles played by groups of people.

First a huge, huge thank you to the brave souls who volunteered (yes they volunteered!) to open their gardens to anyone wishing to see what goes on behind the garden gates in our village. Just so long that is, they agreed to pay £5 to Farleigh Hospice. Without the ten gardens opening on the day – there would have been no Open Garden Event – and we could not as a community have delivered a donation well in excess of £4,000 to Farleigh Hospice.

Next a big thank you to Lord & Lady Rayleigh who have unobtrusively supported this event from the start. Indeed Lord Rayleigh, ably assisted by the Right Honourable Priti Patel our newly promoted local MP, officially opened proceedings. Then of course Lord and Lady Rayleigh opened their gardens – which incidentally is where more than a third of our visitors chose to purchase their admission tickets and start their gardens tour. As well, they ensured we could transport large numbers of grateful visitors (many for the first time in their lives) by tractor and trailer around the village and outlying hamlets of Fairstead, Gambles Green and Flacks Green. Poppy Express (even Roger Webb our wonderful driver on the day who is not known for his emotional side refers to it by that name!) was once again hugely popular. Just a pity our bus service is not so well supported! Thank you also to staff and members of Lord Rayleigh's Farm and Estate who ensured our village was well mown and spotless. It was noticed.

Our All Saints congregation – and their network of wonderful volunteers, led by the inimitable Sarah McNamara must also be thanked wholeheartedly. Generously providing teas and home-made cakes is a real treat and once again All Saints did our village proud. And no I have not forgotten our team of Bell Ringers – who combined a wonderful tribute to the anniversary of King John's 1215 Magna Carta, as well as raise the hairs on the back of a few necks with their peal of bells.

Many individuals gave their time in the immediate run up to Sunday 14th to help get lots of small tasks done for which I owe them a debt of gratitude. Chief amongst this group is my long suffering family. They worked without complaint (or if they did it was outside earshot) extremely hard over long hours and suffered all the usual "slings & arrows" to make this event possible. To this group might I add dear friends who helped hammer things into unyielding soil, sold and chased inanimate plastic ducks along the River Ter (where does all the water go as ten are still paddling?) sold tickets at garden gates, etc etc .

Next I must extend my grateful thanks to the members of staff and pupils of Terling School who with their singing and dancing gave their time willingly to help set the right tone for our event. They are all a credit to our community.

Contrary to my opening remarks, I really must single out one (two actually) valiant souls. Quintin and Marta Brazier, both acted as financial controllers – a task they performed impeccably having spent many hours implementing the task. Counting £4,000 is not as pleasant a task as it may sound. It is nightmarishly difficult to count heaps of coins. They both deserve our collective grateful thanks.

Finally grateful thanks to our generous sponsors who together donated several hundreds of pounds to our donation. This group includes :-

- ✪ *MD Plumbing - Mike Dodds*
- ✪ *Humphreys Wholesale/Retail Butchers - Andy Humphrey*
- ✪ *Owls Hill Tea Rooms – Sarah Meares*
- ✪ *Butterfly Art & Craft Studio - Brian & Julie*
- ✪ *The Square & Compasses – Victor Roome and Susan Poole*
- ✪ *Hillside Motors – Alan Parris*

Thank you everyone – you made it special.

Paul Harrison

Thursday, 18 June 2015