



The Grange Hall

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Grange Hall Management Committee: Chairman's Report 2005-2006

This year has seen another successful year for the Grange Hall. The Hall continues to be well used by regular hirers, as well as being an increasingly popular venue for private parties and weddings. We have run a full programme of high quality Concerts with varying attendances.

Financially it has been a more successful year, income from lettings has increased by over 14% to £32,000, bar profits are up by 30% to £8,200, which results in an overall profit of approximately £2,000 compared with a loss of £5,400 last year. I am confident that we can continue to build on this improvement in finances over this year. The change of accountants has given Carole increased confidence in the running of the finances of the Hall.

Looking at the Concerts, once again we have managed to provide a varied series throughout the year, two of the most successful, being the Katch 22 Pantomime in December and the recent "Iolanthe" by the Coventry Savoy. Attendances overall have been poor at several of the concerts. It is difficult to know what will get people out of their homes, yet people in Southam say there is nothing going on! These concerts have all been first rate, and thoroughly enjoyed by those who attended. In fact, a significant number of the audience are from outside the town. We need to look at all ways of improving attendances at the concerts, but at the moment I am reluctant to consider any significant reductions in the number of concerts as I feel we are providing a service to the community. Maybe with the Town Council support as promised in the Southam Town Plan, we will be able to encourage more local people to attend.

Unfortunately, this year we feel that we are no longer able to provide a Christmas variety concert. Over the last couple of years it has been increasingly difficult to fill the programme with local acts, so maybe it is time for a break to re-think this concert, hopefully to re-introduce it in the future. We have also had to reduce the number of performances of the Katch 22 Pantomime this year; Lillington school having pulled out following the committee's decision to withdraw its transport subsidy, and there is now doubt about Harbury's attendance this year. This is such a pity after Carole's hard work in building this up over the last three years.

Generally, the fabric of the Hall remains in good order, but it should be borne in mind that the Hall will require re-decorating within the next couple of years. We need to maintain the Hall's high reputation.

It was with some concern that I saw at a presentation for the redevelopment of Southam that there was a significant development proposed for the Grange site. This would have a serious detrimental impact on the Hall, and its users, and I wrote to the Town and District Councils expressing the concerns of the Committee. I recently published a document proposing future enhancements to the Hall, which was submitted to the Town Council and will be submitted to the Stewards when they eventually meet. I hope that in this year we may be able to make a start on implementing some of these plans.

The Hall would not be where it is now without the people who provide their time to ensure that everything runs smoothly;

Keith Brailsford's sudden death was a shock to many. Keith had served on the Management Committee for many years and will be sadly missed. I am pleased that we were able to provide the facilities for Keith's Memorial last Friday.

Thomas Gwillam has resigned as Bar manager, having stepped in to help us when the previous manager left suddenly. Obviously, I would like to wish Thomas well in his new career and I am sure he will still be seen pulling a pint in the bar when other commitments allow. I would also like to extend my thanks to all the other loyal bar staff that have helped throughout the year.

We have now been lucky enough to find a new Bar Manager, who is currently on a month's trial, and I hope she will become the new permanent manager.

I would like to extend the committee's thanks to Mary for her continued high standards in caretaking for the Hall, her toilets are legendary, and she will be a hard act to follow when she eventually retires.

I would also like to thank you, the committee, for your continued support, particularly those of you who provide assistance at the concerts, taking out posters, serving in the kitchen, and helping to clear away after. It is my disappointment that there are not more active committee members and I would like everybody to try to recruit new members this year.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to Carole for all her hard work ensuring that the Hall runs smoothly. She always goes beyond the call of duty to ensure that all events are a success, both for our own concerts and events, and those of hirers, particularly for weddings and parties. This has even run to attending at several weddings to serve welcome drinks to the guests when bar staff had failed to turn up. I am sure that you will agree with me that much of the success of the Hall over the last few years is due to Carole and all her hard work.

John Gwillam – Chairman Grange Hall Management Committee

17/07/06