

WITNEY TALKING NEWS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT for Annual General Meeting, Monday, 9th November 2020 to be held via Zoom

Welcome to our 42nd AGM, and my thanks to those of you who will be for joining us on Zoom under these most unusual circumstances. But for the wonders of modern technology, we would probably not be having a meeting at all.

2020 has certainly been very different. Due to the restrictions necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, on 23rd March we sent out to listeners what was to be our last recording on memory sticks for six months. Between then and 1st October, 'emergency' recordings have been produced by a team of volunteers working from their own homes, and which were accessible by telephone, online via our website and a variety of other sources including Alexa and BWFB Sonata+. From the 1st October edition, we have been able to resume 'normal' recordings at the High Street Methodist Church, but in a slightly reduced format and on a fortnightly basis. All being well, we hope to return to full weekly recordings in the not too distant future. On behalf of all of us at WTN, and particularly our listeners, I must extend grateful thanks to our Technical Consultant, Gavin, for his amazing expertise in enabling the 'emergency' editions to happen, and to those volunteers who have participated in their production. Also, our thanks are due to the team of volunteers who have returned to the Church to resume 'normal' recordings.

Understandably, we have not been able to record a magazine during the year, but I know that Peter Bee and Alan Revell are hoping to produce one in time for Christmas, so stay tuned!

Our Treasurer, Malcolm Bradford, has taken care of the money, and will take any questions you have on the accounts later.

Gavin Smalley has, as previously mentioned, put in place the machinery for recording the 'emergency' editions remotely, and continued to look after all our technical equipment with his usual thoroughness and expertise; he also maintains our website at **wtn.org.uk** which is as always well worth visiting to keep an eye on everything we are up to.

On the Editorial front, Sheila Rickwood has decided to retire as Editorial Director. She and her team have provided many years of excellent editorial service for which we must say a very big 'thank you'. I understand Sheila has nominated Alan Revell to take her place, and this will no doubt be confirmed under the election of officers and committee coming up shortly. Also retiring as Editors are David Burton and Chris Purple.

Doris Burton has decided to step down from the committee, but I understand she will continue to take playback units to listeners when required.

A familiar voice to listeners will be that of Barbara Baigent, who has contributed to the Reflection spot for some years. She is coming off the rota for the time being, and we do hope that if circumstances permit, she will be back .

Our thanks are due to you all - you will be missed.

It has been my privilege to be your Chairman for the past ten years, but now it is time for me to step aside and hand over the reins to a new person. I have nominated Nigel James, who has been shadowing me during this last year, to take the seat, and again I hope this will be confirmed later.

I have greatly enjoyed my time in the Chair, and it is thanks to the ongoing contributions and support from all the Volunteers that has enabled our regular editions to continue smoothly. In particular, I extend my grateful thanks to my fellow committee members for the continuing and very efficient administration of WTN.

And finally, our thanks as usual to High Street Methodist Church looking after us so well.

Thank you.