

Chairs report for A.G.M. Year ending February 2009

I would like to begin this report by thanking the committee, both for their hard work and for their support, throughout the last year.

The decorating and lighting of the village has now entered its thirtieth year. I would like to thank all the dedicated people, determined to decorate the village for the benefit of all who live, work and visit Lyndhurst, whilst up against the joint issues of the increase in costs, and health and safety legislation.

The committee work hand in hand with the Chamber of Commerce and the Community Centre. The Christmas decorations in the village of Lyndhurst continue to be rated the best within the New Forest.

Our mission policy is to present the Christmas lighting decorations to a high standard, coupled with a Christmas Fun Day for the enjoyment of all who live, work, and visit Lyndhurst. We also hope to encourage more individuals and organisations to become involved with our activities, by joining the Committee.

My thanks and those of the Committee go to our Treasurer Kim Watts, who continues to keep our accounts in good order and who was instrumental in setting up a new system to collect the fees for the lights package from all the village businesses for 2008.

Each year we endeavour to upgrade and improve some part of the lights system. Last year the Committee chose to replace the remaining 50% of Christmas tree lights: in one sense, this will decrease our carbon foot print. In addition, these lights do give an excellent display and appear to be strong enough to withstand hard treatment: 'so far so good'.

Last year we carried out our first official 'switch-on' with celebrity Charlie Dimmock: it is fair to say that the event was well attended and enjoyable and so the committee wish to continue the coming years with an official 'switch-on'.

A Victorian Theme was used for the fun day in December, which proved to be a great success, with different village organisations taking part. Various other activities took place throughout the village, particularly on the frontage of the Mailman's Arms. Again, many of the shops again were highly decorated. The day concluded with a large crowd gathering around the Christmas tree outside the Mailman's in the evening: for carol singing, led by Lockerley Silver Band and the choir of the Woodside Singers. Once again the village Fire Service put on an entertaining display for the Carol service. All of which was thoroughly enjoyed by the children and adults attending. However, although we now use the Meridian forecourt, it has become increasingly difficult to accommodate all the visitors with the High Street traffic being so close and therefore the Committee are endeavouring to source a new location.

Ken Crabb organised a very successful raffle and thus helped boost the much needed funds: his efforts were backed up by the fund raising organised by Micky Judd. The Lyndhurst Golf AM. and the Black and White evening, organised in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce, both proved to be very professional events: they were enjoyed by those taking part and resulted in raising welcome additional funds.

Solent Power remain as our electrical engineers, carrying out the work to our specifications; meeting our changing needs very well and with no call outs recorded. They also helped to ensure the challenging 'switch-on' went without a hitch.

The undertaking of planting and maintaining the flower tubs throughout the village continues during the summer months.

It goes without saying how much hard work has been attributed to the Committee members in making last year's activities successful, enjoyable and fun, supported of course, by the community of Lyndhurst.