

WELLS CARNIVAL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017

Welcome and good evening to you all and thank you for coming to the Wells Carnival Committee. AGM

As chairman of the committee I welcome all present and ask for any apologies.

The minutes of the last AGM are available and I hope have been read.....

Any matters arising from those minutes?

Before I give my report I would like to say a big thank you to Sue, Abi and the Reverend Woodruff for the use of the Gordon Barrett Hall tonight and during Carnival Week. With the closure of the Maltings during the extensive extension we spoke to Sue and Abi about holding events in the hall, and after another successful year we hope to continue to hold events here, it's a lovely venue run by lovely people and the bacon sandwiches are very nice too. With the Marquee in the gardens we have had some great nights in carnival week, the bar that Graham, Moff and Podge assembled would look great in any pub. The bar has been a great money raiser at each event and a big thank you to everyone that helped run the bar and set up each night.

With the ladies of the committee decorating the marquee for each event a dull white marquee can be transformed to a Mexican Bar one night to a quaint English tea room another afternoon, holding Bingo and Quiz nights and on Elvis night we introduced a superstar wearing a tight suit covered in sequences and dark glasses, I mean Mary not Elvis. Mary is just an amazing lady, always ready to help and to entertain, a credit to the committee and we are lucky to have Mary and David in our group.

We could raise £££££10000s if we could bottle Marys enthusiasm

My Report

I am very proud to be Wells Carnival Committee chairman. I have been involved with the committee for approx 18 years, just after leaving school. Although according to the EDP I am 35 and joined the committee when I was 20, proving you can't believe all you read in the paper, we all know I'm 37.

The committee has 25 members, all playing a very active part in organizing the week and holding events during the very busy week.

The committee runs like any company, Directors, accountants, health and safety, HR and a very strong team pulling together, the only benefit is the holidays, work one week and have 51 off. If only it was that way.

Each member of the team chooses the amount of time and commitment they want to give before and during the week, we each have our own tasks and are always there when additional help is needed.

Each event has a committee member that is in charge of and makes sure everything that is needed is booked in and ready for when the crowds arrive. The main big day events "all hands on deck" is the only policy, Carnival Day, Fete Day and the Food and Craft day need over 18hrs of cover, with the days starting at before 7am and the last committee member leaves after mid night. All of the committee isn't there for 18 hrs, it's a shared day. Dip in and dip out, I always seem to be there when the food is being served.

We have always had a very strong committee and with the Friends of the committee it is now at its strongest. The friends help to Marshal the events and clear the venues, when the masses have left. Erecting and taking down marquees, bringing more stock to the

merchandise stall.

A team of 16 Marshals help on Carnival Day to cover road junctions when the rolling road closure is in place as the parade goes round the town. This help, and all the other help in the week by the Friends is invaluable to the committee as it allows us to be at the events making sure all goes well.

With the help of the Marshals during the parade and the committee crossing t's and dotting the eyes with the other events, the Wells Carnival has a very high standing with the police, local council and district council.

Before this year's Carnival we designed and drew up a new safety plan to cover all levels of safety and we pride ourselves in the lengths we go to to make sure all runs smoothly and safely.

Just walking round the town, going to events and hearing the lovely comments makes it all worth it. I am very proud of the committee and all the hard work they carry out, bringing so many great memories to families that live here or visit. All the committee's work is carried out in such a professional manner.

So my biggest thank you of the night goes to the very hard working carnival committee that gives up so much time and put in so much effort to putting on an amazing week. Also to their family, they didn't choose to join the committee but give support in so many ways, giving us a free week to do the Carnival, they sort out dogs, children, work and putting up with us coming home late and getting up early to start again.

Most of the families help in the week too it's the only way they see the committee, So I keep being told.

It's not just the time and tremendous effort the committee put into the very busy 9 days but the year leading up to Carnival week. The 9 days is the easy bit, but don't ask us during the week or you may receive a different answer.

It's the many meetings that are held, phone calls, emails back and forward to each other. The missed tea's, rushing home from work and forced to go to the pub on a Tuesday evening that makes The Wells Carnival Committee second to none.

Wells Carnival Week is not the biggest or the most attended but there is no carnival that can match the spirit and drive of the Wells Carnival Committee

Standing on the Buttlands Stage and seeing nearly 4000 people having a great time, at little, if no expense and knowing that the event has been organised by a mixture of people from all walks of life, with no real experience but just simply enjoying it. They are all volunteers, is truly fantastic and I am very proud of them all, we still don't know how we do it but we do

The main aim of the committee is to give the town a carnival for the week, also to make sure all prices are kept to a minimum and the week to be enjoyed by the townsfolk and visitors, promoting good will, a strong community spirit in the town - and if possible give away monies to deserving causes,

All these aims achieved and so much more.

My next big thank you goes to the local business and individuals that sponsor and support the carnival allowing the committee to put on the fun packed week. So many people/business's help/support/donate.

It's not just the large money donations we receive, although very gratefully received, it's the dressing up by the shop staff in the town, having donation buckets, selling programmes, joining spot the stranger, people coming forward to marshal barriers and car parks, the harbour office and sailing club helping out with the raft race, lighting committee for lighting the Buttlands, GJL animal feeds for lending three lorries and vehicles for the parade, Steve Finch at the football club, Diane Pink and friends preparing the carnival float for the Carnival Queen and attendants. Judges helping on Carnival Day to judge all the classes. Holkham helping out in many ways with the bike ride, sandcastle comp, classical sleep over sorry,,,,, concerton Sunday,beach party, workshops and the very kind car park money donation, which over the last two years has been over £20,000.

At this point I would also like to thank the Grays funfair, Deidre and Fred Baldrey and the Black Shuck Gin Company.

Black Shuck gave us £2000 donation from the Gin and Cocktail Night, over the last ten years Deidre and Fred have given us over £10,000 and the Greys Fun Fair has given us over £12,000 in donations and rent. Fantastic support and so much appreciated.

These very kind donations are brilliant but we still need so much more. The approx. cost of the carnival week is over £50,000 to cover bands, safety, insurance, rent, entertainers, set up costs, hire of marquees, hire of venues, waste bins, toilets, trailer and stage hire, gazebos and Shirley's weekly bar bill,

A big thank you to Carole for all her hard work being treasurer, taking and sorting the finances and making sure floats are issued for the events

Most of the smaller events have their costs covered by sponsorship but the larger events are only partly sponsored with the shortfall being made up with bucket collections and raffles.

Both being a thankless task.....

Although in recent years we have eased off using the pink buckets apart from Carnival Day and concentrated more on the raffles in the evening, these have been very successful,

They take a lot of man power but work very well and help to raise money needed to pay for the ever improving bands we have. A big thank you to the raffle ticket sellers at the live music events. Again friends of the committee help with this.

We are always open to new ideas to raise more money in the week.

Money is not the only reason the committee put on Carnival week but it helps us to achieve so much and hopefully meet the expectations of people who come to our events. Also Carole needed a new car and holiday,

And later on the agenda we will hold an Election of Committee – Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary & Treasurer – we will need a proposer and a seconder for each. Also this is your chance to join the committee.

Before we move on to the week, can I say a massive thank you to Cy (our man in charge of his camera) he is a great asset to the committee and the town. Always there, we sometimes think there is more than one. He has lost a lot of weight so we could have a mini Cy next year

The amazing pictures Cy takes, and with the help of Davis Jagger, gives the guests to events great memories

On to the week:

This year the weather was very kind, with the town having a very wet start to the summer, the sun came at just the right time.

The week has over 100 events throughout the town, old favourites mixed in with new.

Nine nights of live music and entertainment

Day one

The Carnival committee started the week with an evening of dance and fun with a Viva Las Vegas / Elvis and in true Elvis style we had a Human Fruit Machine and Bruce Forsyth playing Play Your Cards Right but in true Carnival Style we had the music going higher, higher, higher and the drink stocks going lower, lower, lower. With Mary stealing the show with her party piece. Great way to start the week.

The first Saturday, as in recent years, is the raft race day, with the late morning tide, the rafts set off against a strong tide and finished in the harbour near the Albatros, This year all the rafts went horizontal and not vertical, with all but one completing the course. One raft came back with three extra crew, but we can't say too much as the case is now with the immigration dept. It's a great event to watch and be involved with, the number of entries has dropped in recent years but we hope to encourage more teams next year, even the committee may put a team in

A big thank you to the sailing club for holding the presentation for the raft race and the barbeque breakfast

Saturday evening opened our week of live music with a Bruno Mars tribute band, great way to start the week, the Buttlands was jumping and dancing, all ages enjoying the lovely summer weather until the man upstairs decided to give the Buttlands a soaking. The crowds left a little early leaving the committee and crew to pack up ready to move down the football field for the Fete Day on Sunday.

Moving from the Buttlands to the football field causes many logistic problems and adds extra cost to the committee. We need additional trailers for the stage, extra toilets and bins and it's a very big ask for the amazing sound guys to move their equipment there and back. So we may look to just use the Buttlands and the small marquee near the Buttlands.

The football field is a fantastic venue and Steve and his team have been very kind and helpful and we hope to hold events in the week that will fit in with Steve and the venue

Going back to the amazing sound guys, Peter, Shaun and Phil were with us again to control the sound systems and PA, they have been a great help to the committee and work very hard in the week. A big thank to them for their continued support. Few people realise these guys each take a week off work to work even harder for carnival and only charge expenses, which is usually promptly spent on more kit.

First Sunday is Fete Day on the football field, this year's theme was Back to the Fuchsia, based on a good old fashioned fete day, children's races, tug of war and other family favourites. To finish the day, we had the annual Dog Show, a very well organised and lovely family event with many different breeds and types to be judged, best in show was a small dog called Suki, some say this is the best event of the week

On Fete day we held the crowning of the carnival queen and her attendants, this year, as is so many recent years, we were lucky to have Royalty to be proud of. Amanda Hastings was Queen and Jasmine Bray and Keeley Tipper were Amanda's attendants. Lifeboat Coxswain and Wells Parish Council Chairman Alan Fray crowned the Queen and presented the junior

and senior attendants with their sash's. The lifeboat crew also sponsor the Carnival Queen. With Alan crowning the queen and the crew sponsoring the Queen it's a really great to have their support.

During the day local groups and fundraisers join us hoping to raise money for their chosen charities, more about this later

Sunday nights band had a hard job to follow last year's. All of last year's audience wanted The Indi killers back to the football field but the Hussy band were as good if not better. A great night was had by all, now to start the busy week.

Monday started with the famous Painting competition, Suzanne is brilliant with her enthusiasm, it's always a packed event, and the judges found it very hard to award winners in the classes, workshops were held around the town during the day for the younger children. So much going on that day you needed to sit down just to read the programme. Race night, La La Land film, pirate night on the Albatros, foam party, gin and cocktail night, history walk, junior town crier, lifeboat festival, pottery workshop, children's pirate party, special effects workshop and a fledgling workshop and Silky Suki and her silver tongue. That's just one day

Tuesday was the now so very popular Food and Craft event on The Buttlands, busier every year, an event firmly marked on the counties food and drink calendar.

The weather, visitors, stall holders and entertainers make it a fantastic show case day. Events I go to in the year, run by paid professional staff don't put on days as well organised as we do. A massive thank you to Paula, Pete and Fran for organising, this event and also the stalls on Fete Day and Carnival Day, not an easy task, to deal with the stall holders,

A task made even harder when I try to help and when followers on Facebook sit in their armchairs and comment on how the week is run. If they only knew how close they were to losing the back bone of the committee this year.

Even when the big Food and craft day was being held, we still had workshops and events around the town, antiques valued and a fantastic beast and activities show in the pinewoods, followed by a gospel workshop.

In the evening the marquee was transformed into a Mexican bar - Beato Burrito performed pop and rock classics in a Mexican theme. The crowd in fancy dress danced the night away, brilliant costumes, the local carpet seller did well. Lots of underlay was sold

Wednesday was sports themed, tennis, croquet, open bowls, gillying competition and a children's fun sports day on the beach road children's playing field. We had big boots to fill as this event replaced Ray's family day. Great fun was had by all and we hope to expand on this next year, hopefully with Ray's help and guidance.

In the evening we held the Beach Party near the beach café. The Die Dorf Fest Kapeele OOompah band played to a packed crowd, sipping cocktails and dancing. The area and the beach bank was full of people listening to the music and enjoying the summer night. Great fun was had.

Back in the town Heritage House held a Quiz night and The Wells War Memorial Institute held a Casino night

Thursday was a quiet day for the committee, only 11 events to sort out. Teddy bears picnic, Bush craft, fantastic Beast and activities show, history walk two bingo's, children's craft work shop and competitive and fun run, junior jazzercise and a Buggy Malone film on the Buttlands. Star of the day was the amazing Buggy Malone themed car that Graham made and brought to the Buttlands, Graham needed an oil change and new head gasket the day after though, and

Sue said: 'Please fit him a new dipstick'

We have great bands through the week but my highlight of the week was the singer before the film on Thursday, Tom Bainbridge was a great find and hopefully will be coming back next year.

Every year I say this but I don't know where Shirley finds the bands from, so very well done.

Friday arrives and has a full day planned. Mini tennis, open air storytelling, the bigger than ever bike ride through to the Vic and back, Playland pirate party, sandcastle competition, history walks, live music on the Albatros and Tea at Tiffany's in the marquee.

Susi Rogers- Hartley gave an inspirational and amusing talk. The committee and friends of the committee made the cakes and all enjoyed a lovely relaxing afternoon.

In the evening the Buttlands crowd was dancing and singing to the Wild Boys, a fantastic 80's cover band. All the crowd knew the right words, but in true Morecambe and Wise style not necessarily in the right order.

You can pay lots of money to see bigger named bands but you won't beat the atmosphere on the Buttlands on a live music night

On to Carnival Day

We all had an early start, arranging stall holders, laying out the arena, putting up and placing marquees, then when Shirley comes moving them again, then moving again, only to go and move them to the place they first were - we are all very relieved when Dick Hutchinson arrives. Dick compares the day and takes so much pressure of Shirley and myself. A big thank you to Dick.

Just after lunch the fancy dress entries start arriving. The committee is always amazed at the remarkable costumes and floats on show and is so grateful to the people that put so much time and effort to dress up and join the parade. The parade will go down as one of the best, with the costumes being match by the support and cheers on the parade route. I have said thank you before, but thank you again to Di Pink and her friends for decorating the carnival Queens float, Just brilliant.

This year we added another name to the trophies we hand out, we now have the Brian Ayton, Bill Sibley and now the Nigel Parr trophy, all have played a large part in carnival weeks and the Wells Carnival wouldn't be where it is now if not for people like them

It's a great day for the town and the community, family and friends heading back and joining in, grownups bringing their children back to star in the carnival they were in, a brilliant atmosphere, Police officers that came to the day said it was the best in the region, no trouble just good old fashion fun. A local PC, was even on holiday but he came in to cover the parade, again this year, not many times you hear that, thank you Jason

Carnival Day is, in my opinion, the best day of the week, a blue print of how a town should put on a carnival.

The parade leaves the Buttlands at 3 pm sharp and heads up Mill Road to go round the town, All floats have pink buckets to collect for the grants we are making tonight.

The committee has added to that figure and so we are pleased to give over £6000.

The evening finished with Dolly Parton and her greatest hits, I said hits, followed by a Dire Straits tribute band, a brilliant way to finish an amazing week of live bands

All of our music nights are very well attended, we estimate 13000 and we are very grateful to most of the audience for taking their rubbish and children away but after each event our helpers and committee pick up the remaining rubbish and put in bins - it's a big credit to the local community that after all events you would not know anything had been held there and as a community we should be very proud of that.

I only listed a few events in my run through, I missed the other 94 events but all went well and were very well attended, we will add more for next year

Throughout the week different clubs and organisations held events promoting themselves and raising money.

With not too much hard work and sometimes our help these amounts can be raised

Heritage House raised just over £500

Scarborough House £500

Wells Primary PFA £1600

Wells Brownies £315

H F Wells £1200

Photography Club £72

Wells Town Bowls £210

Drop in Club £332

Carole's holiday fund £713!!!

Wells Town bowls club, tennis, croquet, sailing club and the swimming pool held open days to encourage new members.

All of the groups and more go towards making the carnival week so special, everybody is welcome to get involved.

Please come along and join in, over 20,000 people come to our events, they can't all be wrong

That's the end of my little speech, I am very proud of the week we put on in August and thank you to all that helped and to the committee, very well done

Thank You

Pat Weston

Wells Carnival Chair