

# St John's Hall

*Rosemary Graves*

The Hall and I have two things in common. We are both of pre-war vintage (just) and we both support All Saints' Church.

St John's Hall opened in April 1939. Prior to that, All Saints' had a hall in the Ware Road. The new Hall was built on glebe land where there had been a footpath, allotments, a pig farm and, Charles Murkin recollects, a tennis court. Charles remembers clearly the ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone as he was in the Church Choir and carried the cross. Joan Allum's friend's father, Colin Penny, was a churchwarden at the time.

The Second World War began soon after and the Hall was requisitioned by the Army Dental Corps. They had a clinic and also made false teeth for the soldiers in Southern England. According to Don Allum, the floor was in a pretty terrible state as heavy machinery was dragged over it. Derek and his team would not be happy!

The Annexe (or the 'Hut') was also new and provided dining accommodation for Foundell Phillips and Abel Smith Schools.

Today the hall is not only a vital part of the church but also of the local community. It houses nineteen regular groups with activities that cater for all ages from toddlers to 80+. Approximately 300 people use it every week.

Maybe you are interested in:- Badminton (three different groups), Keep Fit, Scottish Dancing; Line Dancing; Dancing for adults, two children's dancing schools, juggling, parents and toddlers or Guides. Or maybe you would be more attracted to less hectic activities like Digital Photography, Spanish for young children, Camera Club or Tai Chi!

Recently I have been pleased to welcome the Herts. Education Support Service, our new neighbours. So, if you are looking for an activity to suit you, why not see me and I will put you in touch with the relevant group.

Much of the work at the Hall is voluntary, although we have regular paid help once a week. I am supported by an excellent committee, all with their own particular expertise. We try to make sure that repairs are carried out quickly and that the Hall is clean and welcoming. It is a popular venue for Children's Parties (the 'Magic Man' seems to be a regular!) and other Hertford based groups.

Obviously it would be great to replace certain items and to repaint everywhere but, as in every household, things need budgeting for. This year the Church needs the Hall's support and fortunately our financial position is such that we can help. This is due in the main to those hundreds of people who use St John's Hall, so a big "Thank You" to them all.

## Can you help?

All Saints' Parent and Toddlers group meets every Friday in term-time in St John's Hall between 1.30 and 3.00 p.m.

Are there any grannies out there, or mums with older children, who could spare a little time on a Friday afternoon to help serve juice to the children from 2.15 to 3.00 p.m.? Better still if you can sing and then help put some things away.

If you could help, perhaps with a friend, regularly or even join a monthly rota? Liz Davey, the leader would much appreciate a little help.

Contact me, Rosemary Graves on 01992 582489

## New for Lent

I always make the same resolution and I have never once broken it: every year I resolve to give something up for Lent and then when Lent comes I give up my New Year's resolution.