

Volume 4, Issue 2
Autumn 2014

St. Seraphim's News



'A station that cares for the soul'



During the weekend of October 4th and 5th 2014 the Mid-Norfolk railway chartered a vintage coach, to run as near as possible along the line from Dereham to Wells, calling in at Walsingham, marking the 50th anniversary of the closure of the line.

The work of the Payback Team proved of great help, enabling a display to be put on of the items found, including station signs, refreshment cups and a stationmaster's inkwell from GER days. A former stationmaster visiting at the time said he would have dug the garden if he had known these things

were there!

Thanks to an archivist who is working as a volunteer, her professional skills were reflected in the display which contained photographs, information on the railway and how pilgrimage was revived through the railway, and memories from individuals. The visiting railway enthusiasts hugely appreciated the display, some of whom were not aware the station is still here.

A pilgrim wrote in the Visitor's book during the display, '*a station that cares for the soul and its journey*'.

St Seraphim's Trust would like to express grateful thanks to our funders, supporters and friends :



Supporting volunteers and voluntary organisations

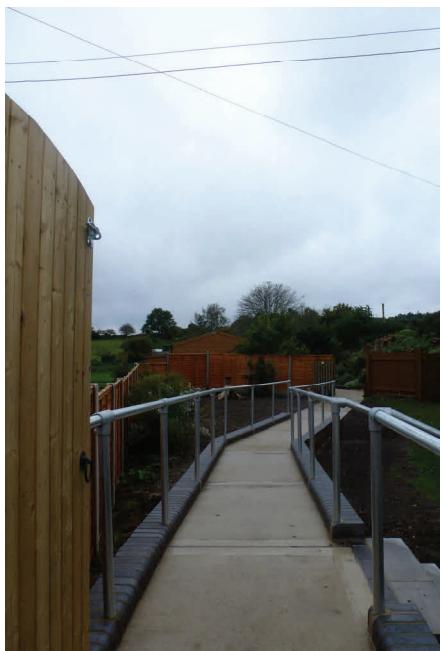


The ‘Payback’ challenge



Since their first visit to St Seraphim’s Garden on 9th January, 2011, the Community Payback (run by the Probation Service for offenders to spend their hours in Community Service as an alternative to a prison sentence) have spent 188 days working on the development of the garden. Groups vary in number, but the average per visit is 11 people, on occasions there have been two groups working here and altogether many hours have been spent labouring in this work.

The garden is a long strip of land running parallel to the platform of the former railway station. When the Volunteers took the job on, the garden was in a fairly neglected



state. A design for the garden was commissioned, to complement the spirituality of the Chapel and include the heritage of the railway, retaining existing features including fruit trees planted by the railway workers.

Planting has been kept as natural as possible to encourage birds and wildlife, with a Celtic Cross planted in sedums as part of the heritage of the early Orthodox Christians.

The use of the garden by groups with a variety of needs, as well as pilgrims and people from the locality, has always been part of the development plan and the work of the Payback is an excellent example of how, with the right opportunity, space and a plan, people’s mistakes can be transformed into something living, attractive and enduring.

The work undertaken by the volunteers has included: the clearing of the site; the preparation of the soil; the laying of cable for both electricity and CCTV; planting a hedge; the making of a look-out hut at the top of the rise overlooking the village, with views of the local landmarks; two pergolas, one shaded and with seats; the restoration of the former lamp and oil shed.

Other volunteers have helped, individually and in groups, but the main development work has been carried out by the Payback. This year their biggest challenge was the digging out and laying of a 90 metre path, which involved the moving of approximately 50 tons of material by shovel and wheelbarrow.

First the soil was removed to dig the path, then timber edging was put down, including a couple of bends, which required skill. Weed

control fabric was put in, then the final layer of Carrstone downs, from a quarry not too far away, which was whacked down well.

The supervisor who oversaw the work was Alan, whose carpentry skills were passed on to the volunteers and whose enthusiasm and dedication enabled the work to progress in the way it has. He has been a great asset and will be missed now he has moved on and I would like to say a special thank you to him for his hard work. However, all of the supervisors have been committed to the work of developing the garden in the spirit of teamwork, with each of them going the extra mile over the four years the work has been in progress.

The disabled ramp was made using funds raised for the job and skilfully put down by Ken of A1 Class Paving. His powered wheelbarrow was the envy of all of us who had laboured over the work of the path laying! The ramp and paved path to the volunteer hut will enable wheelchair users a safe entrance to the garden facilities. In the hot weather of this summer, both Ken and the Payback laboured on the backbreaking work to create the paths from either end of the garden, which meet at the volunteer hut and blend well together. Perfect timing!

Meanwhile the Payback have also directed their skills to the porch, which already is looking brighter and smarter with a coat of paint.



The Work of Volunteers and Friends

It may have taken 4 years to develop the garden, but it is lovely and I am proud of everyone who has been involved.

The feathered friends appreciate the restored pond, which not only is deeper, but has a decorated top and a picket fence to give a safe area for the birds. A family of grey partridges (*pictured below*) have spent the summer feasting on the insects in the garden, their distinctive horseshoe marking on the tum. The young of grey partridges grow on insects and seeds.

For 107 years the property was the railway station, which closed in 1964 under the Beeching cuts. Two years later the booking office and gentleman's waiting room were converted into the Chapel of St Seraphim. The photographs show the difference the care and



skill of the volunteers has made, where once upon a time the railway workers laboured growing fruit and vegetables.

There are benches and seats dotted throughout with a lovely picnic table that has an umbrella to provide shade. The three huts, which provide shelter from the rain, are all equipped with electricity.

The Garden Opening is planned for 2015 and the date will be in the next newsletter.

The garden today (pictured above), whilst below is a photo of Sylvia in the garden in 2008—see how far we've come!



Special Days and Anniversaries

St Seraphim's day, 19th July 2014

Father Kosmas Wittwer from Rugby with a group of his faithful arrived on Friday 18th July, in time to serve Vespers, which was lovely. The Divine Liturgy for St Seraphim's day was celebrated at 10.30 a.m. welcoming visitors from as far away as Stoke-on-Trent, who are regular visitors to St Seraphim's too. Some members of the Holy Transfiguration parish church, Great Walsingham also came on both occasions. Following the liturgy there were refresh-

ments in the garden in sunny weather. Thank you Father Kosmas for coming for our special day and all who joined in.

The garden has been designed as a quiet space which lends itself to use by those on pilgrimage or retreat.

St Seraphim's Anniversary.
In December 2016 St Seraphim's will be marking 50 years since the arrival of the small group comprising the newly-formed Brotherhood of St Seraphim.

It is planned to publish a limited number of copies of the Menaion, in a single book with a spiral back. Donations towards this work would be greatly appreciated.

Top of the agenda for the occasion is some essential work to the Chapel and the addition of one or two icons by Father David and Leon. This is also the date of the Feast of St Nicholas, 6th December.

Thank you to all our volunteers, helpers and supporters, for your contribution!



ST. SERAPHIM'S TRUST

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In brief...

Friends of St. Seraphim's

Thank you to all those who have renewed their membership of the Friends of St Seraphim's and some of you have made standing orders which helps enormously with our record-keeping.

One or two of you who live locally have helped out at events and others who would like to spend an hour or two in the garden as a Garden Steward, will be welcomed. Please get in touch if you would like to be on the rota or if you would like further information. The office relies on volunteers but your phone message, email or letter will be answered as soon as possible. Some voluntary work can be carried out from home, such as funding research, providing you have a computer.



Development phases.

St Seraphim's Trust relies entirely on donations and grants to carry out the work of development. The outline phases of essential work that will need professional labour, includes the roof and guttering, as well as a heating system for the Chapel and the upstairs rooms.

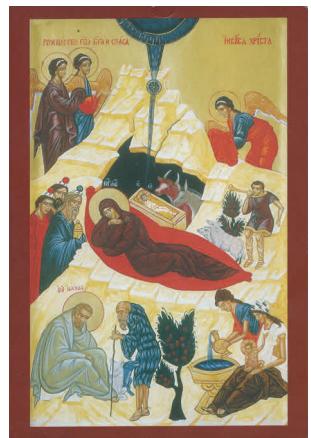
A Special Thanks to Mrs Cathie Knight from Gt. Walsingham who raised £50 for St. Seraphims in the Norfolk Churches Cycle Ride!

The Chapel of St. Seraphim is a place of Orthodox Christian worship. The Faith to which it bears witness is that of the Undivided Christian Church before West and East became separated in the Eleventh Century. Its ancient tradition of worship and prayer is rooted in its biblical and apostolic inheritance, and is expressed in living symbolic form.

In 1966 the Anglican Shrine authorities asked that someone be sent to take care of the Orthodox chapel there, and Father Mark Meyrick (who subsequently became a monk, with the name David) came to undertake that task. It was soon apparent that the open plan construction of the chapel was unsuited to a pattern of regular services and in 1967 Father David and three companions, with £25 between them, settled in this building which, until the closure of the railway in the early 60s, had been Walsingham's station on the line between Wells and Fakenham. They converted the booking hall and ticket office into the nave and altar of their new chapel, and crowned it with bell tower, onion dome and cross. The painting and selling of icons was, from the outset, an important part of the Orthodox witness here. Following Father David's death in 1993, his colleague Leon Liddament continued and developed that tradition until his own death in 2010.

**Wishing all our readers a
peaceful Christmas and a
prosperous 2015.**

**Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!**



Woodcut by Cordelia Jones.

For many years a card has been on sale in the porch of St Seraphim's. It shows a woodcut by Cordelia Jones, of St Seraphim's Chapel, which Cordelia combined with lines from a tombstone in Ely Cathedral. This is a memorial to an engine driver and a stoker killed on Christmas Eve 1845, in an accident on the Norwich to Ely line. It was very popular with the railway enthusiasts who came on the 4th and 5th!



*Alan in action in
the garden. See
p2 for more de-
tails*