Chairman's Report, May 2024

This afternoon I reflected on what HTC had meant to me since I joined in 1984. – that long ago, 40 years!

I moved to Headley in 1975 and spent the first 5 years or so tied up with babies an OU degree and domestic stuff. About 1980, having finished my degree and seen the kids off to school, I tried various activities for size – I found a job working for the local paper; I joined Waverley singers, which I loved, Arford WI, and Headley Wives Group, which were ok, and then, missing the stage, I tried Haslemere Thespians who were doing "Oh What a Lovely War – but having stood in the wings when some of the principals were on stage and listened to the bitchy comments all around me, I decided they were not for me.

In October or November 1984, I came to the Village Hall to audition for the panto at Headley Theatre Club and to my surprise was offered a principal part – I couldn't take it up as I had too many commitments over the Christmas & New Year Period. However in April that year I took part in the Shakespeare evening and in July the 'Black Eyed Susan' sketch which we did as part of the Village Fete, and in January 1985 played principal boy in "Goody Two Shoes".

I was an ok singer, dancer and actress, but what I found so appealing about HTC was their welcoming and inclusive attitude – no prima donnas, I went from principal boy to making the coffee in the interval for the next production. Everyone was welcome and appreciated no matter if they wanted to appear on stage or just make the tea.

That's what I liked and through the years it's stayed the same. My friends joined the club and my children took part and their friends and my friends' children too – some of them are here tonight; it says a lot.

A (fairly) wise man, sitting not too far away once said that HTC was a group of friends who happened to put on performances.

We do well but we are not only about success on the stage – we are about being welcoming to everyone, old, young, new to us or old timers – I sincerely hope it stays that way.

As for the last 25 years … well I can only say it's been my pleasure – wine and cheese awaits, thank you and goodnight.

Dil Williamson-Smith