

The Walberswick Scroll is owned by the WPC. Painted in 1931-32, it is a series of watercolours by J Doman Turner of every house in The Street from west to east down to the harbour, and back up again, with added sketches of those dwellings in the side roads. This diorama has been set in a case and mounted on a scroll 123 feet long which is operated by a handle to show the entire journey. A beautiful and rich record of Walberswick, it is unique and irreplaceable. Since no insurance can cover the irreplaceable, the WPC considered that the best course of action would be to provide it with a permanent home, which is safe and environmentally acceptable, where it can be both stored and shown to the public.

It has a hazardous history and was kept, for many years, as a loose roll on a shelf in the old Gannon Reading Room (which predated the Village Hall). Photographs show that this building was flooded waist-high in 1953, so its survival is wondrous.

The late Richard Scott took it under his wing and, after a re-mounting by conservators, his friend Tony Whittenbury cleverly installed it into its present case. This case had formerly been a football game in the Walberswick Working Mens' Club which met in, what is now, the Heritage Hut.

Following this, it lived in the wings of the Village Hall stage where every year Richard used to show it to the public. As he got older he asked John English to help him with the presentations with the long term view that John should eventually take over. John, with this in mind, formed a Committee of Pat Lancaster, Sue English, Kay Ungless and me, in order to give support.

The case took up too much room during Village Hall stage productions, so a new home was desperately needed. In 2016 the Heritage Hut, recently acquired by the WPC, seemed ideal for showing during the summer months. However, at that time it was too damp and cold during other seasons, so as a temporary measure it overwintered in a studio nearby.

To solve this problem, the Scroll Advisory Group as it later became known, put forward a suggestion that the existing back extension of the Hut be insulated in order to house the Scroll permanently. They helped to raise £15,000 to achieve this. The WPC did not have the resources to undertake a full renovation of the Heritage Hut so instead agreed to lease it for up to 10 years to WCLC for a "peppercorn rent" and transfer to WCLC all the funds raised up to that point, in return for which WCLC would undertake the entire refurbishment project (including the insulation of the whole fabric) and fund whatever shortfall there was between the money raised and the money required. This work is complete which means that the scroll can now stay, in a place on honour, within the main room of the Hut.

The SAG felt that this prominence also merited a full renovation of the forty-year-old case. Jill Whittenbury generously funded this work and Clive Jackson kindly gave his time in carrying out the work. The Village can be very grateful to them for this, as the case is now looking at its very best again.

Because of Covid we have not been able recently to present the Scroll to the public but we are happy to say that on Sunday 24 October 2021 there will be three showings at 10am, 11am & 12noon.

Don't miss this opportunity for a real treat.