

Villagers pay tribute to community stalwart, Graham Artley

On December 22, villagers lined Kirkby Fleetham green to pay tribute to Graham Artley who died last month after a long illness. Graham served for 20 years as Chair and Treasurer of the Village Hall, and Treasurer for the Feast. His legacy will continue for many years to come with a much improved village hall and funding secured to support The Feast.

In these difficult times, when funerals are limited, local residents, grateful for the years of service and affection for both Graham and his wife, Fran, wanted to pay their respects before his coffin was driven to Darlington. A piper joined the occasion in recognition of the time Graham and family lived in Scotland. Fran and her family are grateful for the support of local people, including involvement on the day of the funeral; and for all the lovely cards and flowers



Graham opening the new Village Hall kitchen in 2013

On behalf of The Village Hall Committee, Sheila Minto, said:

"For two decades Graham served as a Trustee of our Village Hall taking on the roles of Treasurer and Chairman. Together with Fran, he was determined to improve and develop this precious asset. Double glazing, re-decoration, plans for an extension and ensuring that the hall was well used for social events were the objectives he pursued tirelessly and with great enthusiasm. It was a privilege, therefore, when in 2013, Graham was able to join us to perform the opening of the new kitchen".



On behalf of The Feast, Alison Booth, said:

"Graham was a stalwart of the Kirkby Fleetham Feast for many years. His role as Treasurer was key to the financial success of the Feast. In 2006, Graham with Jeff Lloyd, the then Chairman, secured £10,000 funding from Awards for All. This secured the future of the Feast and is one of the major reasons why this historic village event will survive for many a year".