

Meon Matters

News, views & Comment from East Meon

meonmatters.com

Issue Number 199

Winter 2018

£1.00



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Meon Matters is back! Our heartfelt thanks to all the generous souls in our wonderful village who donated money to refill our coffers and gave us the opportunity to revive and restore our much-loved magazine.

After an unavoidable sabbatical Meon Matters is once again up and running, albeit in a modified and more affordable form. As you may know, glorious though the previous format was, there was no escaping the fact that it was increasingly expensive to produce. An emergency meeting was held in the village the purpose of which was to find a way of resuscitating Meon Matters. Fortunately, a new group of volunteers has stepped forward to take up the reins.

Duties were divided into two teams, financial and editorial. The first task was to take care of the finances and find a way to return the magazine back on to a sustainable footing. This has of necessity involved reviewing the budget to produce a realistically affordable version of Meon Matters, at least for the time being.

On the editorial side, the most important asset we will need to rely on is your continuing support. Without all your lovely articles and reports there could be no content and no magazine, so please please please keep them coming! We can't do it without you!!

The email address is the same as before: meonmatters@gmail.com

This issue is just a start so as to get us back up and running. It is smaller and more humble than that which you have become used to, but at this stage the most important thing was to get going again. We can explore ways of improving the magazine in the New Year, so please bear with us.

The other major development is that we've added a website to the services that Meon Matters provides for the community. The old village website is to be very shortly absorbed by the new one, the web address being meonmatters.com You can read more about this elsewhere in this issue.

It just remains to say thank you so much for your kind patience and loving support! Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Marc Atkinson

The Editorial Team:

Editors: Marc Atkinson, Sigi Goolden, Charlie Gaisford, Ron Ingerson, Annabel Tyrwhitt-Drake,
Sharon Sillence, Andrew Hughes

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Layout and Printing: Wildy Upbeat Printers

DECEMBER

EAST MEON PRIMARY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SERVICE

December 21 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

COURT HOUSE CHRISTMAS CAROLS 22 December 7pm

NEW YEARS EVE PARTY

December 31, 2018 @ 8:00 pm - January 1,
2019 @ 12:00 am

JANUARY

Jane's Boys

January 2, 2019 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
The George Inn

Moviola SPITFIRE

January 4, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

School Open Afternoon

January 11, 2019 @ 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Community Coffee and Cake

January 15, 2019 @ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Baroque Concert – Bedales

January 17, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

'The timbers of Hyde Abbey'

History Group Talk

January 17, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

David Spurling

£5

Community Coffee and Cake

January 18, 2019 @ 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Pop Up Choir 7.15

January 22, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Natalie Williams – Bedales

January 24, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Burns Night

January 25, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 11:00 pm

Moviola – The Children Act

January 25, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm
£5

FEBRUARY

Garden Club – The Wonder of Clematis. 7.15

February 4, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Jane's Boys

February 6, 2019 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

'The Union Flag' – History Group Talk

February 21, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

£5

Moviola – KING OF THIEVES

February 22, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

£5

Pop Up Choir. 7.15

February 26, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

MARCH

Garden Club. What the judges look for. 7.15

March 4, 2019 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Jane's Boys

March 6, 2019 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Talk on DNA and History Bedales

March 12, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Musical Extravaganza Evening

March 16, 2019 @ 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Ian Millar and Dominic Spencer Jazz duo.

Fund raiser for Village Hall

March 17, 2019 @ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

£10

Portsmouth – 'Harlots, Dung and Glory'

March 21, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

£5

Moviola THE WIFE

March 29, 2019 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm

£5

First and foremost I would like to wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas and a Good New Year!

It is wonderful that the Meon Matters is now up and running again and thank you for all those involved for inviting me to write a piece for this. In the past I have written about this time of year keeping all your homes safe as we spend time choosing gifts and bringing them home ready to give to family and friends. If you do intend to leave them under the tree then close your curtains so that they cannot be seen from outside.

There are still reports of unwanted calls on the phone and people who are trying to sell things at the door. For the unwanted calls, your phone provider can offer a variety of services to screen the calls you have on your landline. If you do get a call asking you to call your bank please make sure that you put the phone down and stop the call, then leave it for at least five minutes and look up the phone number yourself to make the call and do not use the one the caller may give you.

For persons calling at the door please do not let them in your house, there is no reason for anyone who has not made an appointment to enter your home that you do not know. At this time of year you may have someone who lives close to you who lives on their own, please check on them as often as you can just a friendly face at the door can make them feel a little better.

If you are planning to go away over the Christmas period tell a neighbour so that they can keep an eye on the house. A house left without lights on and curtains drawn day and night is very obvious to everyone. Perhaps purchase a plug in timer for a lamp to set it to come on in the evening and go off later on when you would normally go to bed. Please do not shut your drive gates if you usually leave them open when you are there again this is an obvious sign that the occupants are away.

And lastly all your neighbourhood Policing Team are patrolling the area both day and night and always happy to stop and chat and answer any questions you may have. Since last writing we now have a new Beat Officer PC 3647 Richard Turner. He has been a Police Officer for over 18 yrs. and joined our Neighbourhood Team in the summer. I have included his email address at the end of this piece. Richard has worked in this area before and does know his way around but he is still getting to know everyone so please introduce yourself when you see him around.

If you have something to report please call 101 or 999 in an emergency

www.hampshirealert.co.uk

This is a free web site where you can register and get updates of crimes in your area sent as message to your phone or as an email.

Tria Gibbs

Contact details

PC 3647 Richard Turner	richard.turner@hampshire.pnn.police.uk
PCSO 11357 Tria Gibbs.	patricia.gibbs@hampshire.pnn.police.uk
PCSO 15962 Kieren Rogers	kieren.rogers@hampshire.pnn.police.uk
PCSO 13326 Almy Toogood	almeria.toogood@hampshire.pnn.police.uk

Mobile 07554775521
Mobile 07392289626

USEFUL LINKS

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www.twitter.com/HantsPolRural
www.hampshire.police.uk



Useful Numbers

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101 Or 01962 841534

West Meon Surgery:

01730 829666

Out Of Hours Doctor:

111

East Meon Stores:

01730 823224

Citizens Advice Bureau:

03444 111306 / 0300 3300650

EHDC:

01730 266551

East Hampshire Councillor:

Rob Mocatta 01730 823908

East Meon Parish Council:

01730 262882 / 01730 776207

Hampshire County Council:

0845 603 5638

Vicar:

Jane Ball 01730 823221

East Meon Care Group:

0705 017 7505

East Meon Village Hall Bookings:

07956 783061



Parish Council Update

It's a pleasure to be able to once more inform our community of the goings-on at the Parish Council via Meon Matters. This (brief) briefing is not so much a matter of record (please go to the website for formal minutes of our meetings at www.eastmeon.org.uk) as a quick overview of what we've been up to while Meon Matters has been off-air.

In the last six months we have said goodbye to Councillor Richard Bartlett and hello to Councillor Matt Atkinson. We have appointed Suzie Brooker as Proper Officer to replace Sarah Cowrick, who after a long, long time has stepped down from main duties but still remains with our Council as our Finance Officer. We have rejigged our emails, reconstructed the website, and put in place a detailed privacy policy so as to be GDPR compliant (for which our thanks go to George Thompson).

So much for the administration side of things, what have we actually done? Well for starters, the planning sub-committee have commented on more than fifty planning applications, the sites for each one having been visited by members. Ongoing applications of interest due to their size and potential impact include the proposed development by Southcott Homes of the land south of Coombe Road (recommended in the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) as site EM16) and an application to increase the housing stock at Meon Hills (Leydene) from 14 to 24 units. This latter proposal was objected to by the Parish Council due to it being out of scope of the agreed NDP. We await developments here with interest.

Work has also been completed on improvements to the recreation ground, enhancement of our village signs and drainage and resurfacing of Fiveways and part of Limekiln Lane. Ongoing projects include the installation of Speed Limit Reminder signage, conversion of stiles to more user-friendly wooden kissing gates and making safer the roads around the school at drop-off and pick-up times.

Finally, to celebrate Christmas we again have a Christmas tree, complete with lights and decorations, at Washer's Triangle.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, 28th January 2019 at 6.30 pm in the Church Hall.

A very Merry Christmas from all at the Parish Council to all of you.



Age UK Mid Hampshire is launching a new Enablement Service in Petersfield and the surrounding villages. The service will be delivered by Kathy Slade the Petersfield Services Coordinator who is based at Petersfield Hospital

The service is for those aged over 55 who need support coping with a major life changing event, such as a bereavement, a disabling illness, returning home from a stay in hospital, a fall at home or other major physical or emotional change in their lives.

The service can help people in a variety of ways including:

- Coping with domestic challenges
- Sustaining and improving mobility
- Recovering self-esteem and restoring self confidence
- Developing and sustaining social circles and engaging with activities and people outside their home
- Dealing with bureaucracy and claiming what they are entitled to

Age UK Mid Hampshire already runs this service successfully in and around Andover. We have enabled many people to remain living independently in their own homes rather than spend longer than necessary in hospital or entering a care home environment.

Clients are visited weekly at home by volunteer mentors over a period of 12 weeks. All the mentors receive appropriate training and support and are matched with clients according to their skills and the client's needs.

Kathy is looking for volunteer mentors in the Petersfield area. No special skills are needed, more important is the ability to empathise and support people at their time of need. Training is provided and appropriate checks are made (DBS and references). If you are able to spare a few hours a week to support people in your community and become part of a mentor team, please contact Kathy on:

k.slade@ageukmidhampshire..org.uk
07954 655775

*O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight*

It's a bit difficult being a vicar and not particularly liking Christmas carols! I think it's because we start singing them and hearing them so soon – I'm waiting for the first play on the radio any day now – that by the time we get to Christmas I've generally had enough! In spite of my general ambivalence I do have my favourite though and it's 'O little town of Bethlehem'. I'm not really sure why; maybe it's because I find the words moving, maybe it's because the tune isn't too high so it's always one I feel I can sing with gusto or maybe it's because Cliff Richard did a cover version and it was one of the first records I bought!

The words of the carol capture for us the image of the birth-place of Christ; we erect cribs and our children perform in Nativity plays that bring to life the scene where Mary and Joseph arrive at the inn and, finding no room, create a bed amongst the animals in the stable. But as much as I love this carol, I am also very aware of the fact that the reality of life in Bethlehem couldn't be more different. It is not just a symbolic place in the Christian story, but a real and vibrant city dependant on tourism. It is a city in a troubled land, the 'separation wall' cutting it off from neighbouring Jerusalem.

In September 2019 I have been asked to co-lead a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I jumped at the opportunity because I have always wanted to visit the places I have heard about for so many years, to add sight and sound to the stories and images. I'm sure that reading the Gospels will never seem the same and whilst a large part of the trip will focus in and around Jerusalem, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land wouldn't be complete without visiting Nazareth and Bethlehem. What makes pilgrimage special though, is that it's not just about visiting sites of historical interest. Bethlehem in the 1st century wasn't an easy place to be and 21st Bethlehem is no different: of course there will be a visit to Manger Square, the Grotto of the Nativity and the Shepherds' Fields but we will also see the Banksy Museum in the Walled Off Hotel and visit the Bethlehem Fair Trade Artisans (a non-profit organisation committed to promoting and celebrating traditional Palestinian arts and culture). To have the opportunity to meet the 'living stones', the local Palestinian and Israeli Christians who are the on-going living church in the region, is humbling.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas once again, as we sing 'O Little Town of Bethlehem', we pray for all those living in dangerous and difficult situations, all those who will struggle to experience peace; we give thanks for all that is good and for the Light that continues to shine in the darkness. And if you would like the opportunity to experience something of the reality of the Holy Land, please do contact me.

Wishing you a peaceful and blessed Christmas,
Rev'd Jane Ball



East Meon Garden Club

East Meon Garden Club – Chairman's Report 2018

East Meon Garden Club has had another very successful year, bringing together not only people from this village but others from West Meon and the wider community of the Meon Valley. At the beginning of the year we fostered a reciprocal arrangement whereby members of the East Meon and West Meon Garden Clubs had automatic free membership to each other's Club and we would be happy to consider the same arrangement with other Garden Clubs in the future.

I'm also pleased to announce that the membership, having fallen slightly over the years, now shows signs of increasing again as we try new means of communication to reach those we have hitherto missed. All are welcome – in fact we need the numbers to be able to control costs and provide interesting speakers, so please encourage anyone you know who might have an interest in anything horticultural (or even agricultural) to come along!

Part of that policy to increase communications was given a huge lift this year by the kind help of Kevin Davies and his company Mandarin Kite up at the Old Forge, producing a top class fit-for-purpose website. If you haven't already done so, please visit www.eastmeongardenclub.com.

Having said that we occasionally have to pay for 'outsourced' speakers, there is always a special welcome for our local volunteers. Anyone who came to our December meeting last year will not have forgotten Amanda Wyatt's edict that the best way to learn flower arranging is "just get on with it!". Along with a little festive 'fizz', it was a great evening. That was also true of Chris Brooker's passionate talk about the 'Secret of Trees', the questions for which might have gone on all night had we not got homes to go to!

Kelvin Mason then returned in March to talk to us about vegetables, the moral of which seemed to be dig, dig and then dig again! Professor Peter Gregory wrapped up our spring season of lectures in April by giving us the 'lowdown' on 'Behind the Scenes at The Chelsea Flower Show' and how to display a tree with all its roots but no soil!

Our summer season of garden visits so ably researched and organised by Stewart and Betty Bussell kicked off with a successful visit to Chawton House Garden and Library. These visits are a wonderful way to find inspiration, talk 'tips' and meet friends. They invariably finish with a cup of tea and cake or as with our final visit of the year, a hearty meal in a pub where we can all reinforce friendships or make new ones.

Considering the heatwave drawing everyone to the beach and England playing in the World Cup, our annual Gardens Open Day in June proved to be surprisingly resilient and another great success especially as the day finished with a 'Sung Evensong' by the Winchester Cathedral Chamber Choir in our beautiful church. We plan to do the same again next year – and a special thank you to all those people of East Meon who worked so hard to make it such a success. We were also able to donate £900 to the Rosemary Foundation from the proceeds. The July visit to West Dean Gardens

also saw great weather and a record turnout for a garden visit. The mature parkland and trees are unique and the walled garden is just amazing. Well worth another visit! The Annual Show is a focal point in the village calendar and although most enjoyable, does pose the most work for the Committee. The standard of produce is always high (we have that on authority from our external judges) but we need more entrants to create an even greater buzz and competition for the prizes. As a relatively new Committee (some of us anyway), we learnt a lot of lessons this year which we will be taking forward to next year. Many thanks go to all those who helped the event and Mary Hales and her team of helpers and cake makers for the afternoon's refreshments.

Unfortunately the advertised visit to Sandhill Farm House had to be cancelled, with Stewart and Betty miraculously finding us another interesting garden at short notice quite close by, the main feature of which were two 100' (30m) Black Pine trees in the middle of the plot! As mentioned earlier and on Facebook, the discussion about (and consumption of) grapes, hops and barley in the Three Horseshoes sealed a great evening.

The Committee made the decision earlier this year that it would no longer buy horticultural supplies and resell them to members but instead negotiate major and meaningful discounts for its gardeners. This we have done with King's Seeds, the offer having been taken up by several members, but we need more uptake this autumn/next year to maintain our discount status. It would be good to persuade more allotment holders to become members and save their membership fee (and more) through our discounts.

Finally I would like to thank the Committee for their unswerving support and hard work – and one should never forget that they do it voluntarily – without which the Club would not run.

David Lewin, Chairman EMGC

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Helping Hedgehogs in East Meon

As the cold winter approaches many of us consider sheltering from the bitter conditions. Few residents in East Meon though sleep all winter to avoid the freezing temperatures. However, there is one group of small, spiny and spiky near neighbours that do just that. They are, of course, humble hedgehogs.

Sadly our prickly friends are facing a number of new threats. These challenges have led to a steep decline in the size of the hedgehog population both locally and nationally. In the 1950s it was estimated there were 36.5 million hedgehogs in Britain. Shockingly today it is estimated around half a million survive. But what is it that is driving them towards extinction?

Unfortunately threats to hedgehogs come mostly from us. In rural areas our gardens and farmland increasingly lack the diversity of habitats hedgehogs need. However there are small ways which we can help these curious critters.

One East Meon resident, Debbie Evans, is leading the way in helping our parish hedgehogs. She explained to me the importance of creating small holes at the base of our garden fences to allow the mini mammals to travel. Debbie told me that "Hedgehogs can roam for about 2km in one evening". Creating 'hedgehog highways' is a small way we can help to ensure that the cute creatures can access vital resources to help them survive.

Hedgehogs are also very prone to road accidents. Debbie told me that recently she has seen "three squashed on the roads around East Meon". For Debbie this is particularly sad to see. Occasionally she re-homes hedgehogs from a local hedgehog hospital and wonders if it might be one of her adopted hogs.

Debbie has worked with the designer of hedgehog feeding stations to build a hedgehog 'des res'. Here they can find food and water.

Despite a declining population, hedgehogs are highly popular among the British public. In a survey two years ago, more than two in every five Britons picked them as the animals that best represent the country. Whats more, the gardeners of our country are continually thankful for their help with pests.

Debbie is interested to know whether villagers would be willing to help her create a map that plots all hedgehog sightings in East Meon. The hope is this will give us more information on our native population. Debbie told me that, "by plotting our hedgehogs' whereabouts it might show that we have more than anyone knew". If anyone has any ideas about how the locations could be mapped electronically, Debbie would love to hear from you.

In researching this article I was amazed to discover that our spiny friends had already been on Earth for 8 million years before humankind existed. 7 million years later, and over the course of just one generation, this ancient species has seen a rapid demise. If we don't act soon the 15 million year old hedgehogs could disappear forever.

Anyone who is interested in helping our village hedgehogs should email Debbie at bluegrassdobs@btinternet.com

Charlie Gaisford



The Bells of East Meon

“How hard can it be?”

A year ago my husband Bill and I moved into our cottage in East Meon. A few days later, Tony Perkins knocked at our door and welcomed us to the village. He lost little time in asking if we might be interested in bell ringing. Initially, I was politely non-committal, however, one summer evening, after one glass of prosecco too many perhaps, and because I love to hear the church bells; I agreed that we would ‘give it a go’. I secretly thought I might be rather good at bell ringing, and let’s face it I thought, how hard can it be?

Well, six months later I can confirm that it is considerably more challenging than I had anticipated, but a lot more fun. Initially, we had lessons on Thursday night led by Terry with mercifully silenced bells, but after a couple of months we were invited to join the whole band on Friday night with open bells, and Sunday morning too. I have reluctantly concluded that Bill is probably better than me. Nevertheless, from time to time it goes spectacularly wrong for both of us and provides much amusement for the youngsters and advanced ringers in the band alike.

You should understand that when the bell gets to the top of its swing, it stands, with the stay resting against the slider. Well for months Bill and I struggled to stand the bell, and I would sometimes wake up in the night reliving these moments from which we could not hide, with our lone bell continuing to chime after the other bells had fallen silent. Alternatively, as Bill has discovered, you can break the stay by swinging the bell too hard and fast, which terrified him, but caused much amusement for at least one younger member of the band. We have yanked our arms, lost control of the rope and generally caused disarray amongst the other ringers and I have to admit that I have often lost track of which bell I am ringing – so if you hear a little ‘discordance’ in the ringing, then that was probably us.

Yet, far from hoping we would not return to the bell tower, the established band has encouraged us, helped us, and appreciated our enthusiasm, if not our polished contribution. Indeed, on Christmas Day, Bill and I made up the band numbers and we really enjoyed ringing the bells on such a special day. Recently, you may have heard an additional bell practice on a Saturday. This was a practice morning dedicated to the beginners and supported by the experienced band. It was a lot of fun and we ate a lot of cake. We have discovered that bell ringing is really sociable and visitors and beginners are always welcome. We have particularly enjoyed the Christmas meal at the Isaac Walton and the Friday evenings (after bell ringing) in the George Inn.

So, if you occasionally hear lone bells please think kindly of us – and if you would like to ‘give it a go’, because lets face it how hard can it be, please contact Terry Collins, our Tower Captain.

Anna Liddell

For information:

Terry Collins

terrycollins@ntlworld.com



Bell Ringers: Isadora, Terry, Anna and Tony

Your pleasure, my living!

Quite understandably, many people want to walk in our beautiful countryside with or without dogs.

Autumn is the time when female sheep (ewes) will become pregnant and they can easily lose their lambs when chased or disturbed too much. If a dog chases or bites livestock, the owner can be responsible for losses incurred.

Even the best behaved dogs have a chase instinct, it is the owner's fault if it is not under control!

This is a simple list of things to consider.

1. Enjoy a visit to our land and footpaths, but be aware that sheep and cattle may be in a field, even though you cannot see them.
2. By law, dogs should be under control at all times - preferably on a lead!
3. Be aware that dogs can spread and pick up diseases. Neospora (abortion) and cystic tenuicoliss (a tape worm), both cause damage to sheep and cattle, and can affect humans.
4. Pick up your dog poo and dispose of it sensibly, and worm your dogs regularly (get veterinary advice).

Landowners and livestock farmers do not want to be kill-joys, we only wish for consideration, so that everybody can live and work in the countryside without conflict of interests!

George Atkinson, Lower Farm



Winter jobs and beware poachers

During the winter months, the East Meon farming community will be busy catching up on farm maintenance, reflecting on their work so far and planning their spring workloads. Winter sees us hedge trimming, servicing machinery and managing woodlands. Any grain that we have sold (wheat and barley) is collected from our stores - we help to load it into lorries that transport it to its next destination. Winter is also a good time to plan budgets.

The mild autumn has ensured constant growth for the autumn-sown cereals and oilseed rape. Ironically, a spell of colder weather is now needed to slow down these crops and clean out any diseases that are present on the lower leaves. This is important as big lush crops can become expensive and difficult to manage during spring.

The winter months give us time to attend various training courses, most of which are mandatory. Operators of crop sprayers are required to be registered with the National Register of Sprayer Operators (NRoSO) which is essential for our farm assurance scheme. NRoSO runs regular training days in various skills, ranging from environmental stewardship to practical applications and sprayer MOTs. Yes, like our cars, crop sprayers must have a yearly MOT inspection too! We must gain at least 10 training points per year to remain on the National Register of Sprayer Operators (NRoSO), so training and refresher days are an essential part of our working lives.

Agriculture has become a highly regulated industry and it is a much more professional sector than it was a generation ago. Codes of practice apply to the environment, we must comply with 'cross compliance' measures for soil care, hedgerow management, animal welfare and traceability, water regulations and many more. Rules and codes of practice can be quite challenging at times, but they are part and parcel of running a modern farm business.

We and our neighbours are suffering regular incursions from poachers trespassing in vehicles. They drive over newly sown crops, causing considerable damage. The perpetrators have no qualms about cutting through fences as they pursue deer, rabbits and hare. Here at Bereleigh, this has resulted in an increasing number of gates being installed and deep ditches being dug around the estate to prevent such vehicles from gaining access to the fields. If you see anything unusual please report it by phoning 101 and if it's a crime in progress phone 999.

Tom Tyrwhitt-Drake, Bereleigh Estate

History of the River in East Meon

Did the river originally follow its present course through the village, down the High Street, turning at right angles along The Cross and again to split Cross Keys and Vicarage Lodge? Or could it have flowed through the grounds of The Court House, splitting the houses on The Hyde and the High Street, continuing under the Cross where its present course flows?



Saxton's map, the first known, 1579



Norden map of Hampshire 1607

There is no documentary evidence, and certainly no maps, to tell us the course of the river through the settlement of East Meon before the 18th century; early maps either left rivers out entirely (Christopher Saxton, above left) or were very vague about their course (Norden, above right).

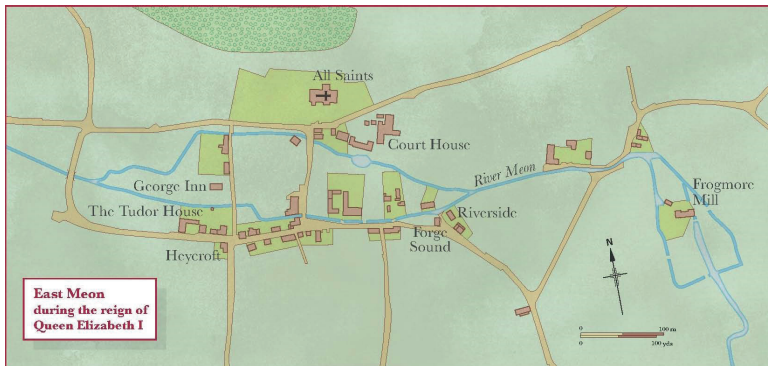
We know from Domesday that there were seven mills in the Hundred of East Meon, which then included the tithings of Froxfield and Steep. Only three were on the River Meon, Southmill near the source of the Meon, Frogmore Mill and Shutts mill at Drayton. None were recorded in the actual settlement of East Meon (though not all mills were full-sized, and some farms used the flow of streams to power small mills; there may have been one such at Hill Hampton. A millstone was found in the river between Cross Keys and Vicarage Lodge.)

Monasteries and great houses

In the Middle Ages many great houses were either built on flowing rivers, such as the Priory at Mottisfont, or diverted streams to create ponds and channels. At St Cross, two streams were cut, parallel to the River Itchen, one for clean water (feeding the ponds, and providing drinking water for the community) and one for foul. We know that Court Farm, now The Court House, had a pond in the 19th century; in the Middle Ages it had been a working curia, or farm headquarters, and would have needed running water: there is a curious anomaly at the northern end of what is now the garden of Glenthorne House; the level of the ground on the Glenthorne side of the wall is a metre higher than on the north side, suggesting the river may have split Glenthorne and The Court House. If so, the river might have divided to the east of the village with one branch flowing along its present course, along what is now the High Street, and the other through the farmyard at The Court House. The latter would have continued just south of the track which is now the West Meon road flowing into the section which still divides Cross Keys and Vicarage Lodge.

In the 14th century, the 'Tudor House' was an important two-and-a-half-bay farmhouse which might well have had a pond and service channels, suggesting that there may have been a southerly stream which continued to the north of what is now Workhouse Lane and joined the other branch to the west of the settlement (along the route of the present culvert).

Conjectural map of the village in the 16th century, showing two possible branches of the river



What are now called Paupers and Kews Cottages were built in the early 17th century, and the village Workhouse was built between these cottages and the Tudor House in the 1730s (or converted from existing cottages). The southern branch of the river may have provided them with running water.

The first map to show clearly the course of the river through East Meon was Thomas Milne's map of Hampshire published in 1790. It shows only one stream, which leaves 'Wigmore Mill' (Frogmore Mill) and goes through Court Farm, splitting houses along the Hyde and the High Street, eventually going under the bridge on The Cross and continuing between Cross Keys and Vicarage Lodge. Granted, it is unlikely that Milne ever visited the village but will have relied on other cartographers, any of whom may have conjectured the course of the Meon, but there is logic to this route.



Thomas Milne's 1790 map of Hampshire, which shows a single stream to the north of the village

So why and when might the southern course of the river have been created, or expanded, to flow along the High Street, then blocked and diverted down The Cross. When was the northern route removed? The first reliable map of East Meon was created in 1851 to support the Tithe Apportionments; it too shows houses along the West Meon road but only a pond at Court Farm remains of the northern branch of the river. New houses have appeared to the west of Paupers Cottages and that section of the southern branch has also disappeared. It is not impossible that these streams created marshy ground unsuited to housing and were removed.



Tithe Apportionment map of East Meon, 1851.

The early nineteenth century saw extensive civil engineering throughout the country, and the creation of such an unnatural route for the river, turning at right angles at each end of The Cross, was perhaps such a venture. If so, it created problems for future generations.

Flooding and flood prevention



Flooding in the High Street and Church Street, early and mid 20th century

Flooding in the main streets of East Meon became commonplace; heavy rainfalls caused the water to surge down the river; when it hit the barrier at The Cross, it flowed back along the High Street and Church Street. In the mid 1950s, engineering works were carried out to remedy the problem by creating an overflow culvert parallel with what was now named Workhouse Lane, following the route of the previous southern branch of the river but in a cement ditch which was presumably much straighter than the original stream.

Michael Blakstad

The course of the River Meon

Until the 1950s, the river caused many floods in the centre of the village: in times of heavy rain, the water came barrelling down the High Street, hit the wall at The Cross and backed up, flooding Church and High Streets. A culvert was then dug parallel to Workhouse Lane, which relieved the river in full spate (though some flooding continued for another fifty years.)

Did nature design a river which ran parallel to the High Street, then turned at right angle down The Cross, then sharp left where the stream divides Cross Keys and Vicarage Lodge? It seems improbable. 16th and 17th century maps do not show the route of the river, but there was a large pond at the Court House, the original curia of the Bishops of Winchester, the headquarters of farming for the 9,000 acres which comprised the Hundred of East Meon. A discrepancy between the height of the gardens of Glenthorne House and the Court House suggest there might have been a stream flowing into that pond, which would logically have continued parallel to The Hyde to join the present course at the southern end of The Cross.

There might have been another stream along the High Street and Workhouse Lane, since a large farmhouse at The Tudor House would probably also have had a pond. The first map to indicate a river flowing through East Meon was that of Thomas Milne in 1770, and it shows only the northern route, through Court Farm. The first really accurate map, however, was drawn in 1851 and it shows the present route, along the High Street and then turning at The Cross, with no sign of the northern stream. We have no way of knowing what might have happened in the 80 intervening years, but might the mighty engineers of the early 19th century have drained the swampy land on which houses are now built along the West Meon road and re-routed the flow along its present route, with disastrous consequences a century later? You can see the evidence, such as it is, on eastmeonhistory.net

Michael Blakstad

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Update from the Village Hall

The Village Hall has enjoyed a successful autumn with strong bookings for our regular classes; yoga, pilates, art, karate, table tennis and mother and toddlers. We also host the film nights and many private parties. In November, the Hall was transformed for the wedding of Gilly Copley (photo attached).

We are pleased to announce that the Village Hall will be holding a New Year's Eve party with a live band, 4play, providing the music. We will run a bar selling bottles of wine and beer, however, guests are free to bring their own drinks and nibbles. We welcome children to the event but they must be accompanied by their parents and remain their responsibility. Tickets are on sale at the village shop. If you are able to contribute a raffle prize, please let the committee know. Contact details are on our website www.eastmeonvillagehall.co.uk.

The committee has decided to run the Country Fair in 2019 on the first bank holiday in May, the 6th. We are now beginning the many tasks necessary to make the Fair a success, so the committee would love to hear from you if you can help in the run up to the event and particularly over the bank holiday weekend.

In January, we are going to open the hall on Tuesday afternoons and Friday mornings to run an informal café with coffee, tea and cakes available. We hope that residents will take the opportunity to pop in and meet friends and neighbours and enjoy the company. Our longer term plan is to extend opening times and services with a view to having the hall fully open during the day. These plans depend on sufficient residents supporting and using the café. We look forwards to seeing you for refreshments in January.

The committee are discussing options for additional events at the hall for our community, we'd love to hear your views and feedback.

George Thompson



Bumper crop at village vineyard

After the warmest summer in over one hundred years, the delicate grapes at the East Meon Vineyard were perfectly ripe and ready for picking. On a clear autumnal day, a small army of volunteers were on hand to help harvest the vines which were heaving with grapes.

The business of wine making is not new in the village. There are records of vine growing in East Meon dating back to the 14th century. Historically, grapes had been grown on the steep sides of Park Hill at 'Vineyard Hole'. Since 2006, George and Clare Bartlett have taken wine production in East Meon to their "Berrygarden" in the grounds of Court House, opposite Park Hill.

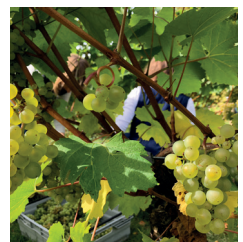
Before entering the world of wine production, George and Clare went on a vine-growing course at Plumpton agricultural college. George told me that "Vine-growing is very labour intensive. Pruning is done in winter, and from spring onwards the vigorous growth of the vines requires directing, cutting back and we need to remove unwanted shoots".

This year was particularly special due to the abnormally warm conditions throughout the summer. George told me, "this year we have had wonderful growing conditions. The vines came to life early in the spring, and the warm, sunny weather in June and July ensured excellent flowering and fruit-setting". The early spring and subsequent warm summer meant that the harvest, on the 7th October, was the earliest ever at the vineyard. The vines produced 3.6 tonnes of beautiful grapes.

At the vineyard all the grapes are picked on a single day, and they are then pressed and fermented together. It takes about five years from harvest before the wine is ready for drinking. All the grapes grown are made into sparkling wine using the champagne method at the Wiston Estate winery in Sussex. 75% of the fruit harvested in the acre vineyard comes from the Pinot Noir vine and another 25% are Chardonnay grapes.

It was a memorable day for all involved. The volunteers were rewarded with rich pickings in the form of a tasty lunch laid on by the Bartletts. As the winter draws in, the Bartlett's will begin the hard work of pruning for next year's crop.

Charlie Gaisford



'SHORT MAT BOWLS'

Have you played bowls at sometime or perhaps you would be interested in learning how to play?

Bowls is a good way to keep active, have some fun and can be enjoyed by all ages.

It would be great to start a Short Mat Bowls group in the Village Hall, all the equipment will be provided.

So please if you think you would like to take part

Contact Jean Cooke 01730 823363

OPENING IN THE NEW YEAR, EAST MEON'S COMMUNITY CAFÉ

Come along and enjoy a 'Coffee, Cake & Chat' at the Village hall

on
Tuesdays 2.00pm – 4.00pm
&

Fridays 10.00am – 12.00am

Starting in January on
Tues 15th & Fri 18th

We look forward to welcoming you there!

PARISH LENGTHSMAN

A part-time Lengthsman is required to work across a cluster of 8 local parishes in the Petersfield area. Duties will include routine maintenance work looking after the lanes and paths within each parish and will require approximately 400 hours a year in total. Applicants should have relevant experience, take a pride in their work and be aware of local needs. The role is sponsored by HCC (subject to funding) and is intended to provide added value to the core service and to improve the environment within local communities.

Applicants must be able to comply with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and relevant legislation and have necessary public liability insurance (£10,000,000).

For more information please contact Jenny Hollington, Clerk to Steep Parish Council (lead parish) on clerk@steep-pc.gov.uk or 01730 267784.

Applications must be received by Friday, 25th January 2019

PETANQUE

Would you be interested in playing Pétanque in East Meon? Also known as "French Boules", the game has an enthusiastic following in Hampshire where it is truly a family sport, played by people of all ages and equally enjoyed by both men and women.

There has been a suggestion that we build our own court or "boulodrome" adjacent to the Village Hall, would you be interested in playing, if so please email Mike Critchley at eastmeonpetanque@gmail.com

Details of the local clubs and leagues are on the Southern Counties Petanque website: southerncountiespetanque.org

The Good Causes Fund

Did you know that the village has a 'Good Causes Fund', which is there to respond to applications from village organisations requiring funds for particular projects?

Since 1999, when the fund was set up, donations have been made to village organisations such as the almshouses, Cubs, the school, village hall, Toddlers group, Garden Club and History Group. Donations are modest and will be made to projects that benefit our village community. Applications for possible funding should be made to Jane Cobley at janecobley66@gmail.com

THE EAST MEON CINEMA SEASON IN 2019

Forthcoming films and dates for your diaries....

Friday 4th January - SPITFIRE - PG - 97 mins

Spitfire is an epic sweeping tale of determination, vision and courage. It is the story of an aeroplane that was forged in competition, shaped as the war clouds gathered, and refined in the white heat of combat – going on to become the most famous fighter plane ever made. Credited with changing the course of world history, this is the story of the Spitfire – told in the words of the last-surviving combat veterans. With stunning aerial footage from the world's top aviation photographer, the film also contains rare, digitally re-mastered, archive footage from the tumultuous days of the 1940's when her power in the skies was unrivalled. Spitfire also explores how this extraordinary plane thrives today and how it has become an international icon.

Friday 25th January - THE CHILDREN ACT - 12 - 103 mins

In the midst of a marital crisis, a High Court judge must decide if she should order a life-saving blood transfusion for a teen with cancer despite his family's refusal to accept medical treatment for religious reasons. Based on the novel by Ian McEwan and starring Emma Thompson and Stanley Tucci. Powerful stuff.

Friday 22nd February - KING OF THIEVES - 15 - 105 mins

A crew of retired crooks pulls off a major heist in London's jewellery district, but what begins as a nostalgic last hurrah for the group quickly becomes a brutal nightmare when greed overtakes them. Based on the infamous true events of the Hatton Garden diamond heist and sporting an impressive line-up including Sir Michael Caine, Tom Courtney, Ray Winstone, Jim Broadbent and Sir Michael Gambon.

Friday 29th March - THE WIFE - 15 - 100 mins

Glen Close is in a class of her own in this tragicomic drama. Joan (Glen Close) has been married to Joe (Jonathan Pryce) for nearly forty years. Joe's literary star has blazed since he and Joan first met in the late 1950s. THE WIFE interweaves the story of the couple's youthful passion and ambition within the portrait of a marriage, and as Joe is about to be awarded the Nobel Prize for his acclaimed and prolific body of work, Joan starts to think about the shared compromises, secrets and betrayals.

Friday 26th April - A STAR IS BORN - 15 - 136 mins

Seasoned musician Jackson Maine discovers - and falls in love with - struggling artist Ally. She has just about given up on her dream to make it big as a singer until Jackson coaxes her into the spotlight. But even as Ally's career takes off, the personal side of their relationship is breaking down, as Jackson fights an ongoing battle with his own internal demons. Lady Gaga, in her film debut as Ally, is a revelation in this new version of the classic tale.

East Meon School Events



Remembrance

A beautiful service of Remembrance was held at All Saints Church on the morning of the 11th November. I was extremely proud of our pupils who bore the school wreath and those that read such poignant, thoughtful prayers.

The evening event, 'Battle's Over' was also fantastic and very well attended and I was made to feel very proud once again when I attended the exhibition with work from all of our classes on display. Thank you to everyone who attended and to the History Group for working with the school to help us understand the reality of the lives of the soldiers and those they left behind.



Comic Relief

The pupils all enjoyed Children in Need day this year. They all brought a donation to school and wore pyjamas for the day. Oak Class even had a pyjama party! The event was organised by our School Council and raised over £100. Well done East Meon!



Bake Off

The East Meon Bake Off took place on 7th December. It was led by representatives from the Hampshire Catering Service and promoted the use of British produce and healthier options. The pupils worked together to make cupcakes that contained yoghurt as a replacement for a large amount of the sugar that would normally be in cakes. Older pupils supported younger pupils in the baking process and also in a task that required them to turn cream into butter. It was great fun and we all learned a lot!

Friends of East Meon School (FEMS)

A huge thank you must go out to the amazing FEMS team for the Christmas Fayre extravaganza that took place on Saturday 8th December. The school was filled with craft stalls, games and delicious food all aiming to raise funds for curriculum enrichment here at East Meon.

The whole afternoon was kicked off by the fantastic East Meon carollers who, despite several technical hitches, continued to sing and get everyone in the festive spirit. Then the arrival of Santa on his trailer driven by Rudolph really got the Fayre going. Fun was had by all. Thank you so much to everyone who supported the school on the day and a special thank you to Daniella Nicholls who led the organisation for this event.

FEMS also organised the Christmas Shopping Day, held in the school on Wednesday 12th December.

Class activities

Oak Class

Oak Class have been working extremely hard on their phonics and numbers and most children can now recognise ALL their initial sounds! This is a fantastic achievement so early on in the school year. Some children have even gone onto using the knowledge from their phonics sessions to help them begin writing words and phrases.

Oak Class have also been learning the Christmas Story and performed their Nativity play on 21st December.



Willow Class

In Willow Class, the pupils have been learning about the Great Fire of London. They have written diary entries from the viewpoint of Samuel Pepys and have also created some beautiful artwork using the idea of hot colours and silhouettes.

Willow Class were also involved in presenting the Nativity story.

Holly Class

Holly Class have been learning about St Lucia and what life is like on an island. They have been reading island stories and learning a great deal about world maps and how far away we are from the Caribbean. The whole class enjoyed a St Lucia Day when they learned about the kinds of foods they might try in St Lucia and what the similarities and differences are between life here and life in the Caribbean.

Hazel Class

Hazel Class have been studying 'Life on the Home Front' and have been enjoying the book 'Carrie's War'. They have been writing their own extended narratives from the perspective of a child being evacuated and have discussed the political and social impact that the World Wars had on life in Britain. In art, the pupils have been working on creating propaganda art. Their first attempts were on display at the remembrance exhibition on the 11th November in the Village Hall.

In science, the pupils have been focussing in on the systems of the body and have now taken part in a heart dissection. Despite the fact that some pupils were a little nervous to begin with, all the pupils were fascinated with the lesson and thoroughly enjoyed exploring and discovering as scientists.

Ms O'Toole

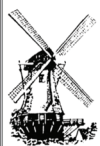
New Village website

The NEW village website is now up and running! Visit meonmatters.com and take a look. We have built it around the features that the community has most asked for. The main headings are News, Events, Country Life, Sporting Life, Village Life, Useful Numbers and following this issue of the magazine, a Magazine section where you will be able to find a full colour version of Meon Matters magazine as well as an archive of back issues.

The most important part of the Website will be EVENTS. Here you will find the village calendar, consisting of a main display of the current month as well as links to each further month. Upcoming events will be listed on every page. Click on any event to see full details of that event.

Email: meonmatters@gmail.com to give us your event details for inclusion in the events calendar and upcoming listing.

We look forward to your visit to meonmatters.com and hope you will enjoy the new website.



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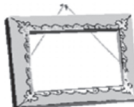
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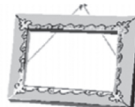
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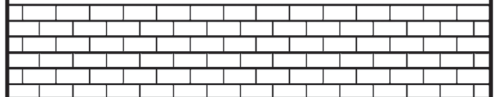
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New Years Eve Party

East Meon Village Hall

8pm to 12:30am

Music all night including The 4play Band

Feel free to bring you own drinks, plastic glasses and nibbles

Bar will be available selling bottles of wine, bubbly, cans of beers and soft drinks

Children are welcome

Tickets cost £20 per family or £8 for individuals. Tickets are available at the shop

Please note alcohol cannot be served to under 18 year olds and children remain the responsibility of the parents at all times