Meon Matters



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Winter 2019
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Cover Picture: Sigi Goolden

We made it! It seems like only yesterday that the new Meon Matters team found themselves sitting around the table at the first meeting each secretly wondering "What on earth have we just got ourselves into?" Hard to believe then that this 2019 Christmas issue finds us a year on and still going strong.

Tempting though it might be to indulge in a hearty round of self- congratulation and back slapping, the truth is that the credit must go to others.

Firstly, thank you to all the volunteers who help with the magazine. It is a source of constant amazement how many people it takes to get each issue to your doorstep, how much of their free time they are willing to give and that they ask for nothing in return.

Foremost amongst these volunteers are the contributors. We are so blessed that East Meon is such a vibrant and thriving community abundant with clubs, societies, activity groups, the church, the school, two pubs and with more hidden talent than you can shake a stick at. I sometimes wonder how we manage to cram it all into such a tiny little village! The fact that they are all so happy and willing to share their news makes our job easy and the magazine what it is.

Of course, it is one thing to be blessed with such an embarrassment of rich content but quite another to have the financial support to produce the magazine itself, four times a year. For this our grateful thanks to all our generous advertisers, donors and sponsors.

Without all of the aforementioned, Meon Matters wouldn't exist. However, without the happy support of you, our readers, Meon Matters wouldn't matter. Thank you.

Finally, and on behalf of everyone in East Meon, I would like to thank the dedicated, loyal and patient editorial and production team listed at the bottom of this page for all their hard work.

It merely remains for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2020.

Marc Atkinson



The Editorial Team:
Editors: Marc Atkinson, Sigi Goolden, Andrew Hughes, Sharon Sillence
Contributing Editors: Ron Ingerson, Annabel Tyrwhitt-Drake, Debbie Evans
Roving Reporter: Charlie Gaisford
Photographer: Clare de Lotbiniere
Advertising and Finance: Andy Hales
Distribution: Rosemary Ryder
Layout and Printing: Wildy Upbeat Printers

DECEMBER
Pop Up Choir
at the Izaac Walton
Tuesday 17 December @ 6.00pm
(Dressed appropriately: Bells, tinsel & flashing lights)

Carols at the Court House
Saturday 21 December @ 7.00pm
(Mince pies to be delivered beforehand, much appreciated.) Charity this year is Farms for City Children.

Pop-up Bakery
24 December @ 9.30-11am
5 Pond Cottages, Ramsdean, GU32 1RR
Pre-order sales only 07796332853

JANUARY
Jane's Boys at the George
Wednesday 8 January @ 6.00pm

EMHG - Book Launch of
"Farming in the Valley"
Monday 20 January Village Hall @ 7.30pm

FEBRUARY
East Meon Garden Club
My Greenhouse Year Talk by Gillian Taylor
Monday 3 February Village Hall
@ 7.15 for 7.30pm

Jane's Boys at the George
Wednesday 5 February @ 6.00pm

EMHG – "The English Civil War:
A Gang of Five" Peter Garner
Monday 17 February Village Hall @ 7.30pm.

The Pop-Up Choir
Tuesday 25 February

MARCH
East Meon Garden Club – AGM
followed by Growing Vegetables in Small Gardens Talk by Geoff Hawkins
Monday 2 March Village Hall
@ 7.15 for 7.30pm

Jane's Boys at the George
Wednesday 4 March @ 6.00pm

Unplug and Play
Sunday 8 March Village Hall @ 2.00pm

EMHG
"Petworth and its People" Bob France
Monday 23 March Village Hall @ 7.30pm

Pop Up Choir
Tuesday 24 March

APRIL
East Meon Garden Club – Plants for Awkward Places Talk by Roger Hirons
Monday 6 April in the Village Hall @ 7.15 for 7.30pm

EMHG – "History of shooting
at Bereleigh" Bill Tyrwhitt-Drake
Monday 20 April Village Hall @ 7.30pm

Pop Up Choir
Tuesday 28 April

MAY
VE DAY – 75th Anniversary Celebration
Friday 8 May on the Village Green

East Meon Country Fair
Sunday 10 May -Village Green

East Meon Garden Club
Visit to Petworth House – Guided by James Rothwell, National Trust
Thursday 28 May @ 2pm - final timings to be confirmed.

JUNE

Open Gardens
Sunday 21 June @ 2pm followed by Evensong in the Church.

Parish Council Update – December 2019

Firstly, we have an important notice for East Meon. National Grid are about to commence work on vital refurbishment to the overhead electricity lines in this area. This will involve replacing the wires in sections that run between pylons as well as some minor works to the pylons themselves. The works are scheduled to start properly in early 2020, however, you may see contractors in the area before then. The works should be finished in late 2020. For more information please see www.nationalgridet.com/FleetLovedean

We are aware the new speed sign is not working. It's possible too many fast cars have flattened its battery or simply that the sun hasn't shone enough, but rest assured replacement parts are on order. Just as they are for various items of football and playground equipment. In return for keeping the energetic youngsters happy, could we urge all parents to comply with the parking safety restrictions outside the school. We are hoping the new signs in front of the war memorial will similarly deter anti-social car parking.

Our application for an Infrastructure Grant for the Village Hall has been turned down, but undeterred we and the Village Hall Committee are re-applying for a smaller sum. And we hope to benefit from grants for new kissing gates, which are springing-up across the valley and proving popular with walkers of all ages. Progress on Fiveways has of course been hampered by bad weather and more will be done in the new year, but pot hole repairs in Frogmore are completed. The formal application for the Coombe Road development has yet to be submitted.

Finally, we are delighted to report that following the river clearance by volunteers, SDNP Rangers consider the river to be in very good order, with baby water voles present. The Hampshire & IOW Wildlife Trust will be visiting in the Spring to advise further on weed policy.

Useful Numbers

POLICE:
101 or 01962 841534

Police Hampshire Country Watch
Anna Presswell 07469 562221

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

UNPLUG & PLAY!
Save the Date - Sunday 8th March

Hi, The dark days of Winter are upon us and with it the interminable afternoons of finding something for everyone to do once you've dragged the kids and dogs outside for some fresh air and eaten too many roast potatoes. Rest assured we've got your back… well for one afternoon anyway!

From 2pm, on Sunday 8th March head over to the East Meon Village Hall to spend the afternoon with friends, old and new, and family playing games, drinking tea and eating the best cake that East Meon has to offer. We'll be setting up Unplug & Play - a chance to remind yourselves of the rules of Draughts or Backgammon, Rummy or Hearts.

There will be games to play for all ages from Toddlers to Adults. From Dice to Dominoes and Connect Four to Giant Jenga and jigsaws for the little ones. Lots of board games from the old favourites such as Cluedo to newer games such as Dobble and Telesketch. A great way to try out a new game before adding to your collection maybe?

More details will follow in the New Year but please SAVE THE DATE and we'll see you there. I'd very very grateful if you could pass this on to all friends and family you think might be interested.

In the meantime, if there are any games you think we should include, please let me know. The more the merrier!

With many thanks

Lou & Laura

Louise Bushell lou@louisebushellphotography.co.uk





DIARY

No January Evening Meeting

Monday 3rd February 7.15 for 7.30pm
MY GREENHOUSE YEAR
Talk by Gillian Taylor

Monday 2nd March
7.15 for 7.30pm A.G.M. followed by
GROWING VEGETABLES IN SMALL GARDENS Talk
by Geoff Hawkins

Monday 6th April
7.15 for 7.30pm PLANTS FOR AWKWARD PLACES Talk
by Roger Hirons

Thursday 28th May
2pm VISIT TO FITTLEWORTH HOUSE GARDENS (guided)

Sunday 21st June
2pm OPEN GARDENS (followed by Evensong in the Church)

Thursday 16th July
2pm VISIT TO DOWN PLACE GARDENS (guided)

Sunday 9th August
ANNUAL SHOW

Friday 18th September
3pm VISIT TO BRAMDEAN HOUSE

5th October
7.15 for 7.30pm WALL SHRUBS & CLIMBERS Talk by Ray Broughton

2nd November
7.15 for 7.30pm PLIGHT OF THE BUMBLEBEE
Talk by Gill Perkins – Bumblebee Conservation Trust

Monday 7th December
7.15 for 7.30pm FROM HEDGEROW TO HANGOVER!
Talk by Richard Dampney

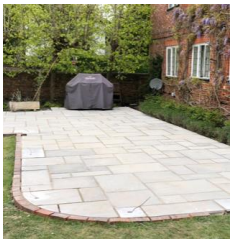
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Right Plant, Right Place:

The Garden Club was delighted to welcome back Chris Bird from Sparsholt College. Chris is a Lecturer in Horticulture and has always been interested in plants and their arrangement and works closely with outside organisations such as Plant Heritage, the RHS and the National Trust to promote their use.

His talk for us was on: Right plant, right place

Chris has been involved in the re-labelling of plants particularly in relation to the description. Previously, the Height and Spread of any given plant, shrub or tree has been given after 10 years, but this has now been reduced to 5 years.

It was interesting to learn for example, that Acers are described as preferring acidic soil but it was suggested that they can thrive in other soils and it is more about providing correct moisture, drainage, mulching etc.

Chris made the audience laugh when he said that...plants have never read the books.." and that.. 'a plant is not happy unless you have moved it three times...' a quote attributable to Gertrude Jekyll.

Apparently green and white gardens are very 'in vogue' at the moment but quite a few of these plants can be found in other colours, for example the female species of Taxus Baccata, has pink berries.

The Clianthus Puniceus Alba, also produces a plant which boasts pendulous clusters of large, claw-like bright red flowers in May and June. It will make a surprisingly tough addition to a sheltered wall but is an absolutely stunning conservatory plant when it will bloom during the winter.

If you have the space, tree ferns are popular for shaded areas but these still require 4 hours of sunshine.

To tidy up the bottom of hedges, Chris recommended Lamian which is commonly known as 'Deadnettle' and comes with both white and pink flowers with variegated leaves. It prefers light shade but will tolerate dark shade. If planted in the sun, the leaves become brown and scorched. Hostas are also good for the bottom of hedges.

Anthriscus Sylvestris - known as Cow Parsley is good for Cottage Gardens and will grow in semi shade. It will get mildew if allowed to get too dry and if this happens, cut right down and water well.

The resilience of nature was brought sharply into focus when Chris spoke about The Ginkgo Biloba Tree (Maidenhair) which is a slow growing ancient tree from China dating back at least 200 million years. Mature male trees have thick yellow catkins in late Spring. Maidenhair Trees were introduced to Japan about 1,000 years ago and are often grown near Temples. The first Maidenhair Tree was brought to Britain and planted in Kew Gardens in 1760 where it still stands today. The remarkable aspect of this tree is that 6 survived the two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and were at the epicentre of the blasts.

If you are interested in helping moths perhaps you would like to grow Lysimachia Clethroides which likes semi-shade or if it is scent you want in your conservatory try growing Zaluzlanskya Ovata which comes from Mexico and is perfumed. If it is bees you want to attract then grow Cleome which are commonly known as 'Spider Flowers'. This plant is usually an annual but re-seeds prolifically and will return year after year. Flowers can be white, pink or purple.

The talk was extremely well received - such knowledge delivered with a wicked sense humour was much appreciated.

We look forward to welcoming Chris back at some time in the future.
Pamela Peacock, East Meon Garden Club

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East Meon Moviola - Spring 2020

Friday 3rd January
THE GREATEST SHOWMAN (PG, 105 mins)

An extra film in early January to brighten up the post festivities blues! This great musical extravaganza based on the hit show Barnum, and starring Hugh Jackman and Michelle Williams, is pure feelgood entertainment. It celebrates the birth of show business and tells of a visionary American (P T Barnum) who rose from nothing to create a circus spectacle that became a worldwide sensation.

Friday 31st January
JUDY. (12A, 118 mins)

A fascinating insight into the twilight years of Judy Garland, played with great sensitivity by Renee Zellweger who has been widely tipped for an Oscar for this role. It is winter 1968 and Judy arrives in swinging London for a five-week sell-out tour at the Talk of the Town. It is 30 years since she shot to stardom in The Wizard of Oz and the trauma she sustained from being a child star (which is shown in many flashbacks) is having repercussions and her life is on a downward spiral, but the support of her many British fans ultimately shines through - very moving!

Friday 28th February
THE GOOD LIAR (15, 109 mins)

A chance to watch national treasures Helen Mirren and Ian McKellan act together in a cat-and-mouse duet that turns into an elegant waltz of affection and deception. Career con artist Roy Courtney (McKellan) can't believe his luck when he meets wealthy widow Betty McLeish (Mirren) online. As she opens her home and life to him Roy is surprised to find himself caring about her turning what should be a cut-and-dried swindle into a treacherous tightrope walk.

Friday 27th March
OFFICIAL SECRETS (15, 112 mins)

A true life political drama starring Keira Knightley, Matthew Goode and Ralph Fiennes. Based in the not-so-distant past and the justification for the invasion of Iraq, this is the gripping story of Katherine Gunn, a British Intelligence specialist and ultimately whistle-blower who cannot stand by and watch the world being rushed into an illegal war.

Friday 24th April
THE PEANUT BUTTER FALCON (12A, 97 mins)

A little known award-winning film and one absolutely not to be missed. This is the story of Zak (Zach Gottsagen) a young man with Downs Syndrome who runs away from a residential home to follow his dream of going to wrestling school. He befriends an outlaw (Shia LaBeouf) who becomes his unlikely coach and ally, which marks the start of the remarkable journey of two fugitives which is funny, touching and heartwarming in equal measures

All films are shown in East Meon Village Hall at 7.30pm.
Tickets are £6 each and can be bought at East Meon Village Shop, or on the door on the night or email Lucy Hollis at eastmeonmoviola@outlook.com to reserve.
The doors and the bar open at 7pm.
See you there!

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Religious Experience

The children from East Meon Primary School enjoyed an eye-opening experience this month as the whole school set off for London to visit an incredible Hindu Temple in Neasden.

The coach was filled with open mouths and gasps of excitement as we turned the corner of the road to see the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in all its glory.

We got to witness an arti ceremony and explore the 'Great Hall' which was filled with intricate carvings and beautifully decorated sacred images. We mingled amongst Hindus carrying out their daily worship and many were happy to chat and answer the children's question. After exploring an exhibition about the origins of Hinduism and enjoying our lunch. We returned to the Haveli (a cultural centre next to the Temple) to learn more about how the Temple had been built over 3 years by a team of volunteers. This in itself was a
mind-blowing event. We were then able to take part in a Question and Answer session where the children asked some very deep and thought-provoking questions.

"It was much grander than anything we've seen before" (Oliver Y6)

"It was thrilling to see other religions and how people live their everyday lives" (Harry Y6)

We definitely left with a greater appreciation for Hinduism and having experienced something far removed from our day to day lives.




BAPS SHRI




BAPS SHRI SWAMINARAYAN HINDU MANDIR



Do you find yourself with spare time to fill during the week?

East Meon C of E Primary School needs you!

We are looking for volunteers to help us develop our links with the local community and support us both in and out of school.

We need volunteers for a range of different activities:

- to help with listening to children read (times can be flexible)
- to help with the planning and maintenance of our school garden and the running of the Gardening club (Thursdays 3.30-4.30pm)
- to help with other projects such as building a storage area for our bikes and trikes.

If you have any skills you would be happy to share with us or just a spare half an hour then please get in touch and join our friendly school community.

Ring the school office on 01730823218, email admin@eastmeon.hants.sch.uk

or just pop in and chat to us to about what you can help with.

We look forward to hearing from you!!

Eco School 2019 into 2020

We have some members of our Eco Team from last summer, but job number one was to interview and recruit members to replace those who have left and also some Eco Warriors.

This year the Eco Team will be focusing on two new topics as well as a selection of the previous 8. The titles of our new topics are Marine and Global Citizenship.

With reference to Global Citizenship, and within the first term, different year groups across the school have been learning about the living conditions and the way of life on other continents as well as learning about festivals that take place around the world. There was also a visit to the Neasden Hindu Temple in London.

We will be having a whole school Mix-up Day, incorporating the Big Schools Bird Watch, early next year. The day will have different activities for the whole school to do. As the year goes on, we will be looking at 'What's under your feet?' and comparing the different mini-beasts we come across at different times of the year.

Kezia Lambton



MDS

In April 2020 I will be venturing out to the Sahara to run, walk and possibly crawl the Marathon Des Sables called by some 'the toughest foot race in the world'.

So what is the MDS, and what makes it so tough?

It's own website puts it best: 'In just six days you will run 250km through endless dunes, over rocky jebels and across white-hot salt plains. The sun will be your constant enemy with temperatures reaching 50 centigrade. The sand will be your constant companion, clouds of it under your feet, sheets of it stinging your eyes and lots of it chafing where it shouldn't. The long stage has become a legend in itself. You will run out of a Saharan morning into the dusk and then the dark, many not finishing the 80+km (52 miles) until well into the next day.'

You carry all your own supplies for the whole event, sleep in simple shelters and have your water rationed out.

So why is a fifty year old mum of two, whose never been any good at sport taking this on? 'Because I can' I think is the only true answer.

I ran my first marathon in 2017, and enjoyed it so much I was persuaded to run an Ultra marathon along the Ridgeway a few months later. An ultra is anything over marathon distance and is considered by many to be 'multiple picnics with a bit of running in between'. I would add to that stunning scenery, chatting loudly and incessantly, singing badly and making lots of new friends.

My longest continuous run to date is 54 miles along the North Downs Way. A multitude of steps, 5600 foot of elevation gain and a 13 hour cut off. I just made it, 15 minutes slower and I'd have been denied a medal.

My normal week involves 50 miles of running, - that and long hours as a GP, means I've not been seen much in the village for the past year. Instead you'll catch me out with my head torch and Meg, my faithful cocker spaniel, somewhere on the South Downs. To my 'delight' my weekend long runs have now evolved into 5 hours of trail running with an increasingly heavy pack on my back. A sneak peak of my training plan 2 weeks ahead adds the Witterings to this, so a pack and sand...March will add the heat - 14 sessions of running in a heat chamber in 50 degrees to mimic the desert conditions, no doubt they will be throwing sand at us as well.

And then April, and I just need to stay ahead of the camels so that I don't get thrown off the course!

I am running this as my own personal challenge, but am fundraising for Wellbeing of Women, a great charity dedicated to improving the health of women and babies by funding research into gynaecological and reproductive health.

Dr Emma Burton
www.justgiving.com/DrEmmaB





Police Round-up from PSI Anna Presswell

In the last three months Hampshire CountryWatch have worked closely with Neighbourhood Policing teams to tackle crime in the East Hampshire area.

Four separate late-night operations were run by PC Bassett covering Southwick to Clanfield, Wickham, Old Winchester Hill and the Meon Valley area. These were set up with local gamekeepers and landowners to tackle offences like poaching, non-dwelling burglaries and theft. The most recent operation resulted in the seizure of a vehicle with no insurance believed to be used in crime in the Swanmore area.

Special Sergeant Shane Phillips seized a vehicle in the centre of Wickham Square area for no insurance on Saturday 07/12/19, much to the delight of around 100 onlookers.

During August a spate of non-dwelling burglaries took place on the A32 corridor between Alton and West Meon took place over three days. While investigations sadly did not lead to any suspects, PC Bassett was able to reunite one victim with their vehicle and another with the contents of that vehicle known to have been stolen from a separate burglary.

PSI Anna Presswell was able to secure a conviction for 4 young people from Gosport aged between 13 and 15 for a series of attacks on sheep leaving them with broken horns, facial cuts and wounds and one who lost its eye all together. The young people pleaded guilty and were convicted, receiving referral orders and rehabilitation orders with the Youth Offending team and were ordered to pay costs and compensation.

CountryWatch were also involved in the National Campaign by the Raptor Persecution Task Force named Operation Owl and achieved the biggest social media following for their educational posts on Twitter.

A female the Neighbourhood Policing Team were investigating for scrap metal thefts from driveways has been charged with 4 offences of theft by finding in Bishops Waltham, Swanmore and Fair Oak.

PSI 14753 Presswell
Country Watch Team
Meon Valley Police Station, Hoe Road, Bishops Waltham, SO32 1DS
Mob: 07469 562221
Internal: 4643445
anna.presswell@hampshire.pnn.police.uk

Vineyard Harvest

On a beautiful sunny day at the end of October East Meon Vineyard's grapes were harvested by our regular team of villagers and other friends. Over the previous 5 weeks 302mm of rain (almost 1 foot!) had fallen from leaden skies, the worst weather imaginable for ripening grapes. Despite this we had a good-sized crop of nearly 3 tonnes, which produced juice of a very promising quality. The wine, now in barrel at the winery, will make 2000 bottles of East Meon Berrygarden 2019, to be enjoyed from 2024 onwards.

George Bartlett





Winter and Spring Crops

You would probably be forgiven for thinking a farmer is bound to start by talking about the weather. I'm afraid I won't disappoint, everything we do as farmers is governed by the weather, so this seems like an appropriate place to start. Rainfall this Autumn has been unprecedented, with over 300mm of rain (1 foot!) since the 23rd September, therefore drilling continues to be a challenge. Ordinarily all our Autumn drilling would have been completed by the end of October, but this year we still have a couple of fields of Winter Wheat to sow. Winter Wheat crops have been drilled much later than planned into wet, cold soils. Ground conditions have made it difficult to find days to travel and have forced us to reach for the trusty plough. Ploughing is slow, relatively inefficient, and not quite so good in terms of soil health, but in years like this, it is an incredibly forgiving means of establishing a seedbed. If it were not for the plough, many more fields on our farm would not have been drilled. The inevitable consequence is that there will be less Wheat to harvest next year, and our Spring cropping area is likely to increase.

The crops we drill can be separated into 2 distinct categories, "Winter" and "Spring" crops. "Winter" crops are drilled in the Autumn, germinate, emerge, and then sit tight over winter to ride out whatever weather the winter brings. In the spring they recognise increasing day length and temperature, responding with a flurry of growth, to harvest the light. Winter crops are the "tortoise" of the arable world, slow and steady, but they win the race in the end. They are in the ground for longer and have bigger leaves to capture more sunlight to convert into our food. Their roots are bigger, and so more adept at weathering periods of adversity, such as summer drought, so ultimately they provide more consistent, higher yields. If Winter crops are the tortoise, spring crops are the "Hare", wanting to do everything at once. They have no capacity to "wait" and ride out a cold winter, they hit the ground and grow, in an attempt to reproduce and set seed as quickly as possible. Drilled in the spring they have a shorter lifetime, and not the time to harvest as much light, so yields are generally lower, and with smaller root masses they are more susceptible to periods of drought.

Despite a shift towards more spring cropping, there are still some positives to take from our later drilled winter crops. Pest and disease pressure will be lower, reducing the number of inputs we may have to apply to protect the crop, and given a sunny May and June, with some rain, yields and quality can still be favourable.

Will Butler, H N Butler Farms Ltd

East Meon Cricket Club

The numbers will tell you that this season's cricket was not as successful as lasts. Fewer runs scored, less centurions, lower batting averages and generally higher bowling averages all point to a club on the decline. Moreover, our skipper announced he'd had enough, we failed to even get in the final of our own Sixes Tournament, losing the third place play-off game, and we're all inexplicably a year older, which is a bit of a shock and an unreasonable punch in the goolies.

The truth, of course, is very different. We are a club bursting at the seams in terms of membership, enthusiasm and spirit, and while the stats might not paint you a picture of verdant virility, those of us within the camp know that this year was actually rather special.

We got the better of our nearest and dearest rivals: Steep, West Meon, Clanfield and Hawkley. Three clubmen – Lakh Jemmett, Matt Stickland and Josh Edney – won baggy-green caps for centuries and five-fours. The Sixes Tournament and Summer Party – thanks to Andrew de Lotbinere and Ali Hales – raised record-breaking amounts. Tour to the Island was … memorable, and our teas were of such quality and high standards that we are fast becoming the team other teams want to play. Thankfully, the setting and pitch (thank you Chris Warren) do us justice.

At the End of Season Dinner a few weeks ago, our dear skipper James Atkinson won the bowling award, although he was pushed surprisingly close by his father, George Atkinson, while his youngest brother, Oli Atkinson, won the batting award, once again outscoring everyone else. Chris Moor was our most efficient batsman, scoring more runs in boundaries than anyone else, and we felt Nick Sole our most improved player, although more for his investment off the pitch than on it. Matt Stickland was voted our Player of the Season: he took more wickets than he ever had before; he won his baggy green cap; he paid more in Fines than anyone else; and he is rather good at making millionaire shortbread.

Next year promises to be as busy and eventful as this with games beginning on 19th April and running through to 20th September, with our Sixes Tournament and Summer Party scheduled for 27th June, and a Tour to the Isle of Wight for 3rd to 5th July. We're always looking to grow and welcome new members, so why not come along and introduce yourself at one of our indoor winter nets sessions at Churcher's School in Petersfield, with sessions booked from 7.30pm till 9pm on 30th January, 5th, 13th and 20thFebruary, 5th March and 2nd April. No bleep-tests, I promise.

Contact Sam on 07411455579 /secretary@eastmeoncricketclub.org.uk.

Sam Meyer

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Meeting and Visit Schedule

Tuesday 10th December 2019

St. John's Room 7:30 pm "75 years after D-Day: the invasion through local eyes"

Doug Jones

Doug is the coordinator of Buriton's local history project (the Buriton Heritage Bank) which has produced a series of publications over recent years. In 2014 Buriton was selected by the D-Day Museum, Portsmouth, to take part in a Heritage Lottery funded project to uncover connections with D-Day in their local area. Doug will describe that work, its findings and questions still to be answered.

Monday 20 January 2020

East Meon Village Hall 7:30 pm Book Launch of "Farming in the Valley"

Michael Blakstad and other members of the team will describe the History Group's most ambitious project to date: researching, mapping, writing and illustrating the history of the Hundred of East Meon and the forces which have shaped our beautiful valley.

Copies of the book will be on sale. Free entry: open to all residents of East Meon.

Monday 17th February 2020

East Meon Village Hall 7:30pm. "The English Civil War: A Gang of Five"

Peter Garner

Five protagonists of the Civil War had one thing in common (apart from being on the same side). All were educated at the same school; four were influential in the events that initiated the conflict.

Monday 23rd March 2020

East Meon Village Hall 7.30pm. 'Petworth and Its People'

Bob France

The story of the Percy "Kings of the North" and their descendants, who owned Petworth for almost 900 years and assembled what is now the most important art collection in the care of the National Trust.

Monday 20th April 2020

East Meon Village Hall. "History of shooting at Bereleigh".

Bill Tyrwhitt-Drake

Bill will talk about the history of Bereleigh as a shooting estate and its place in the village.

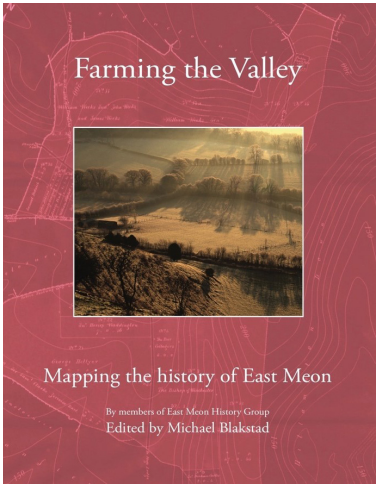
Friday 15th May 2020

Visit to Petworth House

The visit will be guided by James Rothwell, National Trust's Decorative Arts Curator (a national role as specialist covering silver, ceramics, metalwork, glass and arms and armour); he will show us the family bedrooms and look at the newly displayed silver collection, which he has been instrumental in arranging.






Farming the Valley
Mapping the history of East Meon
By members of East Meon History Group
Edited by Michael Blakstad



Farming the Valley, East Meon History Group
How ancient is our Valley

Stuart Martin finds the East Meon History Group's new publication "Farming the Valley" an informative and moving history of the East Meon Valley and of those who have lived in and farmed the land from earliest times.

In 2016 the East Meon History Group embarked on an ambitious project to research the history of farming in the East Meon Valley. The History Group's newly published book Farming the Valley is the culmination of their endeavour.

The book surveys the changing nature of farming, society and settlement in the Valley, covering Neolithic, Iron Age, Roman, Anglo Saxon, Medieval and more modern times. It also examines important themes such as changing climate, migration, poverty, pestilence, religion, politics, civil and world wars, industrialisation and mechanisation. The authors succeed in bringing to life the history of familiar (and not so familiar) buildings in the village and surrounding farms, the history of the farms themselves and of past and current farming families. We learn about the important role played by the pre and post Reformation Church in land ownership, tenure and use as well as local society generally and the impact of plague and land enclosures on communities, land use and field patterns. We also learn of the changing course over time of the Meon and of its water powered mills and fishponds.

The book includes some interesting miscellany including accounts of the rise and fall of great estates and houses; the local strength of the non-conformist chapel movement; and of the importance of each tenth local turnip in securing tithe reform and abolition. There are tantalising glimpses of the important contribution to farming changes of local individuals and families. For example, the authors describe the successful inward migration of farmers and their stock by special train from Cumbria, influenced in part by cheaper farming land then available in this part of the South of England. The migration was delayed due to the train being late and the welcoming carters having over-indulged in the local alehouse in the meantime. I decline to be drawn on any parallels to delays on the modern train network. The book concludes with an informative and detailed account of the post war changes in farming and the community, the challenges faced by farmers in present times including computerised mechanisation and the continued importance of field sports to local farming estates.

Farming the Valley is an informative and moving history of the East Meon Valley and of those who have lived in and farmed the land from earliest times. It includes exquisitely reproduced maps, ancient and modern, photographs and images. It is a fitting tribute to the History Group and all those involved in its production; and, not least, to Michael Blakstad and his immensely important contributions over the years. I for one hope this is the first of many Editions. Copies of the book are available for purchase from One Tree Books, Petersfield.

Harvest Supper 5 October 2019 – Curry in the Church
By Clare de Lotbiniere

Thank you everyone for coming to the church on 5th October to celebrate the harvest.

It's a great reflection on the village that so many people come up that steep path on a chilly Saturday night, pledging their money to a meal they haven't read the TripAdvisor review for.

In fact, this year for the first time ever (so I have been told), so many people came that tickets sold out and I believe some villagers were left disappointed – "it's NEVER sold out before!" were words (muttered in surprise and shock and mild irritation, even!) that crossed my threshold a few times when last-minute-chancers came to my door in hope of getting their hands on a golden-ticket. Thank you Janet for helping to sell tickets in the shop – we much appreciate your time.

Myself, Emma and Lydia were given a free-reign for what to eat this year, from the powers-that-be and we decided to offer a mild Mary Berry curry for supper this time around. Just to add a bit of spice and diversity to the previously rather predictable meal! Knowing what an open-minded and well-travelled bunch our villagers are we knew that the curry would go down a treat – and so it did! This time around there were very little left-overs (Candlemas supper we were auctioning off chili at the end of the night) – chutney, naan, poppadums, raita, salsa – all gone by the end of 'seconds'!

The two main attractions of the night were the beautiful jazz played by Katy (thank you so very much... truly lovely) and the mouth-watering apple puddings entered into the desert bake-off. Annella very kindly took up the challenge of being the judge, however there were so many amazing puddings that she had to bring in two wing-men to help her! Libby Swayne came out the triumphant winner; well done Libby! But to be honest we were all winners because all the offerings were absolutely delicious and us organisers cannot thank you all enough for putting on your aprons and having a go. We hope it is something we can do again in the future...?
(Any suggestions for future pudding competition ideas please contact me or Emma or Lydia – ideally harvest themed.)

Thanks go out to the other chefs – Laura, Jane & Mary – thank you for your time and patience, and accurate recipe-following skills! There is no way we could've fed 100 people without your help. Yes - there were 100 people sitting down merrily eating curry! Thanks as well to Shelley, Andrew, Richard and the gorgeous gals on the bar – Amy, Polly and Beth.

These events can't take place without all of your willingness to role-up your sleeves and offer your time and help, and as organisers it is hugely reassuring to know we can call on you!

It was lovely to have so many young families there too – the church loves being full of noise and happiness and Harvest Supper certainly proved to be just that!

Here's to a very happy year until we meet again for the next un-reviewed-by-TripAdvisor offering.

PS – please, to avoid future disappointment – BUY your tickets when they come on sale! There won't be a better party to go to that night.

Remembrance Sunday 11 November 2019

Clare de Lotbiniere

As always, the hymns, sermon and general occasion was very moving, and the church was filled with villagers of all ages paying tribute and remembering the men from the village who were lost to the wars.

The church looked resplendent with poppies and autumnal themed flowers, adding to the beauty of the day outside – for once, during this horribly wet November, the sun was shining.

Jane talked about her trip to The Netherlands where she learned the story of a small community and the battle fought there. It was an important reminder that so many people from all walks of life in all sorts of geographical locations – however remote - were so hugely effected; and an important example of how the memory of those terrifying challenges live on and need to be remembered in our present day through memorials and by talking to each other.

Whenever the list of East Meon names is read out accompanied by the toll of the bell, we too remember and think of the families in the village who suffered losses, and also reflect on our own experiences of loss and challenges at the moment.

Standing by the war memorial – there seemed to be a lot of people there this year (including a couple of cyclists who accidentally rode through us last year, and decided to plan their route to actually stop and pay respect this year) – and as we hold our two minutes silence, the past doesn't seem quite so distant.


1939 - 1945
J. ALLEN
C. V. BLACKMAN
E. E. BLACKMAN
G. BISHOP
J. BUTLER
G. CHEESEMAN
P. GODDARD
R. NEVILLE
A. MULLARD
F. PHILLIPS
J. SOMERSET
L. WILSON
G. J. WOODFIELD
W. HORSTED

Bah, Humbug!

I well remember the day I was called into the Deputy Headmaster's study to be told off – not as a teenager as you might imagine, but as a 40 something year old school chaplain during my time at Godolphin School. You might be asking yourself what I'd said or done that warranted an interview without coffee in the study? I soon found out. Complaints had been made about my Prayers (what we called assembly). One of the tutors had been to see Mr Dain to say that a couple of girls in his tutor group had been disturbed by some of my comments and he thought they were inappropriate; Mr Dain agreed. So what had I said that was so controversial?!

'I hate Christmas!' had been my opening sentence for my last Prayers of the Autumn term before we broke up for Christmas. I went on to talk about how stressful I found the Christmas holidays; the pressure to buy the right presents, to have the perfect day with all the family getting on all the time, no-one falling out, having to cope with my parents staying … the list went on. I compounded this by beginning my first Prayers in January by saying that the best thing I could say about the holiday was that I'd survived. It was after this that I was called into the study.

Well, I have to say that I was unrepentant, and I most certainly didn't think this was inappropriate. As a priest I think we are sometimes called to put into words the thoughts, feelings and emotions that are often hidden under a layer of what is considered to be all right – and for a lot of people Christmas is not all right. I was aware of a number of girls and staff for whom three weeks away from school was going to be difficult, for whom Christmas was going to be difficult. They would come back to school and ask staff members if they'd had a good holiday and staff always said yes because it would have been wrong to say anything else. But I could step outside that and from my place at the front of the hall I could speak the truth that sometimes holidays – and Christmas in particular – can be pretty grim: sometimes it's not all right.

Now before you think my Prayers were all doom, gloom and Scrooge-like let me reassure you that this wasn't the whole story! The point I wanted to make was that this is exactly the reality of what we celebrate at Christmas. The birth of Jesus was not surrounded by peace and tranquillity; it was not easy or simple, in fact I imagine giving birth in a cave surrounded by animals was anything but a perfect beginning. And this is why Christmas is so important for me. God chose to become one of us in a situation that was far from ideal. It was messy and scary and real. Emmanuel, God-with-us, is a God who is with us in the reality of our lives, whatever they look like.

So, I'm glad that some girls were challenged by what I said and that I had the opportunity to present a different reality to the one they were expecting. I'm glad that there were a number of girls who realised that they didn't have to pretend that everything was ok and who found someone they could talk to and I'm glad that the God I believe in is one who can deal with the realities of life as they are and continues to be with us.

Wishing you every blessing for Christmas and the New Year,
Rev'd Jane Ball

All Saints Church East Meon

WHAT'S ON – WEEK BY WEEK

JANUARY
Sunday 5th - Epiphany
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Family Eucharist
Sunday 12th – Baptism of Christ
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Parish Eucharist (CW)
6.00pm Plough Sunday service at Langrish
Sunday 19th – 2nd Sunday of Epiphany
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Parish Eucharist (CW)
Sunday 26th – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Family Eucharist (CW)

FEBRUARY
Sunday 2nd – Candlemas
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Parish Eucharist
Sunday 9th – 3rd Sunday before Lent
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Family Eucharist (CW)
Sunday 16th – 2nd Sunday before Lent
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Parish Eucharist
Sunday 23rd – Last Sunday before Lent
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Parish Eucharist
Wednesday 26th – Ash Wednesday
7.30pm Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes
A joint service for East Meon, Langrish, West Meon and Warnford at East Meon

MARCH
Sunday 1st – Lent 1
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Parish Eucharist
7.00pm Candlelit Compline
Sunday 8th – Lent 2
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Parish Eucharist
7.00pm Candlelit Compline
Sunday 15th – Lent 3
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Parish Eucharist
7.00pm Candlelit Compline
Sunday 22nd – Mothering Sunday (Lent 4)
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Parish Eucharist
7.00pm Candlelit Compline
29th – Passion Sunday
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)

10.30am Joint Service for East Meon, Langrish, West Meon and Warnford at Warnford
7.00pm Candlelit Compline

Please see the weekly pew news for more details.

BCP *Book of Common Prayer – a service in traditional language*
CW *Common Worship – a service in modern language*
Compline *a quiet service at the end of the day*

DURING THE WEEK

Morning Prayer (a short service of prayer and Bible reading) is said in the Lady Chapel on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday at 9.00am.
Said Holy Communion
On special Saints days Morning Prayer will be replaced with a said Eucharist. These use the same form as the Sunday service but without hymns and last about 25 minutes

WHO'S WHO

Vicar
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The Vicarage – 823221
revjaneball@gmail.com

Churchwardens
Jane Cobley
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Leo Seymour
07891 638844

Verger
Olivia Hickling
01730 823072

Tower Captain (Bellringers)
Terry Collins
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For information or enquiries about **Baptism, Banns and Weddings** or requests for **Visits or Home Communion,** please contact the vicar.

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

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One big happy family!

First footage of mother otter and cubs delights wildlife lovers

Adorable footage of a mother otter and her two cubs provides the first definitive proof that the iconic creatures are breeding on the River Meon.

Thought to be locally extinct in Hampshire until a few years ago, the incredible video is further evidence of reductions in river pollution that is allowing the secretive mammals to thrive.

The otter family was captured under the cover of darkness by a wildlife camera installed by the South Downs National Park Authority.

The mother, with gleaming bright eyes, is seen climbing on to a raft – a device used to monitor river-dwelling species. Her two curious cubs are then seen following in her tracks before the trio glide back into the water.

Monitoring the wildlife camera was Dave Strutt, who is a Volunteer Ranger for the South Downs National Park.

Dave, who lives in Horndean, said: "We have a few of these wildlife cameras dotted around the Meon Valley and we sometimes see foxes, badgers, deer and hare.

"To see an otter is incredibly rare – let alone a mum and her two cubs. After watching hours and hours of waving leaves and reeds, it was a delightful moment to see this otter family appear on the screen. It's a rare treat for any nature lover!"

After tottering on the brink of local extinction, otter populations have bounced back due to less river pollution – which was a historic issue caused by factors such as intensive agriculture. The Meon Valley Partnership, which includes the SDNPA and other partners, has also worked with landowners to help restore river banks and generally improve the health of the river.

Elaina Whittaker-Slark, who works from the SDNPA's base near Hambledon, and is Lead Ranger for the Western Downs, said: "The otter was once very widespread across Britain and was as much a part of the native fauna as badgers and hares. The footage of a mother and her two cubs underlines the tremendous work that has been done over the past decade by landowners and the Partnership to improve the health of the River Meon."





And Elaina added: "Although a short clip, this video provides a fascinating insight into otter behaviour. We can see the mother checking her territory and the cubs following her. There's a very close bond between the cubs and the mother, who raises them without the male.

"We would normally see adult otters' 'spraint' the raft if they go on it – basically it's a form of faecal scenting. In this case, the female doesn't spraint. This is because she doesn't want to attract attention – and potential competition – from other otters, particularly males who might threaten the cubs."

It's believed there are now three breeding females of the otters on the River Meon.

The SDNPA and its partners have interacted with 56 landowners along the River Meon to help improve the health of the river. This includes good river bank management to support eels, which are a vital part of the ecosystem and are the favoured food of otters.



Notes:

• The European otter (Lutra lutra), was common in the UK until the 1950s, but had become rare in many parts of England by the 1980s due to pollution and habitat loss.

• Otter cubs are normally in litters of two or three and can be born at any time of the year. Cubs are normally born in dens, called holts, which can be in a tree root system, a hole in a bank or under a pile of rocks. About 10 weeks elapse before cubs venture out of the holt with their mother, who raises the cubs without help from the male.

Members of the Meon Valley Partnership are the Environment Agency, Wild Trout Trust, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Natural England, Portsmouth Water (Downs & Harbours Clean Water Partnership), South Downs National Park Authority, Winchester

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