

# East Garston Newsletter 2008

DON'T FORGET -

**EAST GARSTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

## *Parish Council Chairman's Report*

### **Welcome Readers old and new!**

We have had another busy year on the Parish Council although we have only six scheduled meetings through the year there have been many planning meetings to attend. We welcomed Brian Cowan onto the Council after the elections on 3<sup>rd</sup> May so we are now at the full complement of six members. The Council meets in the Friends Meeting House, usually on the first Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. The dates and agenda are posted on the notice board outside the shop. Everyone is welcome to attend and time is set aside for any points anyone might like to raise.

Sadly our clerk Joanne Rabbitts retired in January. She has worked tirelessly on the Council's behalf for nine years (it seems much longer Joanne!). She has managed to keep the council in order and produced minutes of our meetings, which in no way reflected the utter chaos in which most of the meetings were carried out – Dibley Parish Council has nothing on us!! Many thanks Joanne for all your efforts, the Council will be presenting Joanne with a small token of our appreciation at the Annual Parish Meeting on 15th April. I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming Alan Breadmore who has taken up the post of Clerk. Good luck Alan.

Thanks to everyone who helps keep our village looking as it does especially David Taylor, who tends the green at Downlands – the daffodils are wonderful this year and very early flowering, I don't know what he puts on them!

Martyn Donno has again kept the war memorial ground in pristine condition, the flowers around the base and the beautifully cut grass keeps it looking immaculate – thank you Martyn. Martyn also mows around the middle bridge, and with his able lieutenants David Knight and yours truly, can often be found chest deep in the river cutting weeds and clearing fallen trees and branches. The July floods could have been so much worse if it was not for these contributions.

Whilst on the subject of flooding the Parish Council has a supply of sandbags which will be filled on request and can be left at the Village Shop if the river looks likely to overflow its banks again.

**The new dog litter bin** in the Millennium Field is very well used – thank you to the responsible dog owners of this village. Maybe another bin is needed in the village. Let us know what you think.

**The village website** is the envy of all our neighbouring villages thanks to Ken Tarbox who updates the site almost daily. He welcomes input from anyone. Do let him know if you are holding an event and he will try to attend and/or advertise it. Maybe some of you could post any comments in the guest book if you have enjoyed looking at the photos or reading the reports of various events that have taken place through the year. Positive feedback, or constructive criticism, is essential for the continued forward development of the site, so please do make your views known. Thanks Ken.

We have at last received the go ahead to level the **Millennium Field**. The Parish Council and the Cricket Club are looking to raise the money to carry out the work. This would be such a useful addition to the village, hopefully a home ground for the cricket club plus some football pitches for youngsters and maybe a village tennis court.

Do come along to the **Annual Parish Meeting on 15th April** to meet your Parish Council and Gordon Lundie your representative on West Berkshire Council. We also hope to have representatives from the Police, to talk about Neighbourhood Policing and from the West Berks. Council to answer questions regarding flood prevention.

**Chris Tonge (Chairman)**

## ***All Saints Church, East Garston***

Dear Friends,

Another very busy and eventful year has passed since we explained that our aim is to make the Church relevant to 21<sup>st</sup> century life and for it to be at the centre of the community, rather than on the margins – a place that people have a need for and enjoy coming to. A characteristic of this last year has been that our services, festivals and events have attracted a much wider cross section of people from across the parish and beyond, who have contributed to the life of the church in their different ways. We heartily thank you for your support.

Particular features of 2007 have been the formation of the Young Families Group: some 18 Mothers, Fathers and their children. A joyful Crib Service, decorations at Harvest Festival and the Children's Service at the Gift Festival are the result of this group going from strength to strength. Some Fathers and Mothers have joined the list of readers in Church.

Another new feature in 2007, which we plan to repeat this year, was the Maintenance Day, when 35 volunteers came to clean, tidy, clear and improve the state of the church and churchyard. The project was excellently coordinated by Chris Tonge: a fine example of Church and Parish Council working hand in hand.

The team responsible for running All Saints Church has gone from strength to strength and we are now a much more cohesive group, all working with the "Church at the Centre of the Community" in mind. The Bell Ringing Band, with Tower Captain Mark Brock, have been extremely active and two new teenage ringers are now involved.

We are very grateful to Stephen Holmes and the Choir of St Michael and All Angels, Lambourn for their support, especially this year when the choir sang madrigals from the top of our floodlit tower, prior to the Songs of Praise Service. We are sad to be losing our resident organist and choir mistress, Susan Holmes in the autumn, when she goes to university to read Music, but we wish her every success and thank her for all the help she has given us.

Peter Cook, who cares for and faithfully winds the church clock twice a week, is someone else to whom we are also very grateful. We are indebted to all those people who keep the church looking so beautifully cared for: Diana Smith and her cleaning team, the decorating and flower arranging group including those who donate or provide flowers or greenery, and Robert Jefferys – our Groundsman. Thanks are due also to Ken Tarbox, for his beautiful photographs on the village web site, and to Martyn Wright who provides us with our spectacular, but very tasteful posters, orders of service and much more.

The highlight of the year was our hugely successful, though ambitious, week-long Gift Festival, from 21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> October, when The Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of Reading, was our honoured guest at our final service of the week – Songs of Praise. Harvest Festival followed by lunch in the church, attended by 100 people, exhibitions and historical talks, a special Children's Service and an organ concert of favourite melodies, were some of the features of the week.

Other highlights of the year include 2 well supported joint services, with our sister Churches in the valley followed by Parish Lunches at the Queens Arms, a very well attended Remembrance Service at the War Memorial on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November, our memorable, traditional candlelit Carol Service, the joint programme of Rogationtide services, held at stables in Lambourn and Eastbury and by kind permission of David and June Rabbits, at Maidencourt here in East Garston. The evening finished at The Queen's Arms – thank you Chris and Jules for your hospitality. In January we celebrated Education Sunday and Plough Sunday and on March 2<sup>nd</sup> a superb Mothering Sunday service took place. These are only some of the occasions we could write about. We will provide a fuller version in our newsletter to you all after Easter, but we must mention now the superb and growing involvement of East Garston school children from Nursery School to Secondary School, in activities in the Church.

There is however much work to be done on maintaining and improving the fabric of our Church, which dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Improvements are needed on the following: the lych-gate, notice boards, the bells

(c. £6,000), the churchyard perimeter wall, lightning protection (c. £2,000), trees in the churchyard, renewing the path to the chancel door, heating and lighting.

We have been enormously impressed by the kindness and generosity of those who have donated or helped the church in various ways – financial or otherwise. Please continue to support us whenever you can. The Church is there for all of us and as I've said before, we are all stewards, holding this ancient Church in trust, for generations of East Garston people yet unborn.

My churchwarden, Sally Wright and I thank you all most sincerely for your help, interest and support in the last year. It has been a wonderful team effort and we look forward to facing together with you, the continuing challenges of the year ahead.

With every blessing

*Tony Cumberlidge.*

The Revd Tony Cumberlidge

### **Valley Film Society**

Our third successful season continues with a membership of over 40 and a guest list of more than 50. Since October they have seen The Queen, Tsotsi and the 1955 version of The Ladykillers. In January we held a film day, showing The Simpsons Movie and Hot Fuzz as family films, followed by This is England for the adults. Melinda & Melinda, The Wind that Shakes the Barley and The Lives of Others were shown in February, March & April. The committee are delighted that a small village can attract support from so many of the surrounding towns and villages. The buzz of chatter, before the films and during our supper interval, emphasises the pleasure to be gained from seeing good films, on a wide screen, in familiar company, close to home. We are grateful to the social club for opening the bar and that might just help the flow of conversation!

The remaining films are **Tuesdays with Morrie**, starring Jack Lemmon & Hank Azaria directed by Mick Jackson, on **6th May**, with an extra film **The Last King of Scotland** with Kevin Macdonald directing Forest Whitaker as Idi Amin, on **3rd June**.

Films are on the first Tuesday of most months, with a break over the summer, after our HADCAF evening. On **Tuesday 1st July** we will be showing **La Vie En Rose**, directed by Oliver Dahan, starring the remarkable Marion Cotillard.

Tickets, which include a buffet supper, are available from Newbury Building Society (Hungerford Branch), at £7 for guests, £3 for members.

The lottery grant has enabled us to provide a platform with tiered seating, which can also be used to create staging for use in the hall.

This year membership was a very reasonable £24, with half price for concessions and guests paying £4.

Doors open at 7pm for screening at **7.30pm**.

Season Four will start on Tuesday 7th October. Do come along.

For more details please ring **Penny Brewer** on 01488 72305 or email [penny.locke@freeseve.com](mailto:penny.locke@freeseve.com) or log on to [www.valleyfilmsociety.org](http://www.valleyfilmsociety.org)

### **Valley Over 60s Club**

Most members of the club come from Boxford, East Garston, Welford and Wickham and with exception of August and December we meet in Great Shefford Village Hall on the last Friday of the month from 2.30pm to 4.00pm – transport is provided.

Our programme includes talks, demonstrations, slides, exhibitions etc followed by a substantial tea.

Each year we have a coach outing, bazaar and a Christmas lunch and we are also invited to the Christmas show at John o' Gaunt school in Hungerford.

New members are always welcome and further information can be obtained from me at 4 Rose Cottages, Back Street (648442).  
**Audrey Boyle**

## **East Garston Village Hall and Social Club**



Photo: Ken Tarbox

It's been just over a year since the Trustees and Management Committee first launched the Village Hall Appeal, our principle aim was to raise sufficient funds to provide a new kitchen and address the sad appearance of our hall. In a remarkably short space of time you, along with others, helped us to achieve our objective and now, looking back over the past year, we can see that all our hopes and aspirations have become a reality.

Many of you have already used the new kitchen facilities and by the comments we have received, it's been judged a great success. Certainly, we have seen a significant increase in the hall's use over the past twelve months, with the hall hosting many family anniversaries, parties and wedding receptions. The task of catering for larger groups has also become more feasible, as our ever popular over 60's Christmas dinner will testify.



Photo: Ken Tarbox

This, in practical terms means that we have moved the hall in the direction of self-sufficiency, so becoming less dependent on financial assistance from the Social Club. Nonetheless, any further financial contributions to assist with the heavy demands of the hall will always be very welcome.

With the hall's refurbished exterior and new kitchen complete, we can now enter our final stage of improvements. To achieve this, East Garston Amenities together with residual funds from the Village Hall Appeal will finance a new ceiling and lighting. This, along with attention to the floor and redecorating will confidently meet the needs of our regular and occasional users, providing a comfortable and well-appointed venue for many years to come.

It's fitting the Trustees wish to acknowledge their grateful thanks to the Vibrant Village initiative, jointly sponsored by West Berkshire Council and New Greenham Common Trust, Millennium 2000 Committee, East Garston Parish Council, East Garston Amenities and the many parishioners who all contributed to make this a worthwhile and notable project.

**Martyn Donno**, East Garston Village Hall Trustee

## **View From The Meeting House**

We held an exhibition in June on the theme of the yew tree (the one behind the meeting house) and the money raised went to Macmillan Cancer Care.

The meeting house has been used by many groups this year, the larger ones using the main meeting house and the smaller groups using the children's room.

We are starting children's meeting on the third Sunday of the month, which we hope some more children will come and join us.

**East Garston Friends**

## East Garston Cricket Club

East Garston Cricket Team has gone from strength to strength in recent years and 2007 was no exception. Planning permission to flatten the Millennium Field into a home pitch was granted and now the hard work of raising the money to do so begins! Not that there have not been a number of highly successful events already organised by the club including skittles, race nights and a Christmas Quiz.

Despite the awful weather during the summer which saw 7 games cancelled, the team had a fairly full season and achieved 8 wins out of the 15 games played against teams such as Woodlands St Mary, Vodafone, Chaddleworth, Speen and, our 'abroad' fixture, Greenwich.

The end of the year saw a change in many of the personnel on the Committee. Russ Highnett, Captain got married (yes he bowled the maiden over) and subsequently decided to step down from the Captaincy although not from the team. Dan O'Brien, Vice Captain also resigned as did Dave Saunders, Fixtures Secretary and Dawn Tonge, Treasurer who had both been on the committee for a number of years. We would like to thank them all for the time and effort they have given to the team. This did not knock the team for six however, and the new committee consists of Chris Tonge, Chair; Michael Highnett, Captain; Peter Stone, Vice Captain; Vincent Highnett, Fixtures Secretary; Alan Breadmore, Treasurer; and Emma Jones, Secretary. We would also like to thank all those who help behind the scenes with essentials such as teas, scoring and umpiring.

Peter Smith was appointed Life President at our Annual Award Ceremony in recognition of his continued support and encouragement and was presented with a framed certificate. The other awards made at the ceremony were Most Improved player awarded to Tom Highnett; Champagne Moment to Michael Ellis for a fantastic run out; Captain's Player to Phil Pounds; and Player's Player to Nigel Gay.

Unfortunately our Colts Team only managed two games last season but were not 'caught out' and won one convincingly. However, a number of our players graduated to the senior team or in one extreme case left to join the army which leaves the team on a bit of a sticky wicket.

We are looking forward to further success in 2008 and if anyone is interested in joining either the Colts or Adult Teams you can come along to practice nets or contact the committee on [dragon\\_jones@hotmail.com](mailto:dragon_jones@hotmail.com). You can also participate by coming and watching us play, sponsoring a match ball or some other piece of equipment and, of course, all donations towards levelling our new pitch will be gratefully received.

Nets are held on Tuesday evenings for adults and Friday evenings for Colts and will be resuming in April.

**Emma Jones**

## Village Views

Village Views is the local magazine covering the parishes of Lambourn and East Garston. Edited by local people for local people, the monthly magazine is full of interesting articles and information concerning the valley and is supported by many local businesses.

The magazine costs just 40 pence per issue and is available from East Garston Stores or by subscription. For just £4 per annum our team of dedicated volunteers will deliver the magazine to your door each month.

For subscriptions in East Garston please contact **Alan Breadmore** on 648851.

### ***East Garston Bell Ringers***

The last few months have seen quite a lot of activity in the tower. Our session during the Gift Week was well attended and we have since added a couple of new recruits - Becky and Jade. They soon picked up the basics of bell handling and are making excellent progress under the watchful eye of Marcus Allum from Beenham - whose help with training and other activities is much appreciated. We have managed to ring for most of the services as well as ringing in the New Year and the now traditional ringer's meal beforehand. We were pleased to see Colin - one of our "millennium" band - back again to join the "regulars" Maureen, Hilary, Rebecca, Tessa and Christopher. It is also good to get back to having our Wednesday practices most weeks. The morning of 26th January saw a visit from Charlie Baker of BBC Radio Berkshire and - with the help of Marcus, our newcomers, David Vince from Brightwalton and most of our current band - the sound of East Garston's bells was heard all over the county. We are currently doing a bit of refurbishment of the bells to augment the routine maintenance activity - the first job was to replace the leather supporting the clapper on the heavy Tenor bell. So if you hear strange clankings coming from the Church at the weekends that is probably the explanation. Thanks are due to Martin Hough, a Lambourn ringer who is also a bell hanger and has helped us with advice and materials. Coming up, we have the annual branch outing in May, which this year takes us to Worcester. As always, if you would like to join us, please give me a call on 648373, you will be most welcome.

**Mark Brock**

### ***East Garston Amenities***

It's now 7 years since East Garston Amenities was established to help provide facilities for the village by applying for grants and fund-raising locally. Our first project was to build the playground in what was originally the Open Space car park and provide football and cricket facilities in the Millennium Field. We also contributed funds towards the audio visual equipment in the Village Hall and help set up the Valley Film Society.

More recently we organised a Watermill Theatre production in the village hall which was such a success that we are planning to bring them back in September with Micky Salberg's Crystal Ballroom Dance Band. We have also organised and funded the replacement of the hall ceiling and installation of new lighting.

We are keen to support any activities or clubs for children in the village and we work with the Berkshire Association of Clubs for Young People to organise the Motorwise road safety course for teenagers in the village.

Currently we are involved in the planning of this year's fete and we are supporting the proposal for a community village shop. We welcome anyone who would be interested in joining our committee.

**Penny Locke, James Pryer, Julie Clayton, Chris Thorpe, Pat Glover**

### ***East Garston Parish Council***

Your councillors are always willing to discuss village matters with residents; they are:-

Christopher Tonge (Chairman)  
Jonathan Rabbitts (Vice-Chairman)  
Peter Smith

Gordon Swapp  
Monica Eyre  
Brian Cowan

Official communication with the council should be via The Clerk; Alan Breadmore

Lime Tree Cottage, Back St.  
East Garston, HUNGERFORD  
Berkshire RG17 7EY

Telephone: 01488-648851  
e-mail: [egpc@breadmore.me.uk](mailto:egpc@breadmore.me.uk)