

# Eastington Community News

March / April 2009

Nº. 114

Welcome to the Spring edition of ECN. When writing my comments in the last edition about having had a 'real winter', I could not have known that a significant snowfall would also follow. With Easter just around the corner, most of us are hoping for a proper Spring and 'real' Summer too

Our sincere thanks go to Mike Ashworth for once more arranging advertising for ECN. This annual event collects sufficient revenue to keep this newsletter coming to each home in this Parish free of charge. Please take a few moments to look at the adverts inside and support these local businesses. We are really grateful to those who have renewed subscriptions and to the new advertisers.

Progress continues at the Owen Harris Memorial Ground; the roof is complete and solar panels are in place. The 'Open Morning' back in February was well attended and it is hoped to arrange another viewing date soon. More details inside

Good news can now be shared about provision of allotments. The Parish Council has successfully exchanged contracts for the purchase of the 2-acre piece of land adjacent to the Owen Harris Memorial Ground. Completion is planned before the end of March and it is hoped that laying out details of plots can be agreed in time for the growing season.

Birder has returned to this issue – and so have the otters! See inside for details of this and birding activities in the Parish.

At Millend Mill demolition works are due to start in early April. This affects not only the citizens of Millend BUT ALL parents of schoolchildren, dog walkers and other pedestrians. Although the Mill owners are from Bristol, they are using local people for the demolition work. See Tom's article inside for an update.

Regular Bingo and Carpet Bowls sessions in the Village Hall make a valuable contribution in supporting the work of the British Legion. These activities are held for the whole community to enjoy, so why not come along and give them a try?

Brownies continue to be active and are enjoying the spring term. They have been out planting trees as part of their centenary celebrations. At Playgroup a few places remain available. If you have a child aged between 2 years 6 months, and 4 years 11 months, then they would love to hear from you. A safe and friendly community based play environment is offered, whereby all children learn through play to meet the standards of the Foundation Stage. There is also news inside about Eastington Baby and Toddlers for the younger ones.

Stroud Valleys Project has continued working with the Gloucestershire Newt Officer on finding and preserving Eastington's Great Crested Newt population. The search for the Great Crested Newt in Eastington will continue this spring. Why not come along to find out why these little creatures are so special: Great Crested Newt by Torchlight on **Friday 24th April** - Details inside

Following many complaints about dog fouling, there is a message inside to dog owners from Dog Wardens, Natasha and Alex. Although the majority of dog owners are responsible, just a few are spoiling things for many people in the community. (Several of us have had to give up cutting the grass and tending flowers outside of our houses because of regular dog fouling.)

We have activities from the Methodist Church and from St. Michael's Church including Services for Easter Day and Holy Week. And for the connection between Easter and 'the drains' read more inside

My thanks to Katrina Naphine and other members of the Parish Council for preparing Parish Council Matters this time. We also have a letter from our District Councillor.

I am sure that the occasional update from some of our other organisations would be much appreciated by our readers. Why not put pen to paper – or the modern equivalent – and tell us something about your activities.

\*\*\*\* **Please use my NEW e-mail address when sending articles for future editions** \*\*\*\*

Andrew Niblett (Editor) 824841 ([niblett.parish@talktalk.net](mailto:niblett.parish@talktalk.net))

Tom Low (Distributor) 823425 ([tom@millend.demon.co.uk](mailto:tom@millend.demon.co.uk))

**Next Deadline:-** All articles by **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009** please!

**Next Delivery:-** by **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009** please!

No article of part thereof may be reproduced or published without prior permission of the Editor and author.  
The views expressed in ECN are not necessarily those of the editor.

## Stroud Valleys Project

Stroud Valleys Project has continued to work with the Gloucestershire Newt Officer on finding and preserving Eastington's Great Crested Newt population. On two occasions in January and February a group of volunteers cleared a farm pond of the invasive water fern Azolla- a rubbery little plant that floats on the surface and turns red towards the end of the season. It multiplies very quickly and in this instance covered the surface of the pond completely. This can have a negative effect on the newt population, so the water fern was removed.

The search for the Great Crested Newt in Eastington will continue this spring. You are invited to come and help us and find out why this little creature is so special.

### Stonehouse Newt Pond Survey

Friday 17th April 7.30pm – 9pm & Saturday 18th April 7am – 8.30am: We'll be putting newt-friendly traps into the pond on Friday evening and then emptying the traps on Saturday morning. The terrain is unsuitable for wheelchairs, prams or people with mobility problems. Wear wellies and outdoor gear and bring a torch for the evening session. No toilets or refreshments on site.

Cost: £3/adult, £2/child, or £2/adult, £1/child for SVP Friends

Meet: Entrance to Court View, Stonehouse (opposite Stonehouse Court Hotel on the right hand side, off the A417) For more details and to book a place contact Nadine or Ivi on 01453 753358

### The Great Crested Newt by Torchlight

Friday 24th April, 8pm – 9.30pm: We will spend an evening searching a pond by torchlight looking for the elusive great crested newt to see them performing their ritualistic mating dance. This event is especially (though not exclusively) for people in Eastington, as we would like you to go home and search your own garden pond afterwards to find out whether there is still a healthy great crested newt population in Eastington.

Cost: £3/adult, £2/child or £2/adult, £1/child for SVP Friends

Meet: Middle Street at the forked junction, Eastington.

For more details and to book a place contact Nadine on 01453 753358. If you would like to find out about any other events Stroud Valleys Project is running in the area, please have a look at our website [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org) where all events are listed.

## EASTINGTON SLIMMING WORLD GROUP

It has been wonderful these past few weeks welcoming so many new faces to our group here in Eastington as well as welcoming back many I recognise. We have had a brilliant start to the year and enjoyed discussing many different issues to help our members to lose weight. We enjoyed sharing many a soup and casserole recipe during the recent ice and snow to keep ourselves full and warm. We have started thinking about spring arriving and the foods we can enjoy while the weather turns warmer.

On Valentines week we had great fun thinking up food ideas from a bag of ingredients that had a red theme steak, tomatoes, kidney beans and red peppers to name just a few. The members came up with some tasty ideas, chillies, red pepper and butternut squash soups, peppered steak and stuffed marrow to fill you up while you lose the weight. We have also talked about some lovely ideas on the topic of feed the family for a fiver its amazing what we came up with many a filling, tasty and healthy meal that all the family can enjoy together. Spaghetti Bolognese, sweet and sour chicken, shepherds pie with vegetables and egg, beans and chips were a few of the favourites mentioned.

Last week we enjoyed another food tasting evening it was lovely to share foods that other members enjoy and picking up plenty of new ideas to try ourselves at home. Finally March started off with our Greatest loser competition so congratulations to Richard who was our group winner after losing 6 stone and 4 pounds so far.

The group offers help and support to anyone who wants to lose 7lbs or more so with summer round the corner what are you waiting for. Come along to the Eastington Village Hall on Wednesdays at 7pm to start your own weight loss journey. We offer membership to men and women. (If you are 11 - 16 years old you can join and attend free of charge as long as you come with a paying adult member) At present we offer half price membership to everyone and reduced rates for senior citizens and students. If you would like more information you can ring me Lorna on 01453821751

# EASTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

## Footpaths.....& Footprints !!

I often wonder how many people are walking our local footpaths. Sometimes I meet some of them when I'm out walking or checking the footpaths, at other times I see visible signs like footprints in the mud, or mud on a stile as someone has climbed over and just caught their foot on a spar, but..... earlier this year we had SNOW!!!!

Now I could see dozens of different footprints (and paw prints!!) which gave an amazing amount of detail. Some walkers had very large feet, as evident by the very large 'wellie' prints, and others were wearing walking boots with their distinctive sole patterns. I was particularly pleased to see so many 'smaller' footprints, which showed how many children were also out walking or enjoying other winter activities.

What also intrigued me was the walker who went out of Eastington on Thursday 5th February at about 0930, in four or five inches of snow with their dog, and walked out to St. Peters Church (on the Coaley Road) and came back again alongside the M5. This was a 'good walk' in the snow, and I would very much like to meet up with you, whoever you are, because you obviously have very good knowledge of our local footpaths.

Please continue to make full use of all our local footpaths, and don't forget to let me know if you have any footpath related issues, or if you would like to help with footpath maintenance and improvement.

Best wishes, Bill

*Bill Edwards*  
*Footpaths Committee Chair*

## Planning

Since joining EPC my main role has been to assist with planning. We are currently trying out a new process so that recommendations are put to the parish meeting immediately following the application. If any members of the public want to let me have comments (to [4hills@fsmail.net](mailto:4hills@fsmail.net) please) these will be considered and if appropriate added as part of the EPC submission. We welcome comments from villagers, try to canvas neighbours opinions and do our best to reflect parish ambitions and concerns when responding to the proposed developments.

*Chris Hill*                      *Planning Committee*

## JAVELIN PARK

---

What are your views on the proposed large Public Finance Initiative Incinerator; a 30-year project, on this site? Eastington Parish Council is sending representatives to the Action Group meetings to find out more, as there are views both ways on this contentious and complicated subject.

*Colin Frith*                      *Planning Committee*

# FINANCE

## **PARISH GRANT**

---

If your local organisation, serves and provides benefit to people within the parish it may be eligible for financial help. The Parish Council has a small fund available from which it can draw. Written grant applications should be addressed to the Clerk, for consideration by the council, within the next two months.

# MAINTENANCE

## **DITCHES & WATERCOURSES**

---

At a meeting of the Stroud District "Pedestrian and Cycle Forum" a Gloucester Highways representative said that they were unable to remove the excavations and rubbish which they had cleared from ditches, gullies, etc, as it had to be left to allow wildlife to return to its habitat. Also although it was unsightly and contained rubbish (including plastics, tins and countless tyres and wheels), which could well be chemically contaminated, erode back and fall onto roadways and be blocking highway runoff channels, it could only go as landfill (with resultant spread of contamination), which was chargeable.

Could the Gloucestershire County Council owned part of Javelin Park be used for collection, separation, grading, sterilisation and resale of this material in order to be commercially viable, bring in funds and be environmentally beneficial?

If there are any more ditches which require attention please ring Highways Maintenance on 0800 514514 although it was stressed that following the recent snows, pothole repairs were now top of their agenda, and would be for some time.

A new guide "Waterside Living in Gloucestershire" is available to download from: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/flooding](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/flooding) and as it lays out the duties of riparian owners (those who own a property that is next to a watercourse or have a watercourse running through it). It could be very useful bearing in mind the recent flooding problems that we have experienced, some of which were caused by lack of watercourse clearance.

***Vacancy - One Watercourse Warden for Eastington. Duties to be decided.***

## **Other Parish Issues**

### **Hedges**

The bird nesting season is fast approaching so may we remind parishioners with hedges, particularly those abutting footpaths, cycle and roadways, that they need to be trimmed back before the end of March. There are also some remarkably well-trimmed hedges that have been allowed to encroach over footpaths; these also need to cut back so that all types of pedestrians have free access.

## **PARKING**

---

Great difficulty is being experienced by disabled and other passengers of the few buses which serve our village. Please note it is an offence to park on a Public Highway without showing a current tax disc or exemption certificate, and very inconsiderate to continually park obstructing the proper use of bus stops and their pull off areas.

*Colin Frith  
Finance Committee Chair*

## **UPCOMING ACTION at MILLEND MILL**

Demolition works are due to start in early April at Millend Mill.

This affects not only the citizens of Millend BUT ALL parents of schoolchildren, dog walkers other ambulatory persons.

### **The Broad Plan**

The Mill is to be taken down in stages, this Spring, leaving only the Cotswold Stone main mill building. That will need extensive renovation before being converted to 8 apartments. Six new houses will also be built in a project that will take 18 to 24 months.

Although the owners are from Bristol, they have engaged Smiths for the demolition work, meaning that most work will be done by local people.

### **What you will see next**

Scaffolding will begin to turn up before the end of March, which will surround the Kiln Building at the front of the Mill. Signs about access and safety will appear, including the channelling of lorries down and up Millend Pitch rather than Churchend.

Demolition of the Kiln Building is scheduled for the School Holidays, starting 6th April for about three weeks. Other buildings will follow quickly after that.

Expect to see scaffolding around the main Mill for another 6 months, although this will not impinge on pedestrian access to Millend.

This will be the most disruptive phase and the plea from Greystone Construction is that parents make it very clear to children that building sites are NOT playgrounds. Despite the obvious intrigue, loitering about the Mill would not be a good idea.

That said, Greystone are committed to pedestrian-friendly safety practices, including avoiding heavy lorry movements from 8.15 to 9.15 and from 2.30 to 3.30 on all school days. For everyone's safety, the kiln Building is to be demolished by hand, brick by brick, with the material being dropped inside the shell of the building. You will be able to see the level and the scaffolding reducing steadily.

### **Further Communications**

Village organisations and the Stroud DC Planners are regularly involved in monitoring access and safety with Greystone. Parents of Schoolchildren with queries should contact the headmaster, who will be attending monthly meetings with Greystone and the Millend Residents. If the works disrupt the life of the village, I'll be disappointed.

On a day-to-day basis Greystone's Site Manager will attend to any problems with traffic or legitimate safety concerns. Scenic tours of the building site, he will NOT be doing.

I will continue to write these notes for the ECN and will answer anyone's queries as always.

**Tom Low, Millend**

# Bohemian Beads Children's Party



If you are looking for an unusual, entertaining party, a children's jewellery making party is a great choice. Perfect for children aged 5+, the activity is fun, very rewarding and will keep the children absorbed and surprisingly quiet!

At a Bohemian Beads children's party we take away any stress. We provide the invitations, equipment, beads and a lovely bag for each child to keep their jewellery in. All you need to do is provide a roomy table with good light, we come to your party venue with a colourful range of beads for the children to choose from. We will spend at least an hour helping the children to design and make two pieces of jewellery, making from a choice of necklaces (lariats for older children), bracelets, or earrings.

A variety of options are available depending on the age of the children, including a special option for teenagers. The jewellery makes the perfect going home gift, as a pretty ribbon-tied organza bag is included in the price. Our prices start from £10 per head, depending on the chosen option, (subject to a minimum of 6 children), this cost includes all beads, stringing materials and the presentation bags – there are no extra hidden costs.

If you are interested in holding a party or would like more details on the options and price scales please email [info@bohemianbeads.co.uk](mailto:info@bohemianbeads.co.uk) or call 0845 391 8941.

## THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION "POPPY APPEAL"

On behalf of the Eastington & District Branch of the Legion, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all of you who helped and contributed to this year's Appeal.

While the 2 weeks of actual collecting of donations is the highlight of the "Poppy Year", fund raising continues throughout the Year and donations to this year's appeal can be made until May 31st.

For the last six years the Branch has raised in excess of £2,000 annually, but it is getting harder for us to achieve this figure as our number of active members declines, whereas the need to support our service personnel and their dependants does not.

The Branch makes donations throughout the year to the appeal by various other fund raising activities, principally our regular Bingo and Carpet Bowls sessions in the Village Hall. These activities are held for the whole community to enjoy, so if you are not already participating in these events why not come along and give them a try. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing that you are making a valuable contribution to the work of the Legion in so doing.

Bingo takes place every Thursday evening and Bowls every other Friday, for further details contact Harry Elliott on 825194 or see The Village Hall Notice Board.

Better still why not join your Local Legion Branch, membership costs only £11.00 per year and we are in desperate need of "New Blood". You can contact me on 822040.

John Darwent

Branch Poppy Organiser/Treasurer

# OWEN HARRIS MEMORIAL GROUND



## Owen Harris Memorial Ground Charity

### **Eastington Community Centre News.**

[www.ohmg.org.uk](http://www.ohmg.org.uk)

If you wander down to the Memorial Ground you will see that the roof is complete and the solar panels are in place (let's hope we have a good summer to make the most of them!!). The external scaffolding is due to come down imminently (if it's not already down by the time you read this). Work is continuing apace inside with plaster boarding (kindly donated by Lafarge), plastering and decorating. We are supporting local businesses as much as possible and Kevin Cook and Alan Lawrence are undertaking the plastering and internal decorating. We also have volunteer labour contributing now that the main construction work is complete. Thank you to all those helping out.

We continue to do well with securing funding and have recently received a further £25,000 from Cory Environmental Trust in Britain (well done to Gill for her dogged determination in again completing the necessary forms). We have also held our third sell-out Ladies' Night, which has raised over £1000 (thanks to Vanessa for all her hard work on making this such a success).

Back in February we had an 'Open Morning' for any interested parties to come and view the building. Despite the very cold and snowy weather we had a steady stream of people coming to take a look. We know that a number of people were unable to make it because of the bad weather so we hope to arrange another viewing date soon. Come and take a look – we think you'll be impressed!

Just a reminder that we are still collecting ink cartridges and we now collect ink toner cartridges too (collection box in the Post Office or hand to any committee member).

#### **Contact Details for the Owen Harris Committee:**

Mark Cousins (Chair)	828557
Gill Glover (Funding Manager)	828782
Jayne Elder (Secretary)	828027
Vanessa Cousins (Bookings Clerk)	828557

Don't forget you can get an update of how the build progresses from the website: [www.ohmg.org.uk](http://www.ohmg.org.uk)

## Middle Hall Farm Veg

On a sad note, we shall be closing our little farm shop on Saturday to Wednesday, from the middle of February; there are many reasons for this, but suffice to say we shall be transferring our attention to growing our vegetables more successfully and in greater quantity and hope that many of our loyal and regular customers will join our box delivery scheme; just give us a call and no matter how small your order, as long as it is on one of our local rounds, we will be more than happy to drop it off. Our website is updated every week with the latest availability list, we also compile a paper list each week or simply call us and we will tell you what we have for you to choose from.

We shall for the time being continue to open the shop on Thursdays and Fridays, the days we are packing the boxes, so hope that many of you will be able to come to do your shopping on those two days.

We are also at Nailsworth Farmers' Market on the fourth Saturday of each month and Nailsworth Market on the second Saturday of each month so please come and see us there.

Thank you for your support and we hope you will continue to enjoy the vegetables we grow here at Middle Hall Farm.

Telephone 01453 821392 or email: [enquiries@middlehallfarmveg.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@middlehallfarmveg.co.uk)

[www.middlehallfarmveg.co.uk](http://www.middlehallfarmveg.co.uk)



## **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S NEWSLETTER**

### **BUDGET**

I voted against the budget proposed by the conservative administration. I have no confidence in their ability to control the finances of the council properly. I made reference in my last newsletter to the three million pounds the council deposited with Icelandic banks, the repayment of which is now very uncertain. At that time councillors were being led to believe that all protocols had been followed in depositing this money. It now appears that with the last one million this was not the case. The advice of external consultants and internal requirements for deposits were not heeded or complied with. The Council delegates the responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of treasury management policies and procedures to Cabinet. When I asked the relevant Cabinet member why this activity had not been monitored properly he replied that the thought that was delegated to officers. This is a malaise that is all too frequent throughout all the council's activities in my opinion. Regular readers will also remember the £357000 lost though the dispute with staff 3 years ago. Attempts to recover this money are 'ongoing' as they say. They have been that for a while and look like being so for quite a while yet. In recent years the financial support to local government from central government has been increased substantially year on year. I do not believe that the services available have increased accordingly.

### **COUNCIL HOUSE RENTS**

A lot of comment has been made by the administration on the loss of some of the rents to central government so inhibiting the work on the rest of the housing stock. Whilst understanding the reason why this money is recovered by government I do not agree with it and the process is at present under review. However whilst complaining about that money the conservative administration has received £5.8 million pounds from the sale of council houses since 2000. None of this money has been used to improve the councils housing stock.

### **DISTRICT COUNCILS CORE STRATEGY**

This is basically Local Plan mk 2. It will take in such things as where houses and commercial properties will be built up to 2026. The process is just starting and I expect it to be similar to the last time in that developers will put forward sites within the Parish that if implemented would take the Parish from a rural one to an urban one. Some residents will remember that during the process of creating the current local plan, the proposal to develop a large site around Nupend and Nastend was supported by the then conservative group on the Council. The process will run for about two and a half years but the initial phase will be very important. I will work with resident groups and the Parish Council for sensible development that keeps our Parish a Rural one.

### **NEW COMMUNITY BUILDING**

I attended the recent open day at the new building being erected in the Owen Harris Memorial Field. In my opinion this is a most impressive, well-constructed building. As someone who knows how much time the committee involved with this project have had to put in and the effect that has on your domestic life, I thank and congratulate them on what they are achieving for the Parish.

There are many organisations that go about their work within the Parish quietly and without fuss. One of these is the Royal British Legion. I would like to thank them and Harry Elliot in particular for their time, interest and ability, which has resulted in the quality of life of a member of my family being improved considerably.

Ken Stephens Feb 2009





## EASTINGTON PLAYGROUP

Tel 07977 342742

Charity number 1084981

We have started another busy term with numbers nearly full to bursting!

The children have enjoyed the recent snow and we have spent as much time as we can enjoying this, making snowmen and sledging on trays – lots of fun!

The new building is a constant source of conversation and learning - we have made buildings with the construction and talked about transport and we have seen many forms of vehicles delivering materials. This has enabled us to build on our very good Foundation Stage report that we have recently received.

We have celebrated Chinese New Year and have made animal masks, dragons and lanterns and we have also tasted Chinese food using chopsticks – that was very amusing!

More recently we have celebrated World Book Day and we have read a traditional story every day for a week and have asked the children to bring in their favourite book to Playgroup. It has been lovely to encourage and share the love of books from such an early age.

We plan to start planting seeds for our garden very shortly and develop some green fingers in the process – the children love nothing more than getting stuck into digging, filling up flower pots, planting seeds and watching them grow (not necessarily in that order!) – prompting many questions and learning through play.

With effect from Easter we plan to start our Pre-School sessions at Eastington School on a Wednesday afternoon where the children will be supported in settling into a new environment, meeting the teachers and other children that will take them on their next step of life.

We currently have a few places available at Playgroup so if you have a child aged between 2 years 6 months and 4 years 11 months then we would love to hear from you. We offer a safe and friendly community based play environment whereby all children learn through play to meet the standards of the Foundation Stage.

For details on spaces, prices and hours then please call one of the staff on 07977 342 742.

There is funding available for children aged 3 years – a full day may only cost you £2 for the lunch club.

We look forward to meeting you!

### ***Lingos*** ***Language Tuition*** **French** **Holiday Courses**



GCSE revision  
&  
Oral Practice

Beginners welcome  
**One to one or small groups**  
Danish and Spanish also available

**07799 657975**

lingos@fsmail.net  
Eastington

## **EASTINGTON BROWNIES**

The Brownies continue to be active and are enjoying the spring term. There are lots of activities, games and badge work and of course fun!

This term we have been learning about taking care of our environment which has involved finding out about recycling and making our own recycled paper. We have also been out planting trees as part of our centenary celebrations.

We meet on Monday evenings from 7 - 8pm, during term time in Eastington Village Hall.

Brownies are girls aged from 7 - 10 years and if you would like more information please contact us. There is currently a waiting list, so if you know of anyone who may like to join please contact us in advance of their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Kate Taylor 01453 821184

Sarah Mannings 01453 826850

## **A WAKE UP CALL TO LAZY DOG OWNERS FROM NATASHA & ALEX**

Dog owners of Eastington please wake up to your responsibilities, we know the majority are responsible but a few are spoiling things for many people in the community.

Yet again we remind you that Stroud District Council have adopted the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996.

This makes it an offence if dog owners do not clean up after their dogs when they foul anywhere to which the public has access.

This includes roads surrounding the school, pavements and playing fields.

### **OFFENDING OWNERS RISK PROSECUTION WITH A MAXIMUM FINE OF £1,000**

Remember you are being watched, we are stepping up patrols in the Eastington area and irresponsible dog owners will be caught and prosecuted.

We urge everyone to be responsible at all times and always clean up after their dog, fouling is both unpleasant and a health risk, particularly to children.

Please always carry a poop scoop and be prepared to use it!

If you have any dog related queries we are both happy to give advice or if you have information regarding offending owners please contact us. We need your help to solve this problem.

Alex Davies, Animal Welfare Officer – 01453 754497

Natasha Anderson, Dog Warden – 01453 754491

## A Birder in the Parish

The new year started brilliantly with a young **Otter** seen at Millend Mill and another calling from inside the outflows - presumably the female. I was pleased to share this sighting with a fellow birder who had never seen an Otter in Britain! This is the second record at the mill in recent years.

Our resident birds have been sorting out breeding territories through the winter (Magpies and Rooks are already nest-mending) and the dawn chorus has been in full swing since early January, when Song Thrushes and Robins were in song. These birds stay with us throughout the year and therefore complete a full moult into breeding plumage the previous Autumn ready for the nesting season in Spring. Hedge Sparrows, Blackbirds, Missel Thrushes and Collared Doves are gradually joining the party with Great Tits calling, and investigating nest boxes. Now is a very good time to clean out nest boxes and put up new ones ready for Blue Tits - watch out for the males' short, gliding courtship flight when they try to seduce a female to the nest sight.

Gangs of Long-tailed Tits will leave the garden feeders, start to disperse and begin pairing up. They build a beautifully camouflaged, domed nest in bramble bushes, or any dense shrub cover, and will start building before the end of the month with the first eggs laid at end of March to early April.

On sunnier days, listen out for the Blackcap's 'sub-song' from sheltered bushes and thick ivy; this is his winter warble as he tees up for full breeding song in May. They are easily overlooked, being generally quite secretive birds which have adapted to spending the winter in Britain by making use of bird tables and feeders, particularly fat-balls, with both males and females taking advantage of this high energy food. The male has a black cap, the female a brown cap - I have had four together in the garden this winter!

Listen out too for Chiff Chaffs starting to sing, when again, a sunny day is preferable (all birds respond to sunlight) - there are six of these small warblers along the river margins upstream from Millend Mill. The winter months are a bit trickier for them as they are mainly insect feeders liking the relative warmth of the river along this stretch as it leaves the works at Stanley Downton, where insects are in evidence.

Other birds are also singing on warmer days - listen out for the chattering chorus of Redwings and Fieldfares at the tops of big trees. They are handsome winter visiting thrushes joining us in late Autumn to feast on sugar rich wild fruits and orchard windfalls; they will be in just about full song by the end of March ready to go back east to breeding territories in Scandinavia. Before the mature hedge-rows were destroyed in the east water meadows, the wild food they provided supported a flock of up to a thousand of these birds for at least a month, and were also a valuable source of early winter food for Blackcaps, Lesser Whitethroats, Common Whitethroats, Garden Warblers, Redstarts, Wood Pigeons, Blackbirds and Song Thrushes - a sad loss to the Parish.

A Little Egret has frequently been seen in the deep drain at the back of Millend Cottages; keep an eye out for this lovely, pure white little heron as it rests in the meadow after feeding. And a Green Sandpiper was seen recently on the canal at Chipman's Platt.

Look for Dippers and Kingfishers returning to our rivers as the water levels fall - particularly at Millend Mill and the waterways at Churchend. They were annual breeders in the Parish but I have no record of them nesting here from last season, though Kingfishers were a daily sight flying up-river and taking a short cut across the front

gardens of Millend Cottages - I actually had one sat on the back garden wall looking out for sticklebacks in the ditch! One of the best places in the county to watch them at breeding time is the South Finger 'Kingfisher' hide at Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust - well worth a look.

As wild seed food diminishes, particularly alder, look out for Siskin and Goldfinches coming to your bird food - they have a particular liking for niger seed and black sunflower - you may also be lucky enough to attract a **Brambling**, though there are few records in the county this year.

Make sure you keep bird feeders clean and well replenished during what has been a tough winter for our birds and only use recommended birdfeed from reliable sources. Most feeders can be taken apart fairly easily and given a good going over - they must be completely dry before re-filling.



Highly qualified & experienced beauty therapist.

- |                  |            |  |
|------------------|------------|--|
| • Waxing         | <i>PhD</i> | • M anicures                           |
| • <i>Safewax</i> |            | • P e d icures <i>O.P.I nailcare</i>   |
| • E lectrolysis  |            | • F a cials <i>proto-col skin care</i> |
| • T i n t i n g  |            | • S t . Tropez                         |
| • M assage       |            |  |

Visit me or I can visit you.  
Call Fay on: 07504 143 879  
villagebeauty@hotmail.com

# Eastington Methodist Church

*Another level*

**Joint youth and family event  
Organised by Eastington and  
Chalford Hill Methodist Churches**

**music      games      dance**  
**dram      food**

@ Eastington Methodist Church  
5:00 - 7:00pm

Please join us with your friends and family

For more info contact Daniel on 079 60881986  
or Ken & Rebecca on 01453 827414

## Good Friday

We have a Good Friday service at 10:30am on April 10th. Experience the meaning of what really happened when Jesus went to the cross.

## Easter Day

Come and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday at 11am. This is a family service - the music will be lively and the service suitable for children, young people and adults.

As has been the case for a number of years, several of us are going to Spring Harvest, a major Christian event based at Butlins at Minehead in North Somerset. This is a major event attended by thousands and with internationally recognised speakers. Each year's programme is based on a theme; this year it is "Apprentice - Walking the way of Christ". Again, as is usual, we will be taking some of our group of young people with us and they have their own events and sessions particularly tailored for their age groups as do younger children. One of the best things about Spring Harvest is that it provides an opportunity to learn the latest music. We moved away from hymn books in favour of an electronic projection system in our services a few years ago and this means that we can use the latest songs as soon as they become available.

Booking for Spring harvest 2010 starts in June! If you think you might be interested in coming next year, please contact us.

### Recent Changes:

**African Drumming has moved to Saturdays from 11am until noon**  
**The Bible Study/House Group now meets on Tuesday evenings**  
**There are informal footballing sessions at 1pm after church on most Sundays**

About a month ago, we held a special Saturday workshop followed by a sleepover to enable some of the young people to prepare the service on the Sunday. This really worked well and the service was very good (in spite of an inevitable level of sleep deprivation). Several of the young people now regularly play on the music group and others clearly have a latent talent. In order to develop this further, we aim to run a similar event from 9th - 10th May with a music/dance/banner theme running through it.

*Jesus said: "I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them." John 19 vs 26*

Ken & Rebecca Burgin - 01453 827414  
info@EastingtonMethodists.org.uk

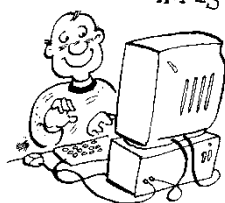
www.EastingtonMethodists.org.uk

# **St. Michael and All Angels' Church, Eastington**

*One of the 'Cotswold Edge' Parishes (Eastington, Frocester, Haresfield, Moreton Valence, Standish and Whitminster)*

**Our mission is: to show God's love for His people, and nurture His people's love for God**

THE RECTOR WRITES



Dear Friends,

Holy Week, Easter and drainage at the Rectory do not seem to be related. However, in my warped and theologically challenged brain I'm afraid they do.

We've been having a few problems with the drainage system at the Rectory – fortunately nothing that a powerful jet of water hasn't been able to sort out as yet. Three times in the last few months it has been done, and the problem has been explored by means of a video camera. Hence we know that the pipes are starting to collapse. This will mean more frequent jetting to remove the sewage – a 'sticking plaster' approach to the problem.

The Jews had a 'sticking plaster' approach to dealing with sin – the 'sewage' that affects the lives of everyone. They had a method of forgiveness by atonement, where an offering of an animal or grain was given to God and in return their sins were forgiven. In the case of animals, the people's sin was transferred to the animal, and it was sacrificed. It was a bit more complicated than this – but you get the gist. Imagine the animal protesters that would be outside the church if I was doing this nowadays!

The trouble was that it didn't work long-term, any more than the drains at the Rectory will either. Something needed to be done.

In the case of the Rectory, it looks likely that it will all have to be dug up and done again – which is fun as the pipe now goes under an extension, a wall and next doors garage on its way to the main sewer. I'm sure the Diocese (who will end up paying for it) will be keeping a close eye on the costs.

In the case of sin, the answer was Jesus. He shared our lives of imperfection, knew that a proper solution needed to be found, and offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice. During Holy Week we are able to re-live the events that lead up to that self-offering. When Jesus was raised from the dead he showed that sin was dealt with, and that those who accepted him no longer needed to sacrifice animals, as his sacrifice was sufficient for everyone – we just need to accept it.

I don't expect sorting out the Rectory drainage to have such a profound effect on the world, but I for one will be very happy when it is, just as I am already very happy that Jesus has sorted out the sin in my life. That, however, is another story, and Jesus 'took my sins away' to paraphrase an old Sunday school hymn. I hope, with sin defeated, you have a happy and fragrant Easter!

**Rev'd Richard Amys, The Rectory, Millend Lane, Eastington, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3SG. Tel: 01453-822437, e-mail: [richardjramys@aol.com](mailto:richardjramys@aol.com)**

## **Regular Services at St. Michael and All Angels**

First Sunday in the month	Holy Communion	10.45am
Second Sunday in the month	Holy Communion (with Junior Choir)	10.45am
Third Sunday in the month	Sung Evensong (with Senior Choir)	6pm
Fourth Sunday in the month	Holy Communion	10.45am
Fifth Sundays – services move around the benefice – see the church notice board for details.		

Wednesdays every week                      Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion    7.30am

Details of all events and services can be sent to you by email – just email me at the address above. They are contained in a weekly news sheet, spare copies of which are left in Church.

The Church is open during the day, every day, should you wish to visit to pray, or just sit. You are most welcome.

No article of part thereof may be reproduced or published without prior permission of the Editor and author.  
The views expressed in ECN are not necessarily those of the editor.

**TABLE TOP SALE**  
**at Eastington Village Hall on**  
**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March from 2-4pm**  
 Bric-a-brac, Home baking, produce, preserves etc  
 (donations of goods for sale can be left at the Rectory,  
 Or phone Barbara Hall on 01453 824321)  
**Refreshments available**

<b>Services in our Benefice over Holy Week and Easter.</b>	<b><u>Holy Week</u></b>	<b><u>Easter Day</u></b> 12 <sup>th</sup> April (p533 - white) <i>Acts 10.34-43 &amp; Mark 16.1-8 (p535/7)</i>
<b>Eastington</b>	<b><u>Maundy Thursday</u></b> 9 <sup>th</sup> - 7.30pm Holy Communion & Vigil to midnight (p498 - white) <i>1 Corinthians 11.23-26 &amp; John 13.1-17, 31b-35 (p500)</i> <b><u>Good Friday</u></b> 10 <sup>th</sup> - 6.30 p m 'Songs of Passion'	<b>10.45am</b> Holy Communion <b>Wed 15<sup>th</sup> 7.30am</b> BCP Communion
<b>Frocester</b>	<b><u>Holy Monday</u></b> 6 <sup>th</sup> - 7.30pm BCP Communion <i>Isaiah 42.1-9 &amp; John 12.1-11 (p488/490)</i>	<b>8am</b> BCP Communion
<b>Haresfield</b>	<b><u>Good Friday</u></b> 10 <sup>th</sup> -10am Holy Communion (p501 - red) <i>Isaiah 52.13-53.12, Hebrews 4.14-16, 5.7-9 &amp; John 18.1-19.42 (p502-6)</i>	<b>9.15am</b> Holy Communion (Peter Cheeseman)
<b>Moreton Valence</b>	<b><u>Holy Tuesday</u></b> 7 <sup>th</sup> - 7.30pm BCP Communion <i>Isaiah 49.1-7 &amp; John 12.20-36 (p491/4)</i>	<b>6pm</b> Easter Carol Service
<b>Standish</b>	<b><u>Holy Wednesday</u></b> 8 <sup>th</sup> - 7.30pm Holy Communion and Agape in Village Hall	<b>9.15am</b> Holy Communion <b>Fri 17<sup>th</sup> 10am</b> BCP Communion
<b>Whitminster</b>	<b><u>Good Friday</u></b> 10 <sup>th</sup> - 2pm-3pm Reflective Service	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion (Peter Cheeseman)

**Sandra Jean Turner** of Eastington, died on December 26<sup>th</sup>. Her funeral was conducted by the Rector at Gloucester Crematorium on 21<sup>st</sup> January.

Sandra grew up in Stroud, and was part of a small, close-knit family – just her parents and brother, all of who have predeceased her. Sandra used to work at Hoffmann's, starting off in the canteen, which involved her taking the tea trolley to the office staff, one of whom was Janet, with whom she developed a lasting friendship. Even after she left the canteen and moved to the factory floor Sandra would still choose to spend her lunch with Janet.

Her late husband Henry also worked at Hoffmann's, but it was chance meeting in Stroud not long after his first wife died when they recognised each other from their schooldays, that led to them dating and marrying in the late 80s, and Sandra moved to Henry's bungalow in Eastington. Henry died in 2007, and Sandra coped at home as long as possible, her breathing problems leading frequent stays in hospital, but eventually moved to Northfield House about a month ago following a spell in Berkeley Hospital.

Sandra has always been devoted to dogs, she had Alsations, then collies, then fox terriers – as well as paintings, photos and ornaments all over her home. It is fitting that she has left the bulk of her estate to Teckels, who have done so much to help her by caring for her dogs through her illness. She enjoyed doing crosswords and reading the daily paper, and was an avid TV soap fan. Generally she was very reserved and private, and lacking in confidence, yet all who knew her were very fond of her.

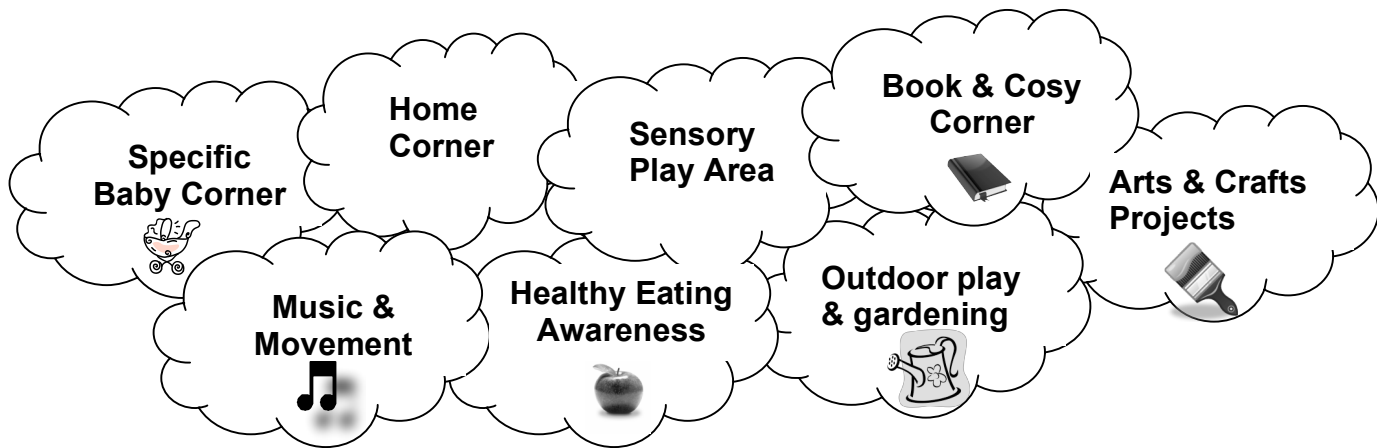
No article of part thereof may be reproduced or published without prior permission of the Editor and author.  
 The views expressed in ECN are not necessarily those of the editor.

# EASTINGTON BABY & TODDLER - MONDAY MORNINGS NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2009

Welcome to Eastington Baby & Toddler group on Monday mornings 10:00 till 11:30am. We now have a brand new voluntary committee of mums running Eastington baby & toddler group. We are keen to restructure and implement changes and look forward to creating a varied experience for children to enjoy with their carers.

We look forward to implementing in the coming months:-



Eastington Baby & Toddlers is open to everyone from anywhere. We are friendly, warm and welcoming. We welcome parents, grandparents, child minders, aunties & uncles and anyone else who wants their little one's to have fun in a creative learning environment.

**Fees remain the same at 75p per person carer and child, and under ones are free!!  
Refreshment and snack included.**

Please remember we are all volunteers and the more help we get from everyone the better, we need to support each other.

Forthcoming activities are:- Pancake Day, Mothers Day & Easter.

All comments / suggestions welcome.

**Clare Basnett – Coordinator – 07748015034**

**Victoria Fudge – Assistant coordinator**

**Karen Hayes – Treasurer**

**Jenny Seeley – Activities & crafts coordinator**

**Masano Hedges – Activities & crafts assistant**

**Vanessa Cousins – Music & movement coordinator**

' A similar Baby and Toddlers Session also runs 10-11.30am on Wednesdays'

Clare Basnett – Feb 09.