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VILLAGE IN MOURNING FOR ITS 'MAYOR'

"MR. EAST MEON," Herbert Arthur Goddard, has died aged 76.

"Herbie" was considered the mayor of East Meon in all but name for his dedicated service to the village.

He was a parish councillor for 37 years, 16 of them as Chairman, and in 1968 he also became Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee. In 1970 he was one of the leading lights in the scheme to replace the old village hall with a better one.

A tangible recognition of devoted service came in 1978 when Mr. Goddard and his wife, Nellie, were invited to a

garden party at Buckingham Palace.

Mr. Goddard was born at Emsworth but had lived at East Meon since he was seven years old. His first job was clearing wood for a timber company and then he was employed by farmer Philip Berry to look after two horses at Oxenbourne.

In 1929 he sought a change of scene and moved to Manchester to do industrial engineering, but returned to East Meon two years later as a chauffeur to Mr. Morley Horder, the architect.

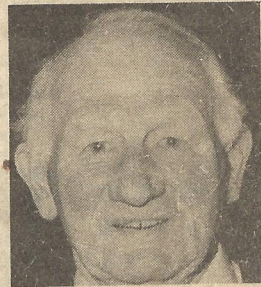
He married Ellen Christmas in 1933 and lived at Havant for a while before returning to work in the local garage.

During the Blitz he became a member of the Auxiliary Fire Service eight-man unit and in 1943 served in North Africa and Italy with R.E.M.E.

When he returned from the war he bought the garage business in the centre of the village where he used to work.

His hobbies included gardening and photography — he was a member of East Meon Horticultural Society, and as an example of his public spirit he spent many years attending to the grass surround and borders of the war memorial opposite his house.

In the book "A History of East Meon," by



Frederick Standfield, it says: "Dogged determination, patience, sheer persistence, unselfishness, and complete integrity elevated Herbie to the role of mayor of the village in everything but name — a combination of father figure, wise man, respected leader, and solver of problems."

He is survived by his widow, one son, one daughter, four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.