

Village Hall Timeline 1887 – 1999

Date	Record of event
14 th December 1887	<p>Indenture of Conveyance 'of land and dwelling house' by Trustees, to be used as 'East Meon Reading Room, Library and Coffee House', a Charity, made between Henry Coles of the one part and the Reverend Charles Patten Good and two others ... Conditions included Vicar being one of the Trustees, Jane Barnard and Benjamin Aylwin as Trustees.</p> <p>Foundation commemorated as 'Year of Jubilee of Queen Victoria', 1887.</p> <p>A rifle range was at some stage erected on the site of what is now Park Vista.</p>
	No Minutes until 1928.
April 1929	Major Nicholson 'gave permission for chairs to be stored in rifle range'. He handed over management of rifle range for a rent of 5/- a year.
December 1934	Decided to amalgamate the Village Library, started in 1897, with the branch of the County Library established at the School. Mr Escombe and Miss Manning to be librarians.
Jan 1938	Messrs Southers and Wallace estimate for installing wiring from the companys' mains, £11.15s. Southern Utility Co charge of £3.9.0d to erect overhead service was accepted. Estimate requested for footlights on the stage ('some kind of contraption for that service').
Feb 1941	Special meeting to discuss urgent matter of letting the Hall for Dances and Billeting of Troops.
Oct 1941	Public meeting to propose Social Club. Vicar made speech. Agreed to establish mixed club for benefit of village. Subscription 5/- a year.
Feb/March 1942	Warship Week to be held ... 28 th Feb, 6 th March, Film Programme'. (regular films shows started in October).
Oct/Nov 1943	<p>Proposal to re-build the Institute as a War Memorial.</p> <p>Chairman (vicar) proposes that a re-building fund be</p>

	established. £50 transferred to open a deposit account.
May 1944	Vicar has spoken to Captain Candy Cooper, Chairman of the Rural District Council, who had suggested that a 'site might be obtained in the meadow in the centre of the village' which it was agreed would be an ideal spot. (Glenthorne Meadow? Then a green space.)
Oct 1947.	General Public Meeting. Resolution "Do you wish the money collected for a new Village hall to be used for the improvement of the present building?" Yes 34 No 8.
July 1955.	Mobile Cinema unit said it could only screen on Mondays. Not possible, so Sec asked to find if alternative mobile cinema unit could be approached.
May 1960.	^t The County Council was organising a mobile van library very shortly and the present arrangement was coming to an end. Mrs Clubb wondered what we ought to do with our own books.
May 1969.	F.G.Standfield writes to Committee (he was ill) suggesting that possibilities of building a new and up-to-date hall be seriously considered. He thought the present premises were shabby and dilapidated.
April 1970	New Charity Commission scheme, including appointment of trustees, for East Meon Reading Room Library and Coffee House. This in effect grants permission to sell the old site in order to raise funds for a new hall.
March 1971	New Site. The Chairman said he had had a talk with Miss Ruth Blackman about her field in Workhouse Lane. She was contacting her brother about prices &c. Fund-raising starts.
May 1971	Enquiries suggested that HCC Social Services would grant £50% of monies.
June 1971	Surveyor appointed, Mr Devenish. who 'tried to sum up the situation': <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The present hall is in disrepair and has come to the end of its useful life. 2. Re the proposed site in Miss Blackman's field, the planning authority had told him that we might not get planning permission unless the authorities were sure there was no alternative site. Mr Devenish thought that

	<p>the site was suitable but rather far from the village and liable to objection from nearby residents.</p> <p>3. He did not commit himself to a figure for Miss Blackman's site but thought that it might well contain a considerable 'hope value' for her.</p>
July 1971	Miss Blackman rejected offer of £650 for 3/4s of an acre as nothing like adequate.
Oct 1971	<p>Mr Devenish reports that the Planning Authority was prepared to consider favourably the application to build a new hall on Miss Blackman's field, with the following provisos:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adequate parking space to immediate west of Hall with access via existing gate. 2. Satisfactory sound proofing with no doors or windows on eastern side. 3. An open amenity area, landscaped, between Hall and workhouse Lane, and a screen of trees behind the Hall on east side. 4. High standard of design and first class materials.
Nov 1971	Rebuilding fund stands at £416.95 and bank balance at £98.90d.
February 1972	Miss Blackman proposed to charge £2750 for the site., providing the Trustees would pay her conveyancing and estate agents' fees. Committee to go to Whiteheads for estimate of price. Also, look at possible site at Coppice Corner.
March 1972.	Whiteheads valued the land at £1,200 - £1,500 an acre. Instructed to negotiate with agents. No point in going ahead with Coppice Corner, on investigation, but Recreation Ground to be explored.
June 1972	Mr Standfield proposed that owing to rapidly rising cost of land, should offer £2,000 clear of expenses. HCC SS had written to say that allocations for village halls were being cut by 90%.
July 1972.	Correspondence with County Education Officer concerning application for Further Education capital grant 'in respect of a new hall at an estimated cost of £25,000'. (Later, £30,000). Not 1972/3 but would be considered in 1973/4. The application would be included in list to be submitted to Department of Education and Science.

August 1972.	<p>Planners had visited present site and recommended getting first class architect to draw up plans. Intensive development of two-storied buildings and flats was the answer. Planners did not feel that recreation Ground was really practical – problems of access and exit, plus encroachment of cricket field. Decided to drop Recreation Ground idea.</p>
Sept 1972	<p>Decided to go ahead with negotiations with Miss Blackman, £2,750 max. Possibility of up to 75% grant from Education Department of HCC in 1973/4, dependent on help from Parish Council.</p> <p>Sept 29th 1972. Extraordinary meeting to consider letter from Miss Blackman's solicitor, 27/9/72:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Miss Blackman had said that land value had risen since last January; she now requires £3,500 plus expenses. 2. Miss Blackman had heard rumours of the very high price likely to be realised when the existing Village Hall will be sold. 3. Her brother will agree with whatever her sister says and does. <p>Debate about reducing size of plot to 3/4s acre. Finally agreed to acquire the one acre plot without more ado and before the price was raised yet again.</p>
Oct 1972	<p>Draft contract discussed (despite Miss Blackman thinking the price was too low ...). Clauses re access, fencing and planning permission added.</p> <p>Architect, Mr Sealy of Sawyer Partnership, Winchester, was asked to press on with plans for old and new sites so as to obtain planning permission.</p> <p>Mrs Ross to look at new Hall at Bramley, where use of new materials was a recommendation, brick walls and laminated wood ceiling trusses which need minimum maintenance.</p>
Jan 1973	<p>Three letters from Lettice Ross, Secretary to Village Hall, to Petesfield Rural District Council containing information. Letter March 1973 informing that East Meon is on their recommended list for 1973/4 and that grant aid will be assessed when the monies realised from the sale of the present hall are taken into consideration.</p> <p>Letter of application, to Parish Council, followed by request for some more details and then by agreement to provide 12.5% of costs.</p>

	<i>n.b. inflation in 1973 running at 3% a month.</i>
Feb. 1973.	Planners considering plans for three houses on old site instead of four. Rebuilding fund stood at £1092.6p.
April 1973	Letter to inform that East Meon has not been successful ... only 6 out of 18 applicant villages had received grants.
May 1973.	<p>Grant Aid application would enable Committee to build the main part of the new hall without waiting for grant aid, to help counteract inflation. The building would be phased.</p> <p>Planners insist no windows on east side of hall. New plans to go to May planning meeting. An Open Meeting was planned to close the Old Hall, July 9th. Fete planned for May for fund raising.</p> <p>Fire Officer had reported that the old hall presented very considerable fire risks. Should be scrapped as soon as possible!</p> <p>Plans to be put out to tender by three building firms..</p> <p>Cost of acquiring the land now £3,600 in all. Miss Blackman to be asked to allow delay in payment until money available (bridging loan, loan from Charity Commissioners or mortgage).</p>
June 1973	<p>Letter from Lettice Ross to County Education Committee asking to receive application form for 1974/5. She informs that planning permission has been granted for three dwellings on site of Institute, vacant possession of Caretaker's Office has been obtained, Charity Commissioners' order for sale of site will be completed, planning permission for new village hall received on 8th June 'with conditions for landscaping and access'.</p> <p>Planners required detailed plans. Horticultural Society to suggest trees and shrubs.</p> <p>Village Hall Chairman (Herbie Goddard was also chair of the Parish Council) reported that PC could assist by making a direct grant. Amount to be decided. RDC would make a grant if the County Education Department did.</p> <p>Revised value for site of Institute now £20,000. Contract for new hall site now agreed with Miss Blackman, to be signed on September 14th with four weeks' payment terms. Rebuilding fund now £1,871.78.</p>

July 1973	<p>Letter informing that 'the starting of your project without permission from the Authority without prejudice would disbar the project from being considered for grant aid'.</p> <p>Charity Commission. 4th July 1973, Scheme providing permission to proceed with sale of buildings specified in the schedule (i.e. Institute and Cottage). Cash flow projections included. (notes: Increase of cost of Stage I to about £44,000 due to inflation currently running at about 3% a month. Education grant 1/3rd of construction costs as at July 1973. Local Government grant ditto.</p>
August 1973	<p>Letter from Letttice Ross to Mr Charles of CED, thanking him for 'coming to see us'.</p> <p>Mr Charles had informed that East Meon had not qualified for priority in 1973/4 because budget was inadequate and our ability to meet the commitment of building was doubted.</p> <p>Govt policy on hall grants expected to reduce from 50% grants to 1/3rd grant. 1/3rd raised, 1/3rd from minor authorities.</p> <p>No allowance would be made for inflation after July.</p> <p>Repeated that commencing building (or signing contract) would seriously disbar grant for Phase I and seriously affect application for Phase II. We would know in October.</p> <p>Total costs of Phase I now £30,240. Whole building £42,790.</p>
September 1973	<p>Reserve price of £18,000 not reached at auction of site, but Robert McKay Developments of Godalming offered this sum the next day. 'Great relief to have reached the reserve price in an uncertain market ...</p>
October 1973	<p>Purchase money had been received, £500 being made available for purchase of land. 'Thus the completion of the purchase of 1 acre of land was now a fact and the Trustees were the proud owners thereof.'</p> <p>Mr Charles had visited; no date was known when permission to build would be given, nor specification of grant aid before January 1974. Committee asked if they would be satisfied with a grant of approx £16,500.</p>
November 1973	<p>Tenders received ... Moulds now included, with lowest price £38,897 for whole, £33,064.00 for whole. Moulds to be invited.</p> <p>Mr Lynton White, as County Councillor, was approached for help. He had gained cooperation in approaching Dept of Ed and</p>

	<p>Science for their urgent decision on approval for EM to start building “without prejudice to their Grant Aid Application.”</p> <p>Profit from Then and Now exhibition £134.56.</p>
December 1973	Letter from Mr Charles giving permission for work to be started, but that this does not commit the DoE and HCC to provide a grant specifically for the project.
	Extraordinary meeting. Mr Lynton White had been coopted onto the Donations and Loans Committee. He had agreed to guarantee maximum sum of £22,000, free of interest. Mr Standfield suggested other potential guarantors be approached to reduce responsibility on LW.
Jan 1974	Chairman said that Parish Council had decided that 12.5% of grant should be set aside for new hall. If County Council grant was cut, PC could still make contribution.
March 1974	<p>Extraordinary Meeting. Grant Aid from Hampshire County ‘extremely precarious and then suspended’. Major Rigby of District Council and Major Rose of both District and County had been approached. EHDC might consider grant of £6,000 provided Parish Council gave £3,000.</p> <p>Parish Council had agreed to donate £3,000. Chairman and Mr Standfield had met Lynton White, and with his approval it had been decided to go ahead with both phases. Costs of cloakroom had been increased. Foundation stone to be laid in Mid-April. Dowager Countess Peel Trust to be approached. Accounts of old hall now closed.</p> <p>March 23rd 1974. Letter to Parish Council thanking for ‘unanimous decision to grant £3,000 in grant aid ...</p>
April 1974	<p>EHDC will give grant, maximum £6,000, dependent on DES decision. Funds stand at £9,847.38p. Sponsored walk had raised £159.59.</p> <p>Letter to RDC thanking for promise of a grant within the maximum of £6,000, £3,000 in 1974/5, £3,000 in 1975/6.</p>

May 1974.	<p>V.W.Emery, Rural Officer, Hampshire Council of Community Service writes to Lettice Ross. 'I am very impressed with your fundraising record and should like to congratulate your Hon. Treasurer on the excellent manner in which the accounts are presented.' Had received note from national Council of Social Services ... cuts have been made in the total amount of money available'. 16th May. 'DES have now announced their programme for the above financial year ... £39,500 is a 50% grant, to be supported by local authorities. Asks for latest financial costing.</p> <p>Letter to Emery on 19th setting out financial figures. Balance £13,211.21, Donations £24.60, Sponsored Walk £259.20, Dance 383.10d, total £13,955.67. Payments Building Costs £5,750, plus equipment &c, total £5,809. Balance £8,146.46d. Up-to-date building costs – Fixed price contract with Moulds of £38,897, as at Dec 1973 when contract was signed. (Note that sub-contracting is not at a fixed price – 2.5% a month will be added for sub-contracting and materials ... estimated addition of £1,560. 3rd June 1973. Letter from F.G.Standfield to Lettice Ross setting out inflation estimated.</p> <p>Dowager Countess Peel Trust would place application before committee. DES grant aid for Hampshire £39,500 – HCCS asking for up-to-date information about building costs. Parish Council had paid cheque of £1,500. Spring fete had raised £557.63p. Treasurer reported that they might run out of funds in September; Mr Standfield to approach those who had offered loans?</p>
June 1974	<p>No news from Peel Trust or County Council. Building three weeks behind. £1,344.35p raised since Easter.</p> <p>June 1973, HCCS Newsletter lists East Meon Village Hall third in its list of approved schemes, at total cost £36,000. 'Only top three schemes can be grant-aided this year'</p> <p>District Council will be willing to grant half the amount provided by County Council, provided Parish Council will make a similar grant.</p> <p>Letter to Parish Council acknowledging cheque for £1,500.</p>

July 1974	<p>Peel Trust had sent cheque for £500. Letter from HCC informing that 'Although HCC have not felt able to make provision in their estimates ... they will offer grant on behalf of the Dept of Education and Science at twice that offered by your Local District and/or Parish Council'.,,, based on cost of £40,457, and balance sheet of £21,850, grant not to exceed £9,600. Conditions listed.</p> <p>Roofing about to start. New plan for stage two coming soon. Final contribution of Fete £628.26. Current a/c £92.03, deposit account £8,664.</p>
Sept 1974	<p>Following assurances from Parish and District Councils, and County Architect having declared that 40% of building work complete, DES had been informed and cheque for £2,048 had arrived. 'Meaningless figure' since it did not represent 40% of £9,600 grant!</p> <p>Building behind schedule – Moulds threatened with penalty clause. Mr Caesar of Moulds promised it would be on time.</p> <p>Liphook Young Conservatives had donated. £22,000 paid out to date, accounts totalled £4,194.86. If interim payment from DES came in time, no need to alert guarantors..</p> <p>Letter to DES thanking for cheque for £2,400. 'The Hall is now well on the way to completion ...'</p>
Oct 1974	<p>Glazing complete, electrician half-way through. External and heating works at a standstill, no plumbing to date and doors not in place. Letter to Moulds expressing dissatisfaction. 2½ weeks behind in first month!</p> <p>DES cheque had been received. Treasurer predicted deficit of £7,355 by end of January 1975, plus architect's fees. Overdraft could not be achieved without Charity Commissioners' approval. Guarantors would be approached.</p>
Nov 1974	<p>Current a/c £77, deposit £1,887. Payments from DES not until next financial year, only £600 due from EHDC. Final 50% Of District and Parish Councils not due until 1975/6. Decided to write protest letter to Mr Fryer of County Education Department.</p> <p>F.G.Standfield reported that seven other guarantors had agreed to shoulder Lynton White's load. Mr White was now providing £2,000 (Others: W.Douglas Home, Captain F.Tyrwhitt Drake, Mr M Tyrwhitt Drake, Mr A Gill, Mr & Mrs Stan Smith, D.Ryder, Mr F.G.Standfield, Mr H Goddard.)</p>

Jan 1975	Jan 24 th 1975 Village Hall now open and running, but still in debt.
April 1975.	<p>C,E.D. to increase grant offer by £1,000. Architects' fees came to £700.</p> <p>Letter to Parish Council, thanking for cheque of £1,500.. "The committee cannot be grateful enough for the Parish Council's help and support ... has been their mainstay ..."</p>
June 1975	Final grant of £6,157 from DES. Fund-raising continued.
October 1975	A further £2,400 repaid to guarantors. Parish Council donated a further £500.
Jan 1976.	Final payments made to guarantors.