



Meon Matters

*News, Views & Comment
from East Meon*



£1.00

Summer 2024

Issue Number 221

meonmatters.com



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Cover Picture: Richard Gaisford





Editorial

You're in for a treat! We've got a bumper edition for you this Summer which is brimming with interesting articles and fabulous photographs - all of which make for a happy Editorial Team!

We've got some lovely articles from the school, in particular the children's Q&A session with their new Head, Cat Olver, and their appraisal of this year's May Fair and Boat Race, both of which were roaring successes and you can read more about right here.

Along with our regulars, we hear an interesting view on the ever popular Clarkson's Farm from one of our local farmers, a synopsis of the marking of D Day which saw a huge turnout from the village, and an essential read on the Asian Hornets and how they are affecting our bee population and what we can all do to minimise the spread of these unwanted invaders.

A special thank you must go to Steve Howard who has provided us with some wonderful photos of the May Fair, Boat Race and D Day Anniversary. I hope that you will all agree that we are very fortunate to have such a wonderful village magazine, which wouldn't be possible without the continued dedicated support and contributions from you, our lovely readers. Please keep your ideas for new articles coming and we always welcome fabulous photographs to complement them.

Happy reading!

Annabel Tyrwhitt-Drake
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Northern Lights

I'm told that looking at my phone before going to bed is not such a good thing. This was one occasion when it most certainly was - I would never have known that the northern lights had mysteriously appeared over the village had I not had a last-minute scroll through messages and social media posts before turning off the lights.

For years I've been looking at other people's pictures of the aurora borealis, but never thought we'd get to see it in Hampshire. In fact we took a holiday to Iceland a few years back, and sat out in freezing conditions hoping to catch a glimpse. What we saw there wasn't a patch on the light show that appeared over East Meon.

Admittedly, to the naked eye, it was more like a series of streaks in the sky. However, once I'd raised my iPhone towards the planets a magical sight unveiled itself as the full colour spectrum became clear.

Around midnight the church, gravestones and buildings in the village framed a stunning night sky that was alive with moving beams and patterns. The images were mysterious and beautiful. A solar storm, and a last-minute look at my phone, had led to a more than memorable night and some magical pictures.

Richard Gaisford.

Meon Matters thanks Richard for the stunning cover photograph.

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Church Matters

It may seem to you that not a lot has been happening in All Saints' over the past few months, but behind the scenes it has been extremely busy for the PCC both with All Saints' and across the Upper Meon Benefice. Like a swan, graceful on the surface, but paddling fast underwater.

The most important news for the Benefice is that Father Tony has had his major surgery, which all went well and according to plan. Amazingly he was home again after five days and is recovering well with everything going in the right direction. We wish him and Linda, who is nursing him back to health, all our best wishes and look forward to perhaps seeing them out and about before too long.

There have been baptisms, weddings and funerals taking place and, as always, the church looks so beautiful for these occasions once the 'East Meon Flower Ladies' have worked their magic. They are a truly talented team. There are also many other volunteer teams, who tirelessly help to keep the church running. They are not always seen, but they are hugely appreciated, and we thank them. One of these trojans was Jean Cooke, who so sadly died recently. She was such an enthusiastic supporter of All Saints', the village and beyond and we all miss her enthusiasm and good will. We are thinking of David and all of Jean's family at this very sad time.

We ALWAYS need more volunteers, and there are so many small jobs that need to be done, do not take up a lot of time and can be rather rewarding. So PLEASE do get in touch if you would like help in any way.

As it is now mid-summer, you will notice the heating is not turned on in the church. As we very much hope that we shall be able to turn it on again once the colder months return, and the one remaining boiler is really on its last legs, rest assured that an enormous amount of work has been, and continues to be done, so that we can hopefully install a new boiler before the cold returns. The Church of England has a net zero carbon by 2030





policy, and many hours have been spent by PCC members investigating alternative heating methods and researching and submitting our case to the Diocese for permission to install a new boiler using HVO fuel. We are waiting with bated breath. HVO stands for hydrotreated vegetable oil. If we do get permission to install this system – we can then inform you in much more detail about this fuel which can reduce CO2 emissions by up to 90% compared to conventional kerosene heating oil.

The process of closing Langrish Church for worship has been initiated and is moving slowly along, with a completion date not to be expected before July 2025. When it does happen the Parish of Langrish is expected to merge with that of East Meon, thereby restoring the Parish of East Meon to the size it was before Langrish was created in 1870. There is still a lot of work to be done but essentially All Saints' will become the parish church for all the inhabitants of Langrish and Ramsdean. It has yet to be determined what will happen to the building of Langrish Parish church, but Stuart and Emma are working with Langrish to ensure that the merger of the parishes goes smoothly and with the minimum of administrative hassle. It is a sad time for Langrish Parish, but we look forward to welcoming the Langrish and Ramsdean worshippers and wider communities to All Saints' East Meon.

We look forward to seeing you in All Saints' over the summer – if it doesn't get much warmer we may even turn the heating on for you – if it still works!!

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Good Friday Walk 29th March

The pouring rain miraculously stopped by 9am, when the walk started at Langrish, taking the walkers via Park Hill to East Meon Church, (hot cross bun!), then on to West Meon up via Hen Wood to West Meon (soup!), with the final leg to Warnford (tea!). Father Tony started the day with prayers at Langrish, and finished with a lovely service at Warnford.

Helen G.



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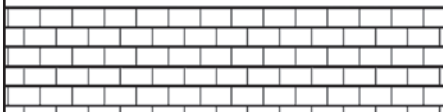
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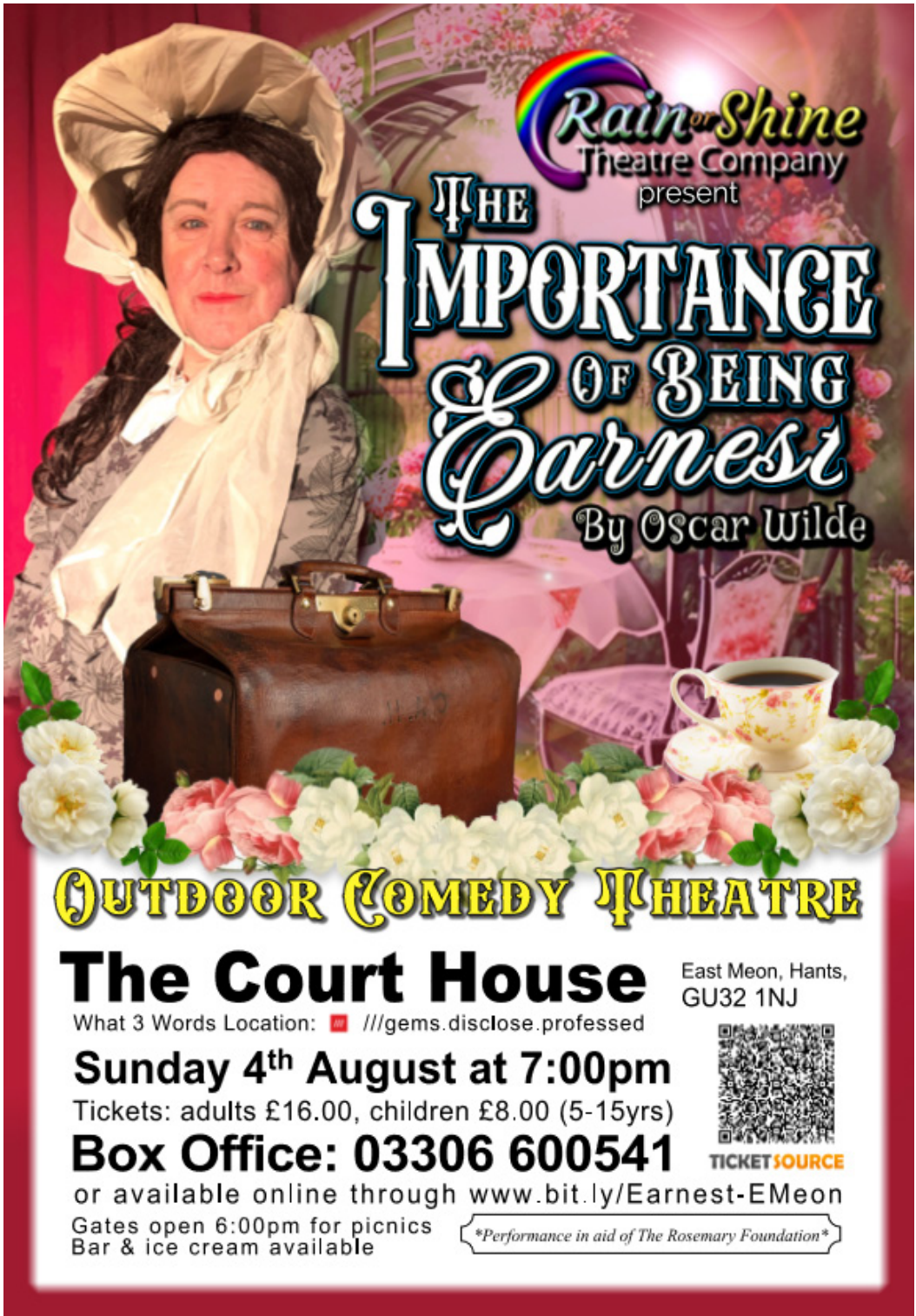
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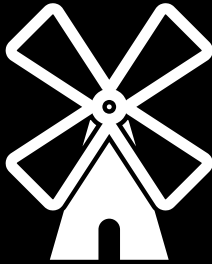


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Parish Council Report

Judging from the numbers attending the Annual Parish Assembly, democracy is alive and well in East Meon. Or maybe you came to hear about the beavers? That was cunning of us. But thank you regardless. And also thank you Will Atkinson for pulling in a crowd, and the Tyrwhitt-Drake's for generously providing the drinks.

As to be expected, sewerage and potholes were high on your APA agenda. On the former, site inspections are showing that surface water run-off is infiltrating the Workhouse Lane sewerage pipe in multiple locations, and hence causing the outflows. No less ghastly, but with the problem hopefully identified we will continue to pressurise Southern Water to address the main sources of this infiltration. On potholes, we can do no more than to continue reporting them, including through the new and jolly useful OurHants mobile app (which you can download for free from any app store). For action on both items, noise counts.

Not quite so many of you turned out for our May Parish Council meeting, but with no beavers who can blame you. It also wasn't quite so exciting. This is the meeting where we elect our Chair, Vice Chair and Planning Committee Chair. In fact, we re-elected them all! Please join us in expressing our appreciation for their dedication and service.





We too continued to talk about sewerage, but perhaps surface water ingress would be a more accurate caption. Suffice it to say, we continue to pester Southern Water who are hampered by their lack of records for downpipes entering the sewer.


Happily, life is returning to normal at the allotments and a big thank you to Mike Critchley who is patiently handling the sewerage compensation claims with Southern Water.


We also have progress to report on the BOATs. A highly effective subgroup of Parish Councils (compromising ourselves, Langrish, Buriton and Hawkley) has successfully lobbied SDNPA and Hampshire County Council to issue Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders to close the BOATs during periods of heavy summer rain. In addition, the authorities are considering taking into account other factors such as the Health & Safety of users when identifying which BOATs should be closed. You will be pleased to hear that Brian Biggs, our highly conscientious footpath czar, will be inputting into this grading process.

Can we return to the beavers? You will be as surprised as Will to learn that his initial application for SDNPA funding has been turned down. We hope this is a temporary setback and the positive feedback forms Will received from across the village are adding important weight to his cause.

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We are having better luck with toads, 813 having been rescued this spring compared to 546 last year. Well done to all those in the Nature Group involved.

Other updates for you. We are beefing-up the speed sign solar panel, the Pavilion is no longer leaking, we are at contract stage with a local football team for the 2024/25 season, we received grant funding for the All Sports Court resurfacing, The Green grass cutting contract has been finalised, our 2023/24 accounting statements have been approved and submitted, and we are dealing with the dead ash trees and the Frogmore footpath. The widening of the path across the Green will happen this summer, and we will be litter picking this autumn.

Finally, one request for you. Could you please endeavour to keep your dogs on the lead when close to traffic or sheep. Thank you.

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Hanging Hostas **Talk by John Baker and June Colley**

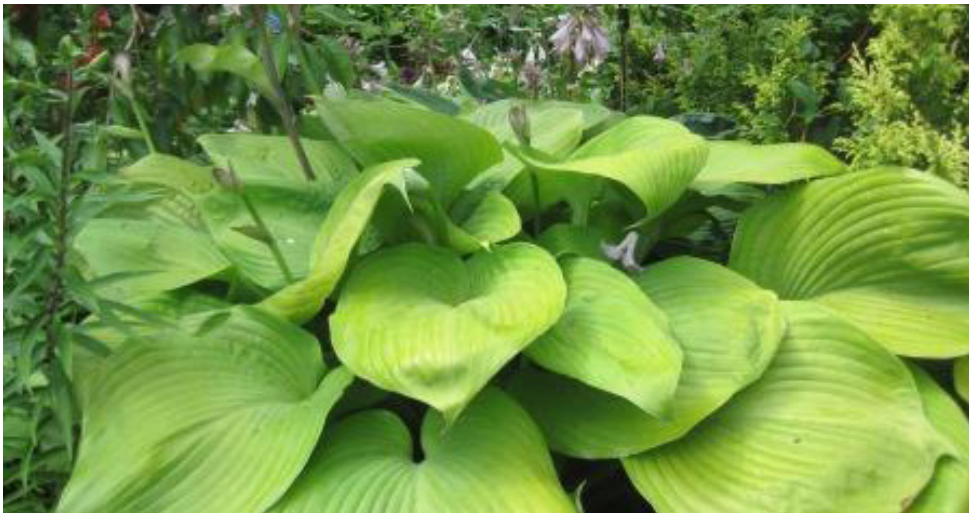
The burning question for the very proficient and prolific hosta growers from North Hampshire, was how on earth to stop slugs and snails eating your precious specimens! I will come to that later.....

John talked about the origins of hostas. The Dutch East India Company used to trade medical supplies for hostas on Deshima Island in Nagasaki as the demand in Europe grew. Hostas were found in China, Japan and Korea and their shoots were often eaten in stir fry!

There are 15000 cultivars today from a blue hosta such as Tardiana to a pie crust edged hosta known as Marilyn Monroe. (There was a noticeably large take up for MMs for sale at the end of the evening.)

Tips were given about how to make the most of your hostas, such as:

- Choose hostas with thick leaves so that they last, given that snails and slugs find them too hard work to chew through.
- Hostas with yellow leaves like lots of sun.
- Plant hostas with the same circumference as their canopy. They do not have a tap root, so it does not have to be too deep.
- Plant in spring or summer but avoid planting in late autumn.





- Add grit to compost.
- Miniatures do well in pots. We were shown a wide array of the “Mouse” cultivars. They particularly need drainage. They may need winter protection and if so, cover or move into polytunnel, garage, etc.
- Lawn feed is good for their leaves.
- Collect seed in autumn round about November as hostas hibernate during the winter. However, seeds can create instability; watch for sports. Propagation can be done by sawing through roots to create two plants or more.

Keeping Slugs/Snails at Bay!

- Coffee grains in two gallons of water
- 1 bottle of ammonia and 9 bottles of water
- 2 garlic cloves boiled in 1 litre of water
- Epsom salts improve colour and act as a deterrent. 2tbsps in 2 gallons of water

Good Luck!

There was much, much more than this when it came to wise advice, information about different cultivars and the general history of Hostas. We think the only solution is to visit the garden next year. I will try to arrange to do this, so look out for information re 2025 garden outings.
<https://www.eastmeongardenclub.com/>

Nicky Staveley





EAST MEON CINEMA

Did you miss us? The good news is that in September, East Meon Cinema will be back. "Hurrah!" you cry. As Meon Matters goes to print, the selection of autumn films is still in the pipeline so, for the moment, here are the Friday evening screening dates for your diaries.

27th September

25th October

29th October

27th December

Come August, there'll be an announcement of a thrilling, new season with something for everyone. Look out for details in on email and Facebook, flyers and posters around the village.

As usual, all the films will be in East Meon Village Hall at 7.30pm on the last Friday of the month. Tickets are a bargain at £6.50 each and there's a bar, ice creams, excellent company and general bonhomie.

If you would like to be kept up to date with what's coming up, join our mailing list. Email Lucy or Caroline at eastmeonmoviola@outlook.com

Looking forward to seeing you again or welcoming you for the first time!

The East Meon Cinema Team





Moving to East Meon

Anna and family moved to the village over Easter. Here's how they've found it:

As a family, we first visited East Meon in lockdown when, like the rest of the world, we were going on lots of walks. Originally from Cumbria and Rutland, work had brought us south, and we lived in Petersfield for several years. We loved the village from our first visit and I knew straight away that the primary school would be awesome for our son, who would have been a little lost in one of the bigger schools in town. We never thought we'd get to live here though. Four years (and countless school runs) later, one of those rare situations in life occurred, where everything unexpectedly goes right. We still can't quite believe we get to live in East Meon.

Meon Matters was one of the first publications we got through the door and I was gobsmacked by the amount going on in one village - from the cinema to the gardening club, there really is something for everyone. I've been amazed by how much useful 'stuff' there is in the village too, like the post-office and the clothes bank. My husband really appreciates being able to see the livestock on the hills on his way to work - apparently, it's 'just like Cumbria, but not always raining.'

Our son says: 'I like playing football at the football pitch with Dad and I like walking up the hills. It's really good being able to walk to school - Mum used to get mean and grumpy in the car. And I like the play area by the cricket pitch.'

People are incredibly kind - they've stopped to introduce themselves and we've had house warming cards through the door. We really enjoyed the boat race and the fete. We've all still got loads to learn about East Meon and the Meon valley as a whole. Right now, we're looking forward to summer and getting stuck in to village life.

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Nature Group

Global Warming is a fact. But predictions of a Mediterranean climate for the UK did not anticipate the challenge of much wetter conditions combined with continuing cold spells. Our wildlife is not well adapted to a climate that disrupts hibernation, feeding and breeding; many species are struggling as a result.

We began our butterfly monitoring above South Farm a couple of months ago and, as I write, the results are worrying. We are seeing very few butterflies - certainly not sustainable populations. Other flying insects are also scarce - a pattern reflected across much of the country. We can only hope for warmer, drier weather that might give our insect populations a chance of recovery.

It is a good time to check out the natural hedges that you helped our Tree Working Group (TWiG) plant 18 months ago. If the butterflies have taken a hit as a result of the warm, wet weather, then the hedges by the cricket pitch and on Workhouse Lane have thrived. These are providing valuable habitat as well as routes for wildlife to move for food and to enable viable breeding populations. TWiG plans further hedge plantings but meanwhile, with the kind permission of Bereleigh who own the land, we have planted four disease-resistant elm trees (donated by South Downs National Park) along Halnaker Lane; this lies to the west of the village where a small number of elms survived Dutch Elm Disease. TWiG is exploring the planting of further elms there which might provide viable habitat for those insects that depend on elm for their lifecycle.

With the natural world struggling for survival, it is timely to remind ourselves of the small things we can do to help. You don't have to hit all the points below but even a small number could help:

- Put a small pond or two around your garden, with a few native pond plants - great for all wild life, especially amphibians and aquatics. The ponds don't need to be big and can be attractive water features.
- Compost some at least of your garden waste - great habitat for worms, beetles etc and food for those that feed on them. It will also save on those journeys to the recycling centre and enable you to return the goodness to your soil later.





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- Minimise your use of chemicals - you may not always feel able to avoid these, but there are plenty of natural predators that will eat your blackfly. Chemicals will often destroy valuable friends of the gardener and the planet but, if you have to use them, go for those that minimise damage to other wildlife.
- Plant nectar and pollen rich plants that are insect friendly, staggered to provide food across the year. Most plant sellers are good at labelling these.
- Leave areas of weed where they are not a threat to your garden. Eg Stinging Nettles are the food source for many of our most beautiful butterflies, whilst dandelions and buttercups are a major source of pollen and nectar for insects.
- Leave a few piles of twigs or logs in the less visible parts of your garden, and try to leave fallen leaves and plant stems on flower beds. These are essential habitat for a range of wildlife that help us as gardeners and that we and our children have grown to love. Bird boxes and bug hotels are also helpful.

These are small things that need not turn your garden into an unmanageable jungle. Your garden will be a richer place for the interest that these can bring. Importantly, they can all help struggling wildlife that we and our children need if planet earth is to remain habitable.

Jonathan Iremonger
<https://eastmeonnature.com/>





South Downs National Park

Want to keep up to date with the varied and interesting activities in the South Downs National Park? Sign up for the South Downs News, the monthly newsletter full of useful information and dates for events across the Park, delivered directly to your inbox. Go to <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/publications/south-downs-news-the-newsletter-for-the-national-park/>.

The SDNPA is also our Local Planning Authority. If you also want to keep up-to-date on the latest planning news in the Park, there's also a Planning Newsletter. Go to <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-newsletter/> to sign up.

If you're looking for something to do over the summer, the South Downs National Park owns the Seven Sisters Country Park on its eastern edge (see <https://www.sevensisters.org.uk/>). As well as stunning views, amazing wildlife and great walking and cycling trails, the Country Park has accommodation to rent for holidays and short breaks. For more information, see <https://www.cuckmerecottagesand-camping.co.uk/>.

Steve Ridgeon
SDNPA Member for East Hampshire Parishes

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W.I.Report - June 2024

Angie Trenchard, our President, reported that our AGM at the previous meeting had gone very well and we welcomed Fiona Hughes on to the Committee. We were all issued with our new programme of events and Angie asked the members to note the change in arrangements for the tea rota. We have introduced a series of competitions throughout the year and for the next meeting it will be 4 scones on a plate, so please get your aprons on and rustle up some tasty scones. Sue Croft has introduced a very good initiative to have a book exchange each meeting, where members who have books which have been read, are brought along so that members can swap them between themselves at a cost of £1 per book which goes towards W.I. funds.



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SJP Approved 10/06/23





Peter Ashburn was our speaker for the afternoon and he gave us a talk on 'Orchids Wild and Beautiful'. Peter is a self-professed orchid lover and even has one of his bedrooms set up to house his collection of cultivated orchids. Luckily his wife is very understanding. He started his talk with a brief history of the introduction of orchids in the 1700 and 1800s, when orchid hunters travelled abroad to collect them to fuel the orchid mania of the wealthy upper classes in England. Peter then gave us a fantastic insight into British wild orchids of which there are 55 varieties, and then explained the wealth of varieties growing in Hampshire, including those growing in ancient woodland such as the rare Sword Leaved Helleborine which grows in Chappetts Copse in West Meon. Noar Hill is a nature reserve near Selborne, which is also a local wild orchid hotspot. Peter then gave us lots of tips for caring for our cultivated orchids, which was very useful and it was interesting to hear that they love to be watered with rainwater and they thrive on neglect.

Sue Kinloch

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The Duck race is Back !

The weather forecast was not looking bright, but it just held off for us on the afternoon of Wednesday the 27th of March, when a flock of excited children and parents waddled down from the school gates to the bridge, outside the Izaak Walton Pub, for this year's Duck race. We had 9 heats with a total of 95 beautifully decorated little yellow ducklings racing to the finish line. There was one heat for each year group as well as one for the Village Nursery and one for local businesses that had very kindly donated £10/duck in the support for the school, Thank you!

All participants got a chocolate treat for taking part and one lucky child from each heat won themselves an Easter egg. We all had a lovely afternoon and a great way to finish off the term before the Easter break so watch this space next year when the Ducks will yet again be floating down the river.

As mentioned, a special thank you goes to our local businesses who very kindly supported the school by taking part in this years Duck race; - The Izaak Walton Pub, Solent MX5, Deans Decorating ltd, Autovalet Supplies, Hampshire Drainage, dashcollective.cc, Burley Geach Solicitors and Marchant Tree Care.

Sofie Blood
FEMS – Friends of East Meon School





Musical delights at West Meon

There will be plenty of musical treats in store this year at the 14th annual West Meon Music Festival (12th to 15th September) with an award-winning pianist, a group of world-renowned baroque musicians, and two of the UK's most-talented young string players joining the Primrose Piano Quartet for eight concerts over the four days.

Highlights from the festival include piano quartets by Mozart, Schumann and Brahms as well as a rarely-performed piano sextet by Sergei Lyapunov, who fled to Paris after the 1917 Russian revolution, when the quartet will be joined by double bassist Will Duerden and violinist Tom Aldren.

While most concerts are held at West Meon's St John the Evangelist Church, the festival also extends elsewhere into the Meon Valley. Cutting edge baroque quartet Red Priest (named after the original "red priest" – Antonio Vivaldi) have been delighting audiences across the globe since 1997 and will be bringing their unique style of high-energy performances and theatrical presentation to East Meon church on the morning on Saturday 14th September. "Truly Madly Baroque" will explore themes of love, joy and madness. Later in the day the lovely 12th century Church of Our Lady in Warnford is home to a recital by the Primrose's string players of works by Purcell and Mozart.

On Sunday morning (15th September) Lithuanian pianist Gabrielė Sutkutė – winner of some 20 international piano competitions – will be performing works by Rameau, Brahms, Debussy and Prokofiev in West Meon, while that afternoon's festival finale sees the Primrose Piano Quartet focussing on "German Romantics" with works by Felix Mendelssohn, his sister Fanny, Emilie Mayer and Robert Schumann.





In addition there will be a late-night jazz concert by local band, East of Meon, at West Meon's iconic Thomas Lord pub in aid of Cosham-based The Elizabeth Foundation – the UK's leading charity for pre-school deaf children; the charity uses music as part of its therapy to help them to talk and communicate.

Ticket prices start at £19 and the box office will open at the beginning of June. For full details of all concerts visit www.westmeonmusic.co.uk.



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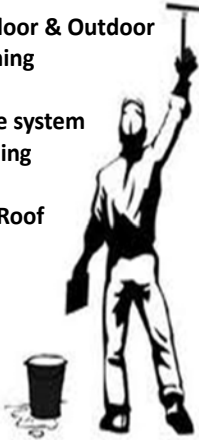
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May Fair

Saturday May 18th was a very busy day with the May Fair stretching from the morning Great East Meon Boat Race to Nuthin Yet headlining the four band music line up late at night. In between we had a maypole dance, some closely contested kids races, a range of stalls, tea and cake, an ice cream wagon, slides, a train ride, the dog show, burgers and a roast pig, and much more, all in aid of the village hall and its refurb. The boat race is covered elsewhere in this issue but has now been established as a fabulous addition to the village annual events - well done David Lewin. Our new head school head Cat Olver, megaphone in hand, had the kids' activities well under control. We seemed to have several boys instead of the normal May Queen, but that's the 21st century;- equality cuts both ways these days and opportunities to shine come in unexpected ways.

Music was a big feature with Train of Soul, who rehearse in the village led off with a northern soul inspired set. They were followed by Richard Cousins, then latin jazz from East of Meon and village based Nuthin Yet. The set up used the hall car park as the dance floor with the bank behind it as the stage, and a bar built from pallets (christened the Izaak on the Green) serving the beer. Nothing is perfect. A review is planned on whether the date, the revised layout and schedule worked at what we can do better next year. Ideas and feedback are welcomed. Special thanks go to Peter Lague who directed the set up and take down efforts, Matt Millward as sound engineer and technical supremo, Diana Probyn and the tea room crew, of course David Pepper and David Lewin for planning the whole day (which Mr Pepper sadly missed through illness) and Richard Gaisford and Chris Hollis for commentary

Andrew Hughes







School Pupils Comments on the May Fair and Boat Race

We have has some fabulous reporting from the school on the events of May 18th.

Explorers (Yr 3/4) have written the following piece about the May Pole Dancing:

When we first saw the maypole and the video of other people maypole dancing, there was a mixture of emotions. Some of us were excited and some of us were nervous. When we started to practice it was a bit confusing but then we saw the ribbons swirl around the pole in a pretty, colourful pattern. As we practiced, we felt more confident and began to really enjoy the dancing.

On the day of the May Fair, we were really proud of ourselves because we were nervous to dance in front of everybody but we all did an excellent job, even though there was a problem with the music.

“I felt a bit confused as I had never seen dancing like this and I was a little anxious but I was also excited to have a go.” Elliott B

“I was really excited but a bit worried that I would let go of the ribbon.” Lylah R

“I felt quite embarrassed when everyone clapped but very proud of myself overall.” Hattie P

“I thought it was fun, even though I was very nervous and I would like to do it again.” Otis L





Adventurers (yr 1/2) have written this piece about the boat race:

Mr Lewin came into Adventurers Class and showed us some ideas of how we could make a boat. We had to bring in a plastic milk bottle which we cut to make a boat shape. We used coloured tape, pipe cleaners, stickers and lollipop sticks to decorate our boats. We used cocktail sticks to make flag poles and ribbon to make them look pretty!

We then took them down to the river in East Meon on the day of the May Fair where they were entered into a race.

Pixie said, 'I enjoyed watching the race to see who would win.'

Eyja said, 'I enjoyed coming second in the race! I also enjoyed watching the May Pole dancing.'

Alice said, 'I enjoyed creating the boat. I worked with Orla and we used pipe cleaners and ribbons on our boats.'

'I came ninth place in the race,' Amber

We look forward to doing it again next year!





I really enjoyed going on the bus because it kept beeping its vintage horn and it sounded really weird. The May Fair was full of things to do with lots of stalls selling things like: fizzy drinks, food, cakes, lucky dips, bouncy castles and lots more fun stuff. There was even a tractor ride that pulled you along and a dog show!

There were lots of running races for each year group including yr6, yr5, yr4, yr3, yr2, yr1, yrR and even preschool. The best thing is that everybody was allowed to come no matter how old you are or young. I think everybody enjoyed the fair.

By Alex Sydenham





Meon Matters!!!!

I loved the May fair, because us year 6's got to go on an old fashioned bus to the boat race, and we started the whole boat race by all of us saying from 10 to 0. Then, the starting crew put the first lot of boats in the river.

I love it when the whole of the village gets together at the village hall doing lots of games, at lots of little stalls set up to win prizes and sweets! It started at 11am and went on to 11pm.

The entertainment at the fair was:

- the year 3-4 Maypole dance,
- bouncy castles,
- running races and sack races,
- tractor ride

There was also live music on all day from 11am-23:00 (11pm).

By Alfie Powney

Meon Matters

I loved the May Fair because I like it when the village gets together and I feel that our new head teacher has opened up our sports activities more. I liked going on the bus to open the boat race and so did my friends. I had a great time and will definitely watch the next year— sixes opening the fair. The only bad thing is that everything is getting going just as I'm leaving.

By Rowan Marchant





Labrador Lola Wins the Dog Show

At the East Meon May Fair my sister Isabelle entered our Labrador Lola into the young handler dog competition. Lola was really well behaved and did everything Isabelle asked her to do. She did so well she won!

Then I entered her into the Best Dog in show competition. I walked her round the outside of the ring and she was brilliant and walked right by my side. We then had to walk around the judge and back again.

The judges spent ages looking at all the other dogs in the competition. There were lots of really lovely dogs all very well behaved and all shapes and sizes. After what felt like a long wait the judge called me over and handed us a red 1st place rosette and a trophy! I couldn't believe it!

I was so happy and so pleased with Lola! She's a really good dog.

Amelie Symington, age 12, former E.M primary pupil





Great East Meon Boat Race 2024

The third annual running of the Great East Meon Boat Race took place on the morning of the May Fair on the 18th May. With 3 different classes, there was plenty of diversity and originality with a few veteran competitors beginning to understand that a little displacement below the water allows the stream to get a better ‘grip’ and carry them through – providing they don’t run aground!

This year’s entry was 74 boats, up 4 on last year but slightly down on adult participation so grown-ups need to do better next year! East Meon Church of England Primary School dedicated the whole of the previous morning to boat construction, some 90 plus boats being built in total with some amazing designs and freedom of expression.

As always great thanks to the Village Hall team and Peter Lague for fixing the safety netting along the course, to David Pepper for the Start and Finish signs and the Izaak Walton for the loan of the tables and chairs.

Last year the Boat Race was opened by the May Queen but as there were only boys in Year 6 moving on this year we had all Kings. They arrived in the most amazing ‘charabanc’ and did a great job in exciting the crowd, opening the proceedings and using the poles to push the boats out of the reeds.




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Although the weather forecast had been dodgy all week, the day was bright and the rain the previous day had given us enough water flow to ensure good racing. The Class 1 milk carton boats were first away with wins by Zach, Jacob Stringer, Robin Smith and Henry B. Class 2 had to fit the same dimensions as Class 1 but construction was free. The heat winners were Oliver Stanley and Joey Larke. Class 3 is the 'unlimited' class with some fine vessels such as Peter Lague's coastal tanker (although it spent an awful lot of the time on its side). The winner here was Hayden. Other notable vessels were the Dobson's twig and leaf canoe, Liz Pecoock's 'Hoovercraft', a very well constructed catamaran and Reuben's Platform Supply Vessel. Yet again the East Meon River Patrol frigate was in attendance as guard ship along with the new addition to the fleet, our very own nuclear submarine anchored in the fairway. The bar has been set pretty high for next year.

As well as the good sports who took part this year, considerable thanks must also go to the good sports who sponsored and supported the event enabling us to make a substantial amount of money towards the Village Hall Overhaul Project. These were Bereleigh Estate, Petersfield Service Centre, Wilson Atkinson Farms, MK Brand, Dampney's Remarkable Drinks, M J Tosdevine, the Pub with No Name, Lily and Bean, Winchester Market Cheese Stall and Ye Olde George Inn.

Thanks also to all helpers (wet and dry), registrars, judges and all who made the event such a success. We won't be using milk cartons again next year (enough is enough after 2 years and cutting up 200 plastic bottles) but we are rather thinking the theme might be the Story of Aluminium – an element which is very hard to extract for the first time but very easy and cheap to recycle. What could you do with a beer can or some aluminium foil? You have 9 months to think about it....!"

David Lewin





Cat Olver – East Meon Primary School

Thank you to all the children of East Meon school for writing some great questions for your new Head teacher, Miss Olver. Cat Olver joined East Meon Primary School as Head teacher in January 2024.

Why did you want to be a Head teacher?

My Grandad was a Head teacher when I was a little girl, I suppose he was my role model. I enjoyed working with children and wanted to be able to make a difference.

Out of all the schools you could have chosen, why did you choose ours?

I wanted to work in a small school so I would get to know all the children as individuals. East Meon is such a beautiful village and the school has amazing outside space. Everyone was really warm and friendly when I came to visit.

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**What were you doing before this school?**

I was a Deputy head teacher at Upham C of E Primary school and I taught in the year 5/6 class.

What is your favourite hobby?

I enjoy running and try to get out for a run most days. I have run a marathon before. To relax I like reading.

Do you have any favourite animals or pets?

My favourite animal is a hedgehog, because they are really cute! I've always liked them since I was a little girl and had pictures on my wall. I have a pet dog called Flash, he is a chocolate Labrador and we like to go on walks together.

Why did you paint the wall in your office?

I wanted to have a space that felt calm and safe so I could concentrate.

Why did you bring in kindness certificates?

I think being kind is a really important quality. I wanted to recognise, reward and promote kindness in our school.

Thank you to Cat for answering the children's questions, and welcome to the East Meon Community!

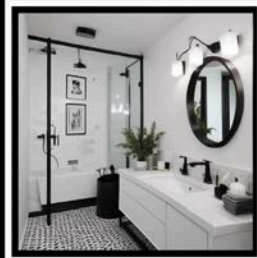




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East Meon Village Fair Dog Show

So who has the waggiest tale in East Meon, and which dog looks most like their owner? The tension on the green on May 18th wasn't nail biting but a lot of fun was had, kids parents and dogs performed in the dog show. The smiles were very bright, especially Amelie Symington's (who was at East Meon school) and her labrador Lola, who were awarded best in show. A few emotional tears were spotted as elderly dogs won rosettes. The most creative entry was the lady with the big dashing red fox Labrador who fixed a hat on him (to match hers for the dog most like its owner) and the surreal entry of Blackie (a stuffed toy dog) in the under seven class, who came second (in a field of two). A lesson learned was that Obedience was a rather forbidding class title. Despite Val and Mo's gentle expertise and coaching of the entries that overcame a reluctance to show off their abilities, an Agility class might have been a bigger draw.

The full list of winners were.

- Best Bitch Loxi
- Handsomest Dog Hippo
- Prettiest puppy Oakly
- Dog and Handler – under 7 Bexta
- Dog and handler – 7-14 Lola
- Waggiest tale Nova
- Dog Most Like its Owner Bertie
- Obedience Nola
- Best in Show Lola



It was never going to be Crufts;- especially with the organiser's brand of it will be all right on the night organisation. Happily Anella Parker-Martin stepped in to provide some much needed discipline, and to replace the cup (lost by the previous winner), rosettes, entry tickets got ordered from EBay, and Olivia Hickling, Val and Mo Uden and Stewart stepped up to help on the day. Special thanks to Dan and Janice Roper from Hythe who came over to judge the classes.

Andrew Hughes





Kids Football in East Meon

Meon Matters recently caught up with Nigel May who runs Aspire Coaching – which is 25 years old this year, and often uses the East Meon pitch.

1.) You have been coming to the East Meon football pitch for a while now - how did you get into football coaching originally?

I got into coaching at 16, running the Petersfield Cub team and after finishing playing with Petersfield Town Juniors I started volunteer coaching the U9s. Whilst at University I got work experience with Portsmouth FC and then set up Aspire Coaching with my friend 3 years later. Aspire turns 25 this summer. I was manager at West Meon and whilst cricket was on in summer we did pre-season training and friendlies at East Meon due to our friendly relationship. I also ran sports sessions for children when restrictions eased and people were allowed to meet during lockdown, which were great fun.

2) Tell us about your history with the football ground.

Going back about 25 years there was a big rivalry between East and West Meon football teams in the Meon Valley League, although many of us were friends and still are to this day. We used to arrive at East Meon to a shack with no roof or electricity in the field. As time went on rivalries eased and the facilities improved at East Meon significantly. West Meon became a Saturday team with East Meon playing on Sundays so many played for both. Sadly the Meon Valley League no longer exists and lower grassroots men's football is diminishing.

3) How does EM compare to other local village football pitches?

The quality of the pitch is great. It helps that it's a large space and fenced in. It's safe and flat with plenty of parking. The scenery is amazing and peaceful. The pavilion inside has good facilities - lots of storage, showers, plenty of toilets and wash basins all in great condition. A little hidden away, but when you know where it is - it's great!

4) What is the most popular age for children learning football? How can we keep them interested?

I'm Head of Mini Football and on the executive committee at Petersfield Town FC and the club is full to bursting at the moment. We have over 50 teams under our umbrella from U5s to Veterans. We have lots of girls teams too which tripled in the last 2 seasons. The U9s to U11s are the most popular age groups. The best way to keep kids interested is to create safe and fun environments whilst reaching out individually so they feel wanted and part of the team.





5) What do you think the barriers are to children coming to play team sports generally?

The main barriers to children playing sport is they rely on parents/carers for transport and to pay... It's not easy, taking up whole weekends and evenings. If parents aren't interested then the children are going suffer. Costs are a vicious circle – keeping facilities up to date is expensive, but people often can't afford the fees... Meanwhile the big clubs get bigger and small clubs lose out.

6) You recently ran a girl's tournament on the EM pitch - how did that go? Are girls more interested in playing?

I ran a girl's football tournament for local primary schools. 8 schools came along and all played 5 matches, with Froxfield the eventual champions. Everyone really enjoyed it and the support for each of the teams was amazing. Girl's football is expanding rapidly with Petersfield and Clanfield Football Clubs having lots of teams. Because of the success of England Lionesses girls are finally getting more opportunities and safe spaces to play and express themselves.

7) Why are team sports so important, especially for young people?

Team sports help children develop so many skills for life. As well as all the physical benefits, social interaction, communication, a sense of belonging and working together help mentally as well and can give a huge sense of achievement and relief from the stresses of life.

8) Who do you support?! Why?

I am Liverpool fan - they were the best team back in the late 70s, early 80s – and I've stuck with Liverpool through thick and thin!

9) Have you met any famous footy stars?

I've met a few players and also been lucky enough to start some off on their football journeys. Calum Chambers (Southampton, Arsenal and England), currently at Aston Villa; George Wickens - goalkeeper at Fulham; George Milner-Smith at Aldershot and Sam Paul at Reading hoping to breakthrough. I coached these boys at a young age at Petersfield.

10) What are your top tips if someone is interested in joining a club/team?

Anyone interested in joining a team should look up their local clubs. I've mentioned Petersfield Town and Clanfield FC. There is hockey, cricket and many other sports available locally.

If you want to start a club you have to be dedicated and give a lot of time but it is so worthwhile and there is always support around if you ask.

Thanks Nigel.

<https://www.aspirecoaching.org.uk/>





D-Day Anniversary

Thank you for turning out in such large numbers on Thursday evening to mark this moving occasion. We were expecting 50, maybe 70, never 150. We were out-chaired and almost out-glassed. But it was worth it. There are many thank you's to make.

First, to Mike Critchley and Neal Croft who talked so sombrely and authoritatively, capturing the room instantly with that shocking sequence from Saving Private Ryan. Neal reinforced just how horrendous D-Day was and that we should remember not to glorify it. Ordinary people doing extraordinary things and giving so much. And Mike's typically dark humour extended to warning us that every ship can be a mine sweeper, once. Matt (and Spielberg) thank you for all the tech support.

I apologise that we run out of time for a proper Q&A, but I am glad we broke for the bells. The Band at All Saints led by Pam Barnsley were keen to participate in the nationally coordinated 'Ringing out for Peace' campaign. East Meon were joined by ringers from Petersfield and Soberton, enabling them to ring rounds and call changes on all 10 bells for the full 45 minutes, hence the joyful sound. So, thank you to Pam and her team, who (by the way) are always keen to welcome new members – no experience necessary. For more information contact Pam Barnsley at pmbarnsley@hotmail.com.

And for the grand finale we had Tom Tyrwhitt-Drake lighting the beacon on top of Park Hill as part of an international 'Lights of Peace' initiative. Thank you, Tom.

Given the enormity of what we heard and saw, the conviviality of the company, the excellent refreshments (thank you Alastair, Diana, Betty and Charles) and delicious nibbles (thank you Sue, Sue, Susan, Melanie, Anella, Bill, Helen and Mary), it's no surprise that you donated so generously to our 3 military charities. With some judicious rounding and the added generosity of the Village Hall, together we raised a staggering £900!





Funds in the name of East Meon will be donated this week to The Royal British Legion, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, and ABF The Soldiers Charity.

As has been said before, East Meon really does pull out all the stops when it comes to commemorations. Thank you everybody.



History Group Archive of Village Photographs

This is a new item for Meon Matters and assuming it proves popular the History Group is keen to make its considerable archive a regular feature in the magazine.

Serendipity of course played a part in getting us to this point. First of all, Fiona Wyatt gathered together a group of 10 or so long-standing, good-natured residents and former residents to help the History Group put names, dates and places to a collection of archive photographs. Whilst sometimes emotional, great fun was had by all and our 2 hours together rushed by. This is something we will definitely repeat.

And at almost the same time, huge interest was generated across the village in a 1949 photograph (also from the archive) of a lone policeman and bicycle on top of Park Hill.

From here, it didn't take long for the History Group to join up the dots! So please, if you can help us put names, dates and places to these photographs, do email the History Group via the contact page at www.eastmeonhistory.net. For historical reasons, our archive can be found at www.eastmeonhistory.org.uk.

And by chance, if you have photographs of interest you would like to see added to the archive, we will happily scan these and return them to you.

Ian Wesley



Garden Club, Annual Show, L to R, Paddy Mason, Monique Aldridge, Bert Perry, Shirley Kitcher, Keith Kitcher, n.k., Lesley Dampney, Zara Kitcher in front



Flower Show winners

L-to-R back row: Keith Kitcher, Susan Hull, Molly Dicker, Adrian Pelly
 front row: Lisa Kittcher, Claire Wilkinson, Bun Roper



Best kept village, 1986. Left to right, John Whitear, Richard Burley, Michal Atkinson,
 Bessie Tucker, Jean Rocket, Freddy Standfield, Dennis Mason





Cricket team on tour



Cricket team





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East Meon Bees and the Asian Hornet

You may have heard about Asian Hornets in the news recently, as last year the UK has suffered its biggest incursion to date of this non-native species. We have gone from just a single nest in 2016 to 72 nests in 2023.

Why should any of us care, though?

Whilst the Asian Hornet does not pose any more danger to people than our native European Hornet, it is a prolific hunter of insects – eating ALL pollinators – but especially a threat to honeybees, as they hawk outside a hive and pick off returning forager bees.

France and Belgium were badly hit last year, and numbers are building in the UK. Number-crunchers have estimated that the economic impact of the loss of bee colonies in France could amount to €30.8 million per year and other estimated losses throughout Europe are huge.

For all you keen gardeners, walkers, tree surgeons: it is worth knowing that Asian Hornets are much more aggressive than our native European Hornet if you get too close to their nest.

So, what is being done and what can you do to help?

A public awareness campaign has been initiated by DEFRA, the NNSS (Non-Native Species Secretariat), APHA (Animal & Plant Health Agency) and NBU (National Bee Unit). Among them these departments aim to increase awareness, to both help control the advance of this insect and to protect employees and the public.

Beekeepers across the nation – and across Europe – are uniting to try and stop the spread. It is an uphill battle, and we need as many eyes as possible to help us! Research by experienced insect geneticists is revealing that just one queen introduced to France in 2004 may be responsible for the spread of the entire invasion we have now. But when a nest is spotted and destroyed, the rate of proliferation is considerably slowed.





If you think you spot an Asian Hornet, try to take a photo and note exactly where you are.

Download the Asian Hornet Watch App on your phone and report your sighting, using the photo you took. Or if you prefer you can send a photo via www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport

The photo will be automatically sent to the NBU and inspectors will come to the site as soon as possible. Please do not attempt to catch or kill the hornet. It is essential that it can be traced back to its nest and for the nest to be destroyed. Licensed staff from APHA and the NBU take over to track down and destroy the nest. It is illegal for non-licensed organisations to do this.

Thank you in advance for your help!

Pip Sweeney.



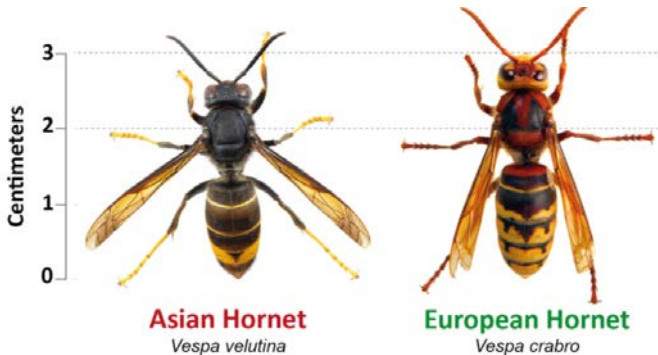
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Have you downloaded the Asian Hornet Watch App?
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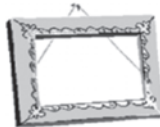
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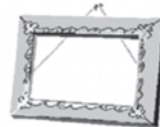
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Clarkson's Farm. Good or bad for farming?

I have just now finished Season 3 of Clarkson's Farm and to answer what many people ask us; yes, farmers think it's great! In my view the Amazon Prime series has publicised the challenges and realities of farming life better than 'Countryfile' has in years. Yes, Jeremy is a buffoon and his farming is hopeless, but his 'will' to try and think outside the box has made the series gripping and resonate to the general public.

Series 2 followed the challenges the farm had fighting a council who weren't open to change and accept farms must be highly diversified to survive. Series 3 followed this up with Jeremy challenging his new farm manager Kaleb to an Arable Farming vs 'Non-conventional' Farming competition.

You ask any farmer, they would love to make enough money just from growing food and we wouldn't have to do all the 'non-conventional farming'. Jeremy gets goats, sets up a farm shop, grows mushrooms, homemade jam, tries trout farming, grows wasabi, mustard seeds and tries his hand at 'regen' arable.

I sat watching this thinking we really have had to diversify hard at home to survive and thrive. A campsite, pantry, farm tours, public events, paw paddock, storage and maybe beavers...

Kaleb on the other hand, did straight arable farming. Simply put, spend loads of money on fertilisers, fuel and seed then pray for most of the year that the weather is kind in order to harvest a crop worth something... Last year he managed to make a profit which he

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spent on next year's fertiliser. This year I'm not sure he will be so lucky.

Farming is a tough game. Being highly diversified is of course hard work but completely necessary in order to have a sustainable business. It is also great fun!

Well done to Clarkson's Farm for educating the public and remember, buy local and support your local farms!

Will Atkinson



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Summer Barbeques

If the weather ever gets a little bit more summery, here are some recipes for bbq-ing lamb. We are a village surrounded by lamb and nothing beats home-grown bbq'd lamb!

Sticky Maple Glazed Lamb Chops

Serves 2, prep time 5mins, cook time under 15mins!

4 lamb chops / cutlets

Grated zest of 1 lemon

2 tablespoons of balsamic / red wine vinegar

2-3 tablespoons maple syrup / honey

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Extra lemon zest to garnish

Method:

1. Season the chops and coat with lemon zest all over
2. Cook on a prepared BBQ for 5-7 mins on each side
3. Meanwhile in a small bowl mix the vinegar, maple syrup, cinnamon together
4. Brush the chops with the glaze on both sides
5. Return and cook for a further 1-2 mins on each side
6. Garnish the chops with extra lemon zest & serve on a bed of salad





Moroccan style butterflied leg of lamb

Serves 6-8, preparation time 30 minutes, cooking 40-50 minutes.

Ingredients

- 50g butter, melted
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp each ground cumin, coriander and paprika
- 1 tbsp thyme leaves
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- zest and juice 1 lemon
- 1 tsp harissa
- 2 ½kg leg of lamb, butterflied

For the sauce

- 1 tsp harissa
- handful fresh coriander leaves, roughly chopped
- 300g Greek yogurt



Method

STEP 1

Mix the butter and oil in a bowl, then stir in the spices, thyme, garlic, lemon zest and juice. Add the harissa, 1 teaspoon of salt and plenty of freshly ground black pepper, and mix well.

STEP 2

Put the butterflied lamb (see step-by-step guide) in a large shallow dish and spoon over the marinade. Using your hands, rub it all over the meat. Cover loosely with foil or cling film and leave to marinate for at least 2 hours, or overnight in the fridge.

STEP 3

Light the barbecue, adding plenty of coals. When it is ready, add the lamb, fat-side down, and cook on a fairly high heat for 5 mins until well browned. Turn over and cook for another 5 minutes to brown the other side.

STEP 4

Move the coals to the sides of the barbecue to reduce the heat under the meat and cook more gently for 30-40 mins, turning occasionally. This timing will give you pink meat.

STEP 5

Remove the meat to a large board and cover tightly with foil. Leave to rest for 10-15 mins.

STEP 6

For the sauce, fold the harissa, a little salt and the coriander into the yogurt. Cut the lamb into thick slices and serve with the sauce and couscous.

Recipes sourced from Will Atkinson.





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