



Easton Village Newsletter

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NATURE NOTES 57



What a long winter it has been! But at last – Look at the grass, sucked by the seed from dust, / Whose blood is the spring rain, whose food the sun/.... The first symbol of spring for me was a Brimstone butterfly on 16th March, on exactly the same date as last year! This was followed immediately by the big, buff-tailed *terrestris* bumblebee and the pink-tailed *pratorum* bumblebee, which is a particularly important pollinator for soft fruit. And then, on the 21st I spotted a large clump of frogspawn in the Easton Brook, some thirty yards downstream from the footbridge where it was last year. If you look you will notice that there seem to be several clusters together and a couple slightly apart. Female frogs like to combine their efforts and this mass is clearly the product of several frogs. Frogs spawn in shallow, often temporary pools such as water-filled wheel ruts, to avoid predation by fish, so garden ponds with goldfish won't do. They don't usually use running water but the Brook is so shallow and by June usually ceases to flow altogether. Tadpoles here run the risk either of being swept away in a sudden downpour, or dying from drought before their legs have grown and they are ready to hop out. But it only needs three or four frogs to survive to maturity from this mass of spawn to keep the wheels of life turning. And they have managed to do this for millions of years, so the gamble must work.

Brian Davis

CHIMNEY SWEEP

The arrival of the Chimney Sweep is a sure sign that the winter must be over! This year he will be in the village on Thursday and Friday, 23rd and 24th April: if you would like him to call, please let Kath Goodwin know by Saturday 10th April (tel: 890372).

49 CLUB

Ivan Yates was the lucky winner of the February draw.

SERVICES IN APRIL – ALL IN THE CHURCH

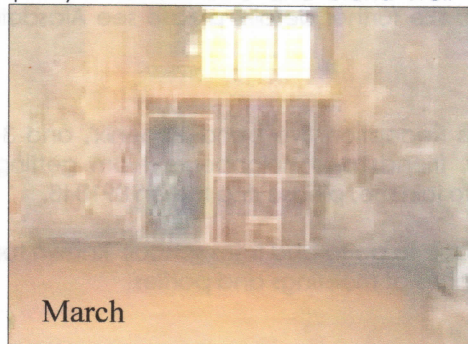


2 nd April (Good Friday)	-	9.00 a.m. Matins for Good Friday
4 th April (Easter Day)	-	9.30 a.m. Easter Festival Eucharist
11 th April	-	6.00 p.m. Evensong
18 th April	-	9.30 a.m. Sunday Worship
25 th April	-	8.00 a.m. Eucharist

The Church will be decorated for Easter on the afternoon of Saturday 3rd April from about 2.00 p.m. onwards. Any help with this would be much appreciated, as would gifts of flowers or arrangements. Help would also be welcome during the Saturday morning for final cleaning and dusting after the builders leave on Maundy Thursday (1st April) to make sure our beautiful church building looks its best on Easter Day.

EASTON COMMUNITY PROJECT: UPDATE MARCH 2010

Despite the cold weather, the work in the church has gone ahead to schedule and should be completed by Easter. Many of you will already have seen the beautiful oak screen around the new Meeting Room/Vestry. The quatrefoil design around the top was designed to match that around the top of the tower outside, just below the spire, and this pattern is continued along the top of the new tower screen. The new limestone pavings at the back of the Nave are from Ancaster quarry in Lincolnshire and blend well with the Weldon stone walls.



March

Inside the Tower, a new floor has been laid with hand-made tiles from the Burwell Brick & Tile Works north of Cambridge. They



January

have covered up the circular fire pit which was discovered in the south west corner when the old brick floor was taken up and which created great interest. Experts agreed that it was concerned with bell founding though dates varied between 14th and 16th centuries. A toilet has been installed within a cubicle leaving a passage to the west door, which will be re-hung the other way round. An 1830 Carron safe was also discovered in a corner of the tower. A new key was made by a locksmith but only a 1957

halfpenny coin was found inside, though this is now worth £3 to collectors! The old pews at the back of the Nave and the font have been moved into the south aisle. Interestingly, when the concrete floor was taken up, an older site for the font was uncovered immediately behind the western-most pillar, and one can still see where this was cut away to allow the top of the font to nestle against it. The floor of the north porch has now been lowered so that the re-laid slabs will slope down to the level of the Nave floor for disabled access. Within the Meeting room itself, cupboards and

a kitchenette have yet to be fitted, but a lovely, folding oak table has been given for use by the Parish Council and other groups, and the Social Committee is looking into the purchase of new chairs. Several groups have worked hard in the rest of the church to clean and restore the pews and furniture, but more is planned and offers of help are welcome.

The total cost of all this work is £92,448, including architect and Health & Safety fees. It is met by net grants totalling £76,441 plus fund-raising and donations to date of £5,718 (excluding Gift Aid), and the residual PCC Millennium Fund sum of £1,150. We are particularly grateful to Woodford Waste Management Ltd., The Donarborn Community Fund, The Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust and Huntingdonshire District Council, all of whom have given substantial grants to the project. This leaves a balance of £9,139 which is covered by the £10,000 loan from the Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust, repayable over four years. Further contributions from anyone who is still planning to make a donation will therefore be gratefully received.

The Easton Community Project Steering Group has now completed its work and all members should be congratulated on their achievements. In its place, the Easton Community Management

Group has been constituted to manage the use of the new facilities under guidelines agreed with the PCC and with Woodford Waste Management who contributed the major grant. The Chairman is George Harlow.



EASTON CHURCH WINDOWS AND A LITTLE EASTON HISTORY

Beth Davis

Every five years (or "Quinquennium") our church architect, Julian Limentani, carries out a survey of the church building and highlights the work that needs to be done before his next 'Quinquennial' survey. Our last Quinquennial survey was in 2008. The glass in the clerestory windows, above the arcade, has for years been deteriorating and needs to be replaced. With estimates from a glazier of about £5,000 (inc. architect's fees) and a grant offer of £1,500 from the Historic Churches Trust the PCC have decided to go ahead and have the work carried out at, or as near as, the same time as the alterations. (The PCC holds a special fabric fund that is topped up whenever possible from fund raising events in Easton, such as the recent Quiz Night). Linda Ramsay, daughter of Tom Ramsay who died two years ago and lived in Easton, is to paint six of the new diamond quarries with a small note saying 'Tom Ramsay, Churchwarden 1945-1970' to his memory; Tom cared for the church during the years of oil lamps and the dreaded Turtle stove, and mowed the churchyard as if it was his own garden. The clerestory window glass was replacement in 1897 after the church underwent a major restoration; the architects then were Sidney Inskip Ladds, Diocesan Architect to Ely Diocese, and his father John Ladds who painted that wonderful water colour of the church in 1907; John Ladds came from farming families in Spaldwick and Ellington who owned land in Easton. The four clerestory windows may date from when the very fine nave roof was built in 1630 by the Duke of Manchester, or even earlier in the 16th century. The glazier is Dave Phillips and you may see him walking on the south aisle roof making templates for the windows ... as well as Matthew Pinnock cutting the Ancaster stone in the churchyard for the new stone floor.

ROTARY YOUNG MUSICIANS' CONCERT

Robert Burton will be taking part in this concert on Sunday 25th April at 3.00 p.m. in the Performing Arts Centre at Hinchingsbrooke School. Robert won the first round competition in Huntingdon a few weeks ago and was awarded the trophy for the best musician in the competition. There will be other performers from Spaldwick School, as well as a number of other talented young musicians. Please come, support and be entertained by these fantastic young people. Tickets are £6, available from Malcolm Halliday on 890125.

CHARITY FIELD

A 4-acre field at the bottom of Woolley Hill (on the corner of the A14 and Woolley Hill) will become available for rent very soon. It would be suitable for cattle, sheep or horses. If anyone would like further details, please see Alasdair Graham (tel. 890411).

HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL Richard Burton

The May Ball will take place on the evening of Friday 14th May with Pimms Reception, live band 'Phoenix', and 3-course meal in Hinchingsbrooke House for £30 each. Open to all parents, friends and neighbours, I am getting together an Easton table or two. If you would like further details or would like to join me, please ring me on 891848.



R.I.P. 'Jeeves' 25.3.10. For 14 years friend of the children using The Lane to go to and from school; known for his enjoyment of walks around the village and occasional appearances at meetings and parties.

