

# Easton Village Newsletter

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### FARMER BURTON'S COUNTRY TALK

From a very cold December (recorded down to  $-13^{\circ}$  one night) to a wet January, my wheat looks a bit sad but like us all, it's looking forward to some warmth and sunshine to get it growing again. It is very difficult to do any land work until it starts to dry but there is always work to be done on a farm (not just shooting, Geoff P!!). Maintenance of machines is always ongoing and very appealing on a cold day in a warm workshop. James was thrilled on our December shoot to bag his first woodcock, which are notoriously difficult to hit. As the name implies, the woodcock is a woodland bird. They feed at night or in the evenings, searching for invertebrates in soft ground with their long bills. The pin feathers of the woodcock (found at the joint in the middle of the wing) are traditionally removed and placed in your hat and use to be used as brush-tips by artists, who use them for fine painting work. The Game shooting season ends on February 1<sup>st</sup> but I will continue to feed wheat grains to the pheasants all year round because when the hens start to lay their eggs in March they get out of condition and are susceptible to predators such as foxes. It is not only the pheasants that benefit as I see many small birds when feeding, such as flocks of finches. Last Tuesday, just before Brampton Hut, on the left hand side, Jill was lucky enough to see four red deer grazing in the wheat field. They have magnificent antlers and have been spotted several times now, so keep an eye out if you are not driving (OK Dave??)



### 49 CLUB

The December draw was won by Margaret Halliday.

### FIVE PARISH AUTUMN FAIR!

Every year the Five Parish Advent Fair has seemed to get colder and colder! As an experiment the 2011 Five Parish joint fundraising will take the form of an Autumn Fair, to be held in Grafham Village Hall on Saturday 10 September, 2011 from 1.00-4.00pm. It is a long way ahead, but could we start thinking how we can make it a success? Ideas and offers of help will be gratefully received by Sue on 453350 from now on.

Sue Young

### CHURCH NEWS

Don't forget the Christingle service at 4.30 p.m. on 31<sup>st</sup> January! Services during February will be:

6<sup>th</sup> February - 9.30 a.m. Sunday Worship

13<sup>th</sup> February - 6.00 p.m. Evensong

20<sup>th</sup> February - 9.30 a.m. Eucharist

27<sup>th</sup> February - 6.00 p.m. Evening Eucharist

### QUIZ NIGHT

The annual quiz takes place on 5<sup>th</sup> February and you can still obtain tickets right up to the day. Contact any member of the PCC.

### AN INVITATION FROM OUR NEW BISHOP OF ELY

Children from our schools and parishes are warmly invited to share in a special event with Bishop Stephen to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> March at St Mary's Church, Ely beginning at 11 a.m. immediately before the Bishop's installation in the cathedral. (Arrive at 10.45.) The children will see Bishop Stephen presented with his special vestments and then they will process with him to the Cathedral and celebrate with a balloon release! There will be refreshments in St Mary's church hall after the balloon release at midday. If any children would like to go, please let Beth Davis know no later than Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February. (tel: 890625).

### SPRINGFIELD AGRICULTURAL RAILWAY



Steve Thomason

The Springfield Agricultural Railway has been built to take manure from the stables at the back of the house to dump it at the far end of the fields (crossing the public footpath to Spaldwick, for which the Cambridgeshire Countryside Access Office gave permission). Once the manure has been left for a year to 18 months, it is then ready for spreading back on the gardens and fields. The fields at the back of Springfield do become waterlogged from time to time and if tractors were used regularly they would soon break-up the surface. The railway has purposely been laid with the sleepers buried, leaving the head of the rails at ground level. The railway itself is 2ft gauge and has been built with second hand equipment from industrial railways in England and abroad, now very difficult to obtain. Many of the wagons and locomotives have needed restoration and rebuilding for actual operation on the railway, rather than just being cosmetically restored to stand in a museum. As the horses

are put away at night only through the winter months, the most active time for the railway is during this period when the stables are mucked out daily. Although the railway cannot fully replace the use of a tractor, it is used for many other purposes, such as hay transport out to the fields, water transport when the hose to the troughs has frozen, and for general moving of materials. If anyone would like to see the railway and locomotives then we are always happy to show people around. We would ask that you email ([thomsk@btinternet.com](mailto:thomsk@btinternet.com)) first. Please remember that this is not a passenger carrying railway, and we are unable to provide rides for youngsters, etc. The seasonal photo was taken when we had the bad fall of snow last December, and the rather odd looking engine in the picture is a British made battery loco from the last mine operated in the Lake District.

### FOR SALE

Does anyone need a 4-drawer, cream/brown, office-quality filing cabinet in excellent condition? Offers around £15. Tel: 890454.