

## EMSWORTH VICTORIA HOSPITAL

*Brendan Gibb-Gray*

The battle to save Emsworth Victoria Cottage Hospital (EVCH) was finally lost when East Hampshire Primary Care Trust (EHPCT) voted in favour of the motion to close this much loved local facility which has served generations of local people. Whilst we lost the battle we did win many of the arguments in support of continuing the 'inpatient' service, but it became clear during the rather flawed consultation process that the main consideration behind the Trust's decision, was to save money. They made little effort to find ways in which this community hospital might remain open. There were defining moments in our efforts to save the hospital, one was the huge turn out of residents and supporters to have their photograph taken outside the hospital, this was a dignified and mature expression of local support, organised at the last moment to meet a newspaper deadline, and even the photographer was amazed at the sudden appearance of 75 people!

The second impression that will remain with many of us was the actual vote by members of the EHPCT at the meeting in the Dame Judith Centre at Cosham on 28th September. A coach took about 50 residents to that meeting where once again we were given the opportunity to put forward arguments in favour of keeping the hospital open. At the conclusion of the debate, the Chair asked members of the board to vote on the recommendation to close EVCH. Initially hardly a hand was seen raised in support, the Chair asked again for those in favour to raise their hands and it seemed with some reluctance that all members finally voted in favour of closure. It probably was inevitable, but sad that not one member of the board had the courage to support the local community over such an important issue. On behalf of many residents I have written to the Strategic Health Authority stating that we have lost confidence in the EHPCT to deliver the full range of services required locally.

In the New Year we hope to organise a meeting with community associations, organisations and individuals to consider whether Emsworth could support a hospice. Whilst we do have two excel-

lent hospices at St. Wilfred's and The Rowans there might be a need for one in this locality, but clearly a great deal of work will need to be undertaken and a business plan produced. Many residents have expressed support for the idea and we will use the opportunity of the closure of EVCH to explore the possibilities. Finally thanks to all the people who helped in the battle to save the hospital. This applies especially to Tony Lowes, Virginia Wilson-Smith, Faith Ponsonby and David Jones for their continued commitment.

If you have, or you know anyone who has, difficulties or problems that clearly relate to the closure of the inpatient facilities at the Emsworth Victoria Cottage Hospital, then contact:

**Dr Peter Allen, 60 Warblington Road,  
Emsworth, PO10 7HH  
Tel: 01243 372752.**

## Emsworth lit up for Christmas

*John Tweddell*

Christmas festive celebrations in Emsworth got off to a great start with a spectacular starlight procession and community event on 1st December. Christmas in Emsworth Village, which featured a host of seasonal attractions, including over a thousand lights, five hundred mince pies, one hundred singing school children, forty Christmas trees, a handful of bagpipers and pop celebrities, as well as the one and only Santa. Atrocious weather, rain and high winds did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the fantastic groups of children who joined in with the celebrations.

Organised by the Havant Rotary Club and the Emsworth Business Association, the event kicked-off at 4pm with a starlight procession, led by The Harbour pipes and drums from Emsworth Station Approach to the Village Square, where they were joined by Santa and his team. On arriving, the entertainment included traditional carols sung by school children from local schools. At 5pm the village Christmas tree was switched on, followed by a generous helping of oranges, mince pies for all, as well as mulled wine for the adults. To keep the party going, pop star Amba and friends led a sing-along with seasonal songs.

Following the event, Brendan Gibb-Gray, chairman of the Emsworth Business Association said, "The EBA and the Rotary Club of Havant would particularly like to thank the Emsworth Residents Association, the Emsworth Horticultural Association and all the other businesses and individuals whose kind donations made it all possible. Through their generosity we raised the £1600 needed to hold the event."



More information about the event and the times of church services can be found at [www.christmas.emsworth.org.uk](http://www.christmas.emsworth.org.uk)

## Vital medical support in time of urgent need!

*Brendan Gibb-Gray*

The First Responder Service is a national project with a local emphasis. Volunteers are trained by the NHS Ambulance Service to aid victims of heart attacks and other life threatening emergencies, between the time of the incident and the arrival of the ambulance or paramedics.

Mrs Janet Barradell, an Emsworth resident, has been campaigning for this service to be introduced here for some time. This initiative has now received the tentative support of many individuals and community organisations including the Emsworth Residents and Business Associations.

We will need about £3,000 to set up the scheme under the auspices of the Ambulance Service and about £500 per annum to run the project. We estimate that about 15 members of the community will need to be trained to provide the 24 hour cover required to

maintain the service. Apparently the training is straightforward and no previous medical experience is necessary. In addition, we will need to find a coordinator.

If you are interested in helping in this vital work, please contact Janet on 01243 430289 or me on 01243 377355.

After the devastating loss of our hospital, this really does have the potential to be a good news story! More information will be given on the progress of this project in the next edition of The Ems.

## Glenwood School develops wildlife area with People's Places Award

*Richard Jannaway*

Glenwood Special Needs School in Washington Road, Emsworth provides an effective learning environment for pupils who, for a variety of reasons, cannot function effectively in a mainstream secondary school. The school serves the urban area east of Portsmouth with many children coming from areas with significant levels of social deprivation. One of the facilities developed to provide the pupils with a rich learning environment is their environmental area and wildlife garden. This was developed with the aid of the BTCV Peoples Places Award unit during 2004 and 2005.



*The amphitheatre outdoor classroom*

The centrepiece is an amphitheatre for use as an outdoor classroom and a wildlife pond with a bridge and decking where students can observe the wildlife in the pond. The garden abounds with plants attractive to wildlife and also features hand carved wooden sculptures. In the trees, surrounding the site are nesting boxes for birds as well as other ones on the walls of the school with internal TV cameras so that the children can observe the birds on their nests.

The school has its own gate onto the adjoining allotments where they have two plots for the children to learn about growing vegetables and flowers.

The children have been fully involved at every stage of the project, including creating animal and insect 'homes', designing parts of the tree sculpture created by Andy Frost and making their own sculptures with his assistance.

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) provided



*Glenwood students and staff on pond bridge*



*The tree sculpture with Glenwood students*

support for the People's Places Award which was funded by the New Opportunities Green Spaces programme with additional funding from English Nature. This award was created to support projects to benefit deprived groups as well as the local environment. By improving the environmental, aesthetic and artistic facilities of Glenwood School, the project has developed the school's links with the local community and a variety of habitats have been created to encourage greater biodiversity in the school environment.

The project was presented at a joint BTCV and English Nature conference in London as an example of a successful and effective scheme. Julie Kirk, the teacher mainly responsible for initiating this award for Glenwood School, was proud to show off examples of the children's work and photographs of the scheme. The conference enabled them to see what other groups were doing and to exchange ideas for future projects.

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