

Digging into the past to find out more about Emsworth's Oyster trade

A new partnership has been formed to discover more about the oyster industry that boomed over a hundred years ago in Emsworth and Chichester Harbour.

The Emsworth Maritime and Historical Trust (EM&HT) and the Chichester District Archaeological Society (CDAS) are to join forces for a unique study of the old oyster beds on the foreshore at Emsworth. Funding for this project is from a grant of £8,300 from the Chichester Harbour AONB Sustainable Development Fund.

"This is an exciting opportunity to find out more about the oyster industry that was based in Emsworth over a hundred years ago", said John Tweddell, the project co-ordinator. "We hope to better understand how it was so successful in the 19th century and find out more about its collapse in the early 20th century."

After winning funding from Chichester Harbour AONB Sustainable Development Fund, the work will start in October and be completed by the

end of March next year. The EM&HT and CDAS are now appealing for volunteers to help with the work.

In 1902, Emsworth's prosperity went from boom to bust, changed over night by a fatal incident that not only killed the Dean of Winchester, but also an industry that kept half of its population afloat. At the height of this successful industry, over three million oysters a year came out of Emsworth to be distributed across the country.

At the end of the 19th century, half the population of Emsworth earned their living from fishing, oyster dredging or the industries that support the trade, such as boat building. Alas the industry collapsed when the Dean of Winchester died in 1902 and the blame was laid on polluted oysters. Since then, the waters have been cleaned up, but today only a handful of fishermen are still dredging the harbour for oysters.

For further information contact: John Tweddell, Vice chairman, Emsworth Maritime and Historical Trust Tel: 01243 374416 Email: jtwweddell@yahoo.co.uk

John Tweddell

Swing while you Shop: memorial events and fundraising

Emsworth Square echoed to the sound of music on Saturday 27th October when residents, visitors and passers-by were invited to 'Swing while you Shop'.

The swinging sounds were provided by Angel Radio and the band of TS Unity, both of whom turned out in support of the 'Friends of Emsworth Memorial Garden'.

Focal point was a display of plans and photographs showing progress on the creation of the Memorial Garden and an artist's impression of how the completed project will look. The event attracted a steady stream of interested visitors to view the display and talk to the two Angel Radio presenters. The 'Friends' were happy too - a further £425 was generously contributed towards the funds!

Memorial fundraising update

Thanks are also due to all those who have to date supported the cause. Membership currently stands at 52 with many generous donations for which the 'Friends' are very grateful. In addition, the 'Friends' are very encouraged by the contributions made, both financial and otherwise, by a number of groups and organisations including:- Emsworth Business Association, Emsworth Residents Association, Emsworth Horticultural Society, Emsworth Conservation Society (formerly Bosmere Hundred Society), the Wednesday Group and Co-operative Funeral Service, all of whom are helping to create 'A Garden to Remember'.

All this generous support has guaranteed work on the hard and soft landscaping element and physical evidence will soon be seen, see opposite.

Fundraising, of course, continues to enable the project to move into phase 2 - the planting which will set the scene for the final phase of creating and placing the memorial name plaques.



The 'Friends' AGM date is **Thursday 6th March** at 7.30pm in the Emsworth Centre, South Street which will be followed by a 'Wine & Nibbles' social. Do come along to meet up and see and hear plans and progress.

To become a member of the Friends of Emsworth Memorial Garden (FEMG) and support its work, send a subscription of only £3 to the secretary; Maurice Clarke, 575 Southleigh Rd, Emsworth, PO10 7TE; Tel. 371486.

You can follow the work of the 'Friends' on their website: www.emsworthmemorialgarden.org.uk

Brian Picknett

Christmas comes early to Emsworth

The traditional Christmas lights, Carol Service and music in St Peter's Square took place on 29th November.

Again the event was well attended and many people have commented on the quality of the lights on the Christmas tree and trees around The Square. The EBA painting competition again had a number of excellent entries from children attending the four schools in the area. Some of the winners had their "works of art" displayed around the Christmas tree. May we take this opportunity of thanking teachers and staff at these schools for supervising entries at this busy time in the academic year.

This year we did not appeal for financial help in running the Christmas event and frankly without the support of individual business people, the event would not have taken place. We ask that other community associations and groups consider supporting us in this popular community event in 2008.

Brendan Gibb-Gray, Chairman EBA

Emsworth Community Association (ECA) Film Club

All films are shown on the 2nd Monday each month at 3.30pm and 7.30pm. Tickets, which include tea or coffee and biscuits are £5 at the door or £4.50 in advance from Newsmag in the High Street. Doors open at 3.00pm and 7.00pm.

We can seat around 100 for each viewing but would advise you to buy your ticket from Newsmag to secure your seat. We have a great programme for the spring starting with "Atonement" in January, "And When Did You Last See Your Father?" in February, "Elizabeth - The Golden Age" in March and "The Kite Runner" in April. All are welcome. Do join us at the Community Centre (behind the Fire Station).

Alison Patrick

Emsworth Ambulance Community Responders

The Responders, will continue to give service to the community in 2008. They are now looking to recruit more responders to improve their coverage.

Mark Riddington, in charge of recruitment, has made a presentation to the Emsworth Business Association, about how they can assist in providing daytime cover with their staff. Additionally, the responders will be setting up meetings with various organisations in Emsworth to promote their ethos.

If you can commit some time on a regular basis to help the responders, please contact Mark Riddington: 01243 375903 or me on: 01243 430289.

Janet Barradell

Mothers' Union Fundraising Event

Amongst their many activities, the Emsworth Mothers' Union raises funds for various Diocesan and Worldwide Projects in which the MU is involved.

Projects such as holidays for disadvantaged families, relief for families in world disaster areas, sustaining parenting projects and literacy projects which help to educate women and girls mainly so that they can live a better life.

Stallholders wanted - The MU are holding a Table Top Sale on Saturday 9 February from 10am to 12 noon at the St. James' Church Parish Hall, Emsworth and will be advertising for Table holders @ £5 per table. What they raise is for their own use. The Mothers' Union hope to raise funds by renting Tables, sale of coffee, etc., organising a Raffle and charging a 50p entrance fee for the public.

Margaret Cornick

RNLI Emsworth Branch

The Chairman and Committee would like to thank all our friends who came along to our events during 2007. We are very grateful for your generous support enabling us to raise funds to help save lives at sea.

See page 10 for dates of future events.

Jackie Walker, Secretary

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