

# Emmaus Oxford



The newsletter of Emmaus Oxford

Winter 2008



The tower of the Community Building was the first part to be roofed

## Up, Up and Away!

Emmaus Oxford has really taken off this year! Since Terry Waite CBE (pictured right, operating a bulldozer), President of Emmaus UK, visited in March to officially begin digging the foundations, our Community Building has been rising fast and by the end of October the roof was on. An early excitement was watching the construction of the 'permanent' crane, seen in the picture above; another crane raising it section by section to its full height. It dominated the Temple Cowley skyline for some months until it was taken away – a traffic-stopping event on the Oxford Road!

It now remains to complete the interior fitting out and decorating, before the building is handed over to us, probably in February. There are twenty-four single en-suite rooms, with extensive communal rooms including kitchen, dining room and other recreational facilities.

We then hope to welcome the first few Companions (as the formerly homeless residents of all Emmaus Communities are known) during March, gradually building up to full complement. It is important to let the Emmaus ethos and culture develop: this is to be a home with a family atmosphere rather than a hostel, where residents respect and

## Preparing to Open

Construction work apart, there is still much to be done before we open the doors. Our Community Leader, Steve James, is already in post. In the next issue we'll tell you a little more about him, and his Deputy, whom we hope to appoint before the end of the year.

Steve will spend most of the time prior to the community opening on an intensive training programme, including extended residential spells in established Emmaus Communities in both England and France. Initially he has been busy networking with other agencies in Oxford as well as working towards setting up the home: read more about this overleaf.



support each other as they live and work together. To read about the work they will do, please see page three.

## Setting up Home for 24!



Perhaps we should go for the four-slice and widescreen versions?

A wedding generally provides the couple with a wonderful opportunity to benefit from the generosity of family and friends, who gladly give gifts and money to help them set up their home. You are probably familiar with the list, offered or enclosed with the wedding invitation, of items the couple would like – or nowadays maybe the website of the store which holds the list! Fitting out a home from scratch is an expensive business, even for two people: scale that up to twenty-four and it is clear that we are going to have quite a bill on our hands to equip our new Community Building.

This fact inspired our Events Committee to dream up a fundraising initiative that doesn't require our supporters to leave their front doors: we are simply inviting you to make a donation to help us set up home! There is a very long shopping list in our office, but to simplify things we have produced a much briefer version suggesting what sorts of items we could purchase with gifts of various sizes. If there is not a list with this newsletter, please do get in touch or visit our website if you would like to find out more and perhaps send us a cheque.

We, and our future Companions, will be very appreciative of any help you can give us in setting up their home. We are most grateful to an anonymous benefactor who has offered to match any donations made through our

own fundraising drives (up to £50,000). So in this case we really can make you a special offer of "buy one get one free"!

## Annie Sloan Demo next February

Our next event will take place at the Secondhand Superstore on Saturday 7th February, from 9.30am until 12 noon. We are delighted that Annie Sloan, writer, interior decorator and paintmaker, whose famous shop in Headington will be known to many, has agreed to demonstrate how to turn 'junk into jewels'. She



will select an item of furniture - somebody's cast off - from the store and show how to transform it into one of her iconic pieces, an example of which is seen above. Annie's internationally renowned paints and books will be on sale. If you do not have the booking form with details, please get in touch. Places are strictly limited so early application is recommended. The £30 ticket includes coffee and scrumptious cakes!

## Snowball Lunches

The Events Committee decided that summer seemed not the appropriate season to be launching our series of snowball lunches. They hadn't expected their autumn start to be met with October snow across parts of the county, however! Initiating hostesses

have invited five friends to lunch and asked them to invite four, who in turn will each ask three to a meal, and so on. Maybe you have already received an invitation! This event gives a wonderful opportunity to tell more people about our work, as well as raise funds - the suggested donation is £10. Thanks to all taking part.

## Summer Concert

Our June concert, in the evocative setting of Christ Church Cathedral, was an extremely enjoyable evening. The rain just held off, allowing interval drinks to be enjoyed in the beautiful Cathedral Garden. Our thanks go to the Dean and Chapter and everyone who helped. Above all, we are enormously grateful to the performers who gifted their time and talent: to Sir Philip Ledger CBE, who sadly was unable to play at the last moment through ill health yet found at very short notice a willing replacement in Anthony Gould, who with Penelope Howard and Robin Morrish performed a wonderful programme of classical, baroque and romantic music. The evening provided an excellent opportunity to celebrate the start of the build and the acquisition of our furniture store, as well as raising a fantastic sum, in excess of £5,500, for our charity.



Christ Church Cathedral vault



## Secondhand Superstore

Emmaus Oxford has its own furniture business! In June we took over the long-established OCVA furniture store in the Northway Estate, Marston, near the John Radcliffe Hospital. This is where the Companions will work, alongside existing staff and volunteers, on a variety of tasks including collecting donations of furniture and household goods and delivering to purchasers, sorting and pricing stock, testing electrical goods for safety, renovating furniture and serving customers.

Over the summer the Secondhand Superstore underwent some re-decoration and refurbishment as part of the Emmaus re-branding, with internal and external signs displaying its new ownership. Our thanks go to the groups of volunteers of all ages who have helped clean and paint inside and clear the weeds and brambles from outside. Two vans now carry our name and logo, as well as furniture, around the city and county. The operation prevents about 160 tons of goods a year ending up in landfill prematurely - and provides plenty of shoppers' bargains!

### Donate or Buy

If you have usable, second-hand furniture, electrical appliances (but not gas) or other household items you would like to donate, we would love to hear from you. We can accept most goods, except secondhand carpets, or upholstered items which are not fire retardant (pre-1988). Please ring 01865 763698 or email [furniture@emmausoxford.org](mailto:furniture@emmausoxford.org): full contact details on the back page.

If you are interested in buying, please come along between 9.30am and 3.30pm, Monday to Friday. Stock varies of course on a daily basis, so if you are looking for something very specific it might be worth phoning first. Prices are low, but those who can bring proof of benefits get a further reduction.

### Volunteer!

We have plenty of opportunities for volunteering at the Secondhand Superstore, whether you have a few hours a week to offer or longer. Carl will welcome your enquiry on 01865 763698 or [furniture@emmausoxford.org](mailto:furniture@emmausoxford.org). Our website [www.emmausoxford.org](http://www.emmausoxford.org) gives more information.

### Meet our Store Manager Carl Salisbury

I have always had a keen interest in recycling and environmental issues, which led to me joining a furniture re use project in Manchester in 1995. Whilst promoting re use and landfill reduction, I soon realised the social benefits of such an organisation, not only for our clients who could now obtain affordable furniture and household items, but for volunteers and long term unemployed, who could obtain new skills and training to enable themselves to re enter the employment market with a good reference and a new found confidence.

I was meeting so many like minded people and hearing so many success stories, I realised I had found my true vocation. I stayed at the Manchester project for eight years, moving from volunteer to paid driver then on to become Project Manager in 1999.



I moved south in 2003 and joined OCVA Furniture Recycling Project as Project Coordinator and over the last five years I have seen the project grow from strength to strength. We have established a pool of long term volunteers, some of whom have stayed on as paid staff and helped the project become the success that it is today. We have also given work experience to many New Deal placements over the years, who not only help with our work but are grateful for the new skills learnt.

Having transferred to Emmaus Oxford I am very excited by what the future holds. With Companions working at the furniture store our operation will become an even bigger success and with new ideas for diversity already starting to bloom the sky's the limit. I am so pleased that people who've been through hard times will have the chance to develop new skills whilst being part of something very special.



# Contact Us



Superstore opening hours:  
Mon - Fri 9.30am - 3.30pm

## For General Community and Office Enquiries:

169 Oxford Road  
Cowley  
Oxford OX4 2ES  
T: 01865 402073  
E: admin@emmausoxford.org  
W: www.emmausoxford.org

To email the Director:  
wyonstansfeld@emmausoxford.org

To email the Community Leader:  
stevejames@emmausoxford.org

We belong to the Emmaus UK Federation: visit [www.emmaus.org.uk](http://www.emmaus.org.uk)

## To Donate or Buy Furniture:

Secondhand Superstore  
Westlands Drive  
Northway Estate  
Oxford OX3 9QY  
T: 01865 763698 (answer machine outside store opening hours)  
E: furniture@emmausoxford.org  
W: www.emmausoxford.org



## Emmaus Christmas Cards 2008

see [www.emmaus.org.uk](http://www.emmaus.org.uk) under 'news': a few at our store, too!

## Help Us to Contact You!

We would really appreciate your help in a very simple way - and this time we're not asking for money! We would like to be able to contact supporters from time to time, in between these newsletters, with information and news about Emmaus Oxford, the Secondhand Superstore, our programme of events and so forth. Email is clearly the most economical way of doing this, but our email address book is woefully thin, with several of those we do have being out of date.

So, we would be enormously grateful to anyone who could take a minute to email us, "email list" in subject line, on [admin@emmausoxford.org](mailto:admin@emmausoxford.org). We do NOT exchange mailing lists. We'll use 'bcc' for any group mails. You may notify us at any time if you no longer wish us to email you. THANK YOU!

Do please let us know if you no longer wish to receive information on Emmaus Oxford, or if you noticed that your envelope had an incorrect name style and/or address. We try to keep our records up to date.

## Please Support Emmaus Oxford

I enclose a cheque/charity voucher for £ \_\_\_\_\_  
(payable to Emmaus Oxford, please)

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_