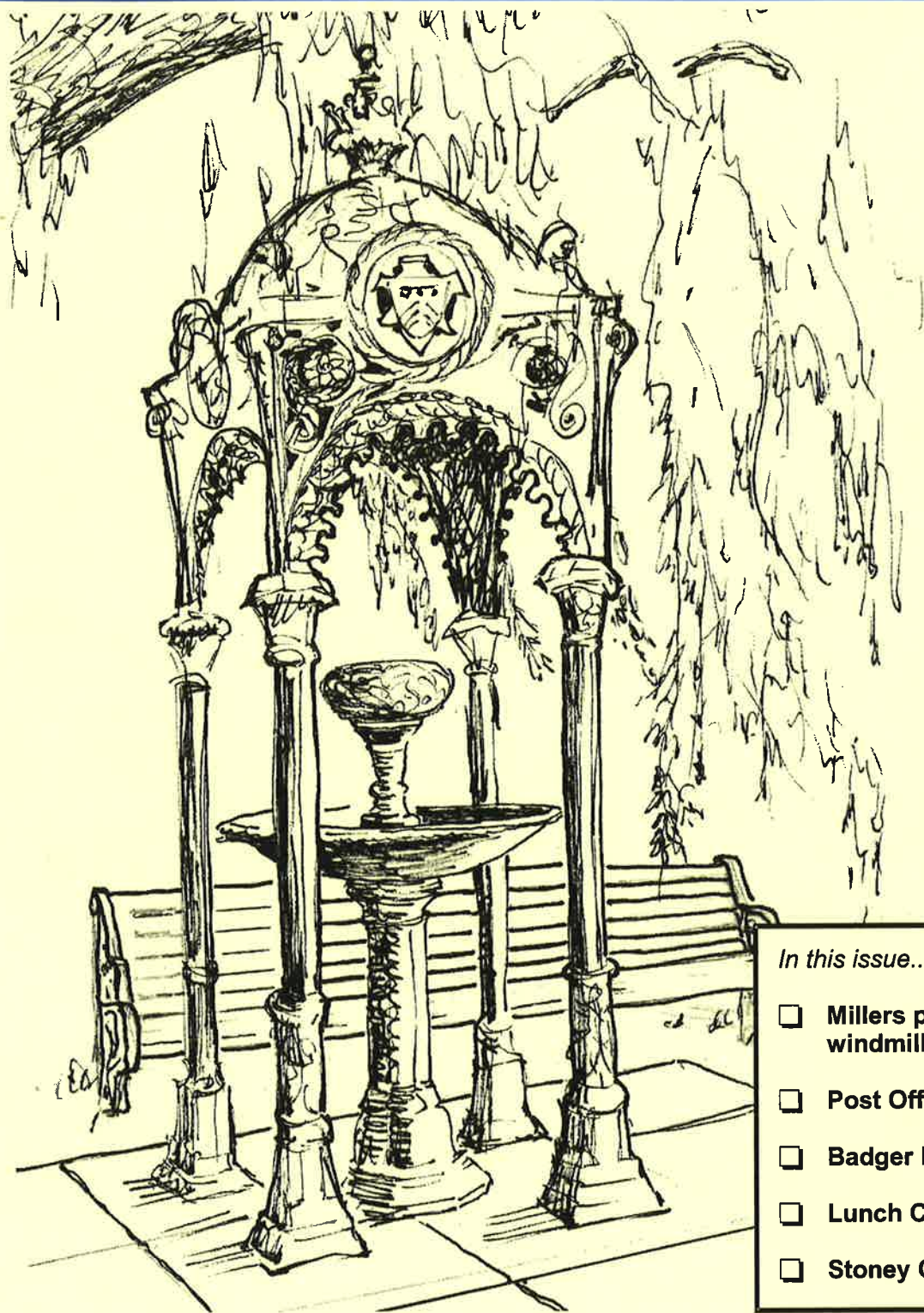


Stansted Mountfitchet

# The Link



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**ada**

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Sunday 9.00am and 10.30am  
Holy Days of Obligation 8.00am and  
8.00pm  
Tuesday-Saturday 9.30am

Confessions  
Saturday 10.00am  
and by appointment

Baptisms By appointment

### EASTER - JUST THE BEGINNING

When Jesus had been arrested and executed, his disciples and followers naturally thought that everything was over. They had not really understood the message that Jesus brought them. They thought that He would be the great deliverer of his people from the heel of the Romans. Now that He was dead, they felt there was nothing more they could do. They must have felt lost and abandoned. Of course today, we have the benefit of hindsight and know that it certainly was not the end. In fact, the story had only just begun, with Jesus rising in glory on Easter Day. Two thousand years later the story continues ...

After his resurrection Jesus appeared to his terrified disciples in the upper room, and how wonderful and somewhat frightening it must have been. He had already explained that his kingdom was not of this world and that his death was not the end of everything. He urged his disciples to go out and preach the good news; the new message of a loving God, who readily forgives and will stay in our hearts and souls all our lives.

The message is spiritual, but it is also practical and if we follow Jesus' teachings it will not only set us up for life after death, but will enrich our life on earth.

Here today, we are spared the torment of wondering how we are to live without our Saviour. We know that we have Him here all the time.

I believe that Easter really is the best season of the church's calendar. A chance to start anew in the eyes of God and try once again to live the life He always wanted for us - Alleluia!

Mary Warnett



## SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

Clerk Mrs Anthea Lee  
24 Lea Close  
Bishop's Stortford  
Tel : 01279 656707

Meeting Sunday, 11.00am

### SILENCE

"Do you sing? Do you dance?" (Question asked by a little girl at a school in Henham) "What is silence for?" (Question put by a churchgoer in Stansted)

Quakers don't often sing during their Meeting for Worship but they do enjoy singing when they worship with other denominations. Similarly we would be happy, if visited by whirling dervishes, to dance our way into the presence of God; but what we really love is the deep and resonating silence of our Eucharist, which lasts for an hour but does not have a prearranged pattern. We simply believe Christ's promise that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he is present. The foundation of a Quaker meeting is the conviction that God is not a distant, remote being but a living presence to be discovered in the deep centre of every human being.

Quakers take very seriously the words "Be still and know that I am God" - but there is no 'magic' in silence per se. It may be just sheer emptiness or absence of words, noise or music but for us it is a way of drawing closer to God. I once heard a Quaker compliment a member of her meeting on 'the quality of her silence', and indeed the quality of what we call Meeting for Worship depends on the loving participation of everyone present. Sometimes we are warmed by the atmosphere or words of our neighbour, sometimes we are enabled to speak from the heart for the benefit of others.

When I first attended a Quaker meeting I was rather daunted by the prospect of sitting quietly for a whole hour. I found that I was frequently distracted by noise outside the meeting but something made me persist and gradually, by a sort of process of osmosis, I understood and revelled in the silence, often being surprised when the hour was up. The deep silence of what we call a 'gathered' Quaker Meeting has great profundity and creative power. External noise simply melts away and becomes irrelevant when we go within and find our still centre.

If pressed to say what we're actually doing in Meeting for Worship we'd probably say we were waiting - waiting expectantly in our hearts for the touch of something beyond our everyday selves. It's not always very easy to participate fully in the silence but when we do manage to quieten the busy, anxious, thinking part of our mind it is possible to enter into a state not only of peace but also of inspiration. Sometimes we perceive in the deepest part of ourselves something we want to put into words and share with others. It's surprising how often one of us will say what others have been thinking and sometimes, when we all arrive at the same wavelength, a theme will develop (a kind of collaborative sermon) as other Friends (Quakers) enlarge on what has been said from their own experience. We don't 'bring our harps to the party' or prepare our ministry, it simply wells up in the silence. In 1669 William Penn wrote: "True silence is to the spirit what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment."

Anthea Lee

# METHODIST

Meets in Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

**Minister** Rev'd Keith Page  
2 South Road  
Bishop's Stortford  
Tel: 01279 654475

**Secretary** Mrs Catherine Dean  
49 Recreation Ground  
Stansted  
Tel: 01279 813579

**Email** methodists@stansted.net

All services start at 9.30am unless otherwise stated

## Services and preachers for April

Services are at the Friends Meeting House unless otherwise stated.

2nd	9.30am	Kenneth Mark
9th	9.30am	Jean Hay
16th	10.30am	At the URC Rev'd Janet Tollington Easter Day Holy Communion
23rd	10.30am	At the URC - Rev'd Keith Page
30th	9.30am	Rev'd Keith Page - Holy Communion

Easter means many things to many people. For many it's a precious extra few days off; for others, a reminder that winter is over and spring has come. Some people enjoy the sports activities and others a time to meet family and friends. Some jet off to the sun, and others start the chores of cleaning up the winter mess in the garden.

Yet there is one thing about Easter that is unique. Christians believe that a remarkable event took place that first Easter which changed the world forever. It is the belief that Jesus Christ died, was buried and rose again the third day. Every other person who has ever lived in history have died and remained dead. All the famous, infamous and unknown people share one thing - they have either died or one day will do so. But Jesus is alive!

What was achieved then, stands today. Death has been overcome. Yet death is the end of a process - the result of greed, lies, spite, hatred and all the other things that blight mankind. In killing death, Jesus offers new life - life as God intended. Of all the things we can do at Easter, the best of all is to come and worship Jesus Christ. We worship Him not only because He is alive - He is life!

Rev'd Keith Page



# UNITED REFORMED

Chapel Hill

**Minister** Rev'd David Simpson  
11 Church Manor  
Bishop's Stortford  
CM23 5AF  
Tel: 01279 504900

**Contact** Mrs Janet Townsend  
58 Chapel Hill  
Tel: 01279 812593

## Services and preachers for April

All services are at the United Reformed Church unless otherwise stated

2nd	2.30pm	Rev'd David Simpson
9th	10.30am	Rev'd David Thompson ~ Palm Sunday
13th	8.00pm	Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service at Water Lane URC Bishops Stortford
14th	10.30am	Rev'd David Simpson - Good Friday
16th	10.30am	With Methodists Rev'd Janet Tollington Easter Day Holy Communion
23rd	10.30am	With Methodists Rev'd Keith Page
30th	10.30am	Rev'd David Simpson

## Dates for your diary

2nd	3.30pm	Afternoon Tea. For lifts telephone 813977 or 812593
24th	6.00pm	Pilots for children 5-13 years. For information telephone 813433
4th May	8.00pm	URC/Methodist meeting in the Hall

## Stansted Pilots

On Monday, 20th February, Jan and Roger Gibson came to visit our Pilot Group, bringing with them Kandy and Dipper, two beautiful and gentle Labrador guide dogs. Jan is blind and Roger, her husband, has taken her to meet various groups of people, both young and old, in many different parts of the country. We were able to use our visual aid facility to show two short films on the work and training of guide dogs, and Jan had many interesting and amusing tales to tell about Kandy and Dipper. As 'sight' has been our theme for this term it seemed appropriate to ask Jan and Roger to visit us and join in our Pilot evening on that day. The children and adults alike enjoyed an exciting and interesting evening, listening to how Kandy and Dipper were Jan's 'eyes' on a day-to-day basis, ever watchful for her welfare.

Cherry, assisted by Rosemary, produced some excellent refreshments, as usual, which everyone enjoyed including Kandy and Dipper. Many thanks to everyone who made the evening such a success.

Valerie Trundle



St John's  
STANSTED

## Personal faith and public life

Should our personal beliefs influence our actions and decisions? From both a common sense perspective and as a person of faith, my answer to this has to be a resounding yes. I say that this is in part a commonsense response because I cannot see how anyone – whether they have a religious faith themselves or not – could argue that beliefs and action should not be connected in some way. Otherwise faith would be just a form of game or pastime, and not even worth rejecting.

Yet this does not seem to be the view taken by those who have castigated Tony Blair for saying that he prays when faced with difficult political decisions such as whether we should go to war. He did not say that God told him it was right. Indeed, he suggested that God would be his judge. What other reasonable position might he take, as a man of faith, than to admit that such decisions are ones that have to involve all aspects of his thought and judgement? A man who made such a decision with only part of himself would surely be truly irresponsible. Of course, the subsequent debate was about far more than this, but it does highlight a dilemma faced by all who are people of faith.

On the same evening that this news broke, the ITV newsreader commented

that every Friday they had remembered the captive Baptist peace activist Norman Kember. Such faithful remembrance is what I would call a form of prayer, but the newsreader was not calling it that. And the next programme on TV was 'ghostly tales of the unexpected'; when a woman used her psychic powers to detect spirits that were not at rest. As a nation, we seem to be happy with faith – of almost any kind – as long as it is an interesting form of trivia, or an unthreatening activity such as Songs of Praise. Just don't let's mix it with politics, or acknowledge that it has any connection with our decisions or actions.

This month, we celebrate Easter. Again, we are happy with the peripherals of eggs and school holidays. Not much of a threat there. But the event we celebrate at Easter changed history. This statement has truth whether we believe in the resurrection of Jesus or not. Those who witnessed it believed it, and this had far reaching consequences. Indeed, most of the major religions celebrate events or people who made some sort of a difference.

Perhaps it is because we recognise that faith does and can make a difference that we are afraid of it as a nation. Increasingly, there seems to be a sense

### contact us

all enquiries

#### The Church Office

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church.office@stansted.net

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Monday, Wednesday, Friday

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Mrs Elizabeth Jennings

#### Church Hall Bookings

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(01279) 817937  
joy@stansted.net

#### Rector

Revd Andrew Spurr  
(01279) 812203  
rector@stansted.net

#### Assistant Curate

Revd Dr Caroline Curren  
(01279) 815243  
curate@stansted.net

#### Director of Music

Currently vacant

#### website

www.stansted.net/stjohns

### St John's Diary

#### Sunday

8:00am said Holy Communion  
9:30am Choral Eucharist  
11:00am Open Door Service  
(all age worship)  
1st and 3rd Sundays  
9:45pm Night Prayer

#### Wednesday

10:00am said Holy Communion  
7:30pm Ecumenical Prayer group

There are services of Holy Communion on the first Tuesdays and Wednesdays of the month in Norman Court, Hargrave House and Broome End Nursing Homes.

Junior Church meets each Sunday at 9:30am.  
(Children return to church halfway through the service.)

The Lazer youth group meets on Sunday evenings at 7:30pm

### Holy Week and Easter

Palm Sunday/Passiontide	9th	8:00am Holy Communion 9:20am Procession with Palms/Holy Communion
Monday in Holy Week	10th	7:30pm Stations of the Cross/Holy Communion
Tuesday in Holy Week	11th	7:30pm Stations of the Cross/Holy Communion
Wednesday in Holy Week	12th	7:30pm Stations of the Cross/Holy Communion
Maundy Thursday	13th	8:00pm Choral Holy Communion and Maundy Vigil
Good Friday	14th	12:00-3:00pm Good Friday Project
Holy Saturday	15th	6:30pm Easter Vigil
Easter Day	16th	8:00am Holy Communion 9:30am Parish Communion and Baptism



that if we can just avoid getting too serious about faith issues we will avoid terrorism, conflict and war. There is a sort of logic in saying that if we don't care about anything too much, then no-one will get hurt. This can be applied in our private lives too, but there, as I suspect in our collective life, it doesn't leave anything worth having.

Most of us do have deeply held beliefs of some sort, religious or not. The question is not whether they should influence our actions, but about the systems of accountability that are then built in. This was a strand in peoples' concerns about Tony Blair's comments – that by appealing to God he was somehow implicitly justifying being outside other systems of democratic accountability. It is also a basis for legitimate concern when any group of people act on their beliefs in a way that is not accountable. That is why we should be bolstering (not undermining) mainstream Islamic institutions and processes in any fight against terrorism that claims Islamic justification.

So yes, belief must be tested and tried within a community of faith, rather than acted on in an individual or arbitrary way. But we do also all need to examine our core values and beliefs and to ask whether they make any difference to how we act. And this seems to me a very important question for those of us celebrating Easter this month. Because it should make a difference – both to our individual and to our collective lives.

CMC

### From the Registers

#### Baptism:

5th February Poppy Young

#### Wedding:

4th February Cara Danielle Fegan to Justin Mark Ian Murray

#### Funerals:

7th February William Arthur James Morris, 79 - St John's

24th February Peter William Stone, 61 - Parndon Wood Crematorium

#### Lent Course

We are very pleased that this year's Lent Course, 'Living the Questions', is being facilitated by Rev'd Andrew Spurr. The course consists of a series of theologians talking on DVD about specific topics, paused for discussion at appropriate places.

The first session was on the Old Testament Prophets and Social Justice. In it, a number of vital issues were raised. First the origins of the Jewish concept of God was rooted in the belief that He abhorred the fact that His people were being kept in bondage in Egypt. Moreover, He was a God who intervened in human history, encouraging individuals and groups to stand up to injustice. When Moses led the people from slavery to freedom, He became their God. When they crossed into the Promised Land, they acted accordingly. They organised themselves into tribal confederations where everyone was treated fairly and with equal communal participation in the fruits of the earth.

As time progressed, social systems were introduced which modelled the hierarchical, monarchical and priestly societies of neighbouring states. These new systems increasingly worked for the benefit of powerful elites for whom they were designed, rather than the people as a whole. It was the role of the Prophets to speak out against injustice so as to bring the people back to God. Jesus, Himself, sided with the marginalised and poor. In His declaration of His mission at the synagogue in Nazareth, He proclaims that the words of Isaiah to bring "good news to the poor, liberty to captives and sight to the blind", is being fulfilled.

Jesus had a vision of the world as His Father wanted it to be. All people would view one another as brothers and sisters of one family recognising their common fatherhood in God and value one another accordingly. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Sadly in our world today, systems still exist which work in the interests of powerful minorities over the many, exploitation of people and the world are widespread, division and discord is evident and we have a disturbing 'media culture' which encourages us to take delight in the misery and denigrating of others. It is us now who are called to be the 'prophets' of the 21st century.

The remaining session of the course, on Tuesday 4th/ Wednesday 5th April, is entitled 'Out into the World', and poses the challenge for us to respond! The culmination of the Lent Course is the Agape at 6.30pm on Palm Sunday, 9th April, in the Friends Meeting House. This will be followed by a Bring and Share supper.

#### Midweek Prayers

If you feel the need of a quiet time in the middle of a busy week, the Wednesday evening prayers at St. John's at 7.30pm may be just the thing. This Night Prayer lasts for about 30 minutes and, of course, all are welcome to attend.

David Morson, Chair



# SHALOM

## Recent Meetings

For our first meeting in February, we had a visit from a representative of *Open Doors*. Originally started by Brother Andrew, who many may have heard about for his work smuggling bibles into China, Open Doors has expanded its work and now 'serves persecuted Christians worldwide'. Even today, in countries such as North Korea, Nigeria, India and Indonesia, many Christians face the threat of imprisonment or death for their faith; we learnt of three women in Indonesia who were imprisoned for running Christian teaching sessions for children. Even though bibles are printed and distributed in China, there are still not enough to support the Christian church there, which is growing by an estimated million per year; so Open Doors still 'smuggle' bibles into China. It was a very interesting, if maybe 'uncomfortable' evening, and we were challenged to get involved, either practically or by prayer support.

At our second meeting in February, Edna and Catherine led an evening exploring the first few chapters of Gerard Hughes' book 'God in all things'. The crux of Hughes' message is that we do not allow God into every aspect of our everyday lives but confine him to the mode of our lives we deem to be spiritual. When we are not acting within the spiritual realm we choose actions which are inconsistent with our spiritual personas. For instance, we are quite comfortable supporting a nuclear defence policy which we think will keep us secure. Our motivation for security comes from the part of ourselves that is split away from our spirituality. So how do we re-earth our spiritual life so that we are not fragmented in this way? For Hughes the starting point is to go back to our prayer life. Catherine took us through some very practical methods of prayer that Hughes suggests.

## Annual Retreat

Last year we were very sad to learn that Hengrave Hall (which has been our retreat venue for nearly twenty years) was put up for sale, with the expectation that it will be turned into a hotel. So in the middle of February, sixteen 'Shalomies' joined Michael and Sheila Hayman for our annual retreat at a new venue – Aylesford Priory. Although not totally ideal for our requirements, the Priory is in a beautiful, peaceful setting, and we had a very uplifting weekend entitled 'Time to talk of God'.



Michael led us through four sessions entitled: Talk about God, Talk about Jesus, Talk about Church, and Talk about Discipleship. There was opportunity for listening and discussion, as well as Prayer and Praise and Holy Communion. Altogether a most enjoyable weekend.

## Future meetings

We start the new term after Easter at 8pm on Monday 24th April at 7 Blythwood Gardens. This will be a Prayer and Praise evening led by Edna and Harry Goreing. Do join us if you can – you will be most welcome. For more details please contact Catherine Dean on 813579.





I said last month that Christian Aid has a new logo; it appears above. The reason for the change is that research has shown that the old logo was not widely recognised, nor do people know what Christian Aid stands for. The new logo is based on the envelope and, according to Christian Aid, is a more energetic image! I wonder what you think? I expect we shall get used to it. (Now you know what I think.)

**Christian Aid Week** (14th-20th May) is seven days of fundraising, prayer and action against global poverty. The theme of the week is again **'You add. We multiply'**. I am asking people to add their time this year by volunteering to deliver and collect envelopes in Stansted. It really is true that 'every little helps', so any offers of help will help Christian Aid's 'multiplication' work. Please contact me on 813579.

#### Circle the City

The traditional sponsored walk at the end of Christian Aid week – this year on Sunday 21st May – will take you from the Tower of London to Fleet Street. There is a choice of two walks, both 2.5 miles, or you can combine the two. It is not essential to get sponsors, but there is a voluntary registration fee of £5 for each walker (£2 for children). If anyone is intending to go, could they let me know so that I can register how many are going from Stansted and get sponsorship forms if needed.

#### Campaign News

As well as campaigning for the Government to deliver trade justice, Christian Aid is calling for amendments to the Company Law Reform Bill so that:

- Companies are legally required to report on their social and environmental impacts
- Company directors are legally obliged to minimise any damage their company does to local communities and the environment
- People overseas harmed by the activities of a UK company are able to take action against it in a UK court.

Christian Aid believes that companies can be a force for good in poor countries, but that whether a company behaves ethically or not should not be a matter of choice.

Catherine Dean  
Tel: 813579

## NOT SUCH JOLLY ESSEX MILLERS

2

The Book of Orders of the City of London in 1594 says "millers have begunne lately a very corrupt trade, to be common buyers of corne bothe in the markets and out of markets and other places seeking thereby an inordinate gaine". There was an attempt to stop millers trading in corn because it was thought it would encourage speculation and deceit in times of shortages. It was said the miller was there to grind for the people, not to enrich himself, but eventually rules were relaxed and many millers did get rich by buying and storing grain and selling the flour when the price rose. Crabb, the poet, said "proud was the miller and money was his pride". Daniel Defoe commented on the vast rents commanded by the watermills by the Thames. Some millers' houses became quite grand although in other parts of the country trade was not so good and some mills disappeared.

Most millers do not seem to have been cheerful and jolly as the song says the Miller of Dee was; in fact they were considered cantankerous and crafty. They always seemed to be moaning about something. As those of you who have purchased a Stansted Windmill guide book will know, in 1850 the miller, Edward Hicks, wanted a rent reduction because "the mill has ground scarcely anything for the last month, for want of wind there is a great loss of time often, which ought to be taken into consideration. A windmill is not worth much with the present trade". He did not get his rent cut but nevertheless managed to carry on there for another three years.

As well as country wide and local laws and regulations, individuals who felt that they had been cheated tried to get their own back on millers. There is a tale written in 1582 about a lad who, when passing Epping Mill, called the miller names and implied he was a thief. A fight ensued which ended with the miller being tied to the rope by which he hauled up the sacks and being left dangling half way up.

Riddles and jibes abounded. "What is the boldest thing in the world? A miller's shirt because it clasps a thief by the throat." "What is the boldest animal in the world? The miller's ass because it lives among thieves and has no fear." And no doubt others unrepeatable here.

On one occasion a lampoon in verse was stuck on the pump in the Market Place at Braintree. The drawing above the verse showed the miller, seated backwards on a donkey, with his false measure round his neck. To one side is a gallows and the other a pillory. It is headed "A Friendly Caution to all Maltsters, Millers and other dealers in Corn" and lists people the miller was thought to have cheated. I don't know if he did end up in the pillory or on the gallows but maybe a miller's lot was not such a happy one after all.

Peggy Honour



## STANSTED FUN RUN

[www.stansted10k.org.uk](http://www.stansted10k.org.uk)  
email: [info@stansted10k.org.uk](mailto:info@stansted10k.org.uk)

**11.00am Sunday 2nd July**

Plans are now well under way for this year's event. Our beneficiaries this year will be:

**Saffron Sight** – supports visually impaired people and their carers throughout the Uttlesford area by providing resources, equipment and advice. See [www.saffronsight.org.uk](http://www.saffronsight.org.uk).

**The Stroke Association** – the only national charity solely concerned with helping everyone affected by strokes, which are the third biggest killer in the UK, and over 40% could be prevented. See [www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk).

**Assin Endwa Trust** – a small joint charitable trust between Ghana and the UK. Our money will sponsor children to attend a local school in the region. See [www.endwa.org.uk](http://www.endwa.org.uk).

Our entry fees have not been increased this year, but we are offering on-line entry for the first time, which will cost an additional £1 per adult and 50p per child. Entry forms will be available from the beginning of May from our website, or by contacting me. Previous entrants from the last two runs will be sent an entry form, and a form will be included in the June edition of The 'Link'.

Marion Dyer  
Tel: 814059  
Email: [info@stansted10k.org.uk](mailto:info@stansted10k.org.uk)

### NEWS FROM THE DAY CENTRE

We have now held a lunch to thank all our marvellous volunteers, our helpers, our drivers and the Management Committee. It was enjoyed by all and requests have been made for a repeat next year - we shall have to see!!

On Wednesday 12th April we are holding a Charity Coffee Morning in aid of Hearing Help, Saffron Sight, Uttlesford Community Travel, Carers, St John's Church Hall Fund and Save the Children. The stalls will be a Tombola, Honey Products, Bric-a-brac, Home Made Food Goodies, Cards, Tea Towels, etc. and a raffle. We do hope it will be well supported.

We have an excellent band of drivers and every day is covered, but Bridget can always use relief drivers to cover in case of illness or holidays. If you feel that you could help, please ring her on 01279 814440.

There was an error in Jane Sell's phone number in the last issue, it is 01279 812408. Any hiring should be done through her. Our web site is up and running and if you want to you can check for available dates on [www.stansteddaycentre.org.uk](http://www.stansteddaycentre.org.uk).

Brenda Scarr



## UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

It was a trip down 'memory lane' for a great many of our members, as Margaret Silvester our speaker at our February meeting, recalled many memories of Nancy Tennant and her family - some very amusing but some sad ones also as both her brothers and brothers-in-law were lost in the first World War. Nancy, however, the founder member of Ugley WI lived to the grand old age of 107 and her sister, Margaret, 103!! The history of Orford House was also very interesting as it was built originally by Charles II as a halfway house to Newmarket, and it was into this house that Nancy's parents, William and Agnes, moved with their family in 1908, thereafter taking a long and active role in the village life of Ugley. Our speaker obviously knew and loved her subject enabling all members present to catch a glimpse of life in and around Orford House over the last century.

We were all saddened to hear of the death of Pru Boggis. Our condolences were sent to her family and a one minute silence observed.

Beautiful Ugley, at least it should be this summer if all the members follow the very useful hints and advice given by Mrs Valerie Day, our speaker at our March meeting, on hanging baskets and containers. Planted and tended as she advised, they should look lovely and last from May to September. We look forward with anticipation!

Mrs Ann Calver, our delegate at the county half yearly meeting, gave a very enlightening report on her day, having been greatly moved by the final speaker, who, in spite of being profoundly deaf, has against all odds become an excellent musician. He now intends to form an orchestra composed of and conducted by deaf people! A lesson for us all.

The Competition Cup for the year was awarded to Mrs D Wallace. The meeting ended with a truly scrumptious tea thoroughly enjoyed by all, provided by the committee as we had the pleasure of nine visiting members from other institutes.

At our 19th April meeting at 2.30pm in Ugley Village Hall, Mrs Susan Walker will talk on 'Pyramids and Petra'.

Audrey Fry

### UGLEY FARMERS' MARKET

Every third Saturday at Ugley Village Hall  
between 10.00am and 12 noon.

**Next market: 15th April (Easter Saturday)**

Stalls selling meat, home cooking, honey, eggs, preserves, ginger beer, hand-made soap, cards with local views, vegetables in season.

Also, in the small hall, craft stalls including jewellery and cards.

Refreshments

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in aid of:

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Uttlesford Community Travel,  
St John's Hall & Save the Children



10 am - noon  
Wed 12th April  
Day Centre



Stalls ~ Tombola ~ Cakes ~ Raffle  
All welcome



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2 - 6 pm

Sun 16th & Mon 17th April  
Sun 30th April  
Mon 1st & Sun 7th May  
Sun 14th May (Mills Day)  
Sun 28th & Mon 29th May

**VILLAGE EVENTS**

**April**

1 Sat	Conservative Supper	Day Centre 8 pm
1 Sat / 2 Sun	Skips	Lower St car park 9 am - 3 pm
2 Sun	Afternoon Tea (after service)	UR Church 3.30 - 5 pm
5 Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
6 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
8 Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
9 Sun	VW Show	Mountfitchet Sch 10 am - 4 pm
12 Wed	Charity Coffee Morning	Day Centre 10 am - noon
13 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
15 Sat / 16 Sun	Skips	Lower St car park 9 am - 3 pm
15 Sat	Famers' Market	Ugley Village Hall 10 am - noon
16 Sun	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm
17 Mon	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm
19 Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
	Ugley WI	Ugley Village Hall 2.30 pm
22 Sat	Conservative Lunch	The Ash, Burton End
	Manuden Singers' Concert	St Mary's Ch, Manuden 7.30 pm
	Auction of Items & Promises	St John's Hall 7 for 7.30 pm
24 Mon	RBL Women	2 Clarence Road 2.15 pm
	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
28 Fri	Conservative Pub Evening	The Rose & Crown
29 Sat / 30 Sun	Skips	Lower St car park 9 am - 3 pm
30 Sun	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm

**May**

1 Mon	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm
3 Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
4 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
7 Sun	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm
	Afternoon Tea (after service)	UR Church 3.30 - 5 pm
8 Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
11 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
12 Fri	Red Cross Coffee Morning	Old Lane Hse, 10.30 am - noon
13 Sat / 14 Sun	Skips	Lower St car park 9 am - 3 pm
14 Sun	Windmill Special Opening	11 am - 5 pm

**Birchanger, Farnham & Stansted Parishes**

**St George's Day**

**Auction of Items & Promises**  
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7 for 7.30 pm Sat 22nd April  
St John's Church Hall

Entry £6 incl traditional English Fare  
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In aid of Benefice Office running costs

**Manuden Singers**

7.30 pm Sat 22nd April  
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Everyone welcome



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1st & 2nd April                      29th & 30th April  
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# UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Budgets 2005/06

This is the time of the year that councils set their budget for the coming financial year. It is Uttlesford's responsibility to collect council tax from some 30,000 dwellings. Each dwelling is allocated to one of eight valuation bands according to its open market valuation as at 1st April 1991. The valuation band for your property can be found on the council tax bill. The top band is capped at £320,000. Bearing in mind the considerable house price inflation since then, there is an argument that the poorest pay too much council tax and the richest too little. Even in America there is no cap, so the man in the \$35 million house pays 35 times more than the man in the \$1 million house. Why not here, dropping council tax for the poorest?

For each pound of council tax collected approximately 73 pence will go to Essex County Council to pay for services, such as education, libraries, social services, care in the community and highways. A further 12.4 pence goes to the police and fire authorities. The remaining 14.6 pence collected from taxpayers will stay in the district to pay for services provided by Uttlesford and town/parish councils. The services provided include refuse collection, concessionary travel, day centres for the elderly, planning, leisure and recreation.

At our last full Council meeting, a 4.5% increase in the district portion of council tax was approved. This will result in the average Band D property payment increasing by 10 pence per week to £127.53. This is still the lowest council tax for any of the district councils in Essex. We still benefit from being a debt free authority.

Although council tax continues to go up ahead of inflation, the overall picture is one of relative stability and a far cry from the huge increases that we saw some years ago.

## Report back on second Area Panel Meeting

A new waste management service will be trailed in Felsted in June and will reach us in the summer. A road show explaining recycling will be coming to Stansted. In the UK it is estimated that 434 million tonnes of waste is produced each year. The area of land in England and Wales used for landfill sites is about 28,200 hectares, which represents 0.2% of the total land area. On average, each household pays about £50 a year to their local authority to take away their waste.

A standing item on the area panel's agenda is Stansted Airport. The Council has set aside almost £400,000 to deal with the challenge of the airport. We are expecting an application for the maximum use of the existing runway from BAA Stansted in April 2006. We have appointed SH & E, a world renowned consultancy that will guide us in aviation policy. The planning application will be determined by the Council's development control committee, which is open to the public. The next area panel meeting will be in May and will be held at Hatfield Heath Village Hall. We will be discussing grants, Stansted Airport and other matters.

Councillor Geoffrey Sell  
Tel: 01279 815925  
Email: cllrsell@uttlesford.gov.uk

The news on the local post office is at last looking good. During March one scheme fell through, another was a non-starter, but as I write this on the 22nd Mr Yakub Alibhai has decided he is willing to re-establish Stansted's long-lost post office in his Y&Z Minimarket at the bottom of Chapel Hill. This really is great news!

I am more optimistic than I have been for two years that we are on the verge of getting our local post office back, perhaps within weeks rather than months. That's what Yakub Alibhai is aiming to achieve. Post Office managers have already given the nod on the premises being suitable for modification. Some bureaucratic hurdles have still to be passed, including the PO approving a formal application.

If this comes off, it will be a successful end to a long saga. A plan for Cambridge Road collapsed at the start of March when the prospective landlord put off the lady who wanted to set it up. A meeting was hurriedly arranged with a PO official by district and parish councillors and officers. Catherine (my wife) and I visited some shopkeepers in a desperate search for premises. We were delighted when Yakub said 'yes'. Time was tight to pull it off by the end of the month because the Post Office was threatening to declare the closure permanent on 31st March.

Keep your fingers crossed! I think at Y&Z we have a prospective postmaster who not only is a good businessman but who also has a social conscience and wants to do something for Stansted community by giving us back our post office.

Councillor Alan Dean  
Tel: 01279 813 579  
Email: cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

## THE MANUDEN SINGERS

Our Spring Concert is at 7.30pm on Saturday 22nd April in St Mary's Church, Manuden. The programme will include Handel's Chandos Anthem 'Let God Arise'. Tickets: Adults £8 concessions, £5 from Fiona Bengsten 812517 or on the door.

The proceeds from the concert will be donated to Dr Simon Lam, a Much Hadham dentist, who has made three trips to India to give free dental treatment to children and their families in rural slums. On his last trip he treated more than 650 patients during an eight day visit. During this time he has distributed more than 150kg of dental supplies, medicine, children's clothes, shoes and toys. The trips are made in his own time and financed solely from voluntary donations and out of his own pocket. Since visiting Rourkela in December 2004 he has collected £9000 to fund an overnight refuge for 24 orphans, which opened seven months ago. During his last trip, on the way back to Calcutta for the plane home, their train was stranded in the middle of nowhere for 15 hours; there was intense activity by Maoist guerrillas in the area at that time. Despite their ordeal they were glad to have helped some of India's poorest villagers. During an earlier trip Dr Lam met a family whose son had been severely burned by chemicals whilst playing in a rubbish tip. We hope that some of the proceeds of this concert will contribute to plastic surgery for this boy.

Teresa Priest

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## MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

### Colour all Summer

Our speaker, Andrew Stewart, showed years of experience in telling us how to keep the patio and hanging baskets in full bloom. At the end of winter all containers should be emptied and filled with new compost – but which compost? Garden compost has weeds, disease and bugs. Attempts have been made for a long time to find a suitable replacement for peat but were largely unsuccessful. Geoff Hamilton, wanting plants for 'Gardeners World', had to grow 50 or 60 to get ten plants for his use! Attempts are being made to use pig slurry and bark but so far the smell is a drawback. The use of the remains of incinerators is being looked at and a neighbouring county is composting its waste for sale, but this has been found to contain weeds. So we are left with John Innes and various commercial composts on the market, which our speaker had found satisfactory in most cases.

Our speaker emphasised that different plants need different treatment and best results are obtained by using one plant, such as geraniums and varying the colour, or putting dark flowers against a light wall. When using a strawberry pot or tub he recommended pushing a piece of plastic pipe down into the lower part of the container for watering.

On the subject of vine weevil in tubs and hanging baskets he has had success with Provado which works through both leaves and soil. Tub, plants and baskets need regular watering and feeding. For flowers and fruit he recommended a rotation of tomato fertiliser at half strength twice a week for four to five weeks, then a nitrogenous fertiliser for leaves for two weeks, which he found gave better results than a slow release fertiliser which needed warm weather and plenty of water. He had found that cold water did not release the fertiliser. He had found water-retaining gel had to be used with care because it makes the compost too wet.

On the subject of hanging baskets he recommended a moss lining. After the first layer of plants he places a saucer in the middle of the basket which will retain and recirculate water; when the basket is full he puts a flower pot down in the middle so that water can go into the pot instead of running off. One tip he gave for placing plants – always put in from inside and, if necessary, roll a plant in paper before pushing it through the wire. Feeding baskets is necessary twice a week, once established, and watering daily, even if it has rained. Busy lizzies are the most popular plant for tubs but almost anything can be used.

### Summer Outing

Following last month's talk by the Horticultural Manager of Thompson and Morgan, several members have suggested an outing to T & M Open Day at Ipswich on 29th or 30th July when there will be no entry charge for members.

Our next meeting is on 5th April when the speaker will be Aubrey Barker of Hopleys, Much Hadham, on 'Lovely and Smelly'. This will be followed by the AGM. This is the beginning of our year when subscriptions are due. Why not come along and join us – enjoy our speakers at first hand, the friendship of fellow gardeners who exchange plants? Members can have discounted seed and bulb orders and use of a member's card giving free entry to the RHS at Wisley and Hyde Hall.

Sally Stockman

### Stop Press

Due to the weather conditions the Mountfitchet Garden Club show scheduled for 1st April has been postponed until 22nd April when we hope the daffodils will be in bloom. Watch the notice boards for more details.

## GARDENING TIPS FOR APRIL

Deadhead daffodils but do not tie the foliage down.

Sprinkle drifts of cottage annuals such as love in the mist, cornflower and larkspur directly into the border.

Mulch beds with bark chippings or mushroom compost to suppress weeds and retain moisture.

Before sowing parsley seed pour boiling water on to the seed: this will speed up germination.

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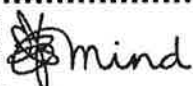
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## BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Arty-Crafty for a whole week.

Organised by our Art Co-ordinator, Mrs Sinclair, the whole school had an opportunity to be creative in our Art Week. Classes were able to experiment in different art forms including batik, inks and screen-printing. They also had class swaps where children of different ages were encouraged to work together. Each child produced one 'Work of Art', which was then properly framed and exhibited at the end of the week. Our parents were invited to come and see the fine displays and the framed work was offered to parents to buy. This was a lively (and messy!) week thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Our sports teams are very busy this term with matches being played out in football, hockey and netball. Some of our children have been learning tag-rugby, a new sport for the school, which they have been greatly enjoying. Classes 1 and 2 had a breathtaking visit from a lady who talked about dolls and dolls houses. She had some beautiful models and even gave the school a miniature bathroom suite for the class doll's house. A charming morning.

Along with other schools in the area, members of our school council were invited to Saffron Walden Town Hall for a meeting and discussion. This was a perfect opportunity for children to broaden their outlook and partake in meaningful dialogue with other schools.

As always we welcome parents interested in either a Nursery or Reception place to come and see the School in action; please give us a ring and we would be very pleased to arrange for you to visit. Our school offers both a Breakfast Club (from 7.45am), and an After School Kids Club (until 6.00pm). We also have our wonderful Messy Play. This is great fun, and runs in the Nursery on Mondays from 1.45pm to 3.00pm. It is open to children 18 months and older. If you are interested contact the school or just turn up!

### PTA News

The PTA has also had a busy month. Our 70s and 80s night back in early March featured Garry King's disco as its star attraction. The evening kicked off with a couple of rounds of quiz questions which took many of us back to our childhoods or teens as we tried to remember details of television programmes, movies or news events from 30 or 40 years ago! Some of us were a little taken aback to realise that a small proportion of the participants had not even been born in the '70s! There were fun recreations of children's TV shows 'Runaround' and 'Crackerjack' (including the famous Crackerjack pencil!).

To help create the right mood, the hall was decorated with wonderful wall hangings made of record covers and iconic images of the period. Garry's brilliant disco had everybody up and dancing - many people had really made an effort to dress up and there were some truly FAB costumes!! Some of the biggest hairdos needed scaffolding and industrial strength glue spray! We are all extremely grateful to Garry for giving his time and talents to support the school and to everyone who came along and joined in the fun.

Spring has well and truly sprung. Easter is just around the corner, so we have organised an Egg Treasure Hunt around the school grounds, which will take place on the last day of

term. There will also be a football shootout, but the rat and a few other stalls to entertain the children while their parents tuck into tea and hot cross buns in the balmy weather which we have ordered!

Our May Fair this year is on **Saturday 20th May** with an 'Around the World' theme. Among the huge list of attractions are an inflatable Fun Run and padded sumo wrestling! Each class in school has chosen a country to represent in the fancy dress parade and there will be stalls and activities for all ages, including the raffle, tombolas, plants, cream teas, barbecue and bar.

Music in the Park follows on **Saturday 15th July**. We have booked a great line-up of bands, along with a bouncy castle and fun run for the children, not to mention ice cream, popcorn, a licensed bar and barbecue.

Please put these dates in your diary now. Look out for further publicity around the village for these great family events and we really look forward to seeing you there!

Alison Thompson,  
PTA Member



## Huw Johnson Club

My request for escorts to accompany our members to and from Saffron Walden on a Thursday evening has so far fallen on deaf ears, so once again I ask "Please could you help us in this way?" In order to satisfy Health and Safety regulations, we do need another person on the minibus. You would only need to travel one way which means you are either on the minibus from 6.00pm to 7.00pm or from 9.00pm to 10.00pm. The return journey will mean that our lady drivers especially will have a companion with them when they return to the Peter Kirk School. We will welcome gentlemen as well as ladies with open arms and you would only be asked to travel once every four weeks. Please think about this and do contact me if you need more information.

Marion Johnson  
Tel: 812284.

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## MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

Last month, our speaker was telling us about Whitehall and the centre of Government. This time, it appeared that we were to hear about the opposite end of the social scale, as Derek Morris was to talk on Mile End Old Town - we were very wrong! In researching his subject, he had discovered that between 1708 and 1863, virtually all properties in Britain had been insured against fire damage and the records were still existing. Some 100,000 policies issued by the Sun Insurance Company had now been indexed and were available on the internet and he had found them useful sources of information. Currently Derek lives in Harpenden, which is very pleasant and open, with a comparatively short commute to London. As a result, the town is very popular with business folk and has the largest number of millionaire residents of any other town of its size in England.

This appeared interesting but not entirely relevant - until Derek began to draw comparisons with Mile End Old Town in the eighteenth century. From a contemporary map of London, he showed how the East End was not a poor district but a centre of trade which brought prosperity to many. The Royal Navy's victualling centre was on the site of what became the Royal Mint, not far from the Tower of London, and contracts to supply the Fleet were exceedingly profitable. Foodstuffs were bought from farmers round the City; gunsmiths were centred on Whitechapel as the Tower could not supply anything like the Navy's needs; ship-building took place in Wapping; sugar was imported and refined (by a sizeable German population - a Lutheran Church of the time has recently been renovated and opened to the public) and a resident Danish population traded in tar, hemp and other nautical necessities. This trade developed from the Navy's requirements to include those of the East India Company and resulted in increased prosperity in the area.

The result was, as today, those with the money looked for somewhere to live nearby, which was pleasant, rural and not affected by London's hustle and bustle. Many looked no further than Mile End Old Town and Derek had done much research to show not only the high quality buildings of the time remaining, but who many of their eighteenth century residents were. He showed us many interesting slides, including some of portraits of local notables, including Admiral Sir Cloudesly Shovell and Captain Cook, who lived in Stepney from the age of 15. Many left charitable bequests for schools, hospitals and alms houses and some of these, too, are still evident, although not used for their original purposes. Those who succeeded in becoming captains of East Indiamen were entitled to the profits from one tenth of their cargo on each voyage and were able to make huge fortunes. They also encouraged their sons to put to sea and many also became captains, with fortunes in their own right. It was common for successful captains eventually to buy estates in Essex and we were already aware that Captain William Heath and his equally successful son, Thomas, moved from Stepney to Stansted Hall. Derek gave us much more information than I have been able to pass on and we were most grateful to him for a most interesting talk.

Next month on 6th April, Bill Hardy will be telling us about Thorley Post Office - I wonder if there will be any news of our own Post Office by then! Incidentally, I have been asked to mention the meeting to follow - this will be on 4th May and will be our (short!) Annual General Meeting, followed by one of Peter Saunders' popular presentations when, aided by the members of the Committee, he will talk on 'Crime in Victorian Stansted'. Hope to be seeing you.

Ian Seavers



Spring is here and we have been as busy as ever with lots of visits and visitors. To continue our topic of 'Healthy Eating' the older children visited Perry's Nursery where they chose various seeds to grow healthy food to eat at snack time. A big thank you goes to Mr Perry, who donated the seeds to us. The older children also enjoyed a trip to Waitrose to find out about the wide variety of exotic fruit and vegetables available in store.

A flurry of card making occurred towards the end of term with first Mother's Day, then Easter. The Easter bunny kindly remembered our children who took part in an Easter egg hunt around the classroom and courtyard. The children were also treated to a visit from a professional musician who had them singing and dancing along to his guitar for most of the afternoon. There were a lot of hoarse and very tired children in Stansted that evening! A librarian also visited both groups of children to share lots of stories with them, followed by a fun activity based on one of the books. Unfortunately we had to postpone our 'Chinese Auction' fundraiser but hope to re-schedule it for early May.

If you are interested in a place at 'Rainbow Tots' (age 18 months to two and a half years) please contact Tina South on 814371. If you are interested in a place at the pre-school, please contact Gill Pursglove on 814701 for further information.

Kate Maginn (Rainbow Committee)

### SNIPPETS

*Are we at the end of the Great Post Office Saga?* We profoundly hope so. It is however a source of concern that the Post Office were about to "close the books" on Stansted on 31st March if a site had not materialised. Where is their duty of public service? The responsibility for identifying premises and a postmaster cannot be laid on the community as a whole, yet it is the populace that has suffered. The people to have come out of this episode with credit are the Councillors Dean, Mr. Yakub and the potential postmaster from Cambridge Road. Our thanks go to them.

On a more cheerful note let us be thankful that the long winter seems to be over. A good opportunity to look out some of Felix's haunts!

A happy Easter to all readers.

Editor

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## Stansted Evening Women's Institute

I think I usually start this column with a comment on the weather. It has occurred to me that if read in years to come it could be an interesting check on the weather conditions if nothing else, so I'll continue by saying that after a mild wet day, the rain ceased enough for members and some visitors to fill St John's Hall for our March meeting! Half an hour before this I was rather perturbed when we couldn't open the storeroom to get the chairs out - I had visions of 50 WI members sitting cross-legged on the floor. Our President's husband came to our aid (they are useful sometimes) and all was well. Our speaker for the evening was travelling from Tollehurst D'Arcy and had asked to speak first, so we were a bit worried when he hadn't appeared by 7.40pm. He came in rather flustered complaining that there are no signs which say Stansted on the large roundabout!

Peter Webb's talk was entitled 'The Good Life' and was a humorous account of his and his wife's attempts at having a self-sufficient style of living over the last 30 years. Starting with an allotment for which he even bought a small tractor, he became more determined to buy somewhere with land where they could grow and eat the food they produced. He continued with a full-time job and it took some years for them to eventually be able to afford a smallholding in Essex, in the village where they now live. A former mink farm, it took a long time to clear and for him to work the land and to replant it with trees. He had a fund of amusing stories to tell of the trials and tribulations they encountered on the way; he paid great tribute to his long-suffering wife, for whom he bought a wheelbarrow when he realised that carrying large amounts of logs in a basket was a bit much for her!

Beneath all the humour we sensed his real love for the land and the desire to put something back, which he has surely done when he tells of the increased amount of birds and wildlife which has occurred due to his replanting. His mother made him a present of 60 fruit trees, so that his orchard is an everlasting memory of her. So now he has a variety of poultry, a flock of Jacob sheep, fields which he keeps for hay, and an orchard for fruit and woodlands for the birds and insects. We were quite relieved to find that he has now given up paid work and with his son and wife maintain the whole place, it seems very happily.

We are having a Make & Bake Stall for the Charity Coffee Morning on 12th April and have decided that the funds will be given to the St John's Hall refurbishment fund, especially as we had suggested lots of improvements!

Our Line Dance Classes have been a great success and the teacher Dawn Bond is hoping to carry on with a class in Stansted, which will be open to anyone in the village who would like to come. At the moment they will be held in St John's Hall on Wednesday mornings from 9.30am-10.30am so that you have the rest of the day to go out if you've still got the energy. There will be posters around the village to advertise this.

Our competition this month was for a wartime souvenir and this brought forth some really interesting entries. One was a small prayer book dating from the Boer War and sent home from there to Rene Sanders' mother, then a baby. Another, several medals dating from both World Wars and belonging to Marion Pretty's family; there was also a gas mask, a copy of the Times dated 1940 and a triangular bandage with instructions for use printed on it. Two of these will be entered in the competition at our Group Meeting in April, so it will be interesting to see what other WIs produce.

Next month Ann Witchall is coming along to talk about and show us, I hope, American Patchwork Quilts, and we will also have the report of our County AGM, when our Chairman Barbara Ball is retiring after four years. The speakers at this meeting are Shirley Ann Field - the actress (or should I say actor?) and a music teacher, Paul Whittaker, who is profoundly deaf. If you enjoy live speakers then you can't do better than come along to the WI; there are plenty of opportunities apart from the monthly meeting

Judy Colliver 812470





## MOUNTFITCHET HIGH SCHOOL

The next event to look forward to is the VW Show - VWs@MHS - on 9th April from 10.00am-4.00pm, which has been organised by two members of staff and is supported by the PTA. There will be entertainment for the kids, stands, beer tent, bbq etc. A day for all the family. Visit the PTA website [www.mountfitchethighschoolpta.org](http://www.mountfitchethighschoolpta.org) and click on the link to find out all the details as well as any PTA news.



Our very popular 'Millionaires' Night' is in May (exact date to be confirmed). You can dress up as much as you wish and play the tables like a millionaire but with our 'money'. Tickets are £12 each to include a 'champagne' reception, excellent food and plenty of 'money'. There will also be a licensed bar.

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## FIDO GETS AN EARFUL

We had an interesting case at the surgery the other day. A client rang up to ask for a bottle of antibiotic ear drops for her dog as she said it had an ear infection again. We hadn't seen Fido for over six months and therefore asked the lady if she would care to bring him in for a check. She was a little annoyed, saying she was rather busy and it looked just like the other ear infections he'd had in the past and why couldn't we just give her what she wanted. Sally politely explained that a vet would really need to check Fido as there could be other reasons for a sore ear and vets weren't allowed to give out antibiotics without having seen the animal very recently. With Sally's calm words of persuasion, the lady was finally convinced to make an appointment and she brought Fido in the next day. Fido's left ear was fine, but his right ear was rather painful and red and he certainly didn't like me coming towards it with a large shiny auroscope.

The owner was still rather annoyed and was voicing the opinion loudly that "anyone could tell it was an ear infection", and if she could just have a bottle of drops it would save a lot of bother. At that moment, with the help of Sam the nurse, I managed to catch a glimpse of something small and white and square-shaped in the ear, and with some long forceps managed to extract a piece of Lego! The lady looked rather embarrassed and admitted her grandson had been visiting at the weekend; obviously not all of the Lego had been used for construction purposes!

I guess the moral of the story is that not all may be what it seems on the surface and only a proper examination of an animal by a trained veterinary surgeon will give the correct diagnosis. Unfortunately most ear problems result in a red, sore ear which the dog scratches, so even though the symptoms are the same, the cause (and therefore treatment) may be very different. Does an ear have a bacterial infection or a yeast infection? Has the infection ruptured the eardrum this time? Is there a grass seed down the ear or even a piece of Lego?! No amount of antibiotics would have solved Fido's problem and not bringing him in would have led to serious complications. We really aren't being difficult when we ask to see your animal; we are just thinking of their best interests and practising good veterinary medicine!

Sadly we have to say goodbye to Sally this month. She's off to a new life in Crete. (Little does she know we've got a rota for visiting her in the summer!) She's been a real asset to the practice; hardworking, never afraid to muck in, calm in a crisis and most of all a friendly face to so many clients that have come to know her well. We will be welcoming our new receptionist Angela, who will be starting at the beginning of April. She will have a couple of weeks learning the ropes from Sally and trying to get to know as many of you as possible before Sally leaves. I'm sure everyone will make her feel welcome, she has lived in Stansted for many years, so some of you may know her already!

Ilse Pedler,  
Partner,  
Mercer & Hughes Veterinary Surgeons



## Nature Notes

### THE BADGER WAS A REAL BEAST

Badgers have been in the news recently because of the controversy, between cattle farmers and conservationists, over whether they spread bovine tuberculosis. I think impartial observers will have to side with the farmers on this question and badger culls in the worst affected areas will be inevitable.

In our locality there are relatively few cattle but plenty of badgers. These are our largest carnivores and one of the most readily recognised of our wild animals, yet few people have seen one in the wild apart from when they are illuminated in car headlights late at night. Early in March we had a snowfall one afternoon that covered the frozen ground until the next morning. This revealed the tracks of everything that had moved about during the one night and showed that our nocturnal wildlife is not put off by the cold. Badger tracks are generally bigger than those of a fox and also distinguished from both fox and dog tracks because the badger's five toes all point forward. Their long front claws also leave visible marks, particularly in soft mud. It was apparent that numerous badgers had ranged over a wide area that night and the frozen ground surface was no obstacle when digging for grubs or worms.

The badgers seem to like foraging along the edges of lanes, hard tracks and bridleways and several favourite feeding areas can be seen along local paths. Also one will come across badger toilets, which are not difficult to recognise, and can be a surprising distance from the setts. Later in the year they will dig out the nests of voles, mice and moles, leaving circular holes about eight inches across and as deep as necessary. A couple of years ago on the footpath leading from Watermill Lane up to Hazel End Cricket Ground there was such a hole about fifteen inches deep with a few shreds of wasp nest left at the bottom. The badger has a very tough skin and thick fur, which renders it impervious to wasp stings; also to hedgehog needles - it is the only animal that will open up and devour a hedgehog. Perhaps there is a connection between the increasing number of dead badgers and the decrease in dead hedgehogs on our roads.

There are plenty of natural history books covering badgers but I recommend 'The Epic of Brock the Badger' by Henry Williamson (author of 'Tarka the Otter' among other stories) which describes the country sport of badger digging in the West Country during the 1930s, and also 'A Lifetime of Badgers' by Peter Hardy, the MP who was responsible for the passage through the Commons of the Protection of Badgers Act in 1973. Apart from telling everything there is to know about badgers, he gives a sickening account of badger baiting in his home area of South Yorkshire.

Also, the sparrowhawks are still with us. The other day one swooped across the garden at knee height. Fortunately there were no little birds on the lawn at the time. And, did you manage to see the wild daffodils? Make sure that you don't miss the bluebells.

Felix

## THE STANSTED LUNCH CLUB

## IN MEMORIAM

### Recent Lunch Meetings

The Lunch Club met for its fifty-first lunch on 29th March at The Old Bell under the sponsorship of Kua Consulting but featuring 'The Changing Face of Mountfitchet High School'.

### Future Lunches (all Wednesdays)

31st May - Radisson SAS

I am delighted to be able to announce that the Radisson SAS Hotel, Stansted Airport, has agreed to sponsor our lunch and that we have been invited to take lunch at the Hotel. Many thanks to Jo Calff who is organising the occasion.

26th July - Sponsorship under discussion

20th September - G E Sworder & Sons

29th November - Sponsor needed

31st January 2007 - Sponsor needed

### Exhausting Work

Ian Hudson's son, Mat, is running in the London Marathon in April to raise funds for Hertfordshire Community Foundation [www.eastspace.net/hertsfcf](http://www.eastspace.net/hertsfcf) - a charity that helps Hertfordshire charities and voluntary groups. If anyone is able to help him reach his target of £1,000, please visit his JustGiving website: [www.justgiving.com/mathudson](http://www.justgiving.com/mathudson) and make a pledge.

### Tony's Golf Day

Tony Bowden organised a golf day in aid of a UK registered charity called 'Homes in Zimbabwe' on 31st March 2006 at Stockley Park, off the M4 near Heathrow.

### On the Back Burner

Members will remember that Jane Hill has withdrawn from active membership to make a family. Her baby son Rhys was born on Christmas Day at 10.17am, weighing in at 7lb 2oz. Although struggling with night times, her family is doing well. Any news of Jo Ridehalgh, who is engaged in a similar exercise?

### WEEE Directive

During the course of 2006, the UK will adopt the Brussels inspired WEEE directive. The purpose of this is to stop electrical and electronic equipment going into landfill. Instead, every effort should be made to reuse items, reduce to component level, or finally to reclaim materials.

PCRC has been set up in Bishop's Stortford by Bob Lee of Business Kinetics, and Gary Moore of Genmar, to take in old, surplus or redundant IT equipment. That which is serviceable is cleaned and found a new home, perhaps in the UK or overseas. Anything else is disposed of in accordance with the WEEE requirements. More details on: [www.pcrc.org.uk](http://www.pcrc.org.uk) or call 01279 655081.

### Items of News / Interest

If you have any items of interest or news that you would like communicated to Lunch Club members, please contact me.

Alastair Richardson

Tel: 07850 295109

Email: [Alastair@abr-ltd.com](mailto:Alastair@abr-ltd.com)

### VERA KATHLEEN WYATT

Born 7th February 1916 - died 17th February 2006

Vera Wyatt was born at 10 Sunnyside, Stansted, and lived in that same house for most of the 90 years of her life. Her father was a local baker and she had two sisters, Eileen (who died in 1999) and Betty, now living in Bishop's Stortford.

Vera was educated at the Council School in Stansted. When she left school at age 14, she started work as a children's nanny for the family of the Rev'd Sturgess, then Curate of St John's Church, Stansted. When the Sturgess family moved to Torquay in the 1930s Vera went with them and stayed in the West Country until the children were grown up. She then returned home to Stansted just before the Second World War and started working for the Smith family in Bishop's Stortford. Mr Smith was at that time the owner of the Regent Cinema in Bishop's Stortford. During the war Vera worked in various factories in Watford and Bishop's Stortford, following which she returned to the Smith family and stayed with them for the rest of her working life.

On her retirement Vera looked after her mother in Sunnyside until her mother's death in 1975 aged 91 years. Although she never travelled very far from Essex, right up until she became ill in November 2005, Vera could always be seen walking to and from the local shops and she was a well known figure to many people in both Stansted and Bishop's Stortford.

Vera was always interested in local history and was a regular contributor to articles in local newspapers and magazines. Her house is full of old photographs and items of local interest, all of which will be passed on to the Local History Society in her memory.





# Stansted Tennis Club



## Floodlight Opening Ceremony

About 60 members attended the grand opening ceremony of the floodlights on Sunday 12th March, which were installed in November 2005 and have been very well used over the winter months. Chief fundraiser, Michaela Bitten, gave a speech, thanking everybody involved with making the project such a success and in such a short space of time. The scheme was made possible by several sources, including the Bretts Environment Trust and a personal donation from Derek and Win Bristow, whose son, Paul, died in the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York. Paul was a popular member at the club. Anonymous donations and funds were also raised through various events organised over the past year. Leicester-based company, Exclusive Leisure, installed the modern system to a very high standard.

## Annual General Meeting

This was held at 105 Cambridge Road on Monday 13th March and was attended by 16 members.

## Coaching

The spring season's junior coaching has recently started and there are now classes after school during the week as well as on Saturday mornings. If you would like to find out more, please call Chris Hollis on 01279319155. Martyn Taplin continues to coach the adults on a Saturday afternoon. If you would like to join in, please call Martyn on 01279 816386.

## Adult/child Tournament

This popular annual tournament will take place on Sunday 23rd April at 12.45pm. If you would like to enter, please complete an entry form, which can be found in the club-house.

## Contacts

If you would like further information about Stansted Tennis Club, please contact either, Richard Mott (Secretary) on 01279 466348, Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 01279 812073 or Daphne Lunnon (Membership Secretary) on 01279 817574. Please note that Daphne has taken over this role from Kate Rutter, who has retired from the committee after 10 years of service.

Chris Hollis

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**Spanish Taster Further Steps - Newport - Mondays (some knowledge required)**

**Spanish for Improvers - Newport - Thursdays (2 years Spanish study required)**

**French Taster Further Steps - Newport - Mondays (some knowledge required)**

**French for Improvers - Newport - Wednesdays (2 years French study required)**

**Italian Taster Further Steps - Newport - Mondays (some knowledge required)**

**Japanese for Continuers - Newport - Wednesdays (3 years Japanese study required)**

**Russian Taster Next Steps - Harlow - Mondays (some knowledge required)**

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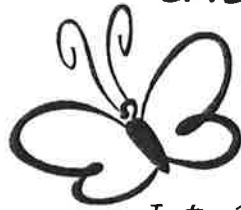
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## STONEY COMMON Part 4

## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

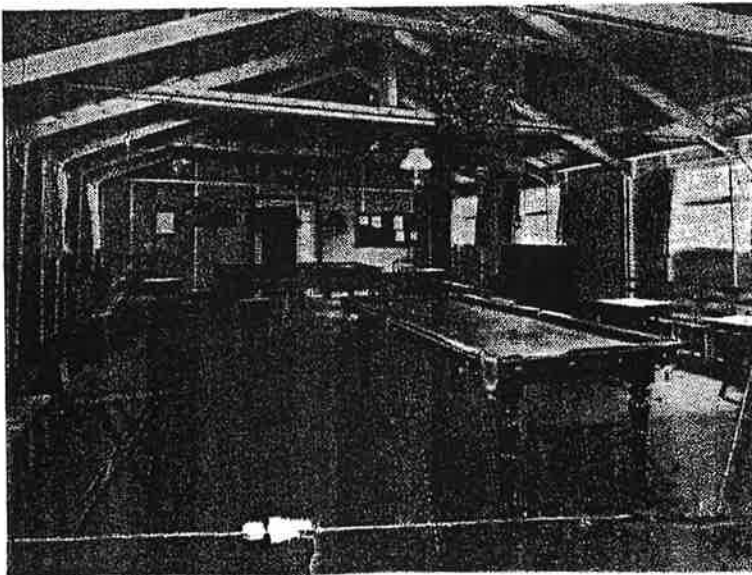


Previous articles have described much of the unique community which grew up around Rochfords Nurseries. For its time the nursery was a massive enterprise. At its zenith it had 293 greenhouses devoted to the production of grapes, chrysanthemums, cucumbers and, above all, tomatoes. The raising of coal from the sidings by West Road to nursery level was also unique, requiring a diesel engine and sturdy steel hawser. Horses were used for its onward distribution, using trolleys on a trackway. They were the high days of staff loyalty and a stable work-force, owing not a little to the manager Mr Edmund Cawkell.

Stoney Common was described as a 'model village'. Its life revolved around the two shops, the Recreation Room - now the Scout HQ in Water Lane - and the Mission Hall. The principal shop, latterly known as Ruth's Stores, became a daily social centre, while in those more Church-minded days the Mission Hall was managed first by the Church Army and afterwards by the Rector of Birchanger. Present-day users of the Scout HQ will instantly recognise the photograph of its earlier incarnation as the Recreation Room. Mr Cawkell provided the Room and Miss Chester was the 'power' behind the Mission Hall. Two other features not previously described in the 'Link' were the small gardens facing the houses on the south side of the road and the children's playground between the sidings and West Road. Mrs Wendy Ward (nee Dockerill) recalls the robust see-saw, two large and one small swing, a sand-pit and an iron pole to which were attached chains and seats. Mark Gerber was able in our January issue to describe the more recent days of the community.

Our 21st century society does not favour the creation or sustaining of close-knit communities but it does us no harm to savour in retrospect the qualities which made Stoney Common a happy place in which to live.

Derek Honour



Employees' Recreation Room:

## STANSTED MILLERS

As anyone who has had dealings with English Heritage will testify, the process of obtaining grants is strewn with obstacles and delays. We now understand that our architect is in some way under-qualified in windmill structures and that either he must qualify or another architect be appointed. Please do not ask the Millers why this point has taken so long to surface - they have no idea either! We are, nevertheless, proceeding with renewal of the fire alarms as this incurs money that is within the Trustees' resources.

The AGM in March was both well attended and enlightening. Geoff Wood, the County Mills Officer, described many Essex mills and gave us valuable information which he will submit as a report. Quite coincidentally, one of the occurrences of which he warned happened on the following Saturday during the annual spring clean. The brake and ties were released to show Geoff (who was making a follow-up visit) how we did it, upon which the northerly wind gently spun the sails in the reverse rotation, even with the shades open, so demonstrating the inherent risk of tail-winding.

The opening season begins at Easter plus a special opening with refreshments on National Mills Day, 14th May. Come along and see your mill. To all our generous donors and helpers we say "do not be discouraged; it really is only a matter of time before refurbishment takes place".

Derek Honour  
Co-Chairman

A new fund-raising scheme for the mill is being tried out. Perhaps not so much a new idea as an extension of our traditional bric-a-brac stall on August Bank Holiday. We are asking for donations of your unwanted goods throughout the year and these will be put up for sale on the Ebay internet auction site. So far half a dozen items have raised over £100 and some good stuff, which did not sell, has been put by for the August stall. So, if you are clearing out any unwanted household items, appliances, furniture - almost anything really - call Tony or Pearl Wellings on 813614 and we shall do the rest. If anyone would like to get involved in this exciting project we would be pleased to hear from you.

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This month we're here to tell you about TEAM Talk Groups. We are in Year 6 and we are both leaders of groups in our school. TEAM Talk Groups are where there are five or six children and we talk about different things in school every Monday. TEAM stands for Together Everyone Achieves More. We sit in different places around the school and there are mixtures of boys and girls of different ages in each group.

In October most of us went to Aylmerton Field Study Centre in Norfolk for five days and we improved our team skills. This has helped us with running the groups. Mrs Atkinson told us all about the groups a few weeks before we started and we were trained to ask useful questions. Mrs Atkinson briefs us each week before we do our group. She asks us the questions and we are given sheets to help us when we run our group. We also have a stone to pass round so that everyone knows when it's their turn to talk.

We've talked about manners and it improved the manners at lunchtime! We talked about School Council before the elections to help people understand about choosing representatives. One week we discussed our school's Golden Rules and what they mean.

Later each week, Mrs Atkinson discusses with us what happened in the groups and we have the chance to talk about what has gone well and what hasn't. The hardest thing was the very first week, when TEAM Talk Groups were new to everyone in the school and we all had to introduce ourselves. Sometimes we feel a bit nervous because we forget what to say and the behaviour of the children in our groups isn't always perfect! But running the groups is helping us to learn new skills for the future and to be more confident. We've noticed that even the younger children are getting better at speaking out and we're all improving our listening. We have also made friends of different ages.

At the moment we are using TEAM Talk time to evaluate TEAM Talk Groups and are using Thinking Hats to help us. So far we have found out that nearly all children enjoy the groups and have lots of good things to say about them. We have also got some really good ideas for what we could do in the future in our groups.

Stephanie and Jonathan from Year 6 at St Mary's



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Saturday 8th April  
Saturday 13th May

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Ruth Rawlinson  
Tel: 814222



### Planning Application for Expansion on the Existing Runway

BAA's planning application for expansion on the existing runway is expected next month. We are keenly aware that BAA will be doing everything in its power to pretend that a virtual doubling of passenger numbers on the existing runway to achieve maximum use won't make much difference to the ground and air noise, road and rail congestion, air pollution, health and quality of life in the region. This is hardly surprising: BAA stands to benefit considerably from increased passenger numbers and there is no doubt that it will try to push through its plans 'on the cheap'.

The quality of the consultants advising UDC and also Essex and Herts County Councils and East Herts District Council will be of critical importance in determining the real picture, as will the briefs on which they are engaged. To be truly effective, our local authorities must not simply be reactive to BAA's application but examine its credibility in the context of the Government's public transport, energy and environmental policies as well as global best practice and technical possibilities. Only then can BAA's claims of sustainability be properly assessed and the planning application decided. We are, of course, preparing to make considerable input into the discussions which will surround the planning application. We will also be commissioning our own external specialist reports, consultants and legal advice to put BAA's plans under the microscope.

Peter Sanders, Chairman

#### DIARY DATES:

8th April	Takeley Supper Quiz - tickets now on sale
28th April	Duton Hill Quiz - tickets now on sale
29th May	Hatfield Broad Oak 10km Run (advance registration essential)
10 June	5th Annual Runway Ramble

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