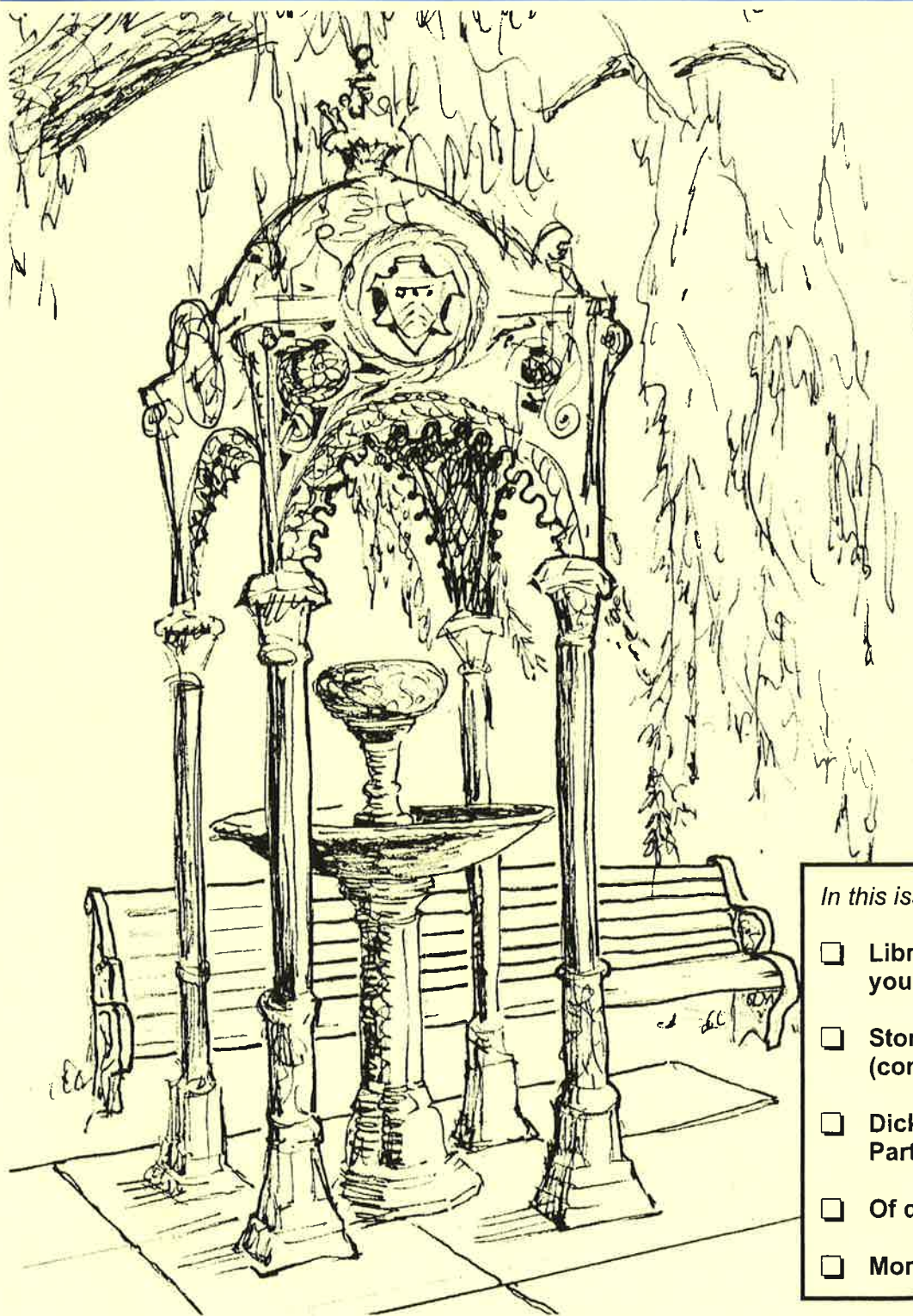
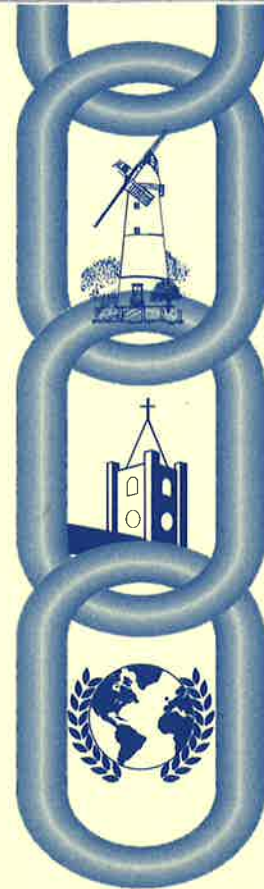


Feb 06

Stansted Mountfitchet

The Link



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ada

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St John's
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contact us

all enquiries

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St John's Road
Stansted CM24 8JP

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church.office@stansted.net

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Director of Music

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website

www.stansted.net/stjohns

Computers

I don't have a great love for machinery or technology. My computer, like my car, is fine whilst it is working. But I am interested in the ways in which things to do with my computer become metaphors in my life. Take the messages that I

receive from my computer. Things like 'disk full' or (in my work e-mail) 'your inbox is unsafe'. 'Your inbox is unsafe' means that messages are arriving faster than I am dealing with them or deleting them. My life, like that of many others at work, has become dominated by my e-mails. Every day I spend several hours just responding to them, and this had become the life blood, or circulation system, for most businesses and work places. It is commonplace for people to return after a period of holiday to a day or more spent only catching up with e-mails. Of course, this technology also provides a fast and often efficient channel of communication, and replaces, in many instances, a whole mound of paperwork.

'Your inbox is unsafe' seems to me to be a powerful way of expressing an emotional truth as well as a technological one. Often, I do feel that my emotional or mental 'inbox' is unsafe; I can't absorb any more. In the same way, 'disk full' has

become a way of thinking of and expressing the state of mind I am often in at the end of a day. For some people who experience certain forms of mental illness, it can be as if they can no longer process the things coming in, and the whole system collapses as a result.

Spiritually too, we walk around with an enormous 'inbox' of unresolved issues. My most powerful experience of the meaning of forgiveness came to me one day – not in Church - but when I was sitting in front of my computer. I had had one of those messages 'your inbox is unsafe', and a helpful colleague told me how to move all my old messages to another place on the computer, in order to allow new messages to come in. With a click of the computer mouse, she did it. 'There', she said, 'now you can look at them in your own time, but they won't get in the way of new messages coming in'. My 'inbox' was empty. From over 500 messages it was now a blank screen. I was so thankful and amazed that I looked at that screen for over five minutes, just enjoying the empty space before the first new one arrived. And I nearly cried. And suddenly I realised that this is what forgiveness is like.

In our personal relationships with our

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 Home.

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

Paul: an appealing or appalling apostle?

A DVD lecture by the New Testament scholar **John Dominic Crossan** 8:00pm the Rectory 22nd February. Maximum 12. Please pre-book at the Church Office.

partners, children or friends, real forgiveness is a way of saying 'don't let what happened between us mar our relationship in the future and stop you moving on'. Within a Christian perspective, God offers to wipe away all the mistakes and bad things we have done in the past – all the things that slow us down or hold us up. They make us reluctant to step out boldly or take on new things. We carry a history of old failures. And the experience of forgiveness should be one where we know that we can now start completely afresh. Of course, more will build up, but we can again offload them and be freed to move on. People at work tell me that I should clear my computer inbox more often. In spiritual terms, church services give a regular opportunity to claim God's forgiveness.

Just like my computer, these things do not go away altogether. We can – when we have the time or the strength – look at them and learn from them, and deal with them. We need to make time to do this. But in terms of daily life, God wants us to be free to respond anew, not held back by the past. Perhaps S/He invented computers after all?

CMC

From the Registers

Baptism:

4th December: Harry Monty Scott Shervington

There were no weddings at St John's in November.

Funerals:

6th December: St Mary's - Ronald Leslie Wright, 62

16th December: Cambridge Crematorium (followed by memorial service in St John's) - Colin Peter Horner, 72

19th December: St Mary's - Baby Halls (premature - 20 weeks)

23rd December: St Mary's - Henry George William Greenway, 61

ST JOHN'S SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING GROUP

The newly formed Social/Fundraising Group have now held their first informal meeting and suggested the following dates for everyone's diary:

Saturday 22nd April - An Auction of Items and Promises in the Church Hall

Sunday 25th June - Benefice BBQ and Mini Fete in the Churchyard - proceeds to local needs/charities.

Saturday 23rd September - Quiz Night and Harvest Supper in the Church Hall - proceeds to Overseas Mission (to be confirmed).

Saturday 18th November - Christmas Fair in the Church.

Rosemary Thomson



We are grateful to everyone who made our two carol singing evenings before Christmas so successful by way of singing, playing musical instruments, knocking on doors and putting money in our tins. The generosity of customers in the Lower Street area pubs and restaurants was particularly noticeable. Perhaps they were just paying us to go away, but that's better than the bucket of water that greeted us one year in another part of the village! £300 was collected, which, added to the £124 raised at the 'Celebration of Christmas', means that the grand sum of £424 has been sent to support the work of the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

The other £124 from the 'Celebration of Christmas' has been sent to the Churches Conservation Trust. Many thanks to all those involved in making both events so successful.

Michael Dyer



SHALOM

On Monday 13th February, we will meet in the United Reformed Church Hall. We will have a guest speaker from Open Doors, a charity which helps Christians who are persecuted for their religious beliefs, supplies bibles and is involved in literacy and livelihood projects.

On Monday 27th February, we meet at 7 Blythwood Gardens. Edna and Catherine will be sharing some thoughts on Gerard Hughes' book 'God in all things'.

All meetings start at 8.00pm and everyone is most welcome. Please come and join us. For more details phone Edna and Harry Goreing on 503764.

Catherine Dean

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

Homage is due to whoever wrote this poem ... Graham
Thwaites

The bell tolls at four in the morning,
I stand by the window,
barefoot on the cool floor.
The garden is still dark.

I wait for the mountains and rivers to reclaim their shapes.
There is no light in the deepest hours of the night.
Yet, I know you are there
in the depth of the night,
the immeasurable world of the mind.
You, the known, have been there
ever since the knower has been.

The dawn will come soon,
and you will see
that you and the rosy horizon
are within my two eyes.
It is for me that the horizon is rosy
and the sky blue.

Looking at your image in the clear stream,
you answer the question by your very presence.
Life is humming the song of the non-dual marvel.

I suddenly find myself smiling
in the presence of this immaculate night.
I know because I am here that you are there,
and your being has returned to show itself
in the wonder of tonight's smile.

In the quiet stream,
I swim gently.
The murmur of the water lulls my heart.

A wave serves as a pillow
I look up and see
a white cloud against the blue sky,
the sound of Autumn leaves,
the fragrance of hay -
each one a sign of eternity.

A bright star helps me find my way back to myself.

I know because you are there that I am here.
The stretching arm of cognition
in a lightning flash,
joining together a million eons of distance,
joining together birth and death,
joining together the known and the knower.

In the depth of the night,
as in the immeasurable realm of consciousness,
the garden of life and I
remain each other's objects.
The flower of being is singing the song of emptiness.

The night is still immaculate,
but sounds and images from you
have returned and fill the pure night.

I feel their presence.
By the window, with my bare feet on the cool floor,
I know I am here
for you to be.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

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High Lane

Priest Father Joe White
The Presbytery
St Therese of Lisieux
High Lane
Stansted
Tel: 01279 814349

Masses	Saturday	6.00pm
	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
-----------------	----------------

The first month of the year 2006 has just finished; how many of those New Year resolutions remain?

At the start of February the Church concludes the joyful season of the birth of Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem with the feast day of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple. The Jewish law required the first-born belonged to God, so Mary and Joseph took him to the Temple, as required by the law, and to redeem him they had to offer up a lamb or a brace of pigeons.

In the readings for this day, reference is made to Simeon's reference to Jesus as "the Light, which shall give revelation to the Gentiles". We Christians have a duty in the year 2006, to carry the light of Christ into the world, by our actions and prayer life, and be like Mary and Joseph, who presented the infant Jesus. We should present everyday life to Christ, as an offering for the needs of the world. A simple prayer is all that is needed to dedicate the day; it need only be short, then it will be easier to remember. May I suggest something like the following:-

Dear Lord, I offer you this day, with all my many faults, and also thank you for all the blessings that I shall receive this day; for your Glory and Honour and for peace in the world. Amen

This feast is also known as Candlemas, when candles are blessed and carried in procession, to welcome Christ as the light of His people. During the early Christian period in Rome, candles were blessed at night in one church and then carried in procession for the celebration of Mass in another church, thus showing the light of Christ to the world.

'A tail note' - how many of us remember Septuagesima and Quinquagesima Sundays? - now we have 'ordinary time' in the lead up to Ash Wednesday; how times have changed!

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

Preachers for February

5th 2.30pm Rev'd David Simpson
12th 10-30am Mrs S Devereux
19th 10-30am Rev'd David Simpson - Communion
Joint with Methodists
26th 10-30am Mr Michael Dyer
Joint with Methodists

Dates for your diary in February:

5th 3.30pm Afternoon tea.
For lifts telephone 813977 or 812593
6th 6.00pm Pilots for children 5-13 years.
For information telephone 813433
20th 6.00pm Pilots for children 5-13 years.
For information telephone 813433

Sunday Afternoon Teas

Everyone is welcome to come and join us at our afternoon teas, on the first Sunday of each month at 3.30pm for a chat and a piece of homemade cake in friendly company. If you would like a lift please let us know.

Janet Townsend
Tel: 01279 812593

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 February

5th 9.30am At the Friends Meeting House
Rosamunde Page
12th 9.30am At the Friends Meeting House
Joan Kennett
19th 10.30am At the URC
Rev'd David Simpson – Holy Communion
26th 10.30am At the URC
Michael Dyer

There will be a church fellowship meeting on Thursday 9th February.

On Saturday 4th February at 10.00am there is a meeting at the URC to continue our discussions about taking forward union of the two churches.

Catherine Dean



STANSTED LIBRARY NEWS

Are you trying to attract more members to your club?

The library often gets asked for details of local organisations, but as no list is being maintained the request often cannot be satisfied. So why not provide details of your club in order that it can be included in the list of local organisations being created by Stansted Library? All that is required is the name of the organisation, a contact name, telephone number, email and website addresses (if applicable) and a brief description of activities, meeting times, etc. This information can be handed in at the library or emailed to

dave.loynds@tesco.net

Have you found that an event organised by your club clashes with another event in the village?

Then why not enter details of your event in the village diary, which is kept at the library?

Do you want to advertise a specific meeting/event?

The library has limited space for displaying such posters (maximum size A4), but if possible the library will display those that are handed in.

Baby and Toddler Times.

Please note that these have been suspended for the time being.

A reminder that the library is open at the following times:

Tuesday	09.00 – 13.00
Wednesday	14.00 – 17:00
Thursday	14.00 – 18:00
Saturday	09.30 – 17:00

And finally, why not join the library? It is free, and there are no forms to fill in!

David Loynds



Turning the runway nobody wants into the runway that never gets built

Ensuring that the runway that nobody wants becomes the runway that never gets built was the message from all quarters at a packed public meeting on BAA's plans for expansion organised by Stop Stansted Expansion.

More than 500 people joined the region's MPs, MEPs, members of the House of Lords and district and county council leaders for the meeting which was held to mobilise opposition to BAA's plans for a second runway. Formal presentations were followed by a lively question and answer session. The venue – the Rhodes Arts Complex in Bishop's Stortford – was packed to capacity and some 200 people had to be turned away.

Mark Prisk MP who chaired the meeting made clear from the outset that by working together, the community could beat the threat of a second runway. The fact that so many people were present at the meeting, he said, bore witness to the commitment and resolve amongst the public and their elected representatives to work tirelessly to overturn BAA's plans.

Fellow MP Sir Alan Haselhurst continued in the same vein. In a vehement attack on BAA he said: "By asking us to decide where we want a second runway, BAA is effectively asking us to choose our poison. But we don't want any of the choices on offer, we don't want any second runway at all. Are you listening BAA? That is the answer to your consultation."

"We must not get into the mindset of thinking that expansion beyond the present capacity would be acceptable – or that we would ever gain any concessions from BAA whose consultation does nothing to meet our concerns," he continued. "There isn't even any recognition in the consultation of the problems before us arising from the second runway plans, such as more noise in the skies and more congestion on the ground."



In his address, SSE Chairman Peter Sanders described the second runway consultation as wretchedly flawed – "superficial, inadequate and unacceptable" – because BAA was merely going through the motions. "The standard of information falls far short of what the Government provided in its original 2002/03 SERAS consultation – and even that was twice deemed by the High Court to be flawed. While the consultation contains lots of glossy pictures of airport buildings, aeroplanes and some beautiful landscape, it contains very little information on the most important issues. This," he said, "makes it impossible for local people wishing to participate in the consultation to make an informed response."

Peter Sanders concluded: "The clear message we must send to BAA is that any second runway, whatever its precise position, would be an environmental catastrophe and must be rejected outright."

North Herts MP Oliver Heald drew attention to the wider impacts which the expansion of the airport would have beyond the immediate vicinity of Stansted, not least across his own constituency which was also threatened by plans to expand Luton too.

His sentiments were echoed in the comments of Uttlesford District Council Leader Cllr Mark Gayler and Essex County Council's Deputy Leader Cllr Peter Martin who responded to questions of concern over not only the second runway proposals but also on the question of full use of the existing runway.

Speaking from the audience, Euro MP Geoffrey van Orden told the meeting that he was pressing for the European Commission to use its powers to ensure a robust single market backed by good competition policy, something which would undermine BAA's monopoly position in the UK and, more especially, in the South East where 92 percent of the market was controlled by the airport developer.

Carol Barbone, Campaign Director, M 0777 552 3091
cbarbone@mxco.co.uk
SSE Campaign Office 01279 870558
www.stopstanstedexpansion.com



Skip Dates Lower Street Car

Green Waste, Metal & Wood
9 am - 3 pm

Sat 4th February
Sat 18th February
Sat 4th & Sun 5th March
Sat 18th & Sun 19th March



Afternoon Teas

resume on Sun 5th Feb in the
United Reformed Church foyer
3.30 - 5 pm

Come along for tea, cakes & a chat
You will find a very warm welcome
All proceeds go towards water
pumps for the Third World



Helen Rollason
Helen Rollason Charity

QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 25th February

7.30 for 8 pm
Stansted Day Centre
Tables of 6
Bring your own drinks
£6 incl ploughman's
Tel 813871

VILLAGE EVENTS

February

1	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm Day Centre 8 pm
2	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
4	Sat	Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
5	Sun	Afternoon Tea (after service)	UR Church 3.30 - 5 pm
9	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
11	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
13	Mon	Shalom Group Tennis Club AGM	United Reformed Hall 8 pm 105 Cambridge Road 8 pm
15	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
18	Sat	Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
25	Sat	Helen Rollason Quiz	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
27	Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm

March

1	Wed	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
2	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
3	Fri	Women's World Day of Prayer	St Teresa's Church 2 pm
4	Sat / 5 Sun	Skips	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
5	Sun	Afternoon Tea (after service)	UR Church 3.30 - 5 pm
9	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
11	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's Lib Dem Quiz	Day Centre noon - 2 pm Day Centre 7 for 7.30 pm
13	Mon	Shalom Group	United Reformed Hall 8 pm
14	Tue	Millers' AGM	Day Centre 8 pm
18	Sat / 19 Sun	Skips	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
18	Sat	Tennis Club Music Quiz	Bowls Club 7 for 7.30 pm
31	Fri	Pete Baker's Crusty Jazzers	St John's Church 8 - 11 pm



Stansted & District
Liberal Democrats

QUIZ EVENING

7 for 7.30 pm
Saturday 11th March
Day Centre
Tickets £5
(incl light refreshments)
Tel 814222 or 813432
Tables of 6 preferred
Bar ~ Raffle



THE COULL STRING QUARTET

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Haydn, Shostakovich
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7.30 pm Sat 25th March
St John's Church

Tickets £10 adults £3 children
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Stansted Carpets, Nockolds B.S.
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or at the door

Stansted Tennis Club



MUSIC QUIZ



7 for 7.30 pm
Saturday 18th March
Stansted Bowls Club

Tickets £7
(incl ploughmans)
Tel Michaela 815796
Tables of 6 preferred

Licensed Bar



STANSTED MILLERS

Annual General Meeting
followed by a
presentation from
Geoff Wood
Essex County Mills Officer

8 pm Tues 14th March
Day Centre

Refreshments ~ All welcome



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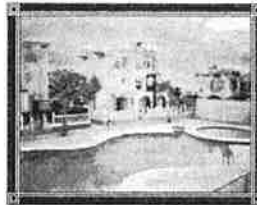
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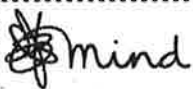
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STONEY COMMON (continued)

This personal account is a valued contribution from a member of this special community. Mark also tells me that the 'missing' shopkeepers after Mr Reeve were Mr and Mrs Felsted. After Ruth came the Keens and last of all and only for a short time Mr Crane; it was then sold privately in about 1985/86. Ed.

My Recollections of Stoney Common

Being born in 1965 my recollections of the Common are historically speaking quite modern but they took the road with its 54 cottages and a corner shop through an interesting time of great changes. By this time the nursery was well and truly on its way out and the residents must have been looking elsewhere for employment. One place that old nursery workers went was Patrick Grangers who were wholesalers in provisions and had bacon smoking facilities. My father went and worked for them as a lorry driver delivering all over East Anglia to small shops (yes, there were a lot of them about still then) and before I started school I had covered thousands of miles with him in a Bedford TK.

As for the Common, it was an interesting time. I can still remember going to the shop with a big old penny for some sweets and getting quite a few as well!! All the old favourites: black jacks, fruit salads, sugar shrimps, flying saucers, to name but a few. Then I started at school and the lorry rides stopped and decimalisation came. I remember a lot of our neighbours complaining about the change and struggling to adjust. Ruth Wickens was still in the shop at this time and 'Auntie Ruth' as she was known helped people to work the new money.

The famous sense of community at the Common I will always remember (I grew up with it) and on summer evenings people would just gather in the twichels with homemade cakes and wine. One highlight of the week was the mobile green fish and chip van that would pull up outside the shops - Wrens I think they were called. We always asked for any batter scraps. Then the residents got together and raised money and Stoney Common got a Tarmac covering - I can't remember exactly when but it was about 1975/76 and J F Knight carried out the work. I remember in the summer holiday my mates and I helping them rake out the piles of hot tar and the men bought us all an ice lolly from Auntie Ruth's. Shortly after this it was 1977 and a fabulous street party was organised.

We moved a little way from the Common in 1989 but I can still see the backs of the houses from our back garden. My memories are still very strong of a place where you could name everyone in all 54 cottages, there were only about 10 cars in the whole road, neighbours met and laughed with each other and you could smell the smoke from the bacon factory in the evening and we had our own little meeting hall for things like jumble sales. Happy days!.

Mark Gerber

... More recollections in the March issue

IN MEMORIAM

Colin Horner

Colin was a real countryman, with a great love of nature. He was particularly fond of birds, having bred them to show as a young man. He retained the amazing ability to identify bird song and calls throughout his life. Colin was President of the Royal National Rose Society in 2000 and was recognised as one of the top amateur rose breeders in the world. He bred many award-winning varieties, all of which were raised on his allotment.

Colin enjoyed sport from an early age. He was a keen football, tennis and table tennis player, but cricket was his main sport and he opened the batting for Newport Grammar School and Stansted for many years. After 'retiring' from regular playing he umpired youth games and coached both football and cricket in the village.

Colin contributed to village life in many ways: as a young man leading the youth club; helping with the village carnival; driving for the Huw Johnson Club; speaking at the gardening club and working for the Stansted 'Helpline'. All of this was done with his characteristic sense of humour; many in the village will miss him.



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St Mary's Primary School



St Mary's has been experimenting with use of Edward de Bono's 6 Thinking Hats for some time, following some training we received through our involvement in the Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet Federation of Schools. This approach helps children (and adults!) to organise their thinking into discrete types, helping to make thinking – and therefore learning – more effective.

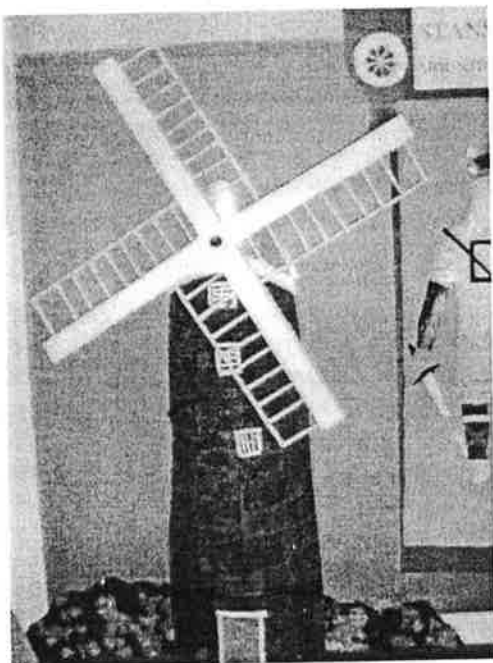
In brief:	White hat:	information
	Red hat:	feelings
	Black hat:	problems
	Yellow hat:	good points
	Green hat:	new ideas
	Blue hat:	next steps

Following our recent art project, children recounted their experience, using the hats. Perhaps you could try to identify which hat is used in different parts of the following piece of work by Stephanie, in Year 5:

"On 17th and 18th of November we did an art project for two days. Two ladies called Sharon and Liz from the Art Solutions company came into our school to do a local area art project for our entrance hall.

I enjoyed making an owl and a squirrel, because I like making pebbles [basic 3D newspaper shapes for modelling] and painting. I also liked helping clean up with Sharon and Liz.

It was good because we used team building skills to work together. It was really fun. We also got to know different people in our class who we don't normally talk to. It was a bit messy and sometimes the materials would rip because they got too soggy or were just delicate and would rip.



The windmill produced in our art project

It would have been better if we wore old clothes so we didn't get glue on our clothes. It would have been better if we had a day longer to decorate the windows.

The final result is brilliant and you can see everyone has worked really hard on it. It was really fun making it."

Wendy Wood,
Headteacher



The start to the spring term has been a busy one with the two extra sessions for two and a half year olds taking place in the Quaker Hall on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, due to the large numbers requiring places. Happily, the new pupils seem to have settled in well, as have their staff!

At the end of last term we were sad to say goodbye to one of the founder members of Rainbow, Ann Conroy who, though she has now retired, will still be helping out as a regular volunteer. Ann co-founded Rainbow more than 30 years ago and it is thanks to her hard work and dedication that it is still thriving today. Many children have passed through Ann's care over the years and she will be greatly missed.

We have welcomed two new members of staff this term. Lorraine Curtis has taken over Ann's position and Mandy Honour has been appointed to assist Yvonne with the extra sessions for the two and a half year olds. We hope they will enjoy working with us.

Our 'sweets in a jar' stall was as popular as ever at the St Mary's School Christmas Fete and we raised just over £70 thanks to the kindness of our parents in donating jars of sweets.

The children have been busy already with this term's topic about castles. They have also been learning how Chinese New Year is celebrated and enjoying tasting Chinese food! The home corner has been transformed into a giant's castle, to complement the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, which we are reading at the moment.



We have a few afternoon spaces for Rainbow Tots (ages 18 months to 2½ years). If you are interested in a place, 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)

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STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Although the festive season has passed there was a particularly light-hearted mood at our last meeting; perhaps because it was our members' evening when contributions came from within the Society. This year the main event was presented by Ralph Phillips and was on the subject of the opening of the Liverpool to Manchester railway line in 1830. It was also the occasion of the first railway accident. He was assisted by others from the Society who played the roles of those who were involved at the time and who left first-hand reports of all that occurred – these were Tony Wellings as George Stephenson (complete with top hat!), Rosalind Peck as Fanny Kemble, Brian Harvey as James Picton, Betty Waterman as Lady Wilton, Derek Francis as Mr Barton and John Hollis, who introduced the subject by reading the newspaper report from the Observer of September 1830.

The proposal for the railway was the brainchild of local businessmen who put in charge George Stephenson, the leading engineer of the time, to plan and build it. However, there was much local opposition and although Stephenson himself gave evidence to a House of Commons Committee in the attempt to gain the necessary Act of Parliament, this was not immediately forthcoming. Building work did, however, begin in January 1827 and was completed in 1830, Stephenson having overcome many adversities on the way. Not least was the fact that some of the Directors of the Company were not convinced over the use of steam traction and still wanted to use horses. A competition was held at Rainhill where several locomotives took part in a trial, the winner being Stephenson's own 'Rocket'. The Directors were persuaded although they still decided to erect stationary steam engines at the steepest incline on the line to be sure.

In June 1830 the Directors made a preliminary excursion and ran a train containing themselves, some honoured guests (including Fanny Kemble) and seven wagons full of stones, to a total weight of 33 tons. This was a complete success and fully justified the decision to use steam power. The Grand Opening was, therefore, set for 15th September and many important people were invited, including the Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington and the local MP, the Rt Hon William Huskisson. Several trains were arranged to carry them all from Liverpool to Manchester using both tracks at the same time. Thousands of people turned out to watch, bands played and excitement was in the air. Unfortunately there was also a sprinkling of political agitators who made their presence felt as the day wore on!

All went well at first and the trains arrived at Parkside to take on water, allowing the passengers to alight to discuss the new experience of rail travel. Suddenly it was realised that an engine was approaching on the other track and there was a rush to return to the carriages to get out of the way. Mr Huskisson had fallen out with the Duke in Parliament and although on social terms with him did not wish, for political

reasons, to be seen getting into his carriage so tried to get round the open door to return to his own. His coat caught on the lock of the open door, holding him so that he was in the path of the oncoming engine, and he was run over, with serious injuries to his leg. It was decided to take him immediately by train to Eccles where he might obtain medical treatment. There he was cared for by the wife of the Vicar until he died at 9.00pm bearing his injuries with great fortitude. On arriving in Manchester, the Duke met with protests over his political policies while the return to Liverpool became a nightmare. Rain fell on the open carriages, and the trains (which had been linked together) could not make it into the station so that the passengers had to get out and walk – the last did not arrive until 11.00pm. So ended a fraught day but one, as Ralph said, that was the 'Birth of an Era'.

We finished with an interesting, if obscure, contribution from Paul Embleton. He had acquired over the internet an eighteenth century legal document relating to persons living in Stansted which he had had great difficulty in trying to understand. Having read it to us in all its legal language I am afraid we were no help in trying to make it more comprehensible but there were several suggestions made which, while not necessarily accurate, were at least imaginative. He has promised to let us know if he has greater luck elsewhere!

At our next meeting on 2nd February Peter Lawrence will return to continue his fascinating talk on 'The Treasures of Whitehall' which we are looking forward to greatly. We hope that you will be able to join us.

Ian Seavers


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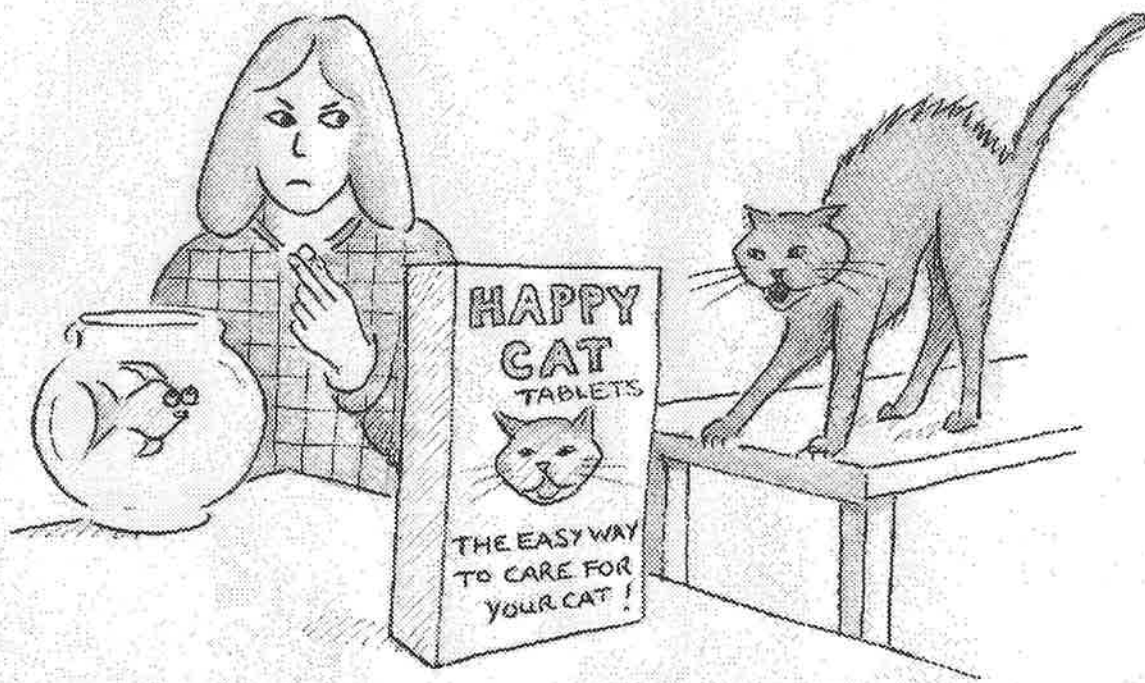
Congratulations to the Library for inviting voluntary organizations to make themselves known and so form part of a comprehensive Stansted listing. This is music to the Link's ears, it being something that is needed but one we have found a task too far. Please, secretaries, do let the Library or David know you are there.

A SOLUTION TO THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE!

I'm sure many of you have read a version of the following as it appears in magazines and on the Internet from time to time. However it is always worth reading again.

How to give a Cat a Tablet

1. Pick cat up, cradle it in left arm. Position right forefinger and thumb on either side of cat's mouth and gently apply pressure to cheeks while holding tablet in right hand. As cat opens mouth, pop tablet in. Close cat's mouth and allow to swallow.
2. Retrieve pill from floor and cat from behind sofa. Repeat process.
3. Retrieve cat from bedroom. Throw soggy tablet away. Get new tablet, cradle cat in left arm, holding rear paws tightly with left hand. Force jaws open and push tablet to back of mouth with right forefinger. Hold mouth shut for a count of 10.
4. Retrieve tablet from goldfish bowl and cat from top of wardrobe. Call spouse from garden.
5. Kneel on floor with cat wedged firmly between knees, holding front and rear paws. Ignore hissing. Get spouse to hold cat's head firmly with one hand while forcing jaws open with wooden ruler. Drop tablet down ruler and rub cat's throat vigorously.
6. Retrieve cat from curtain rail, get another tablet. Make note to buy new ruler and repair curtains
7. Wrap cat in large towel and get spouse to lie on cat so its head is just visible. Put tablet in end of drinking straw, force cat's mouth open with pencil and blow down drinking straw.
8. Check label to make sure tablet not harmful to humans, drink glass of water to take taste away. Apply Band-Aid to spouse's forearm and remove blood from carpet with cold water and soap.
9. Retrieve cat from neighbour's shed. Get another tablet. Put on heavy duty pruning gloves. Tie cats legs to dining table. Force cat's mouth open with small spanner. Push tablet into mouth followed by large piece of steak. Hold head vertically and pour in glass of water to wash tablet down.
10. Get spouse to drive you to A&E, sit quietly while doctor stitches fingers and forearm and removes tablet remnants from right eye. Stop by furniture shop on way home to order new table.
11. Arrange for vet to make house call!



For those of you who recognise this scenario, there is some good news. A new wormer called Profender has recently come on the market. It treats both round and tapeworms and the best news is that it is in a spot on formulation. So no need to struggle with giving worming tablets to your cat anymore. All you need do is put a few drops on the back of its neck! As a general rule it is a good idea to worm dogs and cats about once every 3 months, but it is important to take into account your individual circumstances. If you have young children you may want to worm more frequently; if you have a house cat that never goes out and no children it may be appropriate to worm less frequently. If you are unsure, please contact us at the surgery and we can advise you on the best worming policy for your pet.

Finally this month we would like to welcome a new vet to the practice. His name is Sorin Popa and his nationality is Swedish. He will mainly be working at the Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow surgeries but he will visit Stansted from time to time. He has been working in a mixed practice in North Wales, and so as well as being an experienced small animal vet he also has great expertise with large animals. We wish him a very warm welcome to Mercer and Hughes and are looking forward to working with him.

Ilse Pedler, Partner, Mercer & Hughes, Veterinary Surgeons

LOOKING BACK – part 2

One of the largest shops in the area was Green's Departmental Stores. Dear Miss Tunbridge used to sit in a booth in the centre of the ladies department where there was a wonderful system of wires leading into the booth. Money and the bill would be placed into a container which was pinged to Miss Tunbridge who would ping the container back with any change due.

In the men's department was Mr Neeves, a wonderful character. If he hadn't got it he could always get it for you. Legend has it that an Irish gentleman who was working on the road outside wanted a shirt for a special function. Mr Neeves didn't have the right size but suggested that he bought a smaller size, wore it open necked and purchased a cravat to go with it. Sale made! The stock he kept was usually on the conservative side but he must have had a rush of blood to the head and stocked some lurid fluorescent coloured socks. I couldn't resist them and bought a couple of pairs. I wore a pair to Newport Grammar School who had a very strict dress code then. On rolling the cricket pitch we had to roll our trousers up. I recall coming in for some serious grief from Mr 'Spud' Taylor.

Barclays Bank was next door. This was in a period when the Bank Manager was a much valued and respected person and Mr Winkley certainly fitted that description. The London and Stansted Furnishing Company was next door. I worked there after I left school. This again was a very large store for a village. I recall some great characters like Len Sweet who did the fitting work and Vic Dixon who ran the electrical department with Percy Tabor and Sid Stringer. People used to bring their accumulators in to be charged at a cost of about four pence. A far cry from transistors and circuit boards. I have memories of dear old Walter Jackson of the removal department telling me of the London run which took several days and entailed a stop over at the Wake Arms to stable the horses.

One of the biggest employers in the area was Rochford's Nurseries. I spent several summer holidays working in the greenhouses. We used to go down to Stoney Common to watch the little trucks with the coal for the nursery travelling up the slope on a moving wire. Major Cawkell, the owner, was a real gentleman. He was usually accompanied by his Alsatian dog and would often show us around if he saw us looking in.

The corner shop in Stoney Common was Ruth's Stores. Ruth Wickens was a really lovely and attractive lady who was a great friend to her customers. I recall performing a duet with Ruth in the Mission Hall singing "Just a couple of swells who live in the best hotels" etc. Very fond memories.

As lads we had gangs and played all over the village. There was the pit in Millside now covered in houses, as is Alleyfields. A favourite place to play was the Castle Hills where we used to jump off the castle. We got up to some neat tricks but they were usually pretty innocent.

There was an Army Camp at Hargrave Park. I remember the Americans being there, so would lots of the local girls I'll be

bound! There used to be a large sign near the camp saying 'site for Super Cinema', which never materialised. As youngsters we found plenty to do. Lots of us went into the Cubs and Scouts. Friendships made then still endure today. I have such fond memories of Scout camps and gang shows, etc. For several years our headquarters was the Mill, a wonderful place to hold our meetings which were under Malcolm Treacher, Keith Turner and Cyril Clarke amongst others. The Central Hall was a focal point in the village where we used to hold our gang shows, also church shows. The capers we got up to there merit another article! It later became Rocky's Night Club.

I went to St Mary's Primary School. Our headmaster was Mr Hare, a lovely man. He enjoyed a cigarette and would often say – "Dicky, go to Eric Poole's and get me 40 Kensitas". You couldn't see that happening now! The school moved to Chapel Hill and I remember being taught in the hall behind the Central Hall by Miss Player, a really kind and lovely lady.

I attended the Congregational Church from an early age. I remember the organ had to be pumped by hand, a job done by Norman Adams. His wife was Nina, a very gifted pianist who played for our gang shows. I can see her now, playing away at the piano with a cigarette hanging from her lips.

Our Carnival was a big affair lasting a week. We had a Carnival Queen. (I had a great time interviewing the contestants.) We had a very pretty girl crowned Queen one year who it turned out had done some topless posing. She was promptly dethroned – I would have put her picture on the front of the carnival magazine! This story made the 'News of the World'.

There is so much more I could write, perhaps another time. (Please do! ... Ed). I hope that these reminiscences are of some interest.

Dick Pollard

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Stansted Evening Women's Institute

BENTFIELD SCHOOL

In the twinkling of an eye Christmas has come and gone, the children have returned eager for the new term, awaiting new experiences and horizons, and re-telling their amazing stories. We are very pleased to welcome to the school our new Deputy Head Teacher, Mrs Dee Spackman, who will also be teaching Class 6.

Although the term has only just started we have been busy. Classes 3 and 4 had a really exciting visit from 'The Rock Man' who arrived with all types of soil and rock samples for them to learn about. Class 1 has been out and about in the village visiting Bentfield Playground, and Classes 1 and 2 have had great fun at the Toy Museum.

If your child will be five in the next academic year (September 2006 to August 2007) the closing date for applications for a primary school place is **27th February 2006**. The application form will have been set out by the Health Authority and should be returned to Essex County Council. If you are interested in either a Nursery or Reception place in September 2006, and would like to visit the school, please give us a ring and we would be very pleased to arrange one for you.

The Bentfield PTA also has plenty to look forward to this term. Our first event for the children will be the Spring Disco which will take place in the school hall on Friday 10th February. This is always a great opportunity for the children to get all dressed up and share their latest dance moves with their friends. This time the parents should be taking notes too, because a few weeks later we will be inviting them to take to the dance floor for their own disco! Yes, we are delighted to announce that Garry King has offered to run a 70s/80s disco for the grownups towards the end of term – watch out for publicity nearer the time! It should be a great night – so dig out your catsuit and platforms – we won't tell anyone.

As we get closer to Easter (and, let us hope, to some warmer weather) we will also be organising some special activities for the children in and around the school, including an Easter Egg Hunt!

Looking further ahead to the Summer term, preparations are well in hand for this year's May Fair. Our other major event of the Summer, Music in the Park, now in its fifth year, is booked for **Saturday 15th July** and planning is already well under way for another wonderful musical picnic!

For more details about any of our events, please keep an eye on this magazine and on the Parish notice boards.

Alison Thompson, PTFA Member

January is party time for our WI and if you were walking down St. John's road on the 12th, you may have heard a rousing rendering of 'Jerusalem' (two verses) with which we opened the meeting. Our entertainer for the evening, Ray Spiller, making his third visit to us, brings along a recording of Jerusalem so with full choir accompaniment we are able to let rip. Red clothed tables with small candles and glasses of wine met members as they came in and a party atmosphere was established straight away – almost a continuation of the very successful Christmas dinner which was held at the Cock pub in December, which Pearl Wellings organised for us. We are grateful to the staff for allowing us to make our presence felt there once a year!

Ray Spiller, who has recorded every British No 1 hit since they began in 1952, brings every one of them to every show that he does. This year he played us lots of old signature tunes from past TV shows, which we all recognised but sometimes found very hard to recall the show. Music was played during the supper interval; the committee had provided a variety of interesting dishes and then coffee was served, after which most people got up to dance the rest of the evening away.

The line dancing classes will be starting on 8th February in St John's Hall at 2.00pm. Twenty members have signed up for this so maybe we will be giving a demonstration later in the year!

Two trips organised by members of the County Committee are planned. One called Cosmopolitan London, celebrates the diversity of Londoners, historically and in the present day. It is planned to go through part of London settled by the Huguenots, Jews, Bengalis and Bangladeshi communities, as well as the Hindu temple of Mandir at Neasden and Soho's Chinatown. Nine members have signed up for this and it will be interesting to hear their account afterwards. The other trip is to the Queen's Theatre in London for a backstage tour and performance of 'Les Miserables'. Twenty of us are hoping to go on this - including one member who has already seen it 11 times and is perhaps available to fill in should they need an understudy!

It was agreed to send a donation of £25 to Denman College in memory of our National Chairman; many of our members enjoy going to courses throughout the year and it is becoming increasingly difficult to meet the cost of running such an establishment.

We continue to welcome new members and if you haven't been, then do come and try us - I am sure you will know somebody and if you don't you soon will!

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Nature Notes

One may or may not believe in global warming, but it is apparent to anyone with a garden or who walks the local lanes and paths that the seasons are not what they used to be. During the week before Christmas, the shortest days of the year, leaves were still falling from some trees while others were budding; roses and primroses were blooming and bulbs coming through; sticky buds were sticky; a thrush sang lustily on several mornings before dawn, supported by a robin when the sun came up; local footpaths, which are notorious for mud at this time of year, are still reasonably firm underfoot and the River Stort is completely dry above the springs near Bentfield Mill.

The effect of all this on our wildlife is uncertain. If plants flower too early, will the right insects be around to pollinate them? Last autumn some bushes had blossom instead of berries! It is said that blue tits time the hatching of their brood to coincide with the appearance of masses of minute caterpillars on the bursting oak leaf buds. Will they sort it out if the oak tree gets ahead of itself?

Certainly there are noticeable changes in our local wildlife. In an old edition of the 'Link' I read that water voles were abundant and the deer population was increasing. Now, a few years later, water voles have gone mainly due to the predation of escaped mink against which they are defenceless. Fallow deer did increase round here to the extent that they were to be seen almost every time one walked or drove around, but now their numbers seem to have declined dramatically. They have either moved away for some reason or else ended up in venison pie.

The easiest place to see fallow deer locally must be in Hatfield Forest; all you need is patience and a bit of nonce, like working your way upwind, and you will come upon some sooner or later. It gives a thrill to see these healthy animals in the wild, but it can also be a bit of a shock if you meet a big buck in the autumn around the time of the rut. He will stand very solid and impressive, seven feet or more to the top of his antlers, giving you the eye. You are thinking that you had better not mess with him, but he has more important things on his mind and stalks off haughtily.

Sparrowhawks were talked about in these columns two months ago and since then it has been reported that two young birdwatchers in Loates Pasture watched one of these raptors eat a blackbird in their garden. Other reports have been received of birds of prey not normally seen in this area. Nearly two years ago a goshawk, like a sparrowhawk but twice the size, was seen regularly in the neighbouring parish of Great Hallingbury. Buzzards, even larger, have been around a little to the west of us for the past year and are now regular visitors to the edge of Stansted.

Another instance of bird behaviour which I have never seen before was that of what was believed to be a woodpecker which burrowed into a squirrel's dray, pulled all the bedding

out, and in the end demolished it. A few days later four or five starlings spent some time foraging in another dray nearby. The birds must have been after the wildlife that the squirrels had left behind, but if this was normal, drays would surely not last as long as they do. When I was a boy (here we go again!) I had a pet squirrel and if I raised its front leg its armpit would be a brown mass of fleas. That disgusted my mother, and the young girl I wished to impress at the time, and I suppose it was a reminder that wild creatures are not always the little fluffy, cuddly things that they might appear to be.

Felix



Royal British Legion Stansted & District Branch

May I thank all who gave so generously to the Poppy Appeal? The Stansted collection has totalled £2601.67 to date, with more money to be received. I would particularly like to thank the house-to-house collectors – not an easy task these days when a great number of people are out at work, and in November the evenings are dark. However, this part of the collection accounts for 25% of our overall total. Regrettably due to the above factors, not every house is called upon when someone is at home, but at least people can donate at other places. I would like also to thank the shops, public houses and businesses for their invaluable help by having poppies on their premises during the Remembrance period.

So thank you again on behalf of the Royal British Legion Benevolent Fund, which distributes the funds raised to ex-servicemen and women and their dependents, particularly in areas where the State is unable to help.

John L Segar Honorary Poppy Appeal Organiser
Stansted and Surrounding Areas

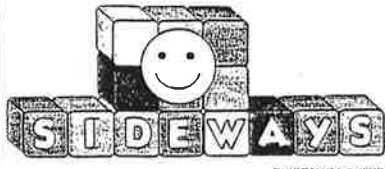
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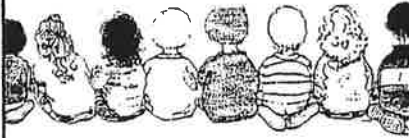
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UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Firstly, an apology for my typing skills! I wrote last month 'it looks as though we will be getting a new post office in the spring of 2007'. I did, of course, mean this year, 2006. At time of writing in early January, plans are still on track for a Cambridge Road venue, so let's hope the deal goes through.

Although recent headlines have been about BAA's consultation on a second runway, we must not lose sight of their aspirations for growth beyond 25 million passengers on the existing runway. I am pleased to say that Uttlesford took a useful step in December by laying down some ground rules that BAA would be expected to meet. This can be found in detail on the web at:

<http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/stansted+airport/planning+issues/letter.pdf>

These are some of the key points:

The Council believes that growth in air travel is incompatible with the Government's carbon emissions reduction obligations and wants BAA to come forward with alternative proposals to reduce the current trend for total emissions at Stansted Airport to increase. It expects BAA to introduce a low car strategy at Stansted for existing and any future developments and invites BAA to relinquish some of its existing permitted public car parking provision. This is particularly relevant to our own Burton End, which would be blotted out by car parks if the runway 2 proposals ever came about. (I have been working closely with Burton End residents on this. There was much press coverage including several radio and television appearances just before Christmas.)

With the new, degraded railway timetable in mind, the Council said it "insists that BAA accepts responsibility for the impact of the airport on local services, such as public rail transport, and ensures that local services are not downgraded to accommodate the demands of airport-related growth".

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

New Railway Timetable

I have taken an active interest in the introduction of the new timetable. Like many others who use the service I have been angry at the way travellers from Stansted Mountfitchet and other stations up the line to Cambridge have been treated. I have been heartened by the reaction of my fellow commuters who decided that they would not accept a significantly worse service. I have done my best to publicise the effect that the timetable has had. I have given interviews to BBC Look East and BBC Radio Essex.

Mark Evans, Business Director of One Railways, has agreed to attend the first South West Area Panel meeting. This will be held on Tuesday 31st January, 7.00pm at the Mountfitchet School. Other topics at the meeting will be airport expansion and car parking in Lower Street. Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting and put their views. I have invited local County Councillors to be present. I hope that with representatives of parish councils, district and county council that it will help to contribute to joined up government.

Waste

After a lot of thought the Council has decided to make changes to the collection of general household waste and recyclable materials. Black and green boxes will be no longer used. Residents will be able to choose to either return them to the Council or retain them for storage use. Like over 100 councils across the country, we have decided that the only way we can boost our recycling and cut down the amount that goes to landfill is to introduce wheelie bins. We realise that some people have strong views about them. The experience of other councils is that once people have them, residents value the wheelie bins and would not do without them.

The service will be based on the use of one 180 (residual) litre and one 240 (dry recycling) litre wheeled bins and the weekly collection of kitchen waste in a 140 litre wheeled bin. The Council will provide these bins free of charge, but they will remain its property.

All properties will be expected to use the bin unless an exemption is granted. This will be if the property meets one or more of the following criteria:

- i) Is physically incapable of storing containers anywhere within its boundary. Residents in these cases will retain their black and green boxes and black sacks.
- ii) Is in multiple occupation (flats) in which case an alternative sized container may be provided for shared use.

More information on the new waste policy can be obtained from the council's web site www.uttlesford.gov.uk.

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



Huw Johnson Club

In January everyone had a great time at our New Year Party with Garry's disco. The new term's programme includes bowling at Bishop's Stortford, line dancing, a curling competition (nothing to do with hair) and a quiz by Garry. Our members love Garry's quizzes and we are always amazed at the vast knowledge our members have when it comes to 'pop' music.

Our holiday this year is a lot earlier. We are off to Pontins at Pakefield, Lowestoft, on 2nd June. There will be 39 of us altogether and our members are already looking forward eagerly to a week by the sea.

Thank you to all those who sent letters saying how much they enjoyed our concert. If you missed our 2005 spectacular watch out for the date of our 2006 show.

Marion Johnson

MOUNTFITCHET HIGH SCHOOL

Interact comes to MHS



Stansted Stort Valley Rotary Club has sponsored a new service club called *Interact*. This club has been set-up at Mountfitchet High School and is for pupils between the ages of 14-16. Interact is normally for people in Sixth Form but our school has worked really hard and achieved it for Year 10 and 11. We have joined together to help local and international charities.

So far we have taken part in:

- The 'Shoebox Scheme'. This involves filling boxes with gifts to send off to Central and Eastern Europe. We bought 100 boxes and have managed to fill all of them which is a great achievement.
- We are now organising a sponsored silence called 'The Big Hush'. This is where pupils in the school are sponsored to be quiet for a certain period of time. It could be 5 minutes or 5 hours.
- Recently many of us took part in the 'Santa Sleigh' collection and some of you may have seen us coming round with our lovely fluorescent jackets and Santa hats. We helped raise a massive £5000 which will go to the Rotary Club, who will disperse the money to various local charities.

If you would like to sponsor any of our forthcoming events or would like to know any further information about Interact please contact us at the school on 01279 813384.

Hannah Pearson, President of Interact



Spring Term Newsletter

Hello again!
Welcome back and hope you all had a super Christmas and that Santa was kind to you.

This term's activity is GROWTH AND NEW BEGINNINGS. We will be looking for the signs of spring, buds on the trees, flowers emerging through the soil, bird watching and talking about baby animals. We will also continue with 'All about Me'; gathering more information about ourselves. Have we grown in the holidays? Are there any new members of the family? etc...

Sideways still has a vacancy for a qualified member of staff 2/3 mornings a week (Level 3 or equivalent). Please call 01279 813828 for more details or call into St. John's Church Hall any morning between 9.00am and 12 noon. If you know of anyone who is looking for work please ask them to contact us.

The village needs to support its pre-schools or they will close. This limits parental choice considerably especially in the 2½ - 3 year age range. Please use the facilities we have! Sideways has a wide range of activities for the children to enjoy each morning, a large spacious hall for freedom of movement and a quiet room for stories, rhymes and cosy chats! We regularly interact with St. Mary's School next door and have good links to Bentfield School too. We are a very friendly group, so pop in and see us any morning for a coffee. Stay and play!

Auntie Helen and the Team 01279 816600



Dates for Your Diary

At 5.00pm on Sunday 12th March there will be an Opening Ceremony for the new floodlights. All are welcome to come along for a drink and nibbles and witness the official turning on of the floodlights. Once the lights are on, members are welcome to stay on and use the courts for a club open session.

The Annual General Meeting will take place at 105 Cambridge Road, Stansted on Monday 13th March at 8.00pm All members are welcome to come along. Don't forget that this is your chance to bring up any issues which you might have concerning the club and your support would be greatly appreciated by the committee.

The Club will be running a Music Quiz at the Stansted Bowls Club on Saturday 18th March (7.00pm for a 7.30pm start). Tickets cost £7 and include a ploughman's supper. There is a licensed bar at the Bowls Club. Please get together with family and friends and make up a table (maximum of six people per table). For tickets and information please contact Michaela Bitten on 01279 815796.

Coaching

Adult and junior coaching is available at the club. If you are interested, please contact either of the club's coaches, Chris Hollis 01279 319155 or Martyn Taplin 01279 816386.

For any other information about Stansted Tennis Club, please contact either Richard Mott (Secretary) on 01279 466348 or Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 01279 812073.

Chris Hollis

LINK UP PROJECT – Adult Community Learning

About 5.8 million adults in England have poor literacy and numeracy skills, but to attend a *Skills for Life* class takes an great amount of courage, especially if you had a bad learning experience in the past. However, if there is someone you know and trust, who is easily accessible, to help you through the learning process, it is less daunting.

This is where **LINK UP** comes in – this project provides **FREE** training to anyone who wants to help support and signpost people (either in or outside of the workplace) to develop and improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The training involves a 12 hour course leading to Unit 1 of the City & Guilds 9295 Adult Learner Support qualification, with an option to complete the full qualification at a later stage. To be eligible, no qualifications are required, but you must live or work in Essex. Details are below, although other dates and venues will be available, including delivery 'on-site' (minimum 12 people).

- 10am – 1pm Saturdays 25th February to 18th March Northbrooks House, Harlow

This **FREE** training is ideal for all frontline workers who interact with the community, colleagues (even friends and family) at any level, and it is a wonderful opportunity to develop your skills and have a major impact on other people's lives.

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DAYS OF THE WEEK - further thoughts

It has been gratifying to learn that at least some of you have read my pieces in the 'Link' on the Months of the Year and Days of the Week.

In the item on Sunday, I mentioned a cheese rolling custom in 'Ranwick' - apologies to the inhabitants - it should have read 'Randwick' as I found out when reading a copy of an article given to me by Margaret Chastney. It was written by her son Andrew and published in 'Cotswold Life'. The cheese rolling was revived in 1971 having been discontinued many years ago, as was also a tradition known as the Wap. This had been abolished in 1893 because "it had degenerated into such a drunken affair that the debauchery often lasted a whole week". Does anyone know of any old customs we could revive in Stansted to liven things up a bit?

I also received two replies to my query regarding the meaning of 'Oatmeal Monday'. "The mid-term Monday at the Scottish Universities when the father of a poor student would bring him a sack of oatmeal to provide his staple diet for the rest of the term". (Ref. Brewers Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.)

Thanks to all those who provided the above information and made kind remarks about my contributions.

Peggy Honour

STANSTED LUNCH CLUB

Wednesday meetings scheduled for this year:

29th March – KUA Consulting
31st May – Sponsor under discussion
26th July – Sponsor needed
27th September – Sponsor needed
29th November – Sponsor needed

For further details, please contact me.

Alastair Richardson 07850 295109
amg.richardson@gmail.com



STANSTED &
DISTRICT LIBERAL
DEMOCRATS.

Our next ploughman's lunches will be on Saturday 11th February, and Saturday 11th March, 12 noon to 2.00pm, at the Stansted Day Centre. All are welcome.

We will be holding a Quiz on Saturday 11th March, 7.00pm for 7.30pm, at the Stansted Day Centre. Tickets £5, to include light refreshments. There will also be a bar and a raffle.

For further information, please ring 814222 or 813432.

Ruth Rawlinson



ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

The Airport

BAA have now issued their consultation document setting out a number of options for a second runway at Stansted Airport and it certainly represents a cleverly crafted case which seeks to minimise the environmental impact which any of the options will have on this area.

It should firstly be remembered that all of the options which they offer will have a greater or lesser effect on one or other of the surrounding villages. Essex County Council have concluded that they are not willing to support any of the options on the grounds that, intrinsically a second runway is unacceptable in any circumstances. ECC will therefore be completely opposing the development of a second runway. Indeed, the details which BAA have included within their document relating to the impact of additional aircraft noise is a clear example of this. All of the noise contour plans they have provided indicate that the areas blighted by increased noise levels will be at least doubled from the single runway plans they issued in 2002. This area will be decimated if BAA are successful.

Waste

The management of waste has become a much debated issue with the proposals for recycling which are being instigated by Uttlesford District Council. It is however, with the imposition of Government Land Fill Taxes, no longer an option for all forms of household waste to be tipped into holes in the ground. To this end Essex County Council are studying various means of disposing of waste by separating it into various components and treating and recycling some parts, whilst using others to produce energy and reusable end products. Obviously the high tech schemes, which are needed to achieve this, will require considerable capital expenditure, but in the long term this will be a saving on the alternative of paying Land Fill Tax and will be beneficial for the environment as well.

Ray Gooding, County Councillor Stansted Division

Tel: 01279 813103

Email: cllr.ray.gooding@essexcc.gov.uk

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Uttlesford Community Travel is a non-profit making registered charity which has been supplying essential disabled-accessible transport throughout the District of Uttlesford since 1997. Use of the service is restricted to people who cannot access normal public transport and in turn are elderly, disabled or rurally isolated. Passengers carried exceed 16,000 per year and the bulk of the trips are for health related appointments (GP, Dentist, Hospital), therapy, shopping, education and social engagements.

For the past 8 years, Uttlesford Community Travel has leased offices in the centre of Great Dunmow but the building has recently been sold and we have been issued notice to vacate the premises by May 2006. So far we have been unable to find accommodation to meet our needs. If we do not find suitable alternative accommodation with sufficient parking/access for our staff, volunteers & vehicles then the continuation of the essential services that we offer is seriously in doubt.

A specification of our requirements is below. We would be very pleased to hear from anyone who can suggest a possible site for us. Please telephone Steve Biddlecombe, Trustee Director or John Wells, Transport Manager on 01371 875787 or write to 2B Stortford Road, Dunmow CM6 1DA. Many thanks.

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