

# Stansted Mountfitchet

# The Link



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**Editorial**



Motorists are constantly receiving 'stick' from the public for driving misdemeanours and indiscriminate parking, particularly on pavements, so it is a pleasure to record the restraint shown by most drivers on Grove Hill. Much of the lower part is occupied by parked cars which means that drivers coming downhill frequently have to wait near the top to allow up-traffic to get through. Fortunately, instances of impatience are relatively few. If it were not so, chaos would prevail.

In this month's Nature Notes 'Felix' has turned to philosophy with his musings on nature and time. It does us nothing but good to realise that Nature triumphs in the end, especially when development pressures can easily distort our judgement so that concrete seems to rule.

It is good to conclude with a pat on the back - this time to the King's Arms where at a time when pubs are experiencing difficult trading conditions Paul, Gary and Lorraine have kept up their strenuous efforts for worthy causes. This gives us a reason, not just an excuse, for a trip to the local - an antidote to the recession of course.

**CIRCULATION:**

The Link is delivered free to 2700 homes and businesses in Stansted Mountfitchet. Further copies may be purchased for 50p each or £5.00 for the year.

**CONTRIBUTIONS:**

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by **noon** on  
11th April  
for publication on  
23rd April  
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**DISCLAIMER**

Opinions expressed in this magazine are given freely and do not necessarily represent those of the editorial committee

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Charles Darwin was born 200 years ago on 12th February 1809, and this year also marks the 150th anniversary of the publication of his most famous work, 'The Origin of Species'. His contribution to our understanding of the living world and to the flowering of the science of biology has been one of the landmarks of human endeavour. And yet, as Darwin drew ever closer to his theory of evolution, he found himself moving further away from Christian belief. Evolution seemed to contradict the notion of God as Creator.

Some, however, saw no contradiction. The Anglican theologian, Aubrey Moore, stated in 1889 that "Darwinism appeared, and, under the guise of a foe, did the work of a friend". Similarly, the evangelical Presbyterian Henry Drummond insisted that "the God of Evolution is definitely grander than the occasional Wonder-worker, who is the God of an old theology". Because of Charles Darwin we have a much enhanced understanding of God's relationship to this marvellous creation. God is continually at work in the processes of the living world and the cosmos as the ongoing Creator of the project of creation.

Darwin himself found it difficult to make this connection. But it would be a mistake to think that Darwin was hostile to Christian faith. Canon John Young, writing in 'The Case Against Christ', notes that when Darwin heard that the South American Missionary Society (part of the Anglican Church) was sending missionaries to Tierra del Fuego, where he had visited on the Beagle, he wrote to them: "The success of the Tierra del Fuego Mission is most wonderful, and charms me, as I always prophesied utter failure. It is a grand success. I shall feel proud if your committee think fit to elect me an honorary member of your society."

God could never be far away from someone so dedicated to understanding the mystery of creation with such humility, integrity and dedication. We thank God for Charles Darwin.



David Mullins  
Stansted Free Church



### Faith, Hope and Love (York Course)

This is the theme of this year's Lent Groups which will follow the same format as last year. Each session will begin with a short Act of Worship in the style of the host church, followed by tapes and discussion. Please join us – you will be most welcome. Dates in March are as follows – all start at 7.30pm:

Thu 5th	Free Church: Believing and Trusting
Wed 11th	St John's: The Peace of God
Fri 20th	Friends Meeting House: Faith into Love
Wed 25th	Free Church led by RC: The Greatest of These
Tue 31st	St John's: Bring and Share Agape

A reminder that we are planning a Songs of Praise to be held in the Memorial Gardens, Chapel Hill, at 6.00pm on Sunday 28th June. We are inviting suggestions for hymns, so please let me or your church CTS contact know if you would like any particular hymn to be considered for inclusion. Courtesy of the money raised from *The Ghost Train*, we are hoping to have the services of a band for the occasion. More details in future editions of the 'Link'.

Francine Cope

### Where do the collectors go?

Over the many years that I have been organising the Christian Aid collection in Stansted, collectors have come and gone, though there is a largish group of stalwarts, who have stayed the course, and deserve medals for doing so.

### Topsy

Stansted continues to grow, and it is harder to cover all the streets every year. Charities may suffer because of the economic down-turn, though Stansted residents are always very generous.

### Help!

This year I would like to cover as much of the village as possible, so this is the first appeal for volunteers. Christian Aid week is the 10th to 17th May. What does it involve? Putting envelopes through doors, and then later on knocking on the door and asking for the envelope (hopefully returned with a donation). You don't have to count the money. It takes a bit of courage to knock on the first door, but most people are pleased to see you and give willingly.

### Interested?

Why not give it a try this year? Persuade a friend to go out with you, then it takes half the time and is twice the fun. I'll be sitting by the phone, when the March 'Link' goes out! 813579 – please ring.

Catherine Dean  
Christian Aid organiser for Churches in Stansted

**All enquiries:** The Church Office, St John's Hall,  
St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP  
Tel: 815243  
Email: st.johns.church@btinternet.com  
Office hours: 9.00am-12 noon, Monday,  
Wednesday, Friday  
Administrator: Mrs Elizabeth Jennings  
Website: www.stansted.net/stjohns

**Rector:** Rev'd Paul Wilkin  
Tel: 812203  
Email: paulwilkin@iname.com

**Assistant Curate:** Rev'd Dr Caroline Currer  
Tel: 815243  
Email: through the Church Office

**Director of Music:** Lorraine Everett  
Email: church.music@stansted.net

### St John's Diary

#### Sunday

8.00am	Said Holy Communion	Junior Church meets in church at 9.30am.
9.30am	Worship 4 All (1st Sunday)	
9.30am	Choral Eucharist (2nd - 4th Sundays)	The Lazer youth group meets on Sunday evenings at 7.30pm.

#### Monday-Wednesday

8.30am	Morning Prayer	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.
5.00pm	Evening Prayer	

#### Tuesday

9.00am St John's Tots

#### Wednesday

10.30am Holy Communion

#### Thursday

8.30am Morning Prayer

## WORSHIP 4 ALL

The people of St John's Church, Stansted, want to invite the whole village to come and celebrate with them at a new service which takes place at 9.30am on the first Sunday of every month. The service, which is called Worship 4 All, will be informal and family friendly with something for everyone.

The first of these new services took place in February and featured children from St Mary's Primary School telling us about the meaning of Candlemas Day; and ended with everyone processing to the church door with a candle of their own to carry light out into the world around us. In the next service we will be taking a journey to the desert - so bring your sandals and sun-screen.

Maybe you've never been to church before; maybe you have been in the past but drifted away; maybe you're a regular who's open to something new? If so, then Worship 4 All is for you. See you at St John's, 9.30am on the first Sunday of the month. You'll be made welcome.

## ST JOHN'S TOTS

Tuesday mornings will never be the same again at St John's Church. Late last year we launched the St John's Tots, a time together in church for pre-school children and their carers. People arrive between 9.00am and 9.30am to find a welcome cup of tea or coffee waiting for them, and drinks for the children and lots of toys to play with. At around 9.30am we have some songs, a story and a prayer in the small chapel in the church. This is followed by more tea and coffee, more play, and a chance to chat. From small beginnings we have grown to be a group of around 25 children and 21 carers at the last count. Those who come enjoy it and there is room for plenty more. Meetings in school term time only.

## ALTAR FRONTAL

The altar frontal in the Lady Chapel at St John's Church had seen better days, and the Rector's wife, Janet, suggested that we form a working party to make a new one. We were very



fortunate that Carole Crosby from our congregation is a very talented artist and she was pleased to take up the challenge of designing something suitable. By July Carole had prepared several designs, and the congregation were asked for their views. A call also went out for 'ladies of the parish' with sewing skills (although it was made clear that gentlemen would be equally welcome!). In the middle of that month, the design was selected at

an initial meeting of the ladies (yes, you've guessed it, no gentlemen admitted to having sewing skills!) and work began in earnest. We are very proud of the finished result, which involved many hours of planning, cutting out, machining and hand sewing. The new altar frontal has the word MAGNIFICAT made up of appliqué figures which pick out the colours of the beautiful stained glass window of the chapel. The pieces of material which form these figures, and the rainbow at the top of the scene, were all made from odds and ends of materials supplied by working party members - which somehow makes it even more special. It was a delight to be involved in making it, and a thrill to see it in place on the Lady Chapel altar when the Rector blessed it on Candlemas Day.

Kathy West

Kathy's account describes an encouraging example of in-house enthusiasm, and shows what can be done at modest expense. The frontal demonstrates that a bright and modern art form can successfully co-exist with a Victorian building. Congratulations to all concerned.

An Admirer



**STANSTED FREE CHURCH**  
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**Ministers** Rev'd David Mullins  
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[minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

Rev'd Allen Morton  
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**Lettings** Janet Townsend  
 58 Chapel Hill  
 Stansted CM24 8AQ  
 Tel: 812593  
[lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

**Preachers for March**

1st 10.30 am Maureen Kendall  
 8th 10.30 am Rev'd David Mullins  
                   Holy Communion  
 15th 10.30 am Rev'd Allen Morton  
                   New Directions in Worship  
 22nd 10.30 am Julie Finbow  
 29th 10.30 am Rev'd David Thompson

**Rev'd Jim Gill**

On 1st February, Jim finally lost his nine year battle against cancer. He had been known to both the Methodist and URC congregations as a local preacher, and for introducing them to the Whitechapel Mission. Ten years ago Jim became a Methodist minister, initially appointed to the Methodist churches in Chrishall and Ickleton. For the last five years he has served in the Harlow Ecumenical circuit. Often described as 'a breath of fresh air', Jim was greatly loved and respected by all who knew him and will be very much missed.

Marion Dyer

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 and by appointment

**Baptisms** By appointment

**SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

**Clerk** Mrs Anthea Lee  
 24 Lea Close  
 Bishop's Stortford  
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**Meeting** Sunday, 10.30am



**SHALOM**

On 2nd March, Alan Wheeler will be giving a talk (with PowerPoint illustrations) on 'Church East – Church West'. This meeting will be at 7 Blythwood Gardens. Then on 16th March, Edna Goring will be leading us in an evening of music and poetry at the Free Church Hall – the evening postponed from 2nd February when we were unable to meet because of the snow. Our last meeting of this term is on 30th March, when Rev'd Allen Morton from the Free Church will be leading us in a Lenten Meditation. This will be at 7 Blythwood Gardens. All our meetings begin at 8.00pm. Please join us – you will be warmly welcomed!

Marion Dyer  
 Tel: 814059

**ATHEISM IN BRITAIN TODAY**

Dr Tina Beattie

professor of Catholic Studies at Roehampton University  
 speaking on 'The New Atheists'

**Brentwood Cathedral Hall**

**Sat 7th March 10.30 am - 3 pm**

Entry free - lunch & refreshments provided

Booking essential: tel 01277 265289

Email: [cef@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:cef@dioceseofbrentwood.org)

*An ecumenical Study Day organised by the  
 Commission for Evangelism and Formation*

**FROM THE REGISTERS**

**January**

**Funerals**

5th Edna May Reed, age 89 - at St Mary's  
 15th Francis Claudius Stevens, age 90 - at St Mary's  
 23rd Sybil Eagleton, age 93 - at St Mary's  
 26th James Barr Gemmill, age 45 - at St John's



## FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

23rd Feb - 7th Mar

### COFFEE MORNING & SALE

10 am - noon

Wed 4th March

Free Church Foyer

All are warmly invited

## WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



2 pm Friday 6th March  
Friends Meeting House  
led by Rev Caroline Curren

Service by the women of  
**Papua New Guinea**

Followed by Refreshments  
All welcome - Men & Women

The Mountfitchet Maths & Computing College PTA



## QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 FOR 8PM SAT 7TH MAR

£6 (incl ploughman's)

Tel Sue 504537 or Yvonne 815707

Tables of 8 or come on your own

Bring your own drinks

All Welcome ~ Book by 2nd March

## VILLAGE EVENTS

### March

2 Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gdns 8 pm
4 Wed	Fairtrade Stall	Free Church Foyer 10 am - noon
	Mountfitchet Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
5 Thu	Lent Group	Free Church 7.30 pm
	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
6 Fri	World Day of Prayer	Friends Meeting House 2 pm
7 Sat	Atheism in Britain Today	Brentwood Cathedral 10.30 am - 3 pm
	Quiz Night	Mountfitchet M&C College 7.30 for 8 pm
	Music Quiz	St Mary's School 7.30 for 8 pm
7 Sat & 8 Sun	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
9 Mon	America History begins	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
10 Tue	Millers' AGM	Day Centre 8 pm
11 Wed	Lent Group	St John's Church 7.30 pm
12 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
14 Sat	Music@stansted	St John's Church 7.30 pm
16 Mon	Shalom Group	Free Church Hall 8 pm
18 Wed	Annual Parish meeting	Free Church 8 pm
20 Fri	Lent Group	Quaker Meeting House 7.30 pm
21 Sat	S Walden Choral Society	St Mary's Church, S W 7.30 pm
21 Sat & 22 Sun	Sun Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
25 Wed	Millers' Coffee Morning	Day Centre 10 am
	Lent Group	Free Church 7.30 pm
26 Thu	Lib Dem MP visit	Day Centre 5.30 - 7.15 pm
28 Sat	Social & Silent Auction	St John's Hall 7.30 pm
30 Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gdns 8 pm
31 Tue	Lent Group Agape	St John's Church 7.30 pm

### April

1 Wed	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
2 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
4 Sat	SSE Show Time	Civic Theatre, Chelmsford 7.30 pm
	WI Quiz	Free Church Hall 7.30 pm

## St Mary's School PTFA

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£7.50 incl supper

bring your own drinks

Tickets from school office 812212

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Crafton Room

All welcome



## Stansted Evening WI - Quiz Eve

7.30 pm ~ Sat 4th April ~ Free Church Hall

Tables of 8 maximum ~ Tickets £6 incl light supper

Tel 812470, 812725 or 813542

## St John's, Stansted Cheese & Wine Party and Silent Auction

7.30 pm Saturday 28 March  
in the Church Hall

Tickets £10 incl supper and wine  
Available after Church services

Proceeds to The Bishop's Lent Appeal

## Stansted Windmill



### Coffee Morning

10 am Wed 25th Mar  
Crafton Room

Mill Goods ~ Cakes ~ Books  
Admission £1

## MUSIC@stansted

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St John's Church

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# JAZZ AT ST JOHN'S



Stansted  
Evening  
Women's Institute

## Looking Back

### Headlines in the press:

Friday 6th February - Britain in the grip of severe weather - heavy snow - icy roads - country at a standstill - Gordon Brown not happy!

### Headlines in Stansted:

Don't miss Jazz at St John's even if you have to don skis and a polar suit - it is the event of the year!

Well it certainly was. At 7.00pm came the first arrivals from Chigwell, closely followed by punters from far and wide. By 8.00pm Peter Baker and his (severely) Crusty Jazz Band played their first number to a capacity audience. The only casualty was the trumpeter marooned in Bedfordshire. Fortunately Alan



Berlyn (no relation of Irving Berlin) stepped in at the last minute and blew up a storm, raising the band's spirits and the audience's participation. Then further excitement as Kenny Ball

arrived to sit in and perform a few numbers after recovering from his recent spell in hospital. The paparazzi went wild - cameras flashed and Kenny charmed us with his bonhomie. So, a well-oiled band swung into action and proceeded to enjoy itself and give us real entertainment. Dancers jived in snow boots last taken on the floor in St Moritz, but nothing deterred this

crowd from enjoying themselves. Further enjoyment was provided by Sonia and her team with a great coronation chicken and baked potato supper, washed down with drinks dispensed by Alan and his bar staff.



Our thanks to Paul Wilkin for opening the church once again, thus providing an ideal location for the gig. Thanks also to Rosemary Thomson for organising the raffle, the prize donors and our sponsors; to Helen on the door and for her sterling work in rallying last minute audience substitutions; and to all those behind the scenes; and of course, to Alastair our co-ordinator and general factotum. Lastly, our thanks to all the punters who braved the weather to support the evening, contributing much needed funds for the church hall. The sum raised will be announced in the April edition of 'Link'.

Eileen Quinn and Peter Baker



Photos by Peter Webb

We were sad to hear just before Christmas that another of our founder members, Rita Humphreys, had died. Rita was the first secretary of this Institute when it was formed in 1960, and Maisie Bunting, whose death was reported last month, was also a member of the first committee. The WI soon established itself and grew from 51 members to 134 during the first year.

Rita became our President in 1965, a post which she held for three years. In those days this was the usual time for holding the post as it seems that members were queuing up for the honour! Rita also served on the County Committee and visited many WIs giving talks - notably one I particularly remember on how to make a fortune growing mushrooms in sacks. Needless to say, it didn't quite work out!! A fine needlewoman, she made a name for herself with her creation of historically dressed peg dolls, which were exhibited at the Toy Fair in London. Rita also served on the Parish Council, and she helped to establish the Day Centre which still operates today. She became the first woman Chairman, a post she held for five years. Several of our WI members have served on the Parish Council in the past and we still have one serving today.

Our County AGM is being held on 5th March. Several members are going to the event and will hear two guest speakers, Jackie Cheer - Deputy Chief Constable of Suffolk, and Terry Waite. We have just heard that a Resolution will be discussed urging HM Government to abolish parking charges at NHS hospitals and related units, to bring us in line with Wales and Scotland. It will be interesting to hear the pros and cons of this proposal and the outcome.

April's speaker is Keith Baldwin with a talk entitled 'All the Queen's Horses & All the Queen's Men (and Women)!' Come and join us. Also in April we have our Quiz - Saturday 4th at 7.30pm in the Free Church Hall. Tickets £6, include a light supper, tables of eight. Please ring 812470, 812725 or 813542 to book a table.



Judy Colliver  
Tel: 812470

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(President)  
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## MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB



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### February Meeting

Despite the snow, ice, chilling wind and plummeting temperatures over 20 members of the garden club met to hear 'The Stort Story' as told by Mr Richard Thomas. Starting at its source in a muddy field, near to Langley Hills where the three counties of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Essex meet, to where it joins the River Lee, Mr Thomas, using old photographs and postcards, told its history from the 1700s and compared the river then and now. Some areas have hardly changed whereas others, such as central Bishop's Stortford, are unrecognisable. It was Thomas Adderley (1707-1774), landlord of The Crown Inn at Hockerill, who finally realised the river's great potential and it was he and his supporters who gained an Act of Parliament in 1759 to make the river navigable from Rye House to the town mill. Unfortunately, the scheme fell at the first hurdle through lack of finance and was temporarily abandoned. The scheme then came to the attention of George Jackson, who, along with Charles Dingley and William Masterman sat as Commissioners for a new Act that received Royal Assent on 30th April 1766. This time enough finance was raised and work began on canalisation on 24th September that same year.

The river, as well as being dredged and widened in places, was also re-routed and straightened out by gangs of navvies. Fifteen locks were constructed between Bishop's Stortford and Rye House to compensate for the 90ft drop, and three terminus basins were built at the town's Navigation Head. The work was finally completed in 1769 at a cost of £100,000. Two attempts were made to extend the Stort Navigation to Cambridge and beyond, via the River Cam. The first attempt failed, but the second succeeded but ultimately failed as financial backing could not be found.

When Sir George Duckett (formerly known as George Jackson) died in 1822 his title and the Navigation were inherited by his son, George, but within two years he mortgaged it for £45,000 and was declared bankrupt in 1832 and his interests sold. In 1833 the Stort Navigation - valued at £150,000 with an annual income of £5,000 - was put up for auction along with the Hertford Union Canal, but there were no takers. The waterway then remained in the hands of the Official Receiver for the next 21 years, during which time it gradually deteriorated. After many years it was sold to Sir Walter Gilbey for £500, who kept the Navigation open for the next seven years purely for the benefit of the town but by 1900 even his vast resources could no longer afford to underwrite it. He then entered into lengthy negotiations with the Lea Conservancy Board with a view to sell. In May 1905 he formed the Stort Navigation Company and in July transferred ownership of the river to the company for £5,000.

### Club Spring Outing

Names are now being taken for the Spring Outing to Glen Chantry and Hyde Hall on 16th May.

### Next Meeting

Wednesday 4th March - subject: Ronald Smith from the National Trust talking about 'Coast and Countryside'. Doors open at 7.30pm for 8.00pm start. Visitors are always welcome £2. Membership is also available.

Maralyn Harris  
Chairman

At the end of January, MMCC hosted the annual North West Essex School Sports Association badminton tournament. Over three nights, tournaments were played in a range of ages: Tuesday Year 11, Wednesday Years 9 and 10 and Thursday Years 7 and 8. There was a brilliant turnout with The Maltings Academy, Tabor High School, Alec Hunter School, The New Rickstones Academy, Notley High School, Honeywood School and Newport Free Grammar School - all bringing students to play doubles badminton alongside MMCC. The games were played in an excellent spirit and there was some superb badminton played across all the age ranges.

There was success for MMCC with the Year 11 boys' final contested between The Maltings Academy and MMCC, with Richard Honour and Sam Carrington taking the title. The Year 11 girls' winners were Honeywood School with MMCC finishing third with Helena Berry and Chloe Nash. The Year 9 and 10 boys' competition final was played between MMCC's Reece Bird and Jack Morland, and Newport Free Grammar School, with Newport running out winners. In the girls' final, Honeywood took on Rosie Greaves and Julia Studholme from MMCC, who ran out the winners after a tense and close final.

The Year 7 and 8 boys' final was played between Tabor and Alex Salter and Declan Lambe from MMCC. A very close game followed with Tabor edging a good result to take the title and in the girls' final Alec Hunter lost narrowly to Notley High School. MMCC experienced further success with Harry Williams and Liam Adams-Stock securing third place in the boys' competition and Elise Headley and Daniella Hudson doing the same in the girls' competition. All in all it was superb to see so many students taking part in competitive school sport over the three days and every single student represented their schools superbly. Well done to everyone!

T Anderson  
Head of Physical Education

On Wednesday 25th, Thursday 26th and Friday 27th February at 7.30pm in the main College Hall, we present our production of GREASE. This is an amateur production by arrangement with Samuel French Ltd with book, music and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey. Tickets - Adults £6.00, Children and concessions £3.50 available from College reception. Please telephone 01279 813384.



Ruth Martin

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## BEREAVEMENTS

*The 'Link' is able to receive tributes and reports of deaths and in most cases to publish obituaries, subject to availability of space. It is not 'Link' policy to actively pursue contributions from bereaved relatives or friends, believing that it is preferable for these to come at the behest of relatives or from members of the community. Funerals where local clergy are involved are usually recorded under 'Registers' or within a church section.*

*Editor*

## IN MEMORIAM

### MAISIE PAMELA BUNTING

1925-2008

Maisie was born in the Pelhams, and for the first few years of her life lived there with her parents Hilda and William Brett, and her older sisters Doris and Olive. Maisie's grandfather was a shepherd and she had many happy memories of being with him as he worked. The family moved to live in Sunnyside, Stansted when Maisie was still at primary school, where she became a very keen Girl Guide. When Maisie left school she trained as a bookkeeper at Greens Department Store, earning five shillings a week. She was to become a very valued member of their staff, being responsible for balancing the takings every night when the store closed at 8.00pm.

The Bunting brothers, Bob and Doug, took a shine to the two youngest Brett girls, with Bob and Olive marrying in 1947. Doug (who joined the army in 1944) began courting Maisie in 1946. Her mother's remark "Oh no - not another Bunting" has gone down in family history! When Doug was posted to Palestine in 1946, Maisie wrote to him virtually every day. Doug was demobbed in 1947, and he returned home for good. He and Maisie married in Stansted Congregational Church on 8th June 1949. Their first few years of married life were in a small terraced house in Bishop's Stortford where they were living when son Geoffrey was born in 1951. In 1953, they moved to Park Road, where they lived for the next 53 years. Daughter Margaret (Maggie) was born in 1954. By that time Doug and Bob were working with their father in the family greengrocers, as were Maisie and Olive (who incidentally were also founder members of the Stansted Women's Institute). Many villagers will recall the joys of visiting Buntings Greengrocers on Lower Street.

Maisie was a home-loving person, who devoted herself to her family. Geoff recalls that he grew up surrounded by love – he never recalls his Mum being cross with him or his sister. Maisie loved to become involved in her children's activities, helping with homework – particularly creative English, which helped make up for her disappointment at having to leave school at 14. She even learned to drive at the age of 40 so she could take Maggie, an excellent swimmer, to her training sessions in Harlow. She loved being a grandmother and although never one to boast of her own achievements, she was very proud of the many accomplishments of her children and grandchildren.

Maisie was a modest person but had many practical skills – including dressmaking (she made Maggie's wedding dress) and sewing beautiful and intricate clothes for the many china dolls she dressed. Her framed tapestries hang throughout the house and are much admired. She was an excellent cook, and people often wondered how Doug managed to maintain his sylph-like figure. One of life's mysteries!

Another great love was her large garden, which was always immaculate. Any threat of a late frost, and Maisie would be out in the garden covering her camellia bushes with fleece. Several of her neighbours have abiding memories of her down on her knees – planting or weeding – content in her work. She usually took her radio outside to listen as she gardened – whether this was to drown out Doug's singing was never quite clear!

Maisie was a gentle, quietly-spoken lady, but she showed a very special strength of character in her determination to remain optimistic throughout her many years of ill-health, always keen to make light of her problems when talking to others. She was kind and thoughtful: if a friend or neighbour had a sorrow to bear, she would be the first to appear on the doorstep with a pot-plant and a squeeze of the hand which said it all.



Doug and Maisie had a long and happy marriage. They spent their last few years together in Callington, Cornwall, where they (and Missie, their much-loved cat) moved to a lovely bungalow in 2006. Although the move was a big upheaval for them, they never regretted it. It says a lot about Maisie and Doug that in the short space of time they have lived in Callington, they have made new friends from the local community, and old friends from Stansted have visited them.

Maisie's health had declined steadily over recent years, but she and Doug were determined to continue enjoying their life together for as long as possible. In her last few days she attended a church music concert, went to a church service, and visited one of her favourite places, Looe. She died peacefully at home. Maisie was a lovely lady – an inspiration to those who knew her. May she rest in peace.

Kathy West



**STANSTED & DISTRICT  
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Norman Baker MP, the Liberal Democrat spokesperson for Transport and Aviation, will be visiting the area on Thursday 26th March, including a visit to Stansted Airport. He will be at the Stansted Day Centre between 5.30pm and 7.15pm to meet people and talk about local issues. All welcome.

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### Second runway: Realism beginning to prevail?

A marathon meeting held on 19th January to discuss the timing, duration and other aspects of the proposed Public Inquiry into a second runway at Stansted has left SSE cautiously optimistic that a sense of realism is beginning to prevail. Around 150 people attended the eight hour session determined to ensure the Inspector took on board concerns that a fair and thorough inquiry be held – not one that was quick and dirty for the sake of political expediency. The Inspector heard representations from SSE, the local authorities, Stansted airlines, BAA and others, and agreed to take full account of these before making his recommendations to the Secretary of State. However, whether the Secretary of State takes these on board is another matter and SSE has expressed concern that political desire to drive through the plans at any cost could overrule the Inspector's desire for a fair and thorough inquiry.

Evidence from the major parties led to a consensus that between 144 and 200 sitting days would be required, spanning 15 to 20 months - significantly longer than the Inspector's provisional view of six months. On closer examination of the potential pitfalls, he appeared to recognise that concurrent sessions could compromise the inquiry's fairness and would not necessarily be more efficient. In addition, SSE and the Stansted airlines both argued for a deferral until September on the basis that fundamental issues remained to be resolved, and the local authorities said they had no objection to this. However, BAA clung to its position that the inquiry should start in April despite the many uncertainties highlighted by the Inspector and other parties. Two of these fundamental uncertainties would be resolved one way or another within the next two months: SSE's pending High Court Appeal into the permission to expand on the existing runway, and the expected confirmation by the Competition Commission that Stansted Airport should be sold. Either of these issues could well lead to the cancellation of the second runway inquiry.

SSE expressed the view that postponing the inquiry until September would allow the dust to settle and thereby reduce the time ultimately required for the hearings – in the event that an inquiry was still needed. This view was endorsed by the Stansted airlines and the local authorities. The Inspector advised that the start date was a matter for the Secretary of State rather than himself and that his own focus was on the duration and programming arrangements. His recommendations to Hazel Blears would be published shortly but it could be mid-March before the outcome is known.

### Showtime to help fight against Stansted expansion plans

A fantastic team of professionals and amateurs from the communities most directly threatened by plans for expanding Stansted Airport are joining forces to present 'Showtime at the Civic' on Saturday 4th April at the Civic Theatre, Chelmsford. Tickets available from 01245 606505.

Carol Barbone  
Campaign Director  
Tel: 0777 552 3091  
Email: cbarbone@mxco.co.uk

### School News

Despite the snowy weather, work on our new school hall has now been completed and the builders are concentrating on the alterations to the existing building. We are going to have a new ICT suite on a mezzanine floor above the old hall, which will now mainly be used as a dining hall. Year 6 is temporarily located within the new building as work on a new access is going on in their classroom. Hopefully, all the work will be completed by the end of May. Unfortunately, as a result of the building work, Messy Play will not be running until further notice. The whole school enjoyed an exciting musical workshop from Shake, Rattle and Roll. As you can imagine from the name, it was very lively!

We have a thriving Nursery class within the school under the leadership of our Nursery teacher, Mrs Smith. The children come for five sessions a week, which are a mixture of mornings and afternoons. Children are admitted in the September of the academic year in which they are 4, so for this September that will be children with birthdays between 1st September 2005 and 31st August 2006. We do not hold an open day but if you are interested in either a Reception or Nursery place we would like to extend a warm invitation for you to come and visit the school. Please give us a ring on 813626 and we will be delighted to arrange a convenient day for you and your child to come and see us on a normal school day. At Bentfield we are also able to offer both a Breakfast Club (from 7.45am) and an After School Kids Club (until 6.00pm). Both clubs are available to children who attend the school.

### PTA News

February has been a very quiet month for us. Unfortunately, we have had to cancel our normal half-term disco due to the building work. We are very excited that the new hall will be open soon and are working with the school to plan a big opening event. We will let you know about it when we have an exact date. We are also in discussion with the school on how we would like to spend the money raised last year and again will give you details once a final decision has been made. The next event in our diary is the Easter Egg Hunt to be held on the last day of term, 3rd April. This involves the children following a series of clues taking them round the playground, with a prize for all those who complete the hunt. Let's hope for better egg hunting weather this year - last year's snow and rain was hardly ideal!

Kerry Freeguard  
PTA

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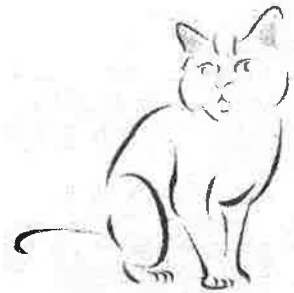
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# ST CLARE HOSPICE



The St Clare Hospice's newly launched Day Therapy is working to enhance patients' needs providing physical, emotional and social support. These needs are being met in several ways but one way will be through Occupational Therapy groups. The group will allow patient interaction, stimulation both cognitively and physically and add variety to the patient's day. It will also enable the staff to treat several patients at one time and provide an ideal opportunity to see each other in a different light so that life experiences can help enlighten all in it. The group session will include discussion, craft and gardening to help with manual skills and dexterity, fun word and board games to aid mental stimulation. There may be the need to reflect and reminisce, enhancing self-worth, and enabling individuals to express opinions in a mutual and non-judgmental environment. Relaxation will also be an integral part of each session. If you, a family member or friend would benefit from any of our services please ask your GP or District Nurse to refer you or them to us. If transport is difficult the staff in Day Therapy would be able to advise or arrange it for you; just call Kelly on 01279 773768.

If you have some time on your hands and would like to become involved even further with St Clare Hospice I will be having an informal meeting in the village on Saturday 28th February at 10.00am in St John's Church Hall. Come along and meet some of the volunteers and staff from the Hospice to hear more about the work of the Hospice and the possibility of starting a FUNdraising group in Stansted.

Some of the funds for the Hospice are raised through street collections or collecting outside the major stores. Last year a total of 33 days were spent hypothetically 'shaking' a tin across East Herts and West Essex and £7,000 was raised. This may not seem a significant amount, when running costs are £2.5 million a year, but the presence of volunteer collectors and staff from St Clare Hospice in and around the area is important. Often the public have a query that can be resolved there and then, or people are keen to participate in one of our events. Sometimes the question is asked as to how to get started with a fundraising idea and seek advice as to what to do next.

The collectors are only asked to give up an hour of their time at any one collection and I would love to hear from you if you can help me out. I organise collections in both Bishop's Stortford and Saffron Walden. Our next collection is at Tesco in Saffron Walden on Monday 2nd and Tuesday 3rd March, and if you could spare an hour on either of those days from 12 noon onwards I would be most grateful. Please call me; I look forward to hearing from you!

Our next major events are the second Midnight Walk on 12th March, and our 15th 10km Fun Run on Sunday 5th April. Please visit our website [www.stclare-hospice.co.uk](http://www.stclare-hospice.co.uk) for further information.



Caroline Bore  
Community Fundraiser  
in East Herts and Uttlesford  
Tel: 01279 773751  
Email: [cbore@stclare-hospice.co.uk](mailto:cbore@stclare-hospice.co.uk)

Roll on spring we say! We're ready for some outdoor fun – having said that we did our annual hike in January (Brrrrrr) to Alsa Wood and combined it with a litter pick to go towards the Global Challenge Badge. We've been very busy with badges (perhaps there's a sewing badge?) as we recently completed the Air Activities Badge, which got us out and about to Stansted Airport by train. It was a super morning and only slightly marred by the cancellation of our train back to the village (hurray for Haribos, which helped deflect the freezing temperature of the station platform).



Well done to Joshua Bains, Oscar Clark, Freddie Jonas, Merlin Owen and Keir Tait, who have just been awarded the highest Beaver accolade - the Chief Scout's Bronze Award. The boys all worked really hard and are very deserving of this special badge and no doubt they are looking forward to the presentation ceremony later this month at Colchester Castle when they will receive their certificates from the Lord Lieutenant of Essex. We say goodbye to Freddie and Max who are moving up to Cubs, but hello to Harvey; we hope he enjoys the fun and our next District event - 'Something from Nothing' at Takeley HQ - more next time.

Claire Jonas  
Beaver Helper

## HARGRAVE HOUSE

A Residential Home for Elderly Gentlefolk

103 Cambridge Road, Stansted  
Tel: 817272

Email: [hargravehouse@scimitarcare.co.uk](mailto:hargravehouse@scimitarcare.co.uk)

As a new resident at Hargrave House (April 2008), may I appeal to the caring people of Stansted to form a Society of Friends for Hargrave House. It would be a joy for the residents here to have some contact with the outside world; some of us have no relatives here, and some have no friends.

With very many thanks in anticipation of your help.

Mary Wigley

Contact: Carol Tubby, Manager





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tlconcept@tiscali.co.uk



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# Stansted network

## NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

\*\*\*\*\*

### FINAL CHANCE TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE PROPOSED ECO-TOWN AT ELSENHAM

Responses to the latest and last consultation document from the Department of Communities and Local Government on the location of Eco towns must be received by Friday 6 March. These can be made on-line (for details visit [www.saveourvillage.co.uk](http://www.saveourvillage.co.uk)) You can either fill in a questionnaire on-line or obtain a paper copy from Stansted Parish Council Offices (weekdays 10 am to 1 pm) or send an email to [ecotowns@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ecotowns@communities.gsi.gov.uk) or write a letter to: Eco towns team, Housing & Growth Programmes Division, Communities & Local Government, Floor 2/H9, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1A 2HQ.

#### Reasons to oppose an Eco town at Elsenham

- The road system is completely inadequate and would lead to greater congestion in Stansted. Traffic queues at Grove Hill traffic lights are already a major problem.
- The trains are already over-crowded at peak times and promised improvements have still not materialised. The recent permission for expansion at Stansted Airport will also mean more rail passengers.
- The area could not sustain two secondary schools, either the Mountfitchet Mathematics and Computing College would have to relocate to a new town, or the new town would not have a secondary school, which would undermine the concept of an Eco town as a self-contained community.
- A large settlement twice the size of Stansted a few miles up the road could result in services, which the village now enjoys, relocating to the new town.

More information on the consultation and reasons to oppose the Eco town can be obtained from the Save our Village web site. Please do respond to this consultation, as an Eco town at Elsenham will have a detrimental effect on Stansted. Stansted Parish Council strongly opposes any development of this size at Elsenham and will be sending its own response to the consultation.

If you can, please drop a copy of your response into the Parish Council Office, or email a copy to [parishcouncil@stansted.net](mailto:parishcouncil@stansted.net).

### CLEARING ROADS AND PATHS OF SNOW AND ICE

Whilst in an ideal world all roads and footpaths would be cleared and gritted/salted by Essex County Council, it is evident that this will not happen and indeed is not taking place throughout the country. If this is not to be repeated then Government/County will need to change priorities or find more money.

Although, hopefully, this spell of weather may not recur this year and perhaps not for a longer period ahead, it is worth making a couple of suggestions to help improve the situation. First, in times gone by it was usual in many communities for householders to clear snow away outside their houses and some do so today. Perhaps this practice could be revived with help being given to elderly or infirm neighbours unless insurance issues prove a deterrent. Second, grit bins can be purchased (probably through the Parish Council) which some roads may find useful. The bins would, we understand, be filled free of charge.

If any parishioner has any other practical proposals (must be printable!). Please let the office know.

### OPENING THE YOUTH CENTRE FOR MORE HOURS

In recent editions of The Link it has been encouraging to report that the Youth Centre is going from strength to strength and this has been reflected, we believe, in less anti-social behaviour. To increase the number of evenings from three to four and to open for forty seven weeks rather than thirty seven weeks (the period currently funded by Essex County Council) would cost an additional £13,000. The Parish Council, youth workers and the police all believe that covering more evenings and more of the holidays would benefit the young people and the community. Ways will need to be sought to find sources for additional funding. If any one has ideas please let us know.

### ESSEX POLICE - 2 SMART ROADSHOWS

2 SMART, the anti-knives, bullying, alcohol and drugs Roadshows run by Essex Police, is back for 2009 sponsored by the University of Essex. The Roadshows, made up of drama performances, music, sport, dance and games will visit ten different venues around the County beginning in March. The messages conveyed about these issues tend to stay with the youngsters long afterwards.

## **A NEW LOCAL POLICE TEAM**

Over the past few months the local team covering this parish has changed. The following police officers now comprise the team:

Inspector Glen Pavelin Based at Dunmow  
Sergeant Chris Sharp Based at Dunmow  
PC Tom Bastendorff\*\* Based at Stansted Mft  
PCSO Kelly Roberts Based at Stansted Mft  
PCSO Stuart Stranger Based at Stansted Mft  
\*\*see below

In addition, PCSO Anne-Marie Clarke has been on long-term sick leave but is now on the mend.

The two PCSO's devote most of their time to this parish and since their arrival a few months ago have been much in evidence around the streets and in responding to calls.

If you need the Police urgently then call 999 but otherwise call 0300 333 4444 and you should be called or visited albeit maybe not immediately.

## **OUR NEW PC – TOM BASTENDORFF**

My name is PC Tom Bastendorff and I am your new Neighbourhood Specialist Officer (NSO) for the Stansted North area.

I have worked for Essex Police for more than five years in the South East of the county and I have recently taken over from PC Jo Jeggo here in Stansted. I am looking forward to meeting all those who live and work here and I have already been made to feel extremely welcome by everyone I have met so far.

Stansted North is a large area geographically, from Birchanger services at junction eight of the M11 up to Berden, Ugley and across to the Eastons. It is a low crime area and a safe area.

As part of your local neighbourhood policing team I want to know what community issues matter to you.

If you have an issue you would like to raise there are many different ways to contact us. You could come and meet us at one of our beat surgeries, or you can contact myself and the neighbourhood policing team on our mobile which is 07801 461666 or you can call Essex Police's non-emergency number 0300 333 4444. In an emergency always call 999.

To find out more about policing in Stansted North and the dates and times of our beat surgeries please visit my page via [www.essex.police.uk/yourarea](http://www.essex.police.uk/yourarea)

I look forward to meeting you and working with you to keep this community a safe place to live and work.  
Email: - [tom.bastendorff@essex.police.pnn.uk](mailto:tom.bastendorff@essex.police.pnn.uk)

## **NEW BUS SHELTERS – WHERE ARE THEY?**

The Council is being asked the question (quite rightly) and the Council is asking the same question of Essex County Council. Last autumn we asked ECC to order the shelters as the funding will be taken from cash provided under the Section 106 Agreement relating to the Rochford development. After chasing ECC it appears that "due to various issues within the area office", the administrative procedures (!) appeared to stall. However, in an email dated 22 January, the relevant permission should be received in the next few weeks. Sorry but keep watching this space.

## **HIGHWAYS – GROWING PROBLEMS**

Continuing discussions on ways to alleviate residents' parking problems along Lower Street and Grove Hill, new short-term restrictions on Cambridge Road, possible plans by St John's Road Residents Association to regulate parking in this road and requests for yellow lining part of Blythwood Gardens are all indicative of widespread and still increasing pressures on limited on-street parking space. The Parish Council recognises the problems but is also cognisant of the risk of knock-on effects. Further work will be carried out by the Highways Working Party in consultation with affected parties. All ideas and views will be considered.

## **WINDMILL – NEED TO MOVE FORWARD**

Unless a source of external funding is found before long which would allow the major scheme to replace interior beams and repair the curb on which the revolving cap rests to be carried out, then proper maintenance should be put in hand this year. The Trustees will meet to consider the way forward over the next few weeks.

## **A NEW GARDENING CONTRACTOR**

A new gardening contractor has been appointed who is very experienced. We look forward, weather permitting, to bright displays in flower beds, troughs and hanging baskets.

## **IMPROVING PLAY AREAS**

Councillor Tudor Owen is considering what improvements can be made to play areas and equipment. If you have ideas on this topic, please contact Tudor (details in the table of Councillors).

## **DISAPPEARING NOTICES**

The Parish Council posts agendas for the meetings on noticeboards throughout the village. Not infrequently, these notices are removed from the Lower Street board and to a lesser extent on the Cambridge Road site. This is unhelpful and we would appeal to those removing in-date notices to stop.



## HOLIDAY COVER FOR GERARD

Gerard does an excellent job in keeping the village tidy but does need to take holidays. Is there anyone who would be prepared to cover during these weeks? For details of the job and pay, please contact the Clerk.

## STANSTED IN BLOOM – LOOKING FORWARD TO SPRING

This year part of Stansted in Bloom will take the form of a competition for "Spring Gardens" with two categories, Gardens and Containers. David and Diane Newland from Elsenham will be our judges and the gardens will be judged during the weekend of 2/3 May.

For our "Summer Stansted in Bloom" we are hoping that shops and businesses in Stansted will take part in a Competition for Tubs and Hanging Baskets. Details to be published later.

We would like the children in the schools in Stansted to be part of 'Stansted in Bloom' as they have been for several years now. They are going to be approached to create posters to advertise the 'Spring Stansted in Bloom' and/or to take part in producing their usual beautiful artwork to be displayed in the local churches and around the village where possible.

From Monday 23 February, entry forms will be available from the Parish Council Offices, the Co-op in Cambridge Road, the Y-Z Mini Market in Chapel Hill and the Library at Crafton Green. We do hope that you will feel enthusiastic enough to take part in the above events and collect your entry forms as soon as possible. The form will also be available on-line at [parishcouncil@stansted.net](mailto:parishcouncil@stansted.net) and should be returned to the office by Friday 17 April.

## PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

Catherine Dean	813579
Gaye Ellington	813933
Jo Freeman	812524
Bridget Gott	814440
John Hudson	814489
Peter Jones	813252
Janice Loughlin	812346
Tudor Owen	812825
Ruth Rawlinson**	814222
Jonathan Rich	813112
John Salmon	814789
Dan Scott	815098
Geoffrey Sell *	815925
Bill Stiles	813172
Valerie Trundle	813433
* Chairman	
** Vice Chairman	

## DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Feb 25	-	Open Spaces
March 11	-	Full Council
<b>March 18</b>	-	<b>Annual Parish Meeting</b>
March 25	-	Finance

Members of the public are welcome to attend all Parish Council meetings, and may address the Council on any relevant issue at the start of Full Council meetings. These comments are noted but no discussion is entered into. Meetings are held in Crafton Green House at 7.45pm unless otherwise stated on the agenda. Agendas are posted on the Parish Council's website [www.stansted.net](http://www.stansted.net) under Publications.

## NEWS FROM UTTLESFORD D.C.

From Cllr Geoffrey Sell

### Council Budget 2009/10

Councillors are in the process of detailed consideration of next year's budget. The budget is put forward by the ruling Administration on the advice of the officers. As lead Opposition member on the Finance & Administration Committee, it is my responsibility and that of my colleagues to carefully scrutinise the budget and ask pertinent questions.

Uttlesford councillors are being asked to approve a council tax increase of 4.875%. Government guidelines are that it expects that the average council tax increase will be substantially below 5%. This relates to the average increase for the country as a whole; there is no specific requirement or expectation that Uttlesford's Council Tax increase shall be substantially below 5%.

What does this proposed increase mean for council taxpayers? If approved, the increase of the District Council's share would be £6.66 a year or 13p a week for a Band D property. The share of the council tax that goes to UDC is less than 10% of the total council tax bill which overall looks likely to rise by about 2.5%.

Essex Police Authority is proposing a 4.93% increase  
Essex Fire Authority is proposing a 3.7% increase  
Essex County Council is proposing a 1.9% increase

The following table shows the amount of Council Tax income since 2007/08.

	<u>2007/08</u>	<u>2008/09</u>	<u>2009/10</u>
Total Council Tax Income (£m)	4.093	4.360	4.638
Taxbase (Band D equivalent properties)	31,455	31,914	32,373
UDC Band D equivalent (£)	130.14	136.62	143.28
Increase on prior year	2.05%	4.97%	4.875%

All councillors are aware of the difficult economic times the country is facing and the need to deliver efficient high quality services. Increasingly the Council is looking to work with partners who will help to reduce costs. Examples of this are:



- Joining a partnership with Colchester & Braintree councils to manage the car parking service
- Operating the Tourist Information Centre in partnership with Saffron Walden Town Council
- Maintaining financial support for Citizens Advice Bureau. As a postscript to my comments last month, the Community & Housing Committee at my suggestion resolved unanimously to write to East Herts Council their concerns on the effect of their restructuring proposals which has necessitated Bishop's Stortford CAB losing staff and cutting back opening hours.
- Forming a partnership for delivering Human Resource services with Essex County Council.

The proverbial 'elephant in the room' when discussing council finances is our £2.335 million investment in the failed Icelandic bank Landsbanki. There is still no reliable information available about the prospects of recovering this sum, or the timetable for determining this. If nothing changes, the worst case scenario is that the Council will be required to write off this investment in 2010/11.

#### From Cllr Alan Dean

The big story in February was snow and the action by councils to help people deal with the disruption. Councils across the country were running out of grit at the start of the month. Essex County Council was putting its efforts into clearing main roads for cars. Little was done to clear pavements, which remained treacherous on Cambridge Road and Chapel Hill. Uttlesford did nothing to make car parks and its own offices in Saffron Walden safer for visitors.

Our society seems to have reached a point where even local authorities shy away from trying to improve safety for local people in case they are found liable for accidents that still occur. I don't believe it is better that ten people slip and hurt themselves on untreated snow and ice than one person has an accident in a gritted pavement, but that seems to be the culture in our risk-averse society. I have received a few complaints about this, but if more people make their views known, maybe a change of heart is possible and people can once again help their neighbours without fear of litigation.

A consultants' report on behalf of the regional assembly came out in January. It suggested one solution to future housing need could be a new town of over 20,000 homes (bigger than Bishop's Stortford) somewhere between Takeley and Dunmow. It is only an option at the moment, but one that will need to be robustly challenged if it is not to become a firm proposal. Local opinion is firmly against new towns in Uttlesford. I helped carry out a residents' survey. The analysis of over 350 responses showed that 42% of local people agree that future housing should be located in existing towns and villages and a further 42% strongly agree with that proposition. Local people are overwhelmingly against the idea of new towns in Uttlesford.

Last month I mentioned diversion signs in Stansted and Burton End for a road closure at Tye Green that had not been started over a week after it was due. I have received a long explanation from Cllr Norman Hume, the cabinet member for highways at ECC. The work is to lay a new water main between Fuller's End, Elsenham and Church Road, Stansted Mountfitchet. It is the same job that has been causing disruption on the Mountfitchet Estate. The delay to the work at Tye Green was to allow a delivery to take place to a local business.

#### CONTACT US!

Clerk – Ruth Clifford  
Admin Assistant – Anne Court  
Phone/Fax: 01279 813214 10am – 1pm  
E-mail: parishcouncil@stansted.net

#### OTHER CONTACTS

##### Uttlesford District Council Members

Alan Dean Tel: 01279 813579  
Email: cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk  
John Hudson Tel: 01279 814489  
Email: cllrhudson@uttlesford.gov.uk  
John Salmon Tel: 01279 814789  
Email: cllrsalmon@uttlesford.gov.uk  
Geoffrey Sell Tel: 01279 815925  
Email: cllrsell@uttlesford.gov.uk

##### Essex County Council Member

Ray Gooding Tel: 01279 813103  
Email: cllr.ray.gooding@essex.gov.uk

##### Member of Parliament

The Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 5214  
Fax: 020 7219 5600  
Email: haselhursta@parliament.uk

##### Police

Stansted Police Station, Hargrave Close  
Tel: 812211  
Essex Police non-emergency number  
0300 333 4444  
Mobile phone carried by PCSO  
07801 461666

#### ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

18<sup>th</sup> March 2009 – at 8.00 pm

Stansted Free Church,  
Chapel Hill

**This is your meeting – all views, ideas  
and criticisms are welcome(!)  
especially as we move towards  
preparing a Parish Plan**



## HATFIELD FOREST HIGHLIGHTS

### Spring in Action

Welcome to a look at recent goings-on and happenings in Hatfield Forest. As spring approaches we are looking forward to opening our gates on the 21st March for the new season and welcoming you all to the Forest for the upcoming spring and summer. I hope many of you were able to come down during the February half term and join us on one of our events including our very popular Forest Survival Skills day; full coverage of the day will be available in the next issue! We've got lots going on at the moment so next time you're in Hatfield Forest keep an eye open and you may encounter any of the following: our ten Wiltshire Horn Sheep grazing the marsh, myself the new Community Warden helping visitors around the Lake Area, or the cleaning of the Shell House by our professional curators. Or have a look at our Conservation in Action Board, between the Café and Shop, to find out what else is going on in the Forest.

Here at Hatfield Forest we are always busy, and even during the winter months we find plenty to do to conserve this unique place as a traditional working forest. Many of you will probably have noticed our volunteers hard at work in Collins Coppice, where they have been coppicing our hazel. While they may be using modern machinery, the task that they are carrying out today is the same task that is recorded to have been carried out here for hundreds of years. Coppices



are important not only as a way of extracting wood but also for providing a significant habitat for insects and woodland plants. The fencing off of recently coppiced areas is essential to ensuring that the coppiced trees successfully grow back without being nibbled away by cattle. As an extra precaution we also build stools round the coppice to stop the deer from being able to reach them. For those of you interested in finding out more then come along to our Coppicing in Action Walk in mid March.

Until the next issue I look forward to meeting you in the coming months. As the new Community Warden you are likely to find me near the Lake so come and say hello and ask me about what is going on in Hatfield Forest today.

Laura Slater  
Community Warden  
01279 874043

[laura.slater@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:laura.slater@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## STANSTED HALL CRICKET CLUB

### Funding Success

Stansted Hall Cricket Club completed a very successful season by receiving a grant of £15,000 from Viridor Credits Environmental Company through the Landfill Communities Fund. The grant went towards costs of £17,525 to make substantial improvements in and around the pavilion. Viridor Credits were approached by the club and after a lengthy process funding was secured. Bob Attwood of Viridor Credits was very helpful in guiding the club in the right direction so that we could secure this substantial funding for our Pavilion Refurbishment Project. We also appreciate the help from the Parish Council. The pavilion roof was leaking and very little work had been done on the pavilion since it was erected in 1973. We have re-tiled the entire roof, put in new ceilings, repaired the electrics throughout, totally improved the shower area, and built a shed for equipment. Local builder Steve Day has completed a very good job indeed. This completes a great year for the club as we won the Herts & Essex Division 2 by winning 17 out of 18 matches. The second XI finished mid-table in Division 5 with numerous youngsters performing very well.

The junior section is going from strength to strength with some 65 youngsters receiving first class coaching. Our Clubmark status was re-accredited and, most important of all, our FocusClub status was re-affirmed. We are one of very few FocusClubs in the local area, the others being Saffron Walden, Dunmow and Bishop's Stortford.

Viridor Credits Environmental Company distributes funding through the Landfill Communities Fund. Funding is available for community and environmental improvement projects within 10 miles of an active Viridor Waste Management landfill site. Since 1996, Viridor Credits has allocated over £50m to over a thousand projects across the UK.

David Brown  
Chairman



## BIRTHSTONE OF THE MONTH

### March - Aquamarine

The name means 'water' and 'sea' and is deep blue or blue/green. Sailors thought it brought good luck and prevented seasickness. It was the gemstone of Poseidon, the god of the sea. One of its components is beryl and unlike many other gemstones it is usually completely flawless. Possibly this is why it is associated with youthfulness. The largest known crystal was found in Brazil in 1920. It was 19" long and 16" wide and was (perhaps unfortunately) eventually cut into several pieces. In some places during the Middle Ages it was thought to reduce the effect of poisons. It was also used in fortune telling by dropping it in water and 'reading' the ripples or suspending it over a bowl with letters round the edge and hoping it would spell out a message. Please let me know if it works!

Peggy Honour



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## THE JOYS OF BUS TRAVEL

One of the best things about being 60 is getting a free bus pass. Travelling on the bus is a great adventure. Sometimes it's a bare-knuckle ride, when the driver unaccountably mistakes narrow country lanes for the racing circuit at Monaco. Sometimes it's a mystery tour when the new driver takes a wrong turning and gets a little lost. Occasionally it's a non-event when the bus fails to turn up at all!

Recently, my husband came across a bus that had plainly broken down. The harassed driver was standing on the pavement with a mobile phone to his ear, obviously trying to summon up some help, whilst his hapless passengers looked on. As he passed by, my husband smiled sympathetically, and was promptly given the driver's mobile phone with a panic stricken, "please - I not understand!" My husband had to give the precise location of the bus to the official at the other end of the phone, as the Polish driver's English wasn't up to the task!

Getting on, or off, the bus can be a challenging game. It's all a matter of timing, and not easy when elderly, infirm, or loaded with shopping. Get it wrong, and one is either tossed around the bus like a pea in a referee's whistle, or left by the roadside in a cloud of dirty exhaust fumes. The drivers have the advantage of training in this art of timing. They appear to be expert at gauging the precise moment to apply the brakes, or accelerator, to cause the maximum discomfort to passengers.

Occasionally, the passenger manages to win this game. A young mother and toddler were trying to cross the road to catch the bus that I was travelling on. Despite being only a short distance from the bus stop, the driver was showing no sign of slowing down. The race was on! The toddler pressed the button at the pedestrian crossing. The lights changed and the pair dashed across the road, just in time to halt the bus. Flashing the triumphant smile of an Olympic gold medal winner, the mother boarded with her bewildered offspring, only to be loudly chastised by her young sprog for crossing the road without waiting for the little 'green man' to appear.

When the bus journey's uneventful, it is very relaxing. The time can be used to daydream, or to plan. I have written poetry, organised parties, devised shopping lists, and enjoyed a lot of 'people watching' whilst on my local bus. For those uninitiated in the joys of bus travel, I urge you to give it a try. I promise that it will be an unforgettable experience. Just make sure that you are well prepared before setting off. I recommend a pair of comfy trainers, Thermos flask, local map and the Kendal Mint Cake, just in case!

'Loki'

Footnote: No passengers or bus drivers were harmed during the writing of this article. The author would like to point out that she has always reached her destinations safely and intact, if not always on time.



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

With all the cold, snowy weather, we wondered if we were being a little optimistic in holding our February meeting. We should not have worried as nearly as many people as usual made the trip to the Day Centre through the difficult conditions - they breed 'em tough in Stansted! Above all, our speaker, John Drury, managed to struggle in from Felsted to give us his selection of the 'Historical Treasures of Essex'.

As he stressed at the beginning of his talk, this was John's own selection and others might disagree with him. He then went on to show us slides of his choices, together with a little bit of the history of each one to support its inclusion. To start with, John showed the remains of the Roman gate and wall at Colchester, going on to the Norman Castle and Saxon Holy Trinity Church, both made out of Roman materials. His selection went on to include the wooden Saxon church at Greenstead, the church of St Peter-on-the-Wall, Bradwell, built on the site of a Roman fort, and the Norman Castle at Hedingham, which was held by the same family for over 500 years. Not all his choices were so old, however, but included Mistley Towers, built by Robert Adam, Audley End just down the road from us, the Royal Parade, Southend (where Princess Caroline stayed in 1803) and many more. We could not quarrel with his selection, particularly as his slides were excellent and all shot in summer sunshine, which cheered us all up considerably. We were very grateful to John for braving the weather to give us such an interesting and cheering presentation.

Our next meeting will be held on 5th March, when Fred Feather will be telling us of 'Arsenic and Old Essex'. We hope by then that the weather will be a little more kind to us - see you then.

Ian Seavers

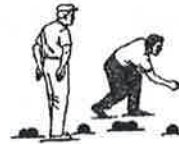
## WELCOME PACK

Stansted Parish Council and the Stansted churches are delivering information packs to the new residents at Forest Hall Park. If we have missed any houses, please let us know. Also, if any other new residents of Stansted would like a pack, we will be happy to supply. Either telephone the Parish Council Office on 813214, or me.

Catherine Dean  
Tel: 813579







**STANSTED  
BOWLING  
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Saturday 14th March at 7.30pm in St John's Church is the date, time and place for the final **music@stansted** concert of the 2008/9 season, when Erdem Misirlioglu, this year's winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year (piano section), will be giving a recital. Erdem, still only 19, is no stranger to Stansted, having played on two previous occasions at our Summer Soirees. Sonia Levy, who recognised



his talent many years ago, has been a very keen and enthusiastic follower of his progress and was thrilled last year (as indeed we all were), when he won the piano section of the BBC competition. He lives in Woodbridge, Suffolk and, for several years, attended The Guildhall School of Music. Erdem will be playing a fantastic selection of music by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Rachmani-

nov, including Beethoven's Moonlight and Pathetique Sonatas and Chopin's Ballade no 4. It promises to be a wonderful evening of favourite classics! We do hope you will come!

Tickets, Adults £12, Students and Children £3 are available from Stansted Carpets; Nockolds Solicitors, Bishop's Stortford; Sonia Levy Tel 815282; or at the door.

This year's Summer Soiree will be held in St John's Church and Gardens on Saturday, 4th July. Please put the date in the diary now. Visit our web site at [www.musicatstansted.com](http://www.musicatstansted.com) for more information about us and our activities.

Alan Corbishley

I have just looked out on our bowling green and can only see the edges as the rest of it is covered in snow - very pretty but not good for grass disease etc brought on by the heat under the snow. We have got until 18th April for things to improve but our green keeper will want plenty of time to prepare the green for play by then. This is the date of our first game of the new season and will be the President's team v the Captain's team, which is always great fun with everyone trying to get the bowls to travel from one end of the green to the other, not having done it for six months.

One date we hope will have much interest for those who would like to have a go at bowling is Sunday 26th April when we will be holding a Bowls for Beginners session from 10.00am to 3.00pm. We will also be continuing training sessions during the evenings of the following week. All you need is a pair of flat soled shoes; we provide the bowls and a complimentary drink. We would like to see as many of you as possible - all ages and genders, and perhaps some of you young lads who look at us over the fence sometimes!! We can also provide one to one training sessions if preferred. If you would like to come along or find out more please ring me or Del Sharp on 816144.

We are currently looking for sponsorship from local companies to help us purchase shirts for our league teams. We would like to get polo shirts (approx 30) with the club logo and the name of a sponsor embroidered onto them. Not only would we be advertising your company on the shirts, we would be happy to have your company advertising board on our car park fence (inside) for visitors to see. If there is a company interested please ring me. Well, keep warm and healthy and really consider coming to join us.

Rex Turner  
Hon Secretary/Captain  
Tel: 817388

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# Stansted Tennis Club



**Stansted Tennis Club Annual General Meeting**  
Monday 9th March 8.00pm at 105, Cambridge Road, Stansted. All members are welcome and, indeed, encouraged to attend. Please contact Richard Mott if you would like to serve on the Committee.

## Coaching

The popular lunch-time adult coaching session continues throughout the year on a Friday between 2.00pm and 2.45pm. If you would like to come along and join in, please call Chris Hollis on 319155. You don't have to be a member of the club. Junior coaching with Chris Hollis continues as usual for the older groups. Some new groups for younger children may be created after the February half-term. If you would like to find out more and get your name on the waiting list, please call Chris on the above number. Martyn Taplin (816386) continues to coach adults on Saturday afternoons at the club.

## Used Tennis Balls

These are available for sale at the reasonable price of £1 per tin of four balls. Please contact Jan Hollis on 812073 or call at 105 Cambridge Road.

## Club Playing Sessions

Members are encouraged to attend these open sessions at the following times:

Wednesdays at 10.00am and 6.00pm  
Friday at 9.30am. Sunday at 10.00am

## Contacts

If you would like further information, please contact Richard Mott (Secretary) on 466348, Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 812073 or Daphne Lunnon (Membership Secretary) on 817574.

Chris Hollis

Stephanie Emberson

SWCS is to perform Bach's St John Passion on 21st March in St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden. This most moving and spiritual work, depicting Christ's betrayal, capture and crucifixion, is – together with Bach's St Matthew Passion – the nearest Bach came to writing an opera. The part of the Evangelist who tells the story will be taken by tenor James Atherton, who, like the other professional soloists, brings a wealth of experience to this role. Soprano Ann-Helen Moen is an internationally renowned Norwegian soprano – you can hear her wonderful voice on her website. Mezzo-soprano Diana Moore and bass Edward Price will be making a welcome return to Saffron Walden, where they have both given spell-binding performances in the past. The music for the chorus demands that it steps in and out of character to fit the story, sometimes being the angry crowd baying for Jesus' life, and at other times taking on a more contemplative role, as for example when singing Bach's glorious settings of Lutheran chorales. Professional accompaniment will come from the Chameleon Arts Orchestra.

In these days of easy-access music, you may be wondering what a live performance has to offer over CDs and mp3s. St Mary's provides an optimal setting for this piece both visually with its fine 15<sup>th</sup> C architecture and aurally, with an acoustic that is both warm and all-enveloping and places you right in the middle of the music's drama and emotion. SWCS looks forward to sharing this wonderful work with you.

Tickets are £15 (£12 concessions and £1 for accompanied under 18s) available from: Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre; from 01279 812849; from members; or on the door. For more details see the SWCS website [www.swchoral.org.uk](http://www.swchoral.org.uk).



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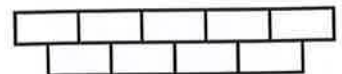
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## HAEMOPHILIAC DOGS, BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS AND BLOOD DONATION

One of my favourite patients is a boisterous Staffordshire bull terrier called Spot. Spot is very much like other 'Staffies' in that his enthusiasm often outweighs his common sense! But he is also a very special dog, not only to his family but also to everyone at Mercer and Hughes because he is a haemophiliac. Haemophilia is a rare genetic condition which causes a problem with blood clotting. This means that if a haemophiliac has an injury they can bleed internally or through external wounds and any surgical operation carries a high risk because of the complications of haemorrhage. Spot's owners had no idea that he had any problems and neither did we until he came in for routine castration. As he was recovering from the surgery, Jo our nurse, spotted that his castration wound seemed to be bleeding a little more than normal. We kept an eye on it for a little while, but the bleeding went on, and on, and on. My first thought was that there had been a problem with the surgical procedure itself but we did some tests that showed there was no internal bleeding but that his blood just wasn't clotting. We rushed him straight over to Saffron Walden where he had a blood transfusion donated by Mr Flood's dog. After further extensive blood tests we found out that he was missing a certain factor in his blood that helped it to clot.

When I was speaking to one of the clinicians at Cambridge Vet School about him, she asked what breed he was, and when I said a 'Staffie' she groaned and said "Oh no". As any of you that have had 'Staffies' will know 'calm' and 'quiet' are not in their vocabulary! The problem was how were we going to keep this young enthusiastic dog from injuring itself for the rest of his life. Well the answer of course is that we were not. Spot has been a regular visitor at Stansted and Saffron Walden as every little cut results in prolonged bleeding and he also suffers regularly from nose bleeds. In one episode he was near death and has had to have several transfusions of a special frozen plasma with clotting factors in it. He has also redefined our classification of anaemia; we now have pale, very pale, and Spot pale! Throughout all his problems, however, he has remained the most affectionate and good hearted dog you could ever wish to meet and his owners are amazingly dedicated and caring. He still loves coming to the surgery and as he's got older he has also become a little more sensible and doesn't get himself in quite so many scrapes.

The reason I'm telling you his story, apart from the fact that he is a lovely dog, is that it highlights the need for blood transfusions in dogs in emergency situations. We have been lucky in the past in that at least one of the vets has had a dog that we've been able to take blood from to transfuse into a patient. Recently because of Spot's problems, we have also started getting frozen plasma from the Pet Blood Bank. This is a company that organises collection of blood from suitable dogs and then processes and stores the blood so it is ready to supply vets across the country when a blood transfusion is needed by a pet. Similar to the situation in humans, dogs have their own blood groups and cross matching can be done to ensure your pet gets blood of the right group. We were so impressed by the Pet Blood Bank that we are organising a dog blood donor day at our surgery in Saffron Walden in

April. They come along with their nursing team and take blood from volunteer dogs. The painless process takes about five minutes and each donation can help up to four dogs. Each donor dog gets rewarded with some food and a goodie bag. Donor dogs should have a good temperament, be aged between one and eight years old, weigh more than 25kg and should not have travelled abroad. If you are interested in your dog being a blood donor and helping to save lives of other dogs like Spot, please ring Lisa at our Saffron Walden surgery on 01799 522082 for more details. I'll also be telling you a bit more about it next month.

Ilse Pedler,  
Partner,  
Mercer & Hughes,  
Veterinary Surgeons

## SKYWATCH

A monthly look at an aspect  
of the night sky



February and March always give us not only interesting skies, but at a sensible time of night - by which I mean as soon as it is dark. So this month, we are going star spotting. Do remember that your eyes will not be fully adjusted for 20 minutes or so. If, when you go out, the moon is up, I suggest that you resist the temptation to look at it straight away. As it is so bright, compared to the stars, it will undo your precious night vision. Instead, turn to the general area of the south and south-west where you can see, outshining everything but the moon, the planet Venus. If you have a telescope you will see it as a crescent.

Back up to the south east and there, in front of you, is the constellation of Orion. His belt, of three bright stars, are nearly, but not quite, in a straight line, angled from lower left to upper right. Look above and below the belt and you will see four bright stars which represent his arms and legs. The top left star is called Betelgeuse (betel-joes) and is a red giant, a very large star but not terribly hot, as stars go. Look carefully because it really is red. To the bottom right is Rigel, a blue-white star. Looking between the left and middle stars of the belt, form an imaginary triangle pointing downwards. You should see a few faint stars in a slightly blurred background. This is known as Orion's dagger. The blur is the Orion Nebula, a vast volume of gases, measured in thousands of light years in all dimensions. Here new stars are born over billions of years.

Orion also points to several other astronomical goodies. Imagine a line through the belt downwards and you will see a very bright star, Sirius, the dog star. It is, in fact, the brightest star we see. Following a line upwards from the belt and you will come to another red giant, Aldebaran, the right eye of Taurus the Bull. Carry on that line about the same distance again and you will see a small group of stars. These are the Seven Sisters or The Pleiades (ply-a-dees). Through a small telescope or, even better, some binoculars, the Pleiades come to life. Right, time to get your 'Link', a torch, some binoculars and set forth. Now you can look at the Moon!

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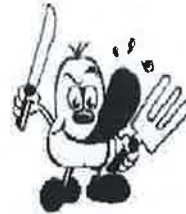
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## 494 (Stansted Airport) Squadron Air Training Corps

The Squadron enjoyed something a little different from our normal activities when we held a Monopoly Challenge in support of our own Matt Barton's participation in this year's World Transplant Games in Brisbane. Five teams of cadets, each supervised by a member of staff, spent the day in London visiting the places named on the popular board game. Each location was worth a given number of points with the team securing the most points winning. The teams made for an interesting sight on the London Transport network as each were carrying an item which had to be photographed at the location to act as proof of the visit. So amongst other things we had a large rubber duck, a cuddly toy dog and a steam iron all travelling around London on the tube! The cadets had secured sponsorship from friends and family and are hoping to have raised a significant sum towards Matt's travelling expenses.



It was back to public duties for the Squadron when we attended a Sector Church Parade at Great St Mary's in Sawbridgeworth. This was being held to mark the 25th anniversary of the formation of neighbouring 309 (Sawbridgeworth) Squadron. Cadets from several surrounding units made for an impressive sight as they marched down Bell Street behind 309's band.

Our Commanding Officer, Flight Lieutenant Ellie Chinnery, gave a presentation to Year 9 at Newport School where they were shown a short film about life in the Air Cadets. It was well received and we had quite a few young people asking for more information at the end. On 9th February the Squadron held an open evening for potential new recruits, the first in our new headquarters, and as a result we had six young people join us. Parents and potential cadets alike were impressed by the range of new equipment and facilities that we now enjoy - with the Flight Simulation computers being a particularly popular asset.

We have many things on the horizon for the coming months with training for the Falklands Competition, Bag Packing in aid of Comic Relief, a Basic Skills Camp, Navigation Exercises and Gliding all on the cards. If you are aged between 13 and 17 and interested in joining us visit our website [www.stanstedaircadets.org.uk](http://www.stanstedaircadets.org.uk) for more information.

Simon Stacey



## Nature Notes

One hears that our lives are governed by time. You might say that all forms of life are governed by time in so far as they have to adapt to the yearly, monthly and daily cycles of our planet. It is only we humans that have the power of reasoned thought and hence the ability to think about time. This has enabled us to produce clocks and calendars and devise a system to measure time from eons so great as to be beyond our comprehension down to the tiniest fractions of a second which are again beyond our comprehension.

Plants have no thought processes at all, as far as we know, but their orderly life is in tune with the changing seasons, and they adapt as necessary to the vagaries of climate and weather, and even cosmic upheavals. We humans have the ability, intentionally or otherwise, to obliterate some species but one suspects that plant life will still be there to take over the world when we have messed it up at our end. In the insect world, bees and ants may not be able to think but they can certainly communicate and live in an orderly community which enables them to build up reserves for future generations. Squirrels and jays are more like us in that they bury nuts and acorns and cannot always remember where they have put them!

A sage once commented that time only exists when one stops to think about it. We humans live in the present and, just like other animals, follow our basic instincts except when we are using our powers of thought. Civilisation developed from these powers and the ability not only to provide for the future but also create surpluses. Once these were real stores of corn or gold or whatever, but technology has allowed us to replace much of that with virtual reserves, and some may say that our motives are still more base than civilised. However, we can always turn to nature for inspiration. The daffodils spent most of last year building up reserves in their bulbs and as I write this their buds are peeping through the snow, biding their time until conditions are right for them to burst into flower and herald the spring, which may be by the time you read this. Was that a thoughtful prediction of the future - or just me passing time as I ramble on?

Felix



## Stansted Cricket Club

Stansted Cricket Club invites all current and prospective members to attend the 2009 Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Tuesday 31st March at 8.00pm at the home of Keith Ayres, 49 St. John's Road. The new League fixtures have just been received for Saturdays and we are all looking forward to the start of the season. For more information, please contact me on 812509 for adults or Keith Ayres (814471) for juniors.

David Hedge  
Secretary

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# Spangles<sup>★</sup>

## Children's Centre

Our revised timetable that was introduced at the beginning of the year is proving to be a success, with all of the groups



having a good number of families attending, some of them for the first time. Everyone has been very appreciative of the structure of the sessions and leadership by our members of staff.

We have been cele-

brating the Chinese New Year with, amongst other things, dragon making craft sessions and Chinese food preparation and tasting, with chopsticks of course. Some of the children are shown in the pictures having a great time with their new cutlery.

One of the favourite activities of the children in the Centre is playing with the shredded paper. Lots of fun, a fair bit of mess at absolutely no cost at all

As part of our 'economic wellbeing' topic we have invited Jobcentre Plus to Spangles on 26th February between 10.00am and 2.00pm. This is open to everyone regardless of whether they have children, to come along and have a financial health check with the Job Centre members of staff. They will be advising on retraining, getting back to work, interview techniques as well as family tax credits and employment benefits. Please call the centre for more information or drop in and have a chat to a member of staff. Stansted does not have a local Jobcentre office, but if this facility proves to be popular and beneficial then we will have them here again, so please make good use of the service this time.

Don't forget we are working with the Community Health coaches to support people in changing their lifestyle. Whether it is fitness and exercise, smoking or healthy eating, the staff can give one to one support. Please contact us for more information. Our next topic at Spangles will be based around 'be healthy' and we shall be introducing some additional services to our timetable, including, I hope, a ball skills session for the under 5s, so watch this space.

We have a parents' forum at the Centre, which is very casual, but helps us to better understand the needs of our users. They meet usually at the Centre, while a session is taking place and they come up with ideas that make the sessions more pleasant, or inform us of other activities in the area, so that we can compliment rather than clash. A member of the parents' forum then feeds into our staff meeting, which is really important, as we want to be providing services that parents would like. The forum needs more members so that we have a real good cross-section of input, so if you would like your views to be heard get in touch with us, at the Centre and we will direct you to the parents who are organising the forum at present.

Don't forget, everything we provide at Spangles is currently free of charge and here to support families in all areas of

family life. We will endeavour to help find a solution to any situation.

Mandy Fitchett  
Co-ordinator



## Royal British Legion Stansted & District Branch

The Stansted and District Branch of the Royal British Legion held their first meeting of 2009 on 9th February and several members of the branch were in attendance. The meeting was fairly quiet as is to be expected after Christmas. Among items discussed we heard that the 2008 Poppy Appeal in Stansted had so far raised £11,400 with some outstanding monies still to come in. This was a good figure and slightly up on last year, which, in the current climate, was considered excellent. The Branch is extremely grateful to our small army of volunteers who turn out each year to make the appeal such a success.

Another important item for discussion was the planting of a tree in the Memorial Gardens of St John's Church in memory of Mrs Kath Stevens, a stalwart of the community, who was a member of the RBL for many years and also Branch President for several years. She also worked tirelessly for the RBL Essex County Council Group of Branches until her death a few years ago She is sadly missed. Members of the branch are to meet members of the Church Council to sort out the details.

Branch meetings will carry on at the home of the Vice President, Janet Hollis, Little Fosters, Cambridge Road, tel 812073. Other contacts are John Segar 813289 and Tom Chadwick 647617. The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 14th April. All welcome.

Tom Chadwick  
Branch Secretary



## Huw Johnson Club

After our winter break, Club will soon be back into full swing. The weather in January and February proved that we were wise to take this break. We begin meeting again on 26th February with Joanne's birthday disco. We have already arranged a bowling evening in March which is a great favourite with our members.

We will be holding our AGM on Wednesday 1st April at the Free Church Hall in Stansted, beginning at 7.30pm. Everyone is very welcome at that meeting which includes a chat over a glass of wine. If you are thinking over my request for an escort to travel with our members from Saffron Walden why not come to the AGM to find out more, or better still, join us in St John's Hall on 26th February when you will see how much the Huw Johnson Club means to our members.

Marion Johnson  
Tel: 812284





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# St Mary's CE Foundation Primary School



*Caring, Sharing, Preparing For Life*

If last month this article focused on food, this month it is mainly about art. There are several art specialists on the staff at St Mary's and we like to make good use of their expertise. The staff have recently had some very good inset training from Miss Innes, and have been able to put it to good use in the classroom. During January we had an 'Art Day', planned and organised by the School Council. Each class chose different media and techniques to create pictures on the theme of winter. Inspiration came from books, the work of a particular artist or from nature. We think the results were excellent – adults and children alike learned a great deal and everyone certainly enjoyed the day. Also on the winter theme, snow has featured very much in our minds so far this term! Our Year 3 pupils were involved as usual in Education Sunday. This year it coincided with Candlemas, and during our research about Candlemas we found this proverb, that people used to use to predict when spring might come:

*If Candlemas Day be fair and bright  
Winter will have another fight.*

*If Candlemas Day brings cloud and rain,  
Winter won't come again.*

That day did start out 'fair and bright' so the proverb worked this year. On returning to school after their 'snow day', the children (and staff!) had lots of fun on the school field where plenty of snow remained to build snowmen. It was a great opportunity to be creative with the curriculum – we measured the depth of the snow, monitored the areas where it melted most quickly or lasted longest ... the possibilities are numerous.

The children have also enjoyed a visit from a teacher from China. Her visit coincided with the Chinese New Year, and during the day the children's learning included aspects of China - art, writing in Chinese characters, research into the Chinese calendar and even speaking some mandarin. Finally, six new pupils have joined the school this term. A warm welcome to them all and may they all be happy and successful at St Mary's.

Christine Tonkins  
Headteacher

## Wellbeing

*Exploring the connections  
Between mind, body and spirit  
With Isobel Bradshaw*



A few years ago, wandering along by myself, I heard my dad's voice "Haven't you got any work to do?" The voices, the people we carry internally, can influence our wellbeing. Some 'other' thought was party to the conversation and came to my aid - an oasis of nature and industry that appeared in front of me ... you guessed it ... I had found the allotments! Little did I realise the importance of this new venture. The overgrown plot of ground was calling me to work but hidden within was a greater gift.

My dad's philosophy of life was 'work hard' - a hard act to follow. Sid Bradshaw was a self-employed carpenter, joiner and undertaker. As children we played, but were always conscious of dad in his workshop. He meticulously planted his garden, reared rabbits and chickens that we ate, whilst his leisure was focused on training homing pigeons. My dad's craftsmanship and reliability made him a respected and well-liked man in our village, although sometimes an impossible person to please.

In late summer and autumn I cleared and cultivated the ground and was in allotment heaven. March arrived; time to sow, and I became anxious. Will I get it right? What would dad say? Psychologists studying mental health identify this as a 'relapse signature'. I became fixated on seed potatoes. My dad was looking over my shoulder, "You're putting them in too early; don't put them in so close; put them in deeper". I was lost and confused, frightened of disappointing dad.

Sunday newspapers recommend allotments as a retreat from modern-day living. Going organic, I was saving the planet but at what cost? My blood pressure was through the roof. "Don't worry" said my new allotment friends. "It's *your* allotment - you decide how to plant it, but remember nature is really in charge." I was about to come of age. Dad always said that you became your own person when you became your own boss. I thought he was talking about your occupation, but I needed to mature - I was soon to be found leaning on my spade, admiring my labour, surveying everyone and everything around. My work was to produce a harvest of inner positive autonomy.

Wellbeing has its roots in your nature and nurture. Self-knowledge is both the ground and the tool we employ. We will always need a mix of support, training and 'manure' thrown on us. However, it is when we realise our inner, adult nature and its relationship with a greater force that our allotment, our life, begins to thrive. On a more cautionary note, idyllic allotments can be very unhelpful in your singing and yoga practice. Smoky bonfires steal voices and double digging introduces you to back pain ... Beware! Take care now!

Isobel



## UGLEY FARMERS' MARKET

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Chinese New Year activities this year included the usual assortment of food tastings (complete with some good attempts at using chopsticks) and the ever-popular game of waking the dragon. All the children took it in turns to climb inside the dragon costume and lie down to pretend to sleep while others banged their tambourines as loudly as possible to wake him up. The festivities also included the opportunity to make Chinese lanterns and the children got a taste of life in China with the addition of further chopsticks and woks in the home corner. On 7th February, Rainbow held its first ever children's nearly new sale which was a great success. Despite the icy weather we had about 120 people through the door who all helped us to raise around £700. Thank you to Hilary, all the helpers, advertisers and our sponsor David Lee Estate Agents. Back in the classroom, the playleaders have been continuing with the theme of Hot and Cold this month using plenty of topical stories including polar bears and other snowy characters.

If you are interested in a place for your child 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 we are now taking names for September entry. Please contact Gill Pursglove on 814701 for further information.



Isabelle Page  
Rainbow Committee

## KING'S ARMS FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Over the past 14 years the customers and staff of the King's Arms have raised over £30,000.00 for various local causes. They have done this by way of sponsored cycle rides, head shaves, quiz nights etc. Every October we hold a curry night cooked by the Bombay Butler, with a massive tombola and auction to follow. Many local and national companies support our fundraising, not forgetting the local fire-fighters who donate part of their car wash proceeds to our chosen charity each year. A very big thank you to them for their time and generosity.

Some of the local groups we have supported in the past include: The Huw Johnson Club, both senior Stansted Lunch Clubs at the Day Centre, Stansted Cubs, Stansted Guides, The Alzheimer's Society, Stansted Air Training Corps, Stansted Youth Centre, Essex Air Ambulance, St Elizabeth's, Much Hadham ... plus many more. This year will be our hardest yet with the credit crunch hanging over our heads, but we will endeavour to do our best for our village. So if you think your bona fide organisation or group can benefit from our help, please feel free to contact us, and our customers and staff will discuss your request. Or why not pop in for a coffee and a chat!

Paul, Gary and Lorraine Moore  
Tel: 812948  
kingsarmsph@btconnect.com

## STANSTED LUNCH CLUB

### January lunch

This event with 75 people present launched the year in fine style with a full house and, sadly, an unsatisfied waiting list of 15. Generously sponsored by Savills, the lunch itself was excellent and presented well by Danny Doyle's colleagues at Pearse House. With splendid lightness of touch and humour, Garth Hanlon of Savills entertained the assembled company with his confessions on how he fell into planning. Many thanks to John Wootton of Savills, unavoidably absent on the day, and his colleagues for the sponsorship; to Garth for his confessions; to Danny and his staff for delivering such gastronomic excellence; to those attending for their good humour and fun.

### Future Lunches

We are well sponsored this year and lack sponsors on only two dates – May and September. Anyone wishing to sponsor a lunch on one of these dates should speak to me as soon as possible. To avoid disappointment, please diarise future lunches now:

25th March – Price Bailey (sponsors)

27th May – Sponsor needed

Alastair Richardson  
Tel: 07850 295109  
Email: amg.richardson@gmail.com



## UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Silence was kept as we held memories of two members lost to Elsenham and Stansted: Pat Ackerman, who died at Christmas, greatly loved and admired ex-head of Elsenham C of E Primary School, and Claire Francis, for whom please (re-) read the outstanding tribute to her in February's Stansted 'Link'.

What better than starting the year by 'Entertaining Ourselves' (cheap, for a start!)? After loads of business (but interesting discussion on the choice of Resolutions to come before National Conference), Ann Calver set off the light-hearted stuff with a two-part quiz, hiding her own knowledge behind a screen of brain-teasers. There were two winners, so an exciting 'stand-off' for Margaret Smith. Rene Camp and Elsie Bunting raised more laughter with 'true tales from home' and an epic poem; a WI adventure. A good day. Dorothy Wallace, treasurer, reported the total of £70 raised by the December Gift Stall including £25 donations.

The Ugley Chequers provided us with a delicious lunch for our New Year meal; 24 were present including three husbands and the speaker, Quintus Benziger, who entertained us with Songs through the Ages - song sheets all round! Quintus accompanied us on the electronic keyboard, guitar or piano accordion as appropriate to the song.

Phyllis Harrison



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