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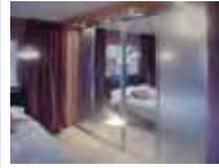
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Front cover:

VE Day at Bentfield End
submitted by Audrey
Rodgers and enhanced by
Paul Burt Photography

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

The Link

www.stanstedlink.org.uk

The Link is published by Stansted Mountfitchet Magazine Community Interest Company and usually delivered free to nearly 3700 homes and businesses in Stansted. Each edition is also available on our website.

This edition is only available online and there will be no further editions until normal activities in Stansted resume

Editor

Elizabeth Oakley
01279 812690
editor@stanstedlink.org.uk

Advertising

Mike and Marion Dyer
01279 814059
adverts@stanstedlink.org.uk

Distribution Queries

David Horton
01279 813680
distribution@stanstedlink.org.uk

Treasurer and Company Secretary

Alan Wheeler
01279 813745
accounts@stanstedlink.org.uk

Directors

Mike Dyer (Chairman)
Yvonne Ayres
Susan Bone
Catherine Dean
Marion Dyer
Sarah Ludlow-Elston
Elizabeth Oakley

Photographic Consultant Paul Burt

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EDITORIAL - SIGNS OF THE TIMES



What on earth has happened? Have I fallen down a rabbit hole, or gone through the back of a wardrobe? If I have, then the rest of the world seems to have done so too, and we have entered an extraordinary world dominated by a tiny semi-living organism, a thousand times smaller than the width of a human hair. To quote Rev'd Lucy Winkett: *We are all experiencing so many changes, at the mercy of forces beyond our control. We experience the horror and beauty of these days, which are filled with chaos and the distress of grief, alongside the generosity of so many. Our days are full of tough reflections and decisions, and also find us grateful for the spectacular courage and resilience of so many workers and neighbours. Our stubborn, messy humanity is finding new ways to be itself.* The Link was hoping to have a happy and fulsome celebration of the defeat of that all-too visible enemy in 1945: VE Day, 8th May. You will find related articles on page 5, and we hope you enjoy this month's front cover, a precious local photo taken on VE Day itself. Do you recognize anyone in the picture? The names are included in the memories of Audrey Rodgers on page 5. Many thanks to Audrey for sending the photograph to us.



I have chosen a few mostly local photographs, from the mundane, like an empty A120 and airport carpark, to the beautiful aspects of life, such as the young grey seal pup in Newcastle. No seals have braved coming into this beach until now, due to the normal human hoards. There are local heroes like the greengrocers in Stansted, Paris Legore and her generous distribution of plants around the village, as well as countless others. There were many thoughtful gifts to the surgery (like the candles and chocolates above, as well as the Social Club, p34, and Bombay Butler). I salute all those retail, postal and health workers who daily face close contact with infected people, as well as bus drivers and so many others; the Stansted Foodbank, Stansted Volunteers and Helpline, who are helping those stuck at home - you are all true heroes.



BIRCHANGER C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

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A HISTORY OF RAINBOW PRESCHOOL



We are all getting used to life away from the school and learning at home during this unprecedented school closure. Our families have shown their resilience and creativity with their regular activities. One of our children is even holding a daily assembly, organising the chairs at home to replicate our school hall. Most of our families are keeping fit with Joe Wicks, and Ross, our PE specialist has sent us clips for our website. Families are exploring new areas of Stansted and Birchanger; the spells of good weather have made these times of exercise a real treat. Children have been planting and growing plants. I have even heard of one family who have built a lookout station in their garden. This builds on our belief at school that outdoor learning is very beneficial to physical and mental health.

At the end of March, we had planned to plant 100 trees which have been donated by the Woodland Trust. At the end of April, we had hoped to invite the community to an open day to help us plant the nature garden to support our school community. Both events were cancelled, but once the children return to school and gatherings are allowed, we intend to hold several events to mark this time of health emergency and school closure. It would be lovely if members of the community could join us; dates will be on our website. The children and families are very aware of the hard work and dedication of the staff who are supporting the country; in particular the care workers and NHS staff. To show their appreciation the children made posters of thanks and sent them to school so that they can be shared on our website. We have also sent a selection of these posters to Broomfield Hospital, Chelmsford, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow and local doctors' surgeries and pharmacies. Stansted surgery has shared our posters on their front door. If you are interested in seeing what the children have been getting up to, please visit our website.



Claire Berry
Headteacher
Tel: 812362



www.stansted10k.org.uk

Date Change

With the current situation in which we find ourselves, we have decided to postpone the Fun Run until **Sunday 20th September**. We will of course continue to monitor the situation and follow the Government's advice. Please refer to our Facebook page and website for updated details.

Clair Rava
Email: stansted10k@gmail.com

How did it all begin? In the early 70s there were four mum helpers at Sideways Nursery when the leaders, Rosemary Minshull and Gerry Rumble, suggested they attend a course in Saffron Walden. Those four mums were so enthused, they decided, with the blessing of Rosemary and Gerry, to look into the possibility of starting a Playgroup. Sue, Sylvia, Sheila and Ann did a survey of the new Hargrave House Estate to see if there was any interest and need for another playgroup. A search was then made for accommodation. The Youth Centre was available as long as all equipment and evidence of a playgroup was packed away after each session.

Funds were needed, so a sponsored knit was organised (even husbands had a go) and funds were found. The basic items such as tables, chairs, home frame, climbing frame and paint easels were bought from a nursery in Enfield that was closing down. With donations of toys and improvisation, such as milk crates for beds, we were ready. In 1975 Rainbow Playgroup opened a couple of mornings a week until there was enough demand to open every morning. The four mums worked unpaid until there were sufficient funds. A committee was formed from the parents of the children and Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer elected. Eventually a Mum and Co group started on Wednesday afternoons.



Eventually The Preschool Learning Alliance was formed and they suggested the name be changed to Rainbow Preschool thereby emphasising the learning aspect of the provision. The ethos was still to provide education through play. The Preschool became part of the village, joining in the Carnival each year and because of the hard work of parents, often won best float. They gave harvest gifts to residents in Norman Court and care homes and put on a Nativity Play. They used the Soft Play area at Peter Kirk School. Some children never had the opportunity go on public transport so annual trips to local parks were introduced. After 25 years in the Youth Centre the Preschool moved to the Quaker Meeting Hall until 2002 when a classroom became available in St Mary's School. At last the equipment and art work could be left out. When St. Mary's School moved to Forest Hall Park, the Preschool was able to rent part of the Peter Kirk building and have an outside play area. Now with Ofsted inspections, the Preschool is more formally run with Manager Yvonne and Administration Manager Gill but the ethos is still the same - learning through play.



Over the years the Pre-school has progressed because of a great band of volunteers and leaders. Pam Moore, Ragni Whitlock, Ann Perry, Margaret Hill, Carol Battson, Terrie Stockwell, Jenny Childs, Edna Baker, Joan Lott, to name just a few. It would be lovely to hear people's memories of their time at Rainbow and what they are doing now. I know some became nurses, a solicitor, an electrician and two returned to Rainbow as Leaders.

Ann Conroy
(Auntie Ann – founder member and current volunteer)



Families have been provided with wellbeing packs while the school is closed. Students headed home armed with a pack full of suggestions about ways to look after their mental health during the shutdown. Teachers are also phoning them to ensure they are coping with this unique set of circumstances. Head of school Hannah Jones said: "We produced a wellbeing pack of activities our students and their parents can do at home, including mindfulness colouring, reading, listening to music and writing poetry. We have supplied them with links to various websites which can help them keep happy and occupied, as well as giving parents a list of useful services. Our children are used to a daily routine of coming into school, seeing familiar faces and knowing when their breaks are. Many of our children like that routine and being at home all day is really unusual for them. Of course, the academic side is important for them to continue, but we need to be aware of the impact of them being away from socialising and interacting with their friends and teachers."



The school has welcomed between four and 11 children of key workers into school since the shutdown. They are being looked after by one member of the senior leadership team and four teachers on a rota system. These students have been studying literacy, numeracy, PSHE (personal, social, health and economic education), PE and IT. They have also been taking part in the daily online Joe Wicks workout, completing laps of the school field and enjoying yoga.

Kelly Clark

Food items collection

Because of the coronavirus outbreak, the collection boxes at the churches are not accessible. Any donations can be left at the Co-op or at St Mary's School in Hampton Road, Forest Hall. Most needed items are: breakfast cereals, long life milk and fruit juice, tinned custard and rice pudding, small jars of coffee, biscuits and toilet rolls. We also collect tinned meat, potatoes and vegetables, jars of pasta sauce, tinned fruit, jam, tea, sugar and toiletries. The foodbank is operated by Churches Together in Stansted and we also welcome financial donations and are most grateful to those who have already given. Please visit our website or call Marion on 814059 for details of how to donate.

Food parcels are available on referral from the CAB, tel 01799 618840 or, if you have children up to the age of 19, from Spangles 0300 2470122. As the Spangles Children's Centre is closed, parcels are being delivered by the volunteers organised by Stansted Surgery. We are most grateful for this service.



Catherine Dean
Tel: 813579

HELPLINE UPDATE



I would like to reassure everyone that the Helpline phone line is still open, but due to the current restrictions we are unable to offer our normal service, ie our ability (or not!) to provide transport for medical appointments. However, we may still be able to pick up prescriptions and shopping on behalf of Stansted residents who are unable to go out themselves and have no-one else to help. If we are unable to help we do have the contact details of other voluntary groups who can, so please give us a ring. We are available Monday to Friday 9.00am-4.00pm Tel: 07704 553727.



Yvonne Ayres
Organiser



RECYCLE INK CARTRIDGES AND STAMPS

We are still able to send cartridges for recycling. Although the churches (where our collecting boxes are situated) are closed, you can still leave items in the box outside the blue main door of the Free Church at the bottom of Chapel Hill. For health reasons, we would prefer not to receive dental products at this time but you can still leave stamps and original (not remanufactured or own brand) ink cartridges. Alternatively please leave items in the porch of 7 Blythwood Gardens. Thank you.

Marion and Mike Dyer
Tel: 814059

Email: recycle@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



HELP FROM STANSTED VOLUNTEERS

There are about 200 volunteers signed up in Stansted. They will do shopping, and also provide food parcels. If you or anyone you know could benefit from this please phone the surgery on 813200, 818053 or 818058. They really want to help so they have said please don't be shy.



Catherine Dean
Tel: 813579 or 07803 299683
Email: catherinemarydean@btinternet.com



LOCAL MEMORIES OF VE DAY

Victory in Europe Day, Friday 8th May, marks when the fighting against Nazi Germany came to an end. It is hard to imagine how Stansted residents would have been felt. I am sure relief would have been the overriding emotion, tinged with sadness, as people reflected on the suffering and loss of life. Certainly, if you had lost a loved one you might not have been in a mood to celebrate. However, for many this was an occasion to forget about the day-to-day hardships of five years of war and have a really special night.

The Herts and Essex Observer of 12th May 1945 reported: "Interesting and popular features marked Victory Day Celebrations in Stansted. In the evening there were two Whist Drives, one at the Mary MacArthur Home and the other at the British Restaurant. A dance held at the Central Hall proved a special attraction, particularly among the large number of members of the Forces, who were admitted free." I have to admit that I have never been to a whist drive and it seems a rather odd way to be marking a momentous day like this. The dance at the Central Hall on the other hand sounds like it could have been a very lively affair. The hall had hosted regular dances throughout the war and the locals were usually joined by soldiers from the Transit camp which had been set up in the grounds of Hargrave House, female members of ATS who were accommodated in Hargrave House itself and members of the Women's Land Army who had a hostel in the village. If you add to this mix some American airmen from the airfield at Burton End then you have the makings of quite a party!

There were displays of patriotism and pride in the fact that the UK had defeated the terrible threat of Nazism. The Observer reports: "Perhaps the most popular feature of all was on Wednesday afternoon, when all the schoolchildren marched with banners and flags to St John's Church for a special service. This impressive service will long be remembered by the children and by the few parents who were able to be accommodated. Afterwards the children took part in a parade along St John's Road and Cambridge Road which were lined by a crowd of proud and enthusiastic parents. Tea was then served. Arrangements for the celebrations were made by the Parish Council, and the eminent success of the whole proceedings was due to the co-operation of many helpers. Although war was won and the threat of Nazism removed, there was still some uneasiness. The war in the Pacific was unresolved, and millions of people in Europe and Russia had to rebuild their lives.

Trevor Lloyd

I grew up in Stoney Common. Although I went to school in Stansted, we didn't really feel part of the village, which centred around Cambridge Road and Chapel Hill. I remember the children's parade very well, and we were delighted to have a few days off school. I also remember that we had a large bonfire in Stoney Common. My 1945 personal diary records that on 15th August we all celebrated VJ Day which brought the war to an end, and I can remember that event more vividly than VE Day. Jean McBride is a close friend; she lived in Woodfields and remembers a celebration dance in the Station Square, where nearly everyone was female because all the men were still away!

Margaret Silvester

8th May 1945 - my 14th birthday!

A day off school! I had been 'evacuated' to Stansted in 1939 with my mother and rejoined the relatives who still lived here, the tail end of several generations born in the village. As always, we all gathered at Bentfield End, where Uncle Frank and Aunt Rose Turner ran the *Stores* and kept open house for friends, family, neighbours, American servicemen, firemen, and farming people. This month's front cover photograph shows the gathering on that day:

Back row L-R: Audrey Warwick (now Rodgers), Marion Sweet, Mrs Warwick (Audrey's mother), Rose Turner (Audrey's aunt), Fred Hoffman, Queenie Sweet, Ida Leech. **Front row L-R:** Nora Turner, Christopher Turner (Nora's son), Linda Leech (now Gilbert), Jean Hoffman (Fred's daughter), Annabel Leech, Linda Sweet.

Dad had stayed in the keepers' lodge in London Zoo which remained open throughout the war. Fourteen was a red-letter birthday in 1945 as you could leave school, but I was lucky to be at the Herts and Essex High School. I had a special cake and a new flowery, silky, dress bought from London. We shared in the celebrations in Lower Street with searchlights, lots of drink flowing, and dancing to Mrs Haggerwood and her piano accordion outside the Queen's Head. When we got home, my Dad had arrived back unexpectedly from London, so that was the time for candles and cake cutting. One thing I cannot remember, but Jean McBride tells me, is that I had a ride on a tank along Cambridge Road; she was jealous, and still is! Not every family could be together in May 1945 and it was many months before the demob or repatriation for all the servicemen. We were lucky as all our family were eventually reunited.

Audrey Rodgers

I will never forget VE night. I was nine, living in Turner's Grocery Store in Lower Street, which had bunting hanging from house to house all the way to the railway station. There was singing and dancing all night, the pubs stayed open and the streetlights were on. Old Mr Joe Childs had dance music playing through a loudspeaker on top of his little Austin. The soldiers manning a huge searchlight lifted me up so I could turn the handles on the massive light up to the sky and along the street. I remember being grabbed by young women to join in the group doing the *hokey cokey* and *Auld Lang Syne*. I was kissed so many times my mother had to scrub my face to get rid of all the lipstick! Many of those celebrating were evacuees; many of the songs being sung were Vera Lynn's. Old Mr Griggs (aka Ditcher) came in our shop and said '*it's better than Christmas*'. The siren gave us the all clear – the terrible war was over.

Keith Turner

Flags were flown, church bells rang, five bonfires were lit and searchlights played above the village in a V for victory sign. On the Wednesday afternoon the schoolchildren marched with banners and flags to St John's Church for a special service conducted by the vicar and the Congregational minister.



Peter Sanders

From: *On the Beaten Track, A History of Stansted Mountfitchet*

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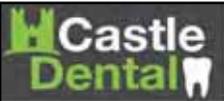
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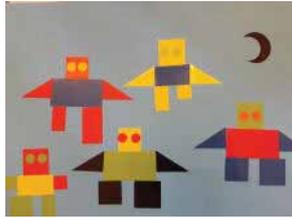
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CRAFTS YOU CAN DO AT HOME

Ideas from Stansted Family Café

While we cannot provide a family-friendly atmosphere with coffee and cake at the moment, I will continue posting pictures of crafts which we have done in the past on our Facebook group *Stansted Family Café* to give people some ideas. We are also encouraging parents to post photos of pictures or craft items their children have made, and thereby give other parents and children ideas of things they could do. Even if you have never been to the café, you are welcome to join the group and check out/post some craft ideas. Most of the crafts can be done without any specialist equipment, and sometimes there are work-around options.

The great news is that there are lots of craft ideas available online; search for *printable colouring pages* and specify an age-range or a topic that your child is interested in or if you want colouring for all ages from pre-school to adults. Pinterest and Youtube contain lots of ideas if you specify a theme or a season, or just the materials you have available, for example paper crafts. Even just searching Google Images for colouring pictures, printable animal masks etc, works well too. If you do not have a printer you can use Microsoft paint to colour pictures, although I can't say I have tried that out myself! *Firstpalette.com* (great for animal mask templates) and *twinkl.co.uk* (more of an educational focus, lots of resources for all ages) have lots of ideas and there are many other sites, including *krokotak.com* (check out their moving fish for starters). Most sites are either free to use and download ideas, or have some sections with free resources and ideas and other sections where you can access paid-for resources. With so much choice there are just two problems really: where to start and where to put all the things that get made!



Ros Page
Tel: 810813
Email: contactstanfam@yahoo.com

STANSTED CADETS DURING WWII



Our thanks to John Salmon for submitting this wonderful old photograph



FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

I am sorry to tell you that the AGM scheduled for 1st May in the Day Centre has been cancelled. The church is closed to visitors until restrictions are lifted. Take care everyone!!



Lynda Dale
Tel: 07716 099474



MAGNA CARTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.magnacartaacademy.org

The school is available for the children of key workers, but almost all families have made alternative arrangements enabling teachers to work from home. Using the school's education technology app and website ClassDojo, they connect with pupils and families in a safe way. Although work packs were given to pupils to last until the Easter holidays, teachers are finding fun ways to keep their children engaged. A book club has been launched, and children are urged to read the same free e-book over two weeks, and then share their comments on ClassDojo.

Science experiments that can be carried out safely at home are part of the *Snap, Crackle and Pop* project. Pupils can share their photos, writing and messages on ClassDojo. Headteacher Marios Solomonides said: "After Easter, our teachers will put new learning online each week and we hope to start videoing lessons. We are being forced to think about remote learning and alternative ways to teach and motivate. We have always used ClassDojo, which is a good system, for rewards and to keep in contact with parents, so everyone is familiar with it. Any teacher can add information or work; I can see what our children are doing, and they can tell us how they are feeling. It is a safe, internal social media; it is really lovely." He and other teachers have been telephoning families to ensure the new routine is working for them. "We want our children to know we have not forgotten them and we care about them. They have been so happy to talk to us and to tell us what they have been doing. It is lovely and makes it all a little bit more normal for them. We are trying to make children still feel a part of their school class and thinking of ways to motivate them." The school has a home-learning page on the website to share useful links and suggestions with parents.



Kelly Clark

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Here is a way to challenge your little grey cells as well as taking your daily outdoor exercise: if you can identify what the object is, award yourself one point and if you can say where that object is, then you get 2 points. All are in or around Stansted.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

Photographs submitted by Ralph Phillips



8



9

Answers on page 37

9

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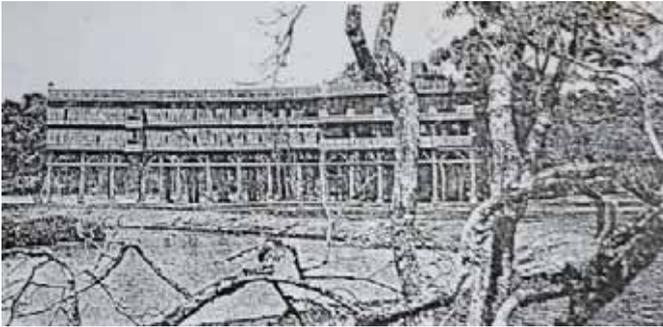
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A NIGHT AT TREETOPS

Deep in the Kenyan Aberdare National Park, beside a wild-life waterhole, there stands a unique, gigantic wooden structure, built high into the tops of trees. We arrived at Treetops in June. We gathered together in a large group, and walked quietly and purposefully up to the staircase leading up into the trees. Once inside the hotel no-one was permitted to go outside. The corridors were narrow, with an occasional branch thrusting up through the floor and disappearing out through the ceiling. A general quietness prevailed so that the animals would not be frightened away. On our arrival, tea and scones were served on the roof: an ideal lookout for animal spotting. The mischievous baboons would swing on to the rooftop from a neighbouring tree and grab whatever was going and make off with it at great speed. It was mostly food they were after, but one lady had her handbag snatched.



Below us, buffalo were standing by the waterhole licking the ground to get at the salt put down by the hotel staff. Not far away three or four elephants were rubbing the ground with their trunks, and another group of them were lumbering towards the waterhole. Slowly, majestically, they approached – these most intelligent, immensely powerful and loyal of creatures, guiding their young away from the buffalo with their trunks. Every so often an elephant would feel that a buffalo had crossed the boundary of polite distance, and would give a mock charge, just two or three rapid steps before stopping dead, its ears standing out like giant fans. The buffalo stood their ground like tanks, without batting an eyelid, totally unafraid, knowing that the elephant's behaviour was pure bluff. As dusk fell, all was very quiet, just the gentle movement of the animals, warthogs scratching in the dust, keeping their distance from the larger animals, and the sound of a hyena laughing crazily far away in the darkness. No lions came that night to disturb the peace. Fascinating though the animals were to watch, fatigue finally forced us to retire to our cabins. We had been told that the baboons went away to sleep at night, so we were able to open the windows without the fear of a hairy hand appearing through the opening and groping amongst our possessions!

In the morning we were up early; time had at one moment seemed to stand still as we entered this unusual world, and now had gone so quickly. For these few short hours, we had shared in the lives of these wild creatures, quietly hidden amongst them, way up high, so that they could pass beneath us unaware of these unseen invaders of their territory. I left Kenya taking with me a deep sense of respect for the wild, a love of a beautiful country and a strong desire to return to Africa at the earliest opportunity.

The original Treetops, built around one tree, became world famous when Princess Elizabeth who was staying there, received the news of her father's death and had to return quickly to England to assume her new responsibilities as Queen. Treetops was burnt down by Mau Mau rebels in 1954, and a larger new one was constructed in 1957 on the opposite side of the waterhole.

Liz Johnson

Stansted Mountfitchet U3A
10th Anniversary 2019-20



www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted

So not the usual style of article from us this month. For some reason, we have not been getting out much! The U3A motto *Learn, Laugh and Live*, is a nationwide grouping of independent U3As under the umbrella of the Third Age Trust. Our U3A, a registered charity, has been in existence for 10 years, and with over 300 members and around 30 interest groups, there has been a lot of opportunity for people to make friends locally. This has paid dividends in these difficult times of self-isolation, with people telephoning and using social media to keep in touch. In particular, some of our members have been phoning those few who do not have email or internet to make sure they can keep in touch with what is happening in our group. We have extended the time that people need to re-join from the end of April to the end of July as so many of our members need to self-isolate, and our AGM has been put back from May to August. All face to face meetings are cancelled until at least the end of June. If new members want to join, just email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com and we will let you know how to do that despite the lockdown. We have set up a closed Facebook group for members. Just search for Stansted U3A on Facebook and request to join. People have been posting ideas there for online free theatre plays, musicals, music, online exercise classes, and just generally sharing news of what they have been doing.

Many groups have been making sterling efforts to keep going via WhatsApp, Zoom and emails – new technology for some, but being embraced by many. Our popular *Saturday Seminars* will be slightly different for a time; the April one was a YouTube video from Carolin Crawford, the astronomer who has visited us previously. A link to her lecture at the Gresham Institute, *The Sun our Nearest Star*, can be found on the news page of our website and a new talk should be on there by the time you read this. Let us hope this self-isolation does not keep going for too long, but while it does, we can use the time it is giving us to find new ways of connecting with friends and loved ones and maybe find new interests or re-connect with old ones.



Sally Rich
Vice Chair
Tel: 07874 385541






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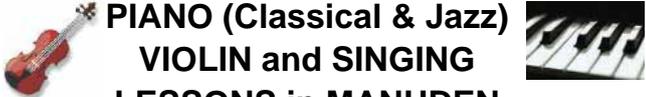
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We have been busy supporting our families at this very unusual and difficult time. We have offered a limited service to our key worker children. For all our other families we have been adding daily ideas for activities to Tapestry (the online Learning journal we use) which parents can do at home. We thought you may like to see some of these ideas:



Make a rainbow and place it in your front window to represent *Hope and Cheer* to everyone who passes by your house and sees it



Make elephants from plastic milk bottles, using the handle as the trunk and decorate with lots of colours like the stories with Elmer the elephant



Try making a Pixie / Elf / fairy garden using an ice cream tub, soil, stones, leaves, sticks, daisies, etc



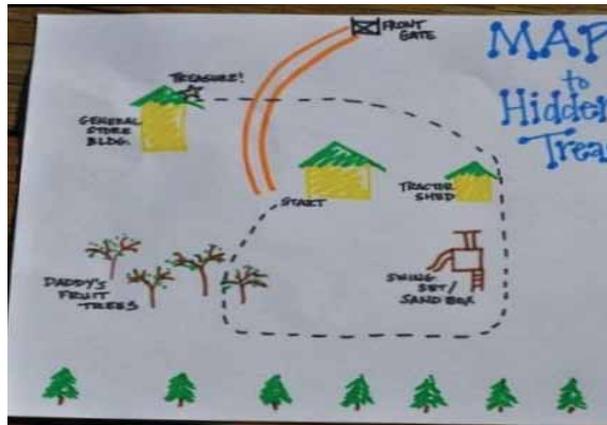
How about a Scavenger Hunt in your garden or when you go on a walk. What can you find?



Read the *The tiger who came to Tea* and make a tiger mask, painting or cut round a tiger paw print



Draw round your hands and make them in to animals; the preschool children made chicks and sheep for Easter, but you can probably think of others to make



You can have fun exploring your home and Mummy or Daddy could create your very own treasure hunt map. Also, the children can draw a map and then hide vari-

We take children from two years old and offer up to 30 hours per week. We are now taking registrations for 2020 - 2021. Please contact Karen Reilly, Pre-school Manager on 810800 Email: admin@birchangerbutterflies.org.uk

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Someone said to me: "It all seems like one of those strange, apocalyptic films. It does not feel real." I agreed. I think a lot of people are thinking this way and I am told that it is due to something called dissociation, which is a way our minds deal with anxiety and unwanted situations. We want to wake up and find it was all a dream (or nightmare). To find that everything is back to normal. This is not going to happen. Even when the pandemic is over there will be no going back to the way things were. The virus has changed us and our society. For Christians this is not something to be feared but something which speaks of hope. At Easter we remember that Jesus died and rose again. It was not as if his death had never happened but in rising from death, he was different. The Christian 'sure and certain hope' for those who have died is not that they will live on, just the same as before, but that they too will rise from the dead. We will be ourselves but far greater selves than the selves we are now, greater than we can imagine at this moment. Saint John put it this way: "What we do know is this ... we will be like Jesus."

I hope we do not just 'go back to normal' when the pandemic is over. We can hope for far better than that. My hope is that the pandemic will make us kinder, more aware that we depend on one another, more aware that those we call low-skilled, and who are consequently low paid, are vital members of our society. My hope is for a better nation, and a better world. My hope is for resurrection.

Paul Wilkin
Rector, St John's Church



All enquiries including Church Hall bookings The Church Office
Tel: 815243 (with answerphone)
Office hours: 9.00am-noon Mon, Wed, Fri
Email: st.johns.church@btinternet.com
Website: www.stanstedstjohns.btck.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/St-Johns-Church-Stansted-Mountfitchet-1230567567096091

Rector Rev'd Paul Wilkin Tel: 812203
Email: stansted.rector@gmail.com

Assistant Curate Rev'd Helen Flack
Email: revhelenstn@gmail.com

Pastoral Assistant Kathryn West Tel: 816293
Email: kewest@btinternet.com

When we were told to close our church buildings the Archbishop of Canterbury said, "We are all having to get used to being Church differently." He encouraged us to maintain the heart of Church life, prayer and worship, by exploring and learning new ways. Our Sunday service is now online using Zoom, so we gather by computer at 9.30am. We are joined many of by our normal congregation and friends from further afield. On Easter Day one person joined us from New Zealand! We also *Zoom* together daily at 9.00am, praying for our world, nation and community. Everyone is welcome to join us and the links are given below.

In order to keep in touch with everyone I have been sending an email with some thoughts and information each day. If you would like to receive it you can sign up on our website. These are dark and difficult times and the world will not be the same after them. A great Christian teacher of the past said, Christians are an Easter People and Alleluia is our song.

Easter is about new life, new hope, and resurrection. My hope is for a better world and a brighter future.

Zoom links

Sunday 9.30am www.us04web.zoom.us/j/109066258
Daily Prayer 9.00am www.us04web.zoom.us/j/459441774

Stay Home! Stay Safe! God bless you.

Paul Wilkin

ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the winners of the March draw:
£100 No.238 Alan Helbert
£50 No.279 John Elliott
£25 No. 93 Annabel Pettinelli

The May draw will be held on the 31st May either in St John's Church or online from my home, in the presence of the online congregation, following the 9.30am service.

Jean Newson
Tel: 819062



Photo by Helen Baker

ST JOHN'S REGISTERS

Funeral on 11th March
Alfred John Bishop, aged 78 at Cam Valley Crematorium



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Email: stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Like most churches we are continuing to run some of our activities online, on Tuesday evenings and Sunday mornings; just contact us for information on how to connect. The Alpha Course has taken a break until things return to some form of normality as we feel aspects of it are much more effective face-to-face than online. If you have a prayer-request, or are looking to expand your reading and would like recommendations for books tackling faith-related questions and/or the evidence for God then please contact us by email. Some popular books for people exploring the evidence for God by themselves include *The Case for Christ* and *The Case for Faith* by Lee Strobel, and *The Reason for God* by Timothy Keller but there are also lighter, more biographical books and books specific to different subjects which we are happy to recommend.

During these strange and unusual times, we have to adapt everything we do, including how we worship. We are keeping our strong parish community together in many ways:

Keep in Touch

Emotional and mental health well-being is just as important as spiritual well-being. It is normal to feel stressed or lonely when you are required to remain indoors for long periods of time. Father Lee and Deacon Des would be happy to chat with people of the Parish on a regular basis to see how you are and to offer guidance. If this is of interest to you, please visit the *keep in touch* page on our website

Livestream Mass

We livestream our daily masses at 10.00am every day except Tuesday on our YouTube channel, accessed via the *live mass times* page on our website.

Children's Liturgy

We have produced a page with some useful links for parents with school-aged children to assist with worship in the home, and to mark the season of Lent and Easter with your families without gathering publicly for Mass. Go to the *live mass times/childrens-liturgy* page on our website.

Website and Facebook Page

We regularly update these with our weekly newsletter.



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Minister Rev'd Roy Fowler Tel: 814809
Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Noel Bowman

We were very sad to learn of the death of Noel Bowman from natural causes on 25th March. Noel was our oldest church member. In line with other denominations, we had to close our church building in the middle of March and no longer hold services or any other events. Consequently, the funeral was conducted by Roy at Harlow Crematorium, rather than in our church, where we would have been able to come and support the family. Our prayers are with his wife Liliane, and the family.

Keeping in Contact

Although we cannot worship in our usual way, we are continuing to worship together using Zoom conferencing system. Those using the internet can speak, hear and see the other people; those without internet access can speak and listen by telephoning in. We are also using Zoom for a weekly *Church Chat* where we catch up on what people have been doing and take part in an informal quiz. These sessions are great fun and help keep people's spirits up.

The Place on the Hill is closed until further notice



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www.stansted.quakermeeting.org

Clerk and Lettings Jane Mitchell
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Email: sjane.mitchell@ntlworld.com

We are holding a Meeting for Worship on Sundays, by each being silent at 10.30am, our usual Sunday meeting time, in our own homes. We have a strong sense of all worshipping together by doing this. Afterwards, we have our coffee or tea and a biscuit and email any ministry, thoughts or news to each other. There has been some moving ministry.



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How to keep calm and carry on breathing

When we get scared, we naturally tighten our breathing up, the breathing becoming shallow and rapid. As fear and anxiety continue, this tight breathing becomes our new normal breathing pattern. Whilst we can try breathing techniques to help us relax, unless we can relax the breathing apparatus, the exercise will not have the positive effect it should have. Letting go of the breath is exactly that. As you exhale, allow the ribcage to gently subside, like a balloon with a bit of air in it gently going down. The belly will gently flatten. There is no noticeable change to the spine or posture. This outbreath is soundless and relaxing. If you hear any 'exhale' noise, it means your throat is too tight.



A few breathing facts: In normal moment-to-moment breathing, it is the in-breath that uses muscles. The out-breath is completely passive. The principal muscle driving this easy in-breath is the diaphragm, which contracts, pushing the ribcage and abdomen slightly outwards and sucking air into the lungs. The lungs themselves are not muscles; they are a huge collection of what could be called tiny air-bags. To breathe out, the diaphragm automatically relaxes upwards, allowing the ribcage to subside and abdomen to flatten, letting the air out. A useful way of helping breathing to relax is to either drop into the yoga position, Child's Pose, or sit at a table and rest your head on your arms. After a little while, you will become aware that your back is gently opening and closing with the breath. This position is very calming. It is fine to add cushions to rest your head on or behind your knees to relieve the pressure on the legs. Because breathing is both automatic and controllable, the neurology behind it is incredibly complex! Nevertheless, everything works better if the basic breathing is healthy.

Clare Harding
Z-Health Master Practitioner
Tel: 07802 872919



UPDATE FROM KEMI BADENOCH MP

www.kemibadenoch.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-and-guidance



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This is a worrying and challenging time for us all and the advice on coronavirus is changing daily because of the fast-moving environment. I understand it is difficult to know what advice to follow when there is so much information out there. I am receiving messages from people wanting to know how they can help; it is good to see the community coming together in a desire to support one another, especially the elderly and vulnerable. There is a page on my website that includes the links to the most up-to-date information from all the various bodies I am in touch with, including the Government, Essex County Council, Uttlesford District Council, plus local organisations and charities across the constituency. As advised by Public Health England, if you think you have might have coronavirus don't go to your doctors' surgery or hospital; go to the NHS website, or if you don't have internet access, call 111. Carers are advised to call 111 or doctor surgeries for specific advice. The Government is holding daily televised briefings and I would encourage constituents to tune in for the most up to date information and advice. If you do have any individual concerns, please do contact me and we will endeavour to signpost you to the relevant organisation for information.

Kemi Badenoch
Tel: 0207 219 1934
Email: kemi.badenoch.mp@parliament.uk

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Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

COVID-19

We usually put these pages together about three weeks before The Link arrives through your door (or in this month's case on your screen!) so inevitably information may be "old news" by the time you read it! There is a saying that a week is a long time in politics. Well, as we write, the UK is dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak and our lives have changed in a way that is quite unbelievable and unsettling. For all of us these weeks of "lockdown" will have felt like a lifetime, especially for those who have been self-isolating for a longer period. Our thoughts are particularly with those key workers who have been on the frontline in the NHS and social care, treating patients and making incredibly tough decisions.

This pandemic will challenge us as a society in the days and months ahead. Both nationally and locally we have seen some heart-warming acts of kindness and generosity from members of the community - hopefully this willingness to help the more vulnerable members of our community will continue long after this crisis has passed.

Sadly, there has also been some very anti-social behaviour from some people who have been abusive to shop workers and ignoring the pleas not to panic buy - hopefully that stage has now passed.

When the UK officially moved into the delay phase, the government put in place more stringent measures to delay the spread of the infection. You can keep an eye on the latest information at the www.gov.uk website which is updated every day at 2pm.

The advice for those who have either a high temperature or a new continuous cough, however mild, is to stay at home for seven days. Further information is available at:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

There is a page on the Uttlesford District Council website with links to trusted sources to help you stay informed – see Cllr Caton's article on page 20 for details.

What the Parish Council is doing

Much work is happening within the Parish Council to ensure the organisation is as prepared as possible. For example, we are looking at a number of ways in which to mitigate the effect of potential staff absence on service delivery. As we write, we have been barred from holding any meetings - for obvious reasons, and further information regarding accounting and auditing deadlines is awaited.

Decisions about meetings will be notified to the public on our website and via social media and the Stortford Independent newspaper.

Our offices are closed to the public but business continues as normal so should you need to contact us, please do so by phone (01279 813214) or email parishcouncil@stansted.net

We have taken the decision to postpone the consultation on the future of Crafton Green House. Comments from those who have already responded will be held over until the consultation re-starts.

Our Community

We are aware that residents and carers are concerned about our older adults and people with underlying health conditions, and how Covid-19 might affect them. Our GP surgery has responded very swiftly and organised an army of volunteers. If you would like to offer to help, or if you need support, please call the surgery on 813200.

We would like to reassure residents that Uttlesford District Council is working together with health colleagues to respond to the emerging situation. Their Communities Team is also working alongside the West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, Council for Voluntary Services and other care providers to ensure as little disruption to services as possible, including ensuring that prescriptions continue to be delivered and links are made to those known to be socially isolated.

NEWS FROM UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Melvin Caton writes:

Coronavirus Crisis

The Coronavirus crisis has meant that “business as usual” at Uttlesford District Council is impractical with all meetings cancelled. The decision about the next step on the Local Plan process, following the Planning Inspectors giving the current draft the “thumbs down”, was due to be made on 31st March but has now been postponed until a later date when all council members are able to “meet” and vote remotely.

Uttlesford District Council is not the lead local agency in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, but is part of the Essex Resilience Forum (ERF) supporting central government, Public Health England (PHE) and Essex County Council’s public health teams.

At the end of March the Council moved into an emergency planning mode of working and set up a strategic command and control structure within the organisation to ensure they are responding effectively to the constantly-evolving situation.

What the Council is doing for residents:

- updating information about our services on our website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/coronavirus and on our social media channels
- sharing PHE and government health and advice messages on all our communication channels, as well as information from Essex County Council, see www.essex.gov.uk/news/coronavirus
- encouraging residents and businesses to sign up to our e-newsletter service at every opportunity: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/keepmeposted
- we have closed all our public buildings to protect staff and residents, ie customer services/reception desks at Saffron Walden, Thaxted and Dunmow; Day Centres and Saffron Walden Museum

The three leisure centres which are operated by 1Life under the Uttlesford PFI Leisure Centres contract are closed: www.1Life.co.uk

Council Tax and Benefits

We understand that many residents may be facing financial challenges at this time. Our teams have worked hard to finalise the administration around schemes set up by Government to support residents and businesses.

Some of the support available to residents:

- **Local Council Tax Support** - for help with council tax payments: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/lcts
- **Exceptional Hardship Fund** - people who are experiencing exceptional financial hardship can apply for help from this fund: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/ehf
- **Universal Credit** – for residents experiencing difficulties with living costs: www.gov.uk/universal-credit
- **Employment Support Allowance** - for people who cannot work due to sickness or self-isolation: www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/how-to-claim

People who need further advice or support in paying their council tax can contact us via email: revenues@uttlesford.gov.uk or 01799 510510.

What the Council is doing for our communities

There has been a fantastic reaction in Uttlesford to the coronavirus pandemic, with a number of groups organising their own efforts to support the vulnerable within their communities. In support of this:

- we have set up a community helpline to direct people to services that can help during this time and to provide advice on where people can register their offer of help to support their community: call: 03333 408 218 (8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday) or Email: communityresponse@uttlesford.gov.uk
- we are playing our part in the support effort of those vulnerable people who will be ‘shielding’ under measures recently announced by government. This operation being led by Essex County Council.

What we are doing for businesses

- keeping our business channels up to date so that businesses and employers can find out about the latest local and national information on what support is available to them quickly – www.uttlesford.gov.uk/business
- implementing the new financial support that government has put in to place locally for businesses.

What we are doing for our staff

- enabled home working - the majority of staff are now working from home
- updating staff regularly on the latest government guidance

Please visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus and www.nhs.uk/coronavirus regularly for information.

CANCELLATION OF VILLAGE VE DAY GARDEN PARTY

Amongst the events that we have had to cancel due to the coronavirus outbreak is the Garden Party we were planning to hold in the Memorial Gardens to mark the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. It is incredibly unfortunate that our community is not able to get together to mark one of the most significant days in the history of the UK, but it would be nice to think that people would want to mark the day in their own homes so you might like to raise a glass and join The Nation's Toast to the Heroes of World War II.

“To those who gave so much,
we thank you”

GARDENING

Our Gardening contractors temporarily stopped work on 23 March due to government guidelines; however, they were swiftly able to review their client base and schedules to enable as many staff as possible to work alone. We hope that by the time you read this our flower beds are still looking good, but if the rules change again with more stringent controls on movement, then they may need to stop altogether. The same applies to our grass-cutting contractors who are still working. There were some really nice displays of daffodils around the village including the newly planted ones on the Recreation Ground, shown below.



We have ordered our usual hanging baskets which we desperately hope can be put in place, but quite how the regular watering can take place is unclear at the moment. Just prior to the introduction of social distancing, our contractors had been working to try and get the open spaces on Foresthall Park into better shape. When the estate was transferred to the Parish Council two years ago we had issues with many of the open spaces which we have been trying to address.



We have removed the fencing around some of the paddock areas which were in a poor state of repair and served no useful purpose (other than some people using them as private dog exercise areas) and cleared a lot of the brambles. We have had some very positive feedback from residents which is always nice.

STANSTED IN BLOOM AND ANGLIA IN BLOOM

Ali Brown wrote about our plans to enter Anglia in Bloom in the last edition of The Link. However, the coronavirus pandemic really makes it impossible for us to work together to plan and get working groups organised. We have decided therefore not to go ahead with an entry in 2020 but we hope to enter in 2021.

As things stand at the moment we are still intending to run Stansted in Bloom on much the same lines as in previous years. Getting out in our gardens is one thing that we can do even if we are self isolating and social distancing, so some of you may well find you've got more time than usual to get your gardens in pristine condition!! As Ali said last time, this is not the Chelsea Flower Show so your garden doesn't have to be anything fancy. Just well kept and colourful.

You can download an entry form from our website or cut out the form on the next page.

DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

All meetings are cancelled until further notice.

CONTACT DETAILS

Clerk - Ruth Clifford, Administration Assistant - Emma Philbrick. Email: parishcouncil@stansted.net
Phone/fax: 01279 813214 Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri 9.00am-4.00pm, Wed 9.00am-1.00pm
Website: www.stansted.net

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Alan BARNES	817214 afbarnes13@yahoo.co.uk
Deena BOWMAN	deenabowman@stansted.net
Daniel BRETT	817974 danielbrettdotcom@gmail.co.uk
Maureen CATON	813914 maureencaton@stansted.net
Jonathan HARDING	817921 jharding.stansted@gmail.com
John HUDSON	814489 johnedhudson@gmail.com
Matthew JESSUP	816591 matthew@in2it.biz
Joanna KAVANAGH	815157 jokavanagh.248@gmail.com
Ayub KHAN	815800 cllrkhan@uttlesford.gov.uk
Alfred MITI	07572 102061 atkmiti@gmail.com
John O'BRIEN	816772 johnedobrien@gmail.com

Frances RICHARDS	812748 frannie.richards@gmail.com
Geoffrey SELL	815925 sellgeoffrey@yahoo.co.uk
Tom VAN DE BILT	07710 426850 tom@vandebilt.co.uk
Daphne WALLACE-JARVIS	812259 dwjjwj.444@gmail.com

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBERS

Melvin CATON	813914 cllrcaton@uttlesford.gov.uk
Alan DEAN	813579 cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk
Ayub KHAN	815800 cllrkhan@uttlesford.gov.uk
Geoffrey SELL	815925 sellgeoffrey@yahoo.co.uk

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Ray GOODING	813103 cllr.ray.gooding@essex.gov.uk
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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Kemi Badenoch MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA Tel 0207 219 1943 (House of Commons) Email kemi.badenoch.mp@parliament.uk

POLICE

PCSO Nikki Morris email: nikki.morris@essex.police.uk
Non-emergency 101 or
braintreeanduttlesfordcpt@essex.pnn.police.uk

STANSTED IN BLOOM 2020 COMPETITION

Entry Form to be returned by Monday 1st June to: Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council, Council Offices, The Mountfitchet Exchange, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted CM24 8AQ
Email: parishcouncil@stansted.net. Judging Days are 26th, 27th and 28th June

Name of resident/business/organisation _____

Address _____

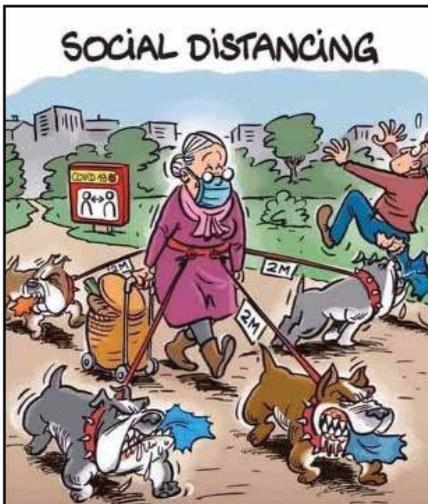
Tel _____ Email _____

Location to be viewed (please be specific re location, e.g. front garden, tubs at side of house etc).

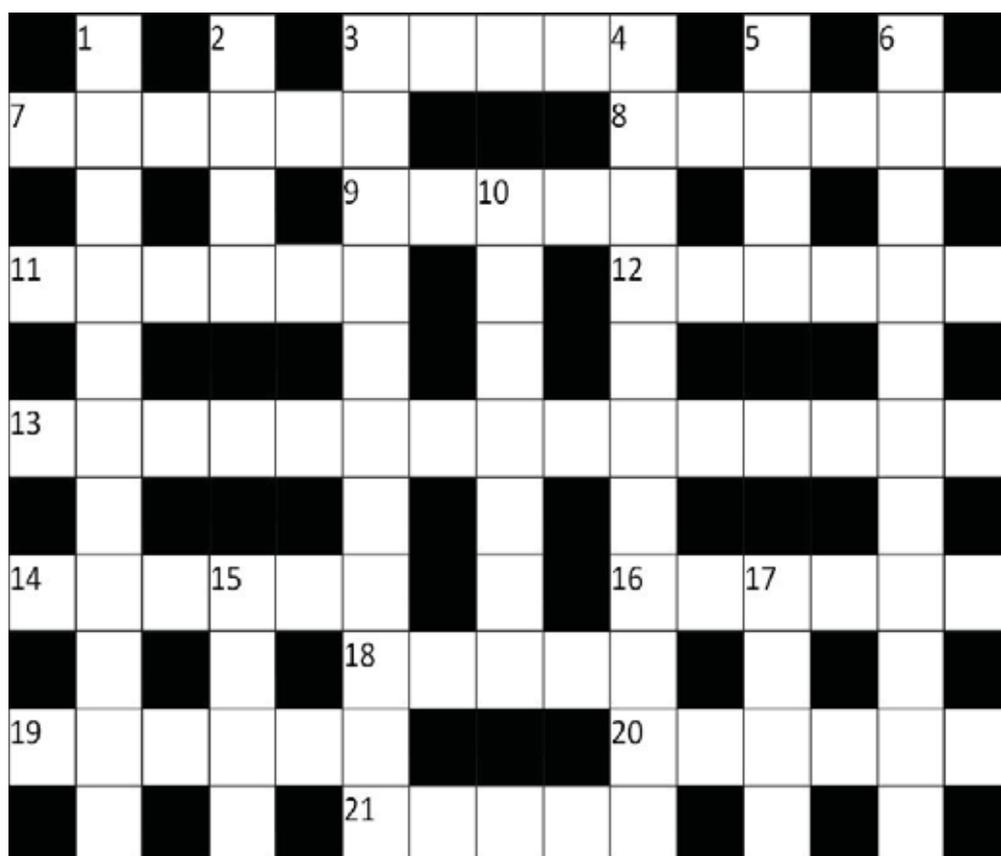
- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| - garden area | - tubs | - hanging baskets |
| - communal area | - community garden | |

CORONA CARTOONS

We may be separated from our friends and family, but we can still share laughter. There are a lot of jokes on the internet and social media. Here are a few cartoons to at least raise a smile. Special thanks to Brian Gough for The Link cartoon. *Ed*



CROSSWORD TIME



ACROSS

3. Not much to this tesla (5)
7. Work out at the hospital [col] (6)
8. Sufficient (6)
9. Spanish wine (5)
11. Wet layer of a flooring (6)
12. Town in Rutland (6)
13. Extremely tall dreamer, mind the cumulo-nimbus! (4,2,3,6)
14. Might come in handy (6)
16. How do you like your 4 down? (6)
18. It could describe 13! (5)
19. Done and cleaned (6)
20. Continent we're trying to leave (6)
21. What you are, shortened (5)

DOWN

1. Andy Warhol painted this potage many times (7,4)
2. Wight, Man, Lundy for example (4)
3. Peer with spouse (4,3,4)
4. Choice of beverage (3,2,6)
5. Reserve a publication (4)
6. Meal, a fry-up for Shirley Valentine (3,3,5)
10. Busy, busy, can't stop (2,3,2)
15. Destiny, kismet (4)
17. Scary giant (4)

Compiled by Roger Wardle. Answers on page 41

STANSTED IS WELL READ

We usually meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 8.00pm in the Dog and Duck and we are looking forward to resuming our meetings. We are a very informal group and as we read an eclectic selection of books all tastes are catered for, so do come and join us; you would be very welcome. For May we are discussing *The Department of Sensitive Crimes* by Alexander McCall Smith. Perhaps better known for his *No 1 Ladies Detective Agency* and *44 Scotland Street* series of novels, Alexander McCall Smith has turned his pen to Scandi crime. In this first book of a new series he introduces his detective Ulf Varg who promises to be a complex character, while the department itself looks certain to deliver some oddball yet poignant cases. We are looking forward to seeing how the interesting combination of Alexander McCall Smith's warmth and humour will mix with Scandi Noir and have a feeling it might be more like Scandi Blanc! Although we are unable to meet, we are keeping in touch by email, so please contact me if you would like to join us. The best thing about a book club, apart from the companionship, is that you are introduced to books that you might not be aware of or might not normally choose to read, and what better time to start a reading habit than now when we have more time on our hands?

Anne Watson
Tel: 898693

Email: stanstediswellread@gmail.com

THE ELUSIVE LOO ROLL

The day of the elusive loo roll has gone
Replaced by a different phenomenon
Today *Lockdown* is finally here.
Now boredom is the major fear
Families cooped up inside will bicker
And the flame of love may well flicker
Ending in queues at the divorce courtroom
Or in nine months' time - a baby boom

Social gatherings and events are no more
The Link is, but not through your door
Sadly only available on-line it's true
But a good read if you're feeling blue.
Social distancing can be hard to bear
For those denied visits from those who care
So now's the time for that wartime spirit
It's what we Brits do well - isn't it?

In May 1945 there was such joy
Celebrations for all - man and boy
Dancing in the street and no one stared
For Victory in Europe had been declared
It's a different scene in May 2020
No public events the streets are empty
But please raise your glasses to those who fought
And to the elusive loo roll once sought, now bought!

Loki

BENTFIELD CHARLES HUCKS – PIONEER AVIATOR

Bentfield Charles Hucks was born on 25th October 1884, and named after his birthplace. He was generally known as B C or Bennie. Originally a keen motorist, he came to aviation after being fined and banned from driving for a speeding offence in Cardiff. He was taught to fly by Claude Grahame-White in 1910, and accompanied him on a tour to the USA in that year. On his return he gained his Royal Aero Club certificate (number 91), flying a Blackburn monoplane. During the test, at Filey on 18th May 1911, the engine seized causing the propeller to shear off. Both Hucks and the aircraft suffered only superficial injuries. To achieve his certificate, Hucks made another flight on 30th May to satisfy the officials. He was engaged by the Blackburn Company to test their new monoplane, which he flew in the Circuit of Britain in July 1911. In August, he made one of the first air-ground wireless experiments in the UK at Swansea.



In 1912 he re-joined Grahame-White at the London Aerodrome, Hendon and became a regular participant in the flying displays held there. In May he piloted an exhibition flight over the Fleet gathered in Portland Bay for the Royal Review and later flew the first airmail service from Hendon to Bath in a Blériot XI monoplane, a distance of about one hundred miles. He was carrying letters from the Lord Mayor of London to his counterpart in Bath. In September 1913 Hucks became the first British pilot to 'loop the loop' at Hendon in his Blériot, having first travelled to the Louis Blériot Flying School in France to learn how to carry out the manoeuvre. On 16th January 1914, Hucks and Gustav Hamel, another Hendon pilot and friend, were the honoured guests at an 'upside-down' dinner held at the Royal Aero Club in London, organised by Grahame-White. The food was served back to front, starting with coffee and ending with soup! Hucks was presented with a Gold Medal to mark his first 'loop-the-loop'. He became famous for carrying out this manoeuvre and flying upside down at displays around the country. He also used another Blériot aircraft with a passenger seat to give pleasure flights to members of the public.

At the outbreak of war Hucks joined the Royal Flying Corps Special Reserve and was posted to No 4 Squadron of the BEF as a second lieutenant, later rising to captain. After an attack of pleurisy in early 1915 he was invalided and sent home. The condition prevented him from returning to the front and he became a flying instructor and chief test pilot for Airco (later De Havilland) at Hendon, where he flew many types of aircraft. In 1917 he designed and invented

the 'Hucks Starter', a mobile, mechanical device based on an automobile chassis, for starting aero engines. Hucks died just days before the end of the war on 7th November 1918 of double pneumonia resulting from the Spanish flu pandemic. He was buried in Highgate Cemetery, London.

Alan Bowles
Tel: 814973



MANUDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.manudenprimary.co.uk

The past few weeks have been a new and challenging experience for us, as for everyone. We have been impressed how families have embraced home learning and what the children have been up to. Our weekly newsletter keeps us all connected. The children are to be commended for how well they have adapted to their new learning environment and style of learning. Their work has been of very high quality; their parents have been very resourceful - our thanks to them.



Joe Wicks' morning workouts and Cosmic Kids Yoga are proving popular, and families are enjoying garden archery, netball shooting practice, bike rides, gymnastics, dance routines and walks. It is fantastic to see how technology is being used to access dance, music and Spanish lessons and some are even managing online maths sessions with grandparents. The children have especially enjoyed the daily stories read to them online by their teachers. It has helped everyone feel connected and a little less isolated. Gardening has also proved a hit, with many families growing a variety of vegetables and participating in the Manuden Sunflower challenge; we look forward to seeing (and tasting) the produce later in the year. Some families have taken to the kitchen, using their maths skills to make a host of tasty treats, including muffins, banana bread, Victoria sponges and chocolate brownies, although more chocolate was probably eaten than went in the oven! Other creative ideas include sewing, patchwork, art, and hands-on science investigations, all demonstrating the huge range of valuable life skills children are using. We send our sincere thanks to all the keyworkers who are working tirelessly for the community. Take care and keep safe.

Marnie Tait
Tel: 813370

Email: admin@manuden.essex.sch.uk

business networking

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SHORT STORY

A SPECIAL DAY

The knock at the back door makes me jump.

“Only me. Anyone home?” I reluctantly crawl out from my favourite place under the table. I’m in the middle of lining up my army ready for battle. Auntie Ethel’s just closing the door behind her and it’s her turn to jump. “Oh hello Arthur you gave me quite a fright. Where’s your mum?” I want to say in the lavvy, where she always is, but daren’t. I might get a smack for being cheeky, even though it’s my fifth birthday today. Luckily before I can answer mum walks in holding her back. She’s doing that a lot.

“How are you Doris?” Mum shakes her head and mutters something. Wanting to get back to my soldiers, I’m not paying attention until I hear mum saying something about little ears and I’m sent out into the garden to play. That’s always happening. There’s only the veg patch and the chicken coop out here. I don’t like the hens much. They chase me and peck at my ankles. I watch them scratching about from a safe distance until mum comes out still holding her back. She tells me to go round and fetch Mrs Harris at number 40.

“You can play out in the street for a bit after.” Her face is a bit red and she looks funny. I dive under the table and scoop up the Dinky army tank that I got for my birthday. It’s second-hand of course and not the toy cap gun that I really wanted, but it’s ok.

“Quick sticks Arthur. We want to see Mrs Harris today not next week,” calls Auntie Ethel from the hall. I look for mum to say goodbye but she’s disappeared. Must be in the lavvy again.

After I’ve knocked for Mrs Harris I wander further down the street where I hear that song that’s always on the wireless. Something about bluebirds and white cliffs of somewhere. Rows of little flags are hanging from bedroom windows right across the street and all around people are laughing and talking. Old Mr Walker and three other men are wheeling a piano into the road. It looks really heavy. I stop to watch wondering if all this is the special surprise my dad promised me for my birthday as he left to catch the train last week. He’s doing what mum calls hush hush war work up in London; whatever that is.

“You allowed to go tonight?” It’s nasty Cyril Sutton from two doors away. I usually stay out of his way. He’s big and always pushing me around, but mum and dad say I’ve got to be nice to him as he lost his dad at Dunkirk.

“Dunno,” I shrug as I try to hurry away.

“I am. It’s going to be ace.” Cyril walks along beside me. “Going to the green? So am I. I want to see the big bonfire they’re building.” I’m too curious to ignore him completely so I ask what’s going on. He stops, digs me in the ribs with his sharp elbow and sneers, “You mean you don’t know what today is?” I want to shout that of course I know, it’s

my birthday, but don’t want another painful jab from Cyril’s elbow so just shake my head.

“War’s over, stupid. There’s going to be a bonfire and dancing tonight to celebrate victory in Europe.” Why hasn’t mum told me? Or maybe she has and I’ve been too busy thinking about my special birthday surprise to listen. She’s always telling me off for daydreaming.

We’ve reached the patch of grass at the end of the street and there’s a pile of wood in the middle. To my relief there’s also some boys playing football including my best friend, Tommy. I run off to join them, leaving nasty Cyril behind.

The bonfire has steadily grown until it’s even bigger than the one for last Guy Fawkes Night. Everyone’s gone home except me and Tommy. We set a course for an attack on the German army by my tank. It’s doing really well climbing up and over everything. Just when it’s about to tackle the biggest hill, a heap of sticks and some marbles covered with Tommy’s hanky, I hear someone shouting for me.

“Arthur. You’re wanted at home. Quickly now.” It’s Auntie Ethel looking hot and bothered so I grab my tank, say goodbye to Tommy and run. All the way home I wonder why mum hasn’t come to fetch me. Out of breath I push open the back door expecting to find her in the scullery but she’s not there. Auntie Ethel says there’s a surprise for me upstairs. She’s smiling now so I know it’ll be good – maybe dad’s home with something for me. I rush up the staircase and at the top I hear a mewling sound. A kitten would be ace I think excitedly as I dash into mum and dad’s room. Mum’s sat up in bed looking happy.

“Come and say hello to your new baby sister Arthur - your special birthday surprise.” I’m a bit disappointed. “I don’t suppose anyone else has had a baby sister for their fifth birthday,” she adds. Put like that, maybe a new sister is a special present after all. But I would still prefer a gun.



Yvonne Frederick

AVO - CAN YOU HELP?

A company historian from Dover has contacted me asking for any information I could find on the company for which he works. There was in 1942-1947 a firm called AVO on the factory site High Lane, now occupied by Mountfitchet Care Home. AVO manufactured instruments for measuring Amps, Volts and Ohms. As yet I have been unable to find anybody who worked there or knows anything about the company which makes life complicated. They were most certainly dispersed to Stansted between those dates. Please if you can help me or him and make us happy men, give me a ring, seems I will be at home for a while yet.

Ralph Phillips
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HATFIELD FOREST HISTORY

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hatfield-forest

Exploring the ancient landscape of Hatfield Forest takes you straight into the past. This medieval forest is a unique survivor, the best-preserved example of its kind in the world. The term *forest* is generally interpreted today as a place with lots of trees; in medieval times the word referred to an area where deer were kept for hunting. Genetic testing has revealed the fallow deer in the Forest today are descendants of those from a thousand years ago, during the reign of King Henry I. The forest is internationally renowned for its ancient trees and some are well over 500 years old. They provide a connection to the wildwoods covering the United Kingdom after the last Ice Age.

The land is split almost equally between wood pasture and coppices. Wood pasture was used in medieval times for grazing livestock and is now used for our Red Poll cattle and rare breed sheep. Elsewhere, the traditional practice of coppicing was employed to provide timber and winter browsing for livestock. Henry I was not the first owner to graze livestock at the forest. There is evidence of settlements dating back as far as the Iron Age. To the north-west of the site are low mounds and ditches: visible remains of such a settlement and probably associated with early woodland clearances and grazing of livestock. Wildlife also flourishes at the forest which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a National Nature reserve. These awards were not just because of the forest's huge array of ancient trees, but also a reflection of the breadth of its bird and insect population. It is home to more than 4000 species of wildlife and trees, and a refuge for many rare insects, fungi and wildlife.



From 1729 to 1923, the Houblon family played an important role in the further development and preservation of the Forest. The lake is a man-made alteration to a much smaller lake, constructed by the Houblon family and extended by 'Capability' Brown. Recently the National Trust team have been working to restore this 18th century landscape to its former glory. A deathbed legacy saved the forest from destruction almost a century ago, ensuring that through the National Trust future generations would forever be able to enjoy this unique environment. In 1923 passionate conservationist, Sir Edward North Buxton MP was fearful for the future of Hatfield Forest. He decided to buy it for the National Trust when the site went up for auction. Due to an 'administrative error', the land was sold to Thomas Place and a group of timber merchants who then ordered that the

trees be felled. Undeterred, Sir Edward negotiated to buy the Forest from Place and concluded the first part of the sale on his deathbed on 1st January 1924. His sons Gerald and Anthony later completed the purchase and presented the Forest to the National Trust five months later. It was opened to visitors in May 1924.

After our enforced closure, we hope to welcome you again to enjoy this beautiful piece of our history. In the meantime, we urge our readers to check individual property websites before attempting to visit any National Trust sites, be it Hatfield Forest or elsewhere. The most up to date information will always be available on the relevant website.

Elizabeth Reeves and Helen Hooker
Visitor Welcome Team
Tel: 870678



www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk

Like other village organisations, the Club had to cancel the annual Spring show and AGM and suspend meetings until further notice. However, whilst taking my daily walk, it has been uplifting to see the gardens full of beautiful spring flowers and shrubs: daffodils, tulips, hellebores, grape hyacinths, forsythia, and the magnolia trees are beautiful. During this lockdown our gardens have become a place of refuge and the warm weather is tempting and encouraging people to potter. Audrey Hepburn once said "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow". It is not too late to plant seeds for growing summer vegetables and flowers. If you have never grown flowers or your own food, why not give it a go? A colourful garden will cheer you up and you'll be surprised how good home-grown food tastes! Please take care everyone and stay safe until this nasty virus has been beaten.

Maralyn Harris
Tel: 07919 47814

WAR MEMORIAL FLOWERS

We have sadly decided not to ask our many volunteers to put the weekly vases of flowers on the War Memorial until the restraints of the coronavirus are lifted. Some people would find it impossible to fulfil their turn and it would make it very difficult for me to do a rota and to make sure the flowers were properly looked after. As soon as things improve, we will start again. Luckily the flower beds in the Memorial Gardens look lovely. Thank you all and I am sure we all eagerly look forward to starting such a worthwhile custom in the very near future. VE Day on 8th May is, of course, a particularly important day for us all to remember.



Janet Hollis
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EASTON LODGE AND STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

Our Common Heritage

www.eastonlodge.co.uk

Visitors and volunteers love the gardens of Easton Lodge for their space and wildlife. They also provide some interesting crossovers with Stansted Mountfitchet. Easton Lodge dates from Tudor times, when the estate was gifted to Henry Maynard in reward for his services as private secretary to William Cecil. Sir Henry built his Easton Lodge mansion in 1597, and the kitchen garden walls still include some Tudor bricks. The Maynards were very much part of the local establishment, with wealth building up over the centuries. Fortunately for them, when the third Viscount Maynard died in 1865 the law allowed him to leave the estate to his granddaughter. Frances Evelyn Maynard, also known as Daisy, inherited the estate when she was three years old.

Daisy was beautiful and wealthy; she lived as an aristocratic socialite, entertaining at Easton Lodge with weekend hunting, shooting, gambling and drinking parties. Daisy was considered to be a suitable match for Queen Victoria's youngest son, Leopold, but chose to marry the heir to the Warwick estate, making her the Countess of Warwick in 1884. After Daisy had produced an heir and a spare for the Warwick family, she started having affairs, including a long relationship with Edward, Prince of Wales, from 1890. Daisy was a philanthropic landowner and engaged with other locals concerned with poverty and other social issues, including James Blyth of Blythwood House, Stansted. For example, the Countess established a needlework school at Easton Lodge in 1890 to provide girls with training and an income. The Countess ensured the lingerie produced could be sold, through a shop in Bond Street. She also had more cottages built for people on her estate. James Blyth built his personal wealth working with his uncle, Henry Parry Gilbey, in the wine trade. He established a model electric dairy at Blythwood, using Jersey cows to produce the highest quality milk. The Prince of Wales is shown below at the opening of the Blythwood Dairy in 1892 with some of the Blyth and Gilbey families, and the Countess at his side (and her husband one step lower!).



65. The opening of Blythwood Dairy. Back row: Henry Parry Gilbey, Sir James Blyth, Sir Walter Gilbey, Lady Gordon Lennox, Mrs Gardner (daughter of Sir James Blyth), Lady Dorothy Nevill. Front row: Earl of Warwick, Prince of Wales, Countess of Warwick, Lady Blyth.

Photo from *Gilbeys Wine and Horses* by Jane Kidd

The Countess went on to establish a Women's Agricultural College associated with Reading University and James Blyth wrote a piece for her first edition of the College's *Woman's Agricultural Times* in 1898. The other point of common history is the Airfields of World War II. Easton Lodge was requisitioned by the UK government; the US Army Air Force built an airfield and flew bombers from there, while also flying them from the airfield they built at Stansted. After the war the gardens were left untended and nature started to take over. The Trust leases the gardens to continue the restoration and make them open to the public. The gardens are beautiful throughout the year and please do visit when they re-open after this shutdown. If you want to see what you will find there, you can find lovely pictures and updates on our website. You can sign up to the monthly newsletter or see garden news on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Jill Goldsmith



www.uttlesfordcab.org.uk

Changes to our Advice Service

To protect the health and wellbeing of our clients, volunteers and staff, we are restricting our advice service to telephone support until further notice. Call or email us and leave a message clearly stating your name, date of birth, postcode, email address and telephone number. If you are only available on certain days or times, please tell us. We plan to check our phones and email every working day and will come back to you as soon as we can, but please bear with us, as we may not be able to contact you as quickly as we would like to.

- For online advice - including advice relating to COVID-19 - please go to our website
- For urgent matters relating to housing, speak to Uttlesford District Council on 01799 510510
- If you are worried about debt, speak to your creditors and tell them that you are seeking advice
- For urgent court matters call or email the court
- For urgent advice on employment issues, ACAS can help, www.acas.org.uk or call 0800 123 1100.

Visit www.uttlesfordfrontline.org.uk for information about local support, to self-refer to local health and wellbeing services or to download factsheets on:

- Local support for anyone who is housebound or self-isolating
- Financial, employment and consumer issues relating to COVID-19

If you do not have internet access or do not know someone who can print this information for you, call us and we can post you a copy. We will be recording any information you provide in our client management system. For details on how we use your data, see our privacy policy on www.uttlesfordcab.org.uk or speak to one of our volunteers.

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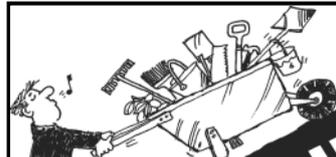


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Our last meeting was all about the history of teddy bears and some lovely teddies came along too. An arctophile is someone who has a fondness for teddy bears and is also a collector, and our speaker Carol James is certainly that. Most people have heard the story of Theodore Roosevelt who was taken on a bear hunt in 1902; but the organisers couldn't find one. A tame bear was produced and tied to a tree for him to shoot; but he refused and so it became known as 'Teddy's Bear'. Margaret Steiff, already involved in making toys, went to a Leipzig toy festival in 1904 and met someone who wanted bears made for the American market. A sample bear was made and an enormous order given. They were immediately popular and so began the famous Steiff toy bear production. Carol went through all the other famous toy bear makers such as Chad, Dean and Green, and Merrythought - she had samples of them all. The most famous bear of all is Pooh Bear, but the sample she had of him was the Walt Disney one; for me it has to be the E H Shepard drawing! Some of the early Steiff bears have been sold for astronomical sums; the mourning bear made after the Titanic disaster last sold for £91,750, and a 1905 girl teddy bear sold for £110,000 in 1994. You may have one hidden in your attic.



Our WI was formed in 1960, so will be 60 years old this year. The first WI was formed in 1897 in Canada and the first one in Britain was in 1915 in Wales. Both Manuden and Ugley WIs were formed 100 years ago, which I find amazing when you think how small those villages were then. We still have three founder members in our WI and one of them, Margaret Chastney, was assistant secretary on the first committee. Margaret Meadows and Marion Pretty are the other two. Marion later served as President three times. It quite quickly became popular and by February the next year there were over 90 members. Right from the start the WI was involved in the village. They organised whist drives, had summer garden parties and jumble sales to raise money to give Christmas gifts to the 'aged and infirm men and women of the village'. Other WI interests included handicraft classes, dressmaking, lampshade making, cane-work and glove making as well as a drama group. I can't think when anyone had any time for housework! We don't boast quite so many interests these days but we are still producing cakes, teas and outside catering, as well as a craft group and have just started an indoor netball group! We meet on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in the Day Centre and hopefully the next one will be 14th May, which is our Annual Meeting.



Judy Colliver
Tel: 812470



Ellie had a heart attack while we were out walking on Sunday 22nd March and died in hospital the following day. I and our children, Vicky and Phil, and grandchildren, appreciate the cards and messages of condolences. Also many thanks for the genuine offers of help which, in the present circumstances, I've only used for telephone conversations. We lived in Stansted from 1989-98 and still have friends there. I particularly want to thank the Centre Group in Stansted for their support.

Tony Rycroft
Tel: 718778



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www.stansted.windmill.co.uk

As I write I am pleased to say that my family and I remain free of the symptoms of coronavirus which I hope is the same for you. It is a very strange and unpredictable time but with time and patience I feel sure we will all come through it. There is not very much news from the Windmill for, in common with other organisations, we have had to cancel our proposed openings and plans for our forthcoming events. How long this situation will last is at present uncertain.

When the Stansted Millers were formed in 1964, the Mill was opened to the public and we have continued these openings since then. In addition, we have opened for the annual Fête, afternoon teas and our Christmas event, all of which have provided us with much needed funds. I take this opportunity to thank all those supporters who have renewed their membership this year and apologise to those who have not yet received their new membership cards but I will deliver these just as soon as the isolation period is over and am able to 'roam free' again! I am sure you will be interested to hear that, once again, we have received a grant this year for our August Bank Holiday Fête. Hopefully this horrible COVID-19 will be over and we can use it for our biggest fundraiser and bring the people of the village back together. I will keep you updated with our news. The Link will be available on line until things improve. In the meantime, stay safe and well.



Molly Clark
Co-trustee
Tel: 816768

Alzheimer's Society is transforming the landscape of dementia forever. Until there is a cure, we will create a society where those affected by dementia are supported and accepted, able to live in their community without fear or prejudice. Every three minutes, someone develops dementia: about 225,000 in all. This year over 120,000 people will walk united against dementia. With your help, the Alzheimer's society aims to raise over £9m to help anyone affected by dementia. I am seeking donations for my **memory hike on Friday 29th May**, walking up Snowdon. This will be my third fundraising event and so far I have raised £2,600. This will be my greatest challenge yet, walking the highest mountain in England and Wales at 1085m. Its Welsh name is Yr Wyddfa, reputedly the burial place of a mythical giant. Standing at the summit will be an unforgettable experience.

My Mum was diagnosed with dementia in 2014. In April 2016 after a three-month ordeal in hospital, she was no longer able to look after herself, and my brothers and I could no longer provide support. Mum was admitted to a local care home and sadly passed away on 13th March at the amazing age of 88; one of my brothers and I were fortunate to say goodbye. Mum had a wonderful life; she lived in many countries, and was adored. She is now at peace with our dad whom we lost several years ago. We miss her terribly. This experience has helped me realise what really is important in life; to be grateful every day and to cherish your family, friends and everything we do. In the current climate we all need to look after each other and to truly care. If you are able to make a donation it would mean a great deal to me, my family and lots of people that have their lives impacted by dementia. Thank you!
www.justgiving.com/fundraising/snowdondaychallenge2020-jonathanself



Jonathan Self

STANSTED SOCIAL CLUB

www.smsc.uk.com

We hope that everybody is keeping safe in these strange and difficult times! We had planned reduced hours and other measures to protect our staff and members, but the Government beat us to it. A bit more notice would have been useful, but the lockdown makes perfect sense if we want to beat this pandemic. We have now furloughed the staff and will try to continue paying their salaries whilst awaiting the Government portal to be up and running. As membership renewals are due it would really help the cash flow situation if members renew online. Please leave your name as a reference when paying; the subscription is £20, senior citizens £5. If you do not have the bank details, please contact me. We will issue receipts for all payments. Unfortunately, work has stopped on the tower as our builders, Sure, cannot obtain materials. We have had a com-

pletely new fire alarm system fitted whilst the Club is closed. There were plans to refurbish the bar but the firm that we had lined up has closed due to the lockdown. Ladies don't worry: the refurbishment of your toilets is still very high on the agenda. It is a juggling act as we would like to get some work done whilst we are shut but we also need to keep funds available for essential bills.



As a thank you to the hard-working staff at Stansted Surgery we donated several bottles of wine. Our remaining crisps, nuts and snacks were donated to the food bank. We also managed to obtain a number of face masks for our senior members. Stay safe and we look forward to welcoming you back when things are back to normal.



Andrew Sharpe

Email: eatmorestilton@gmail.com

STANSTED MESSY CHURCH

www.stanstedchurches.com/messychurch

Luckily our March Messy Church took place just before the coronavirus lockdown. Although numbers were smaller than usual, those who came enjoyed a variety of craft activities related to the theme of *God always forgives*.



Our next event is scheduled for 31st May, but is unlikely to happen, so please check our website nearer the time. We will also be sending an email to our regular attendees if we are going ahead. We then take a break until the Autumn.



Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059





Nature Notes

Recently many of us will have been spending more time at home than usual which will have enabled one to be more aware of the signs of spring in our gardens. At home we have seen all the local garden birds gathering twigs and other bits and pieces for nest building. Among these was a long tail tit which collected spiders' webs for its nest. It spent a lot of time over a two-week period scavenging around the windows of our garage, flying in a dozen times or more on some days. At first it searched under the eaves and round the edges of the windows, but then frequently flew to the centre of the window pane where it fluttered, pecking at the glass. I am sure that there were no cobwebs there and I can only assume that it was pecking at its own reflection in the window. The long tail tits are pretty little birds and as the action was taking place only a few feet outside our back windows it was a most entertaining show.



Felix



www.christianaid.org.uk

Coronavirus Emergency Appeal

The health of the world is threatened by the coronavirus pandemic. We see how difficult it is to control in Britain, Europe and the US, wealthy democracies with first-class healthcare facilities. It will be so much worse for the poorest countries where people are often malnourished, extended families live in one room, healthcare is inadequate and there is no generous state aid to compensate for loss of earnings. Christian Aid has set up an appeal to raise money to provide help for these communities, using lessons learned from the Ebola Crisis, in order to mitigate the impact of the virus. Help is already being given to 850,000 Rohingya refugees. It is a difficult time to ask for money when so many are struggling financially, but if you can donate please do so via the website. Thank you.



Catherine Dean
Tel: 813579



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www.stclarehospice.org.uk

The Hospice has reported a potential £100,000 gap in their voluntary income over the coming weeks, due to the cancellation of all forthcoming fundraising events and the temporary closure of their nine charity shops, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The organisation, which this year celebrates its 30th birthday since its founding in 1990, has launched an 'urgent fundraising appeal' in a hopeful bid to help minimise any impact on continuing to provide specialist palliative care to local people in the community. To ensure their services can continue running now, and for

years to come, the hospice is encouraging local people to take part in a series of 'virtual' fundraising activities that can be achieved from the comfort of your own home.

Use your daily exercise to take part in St Clare's Virtual 5K

You can do this at home, or in the local neighbourhood when you are out walking or running once a day. A great way to keep fit and go the distance for your local Hospice. All you have to do is take a photo/screenshot of your fitness tracker. Sign up at www.stclarehospice.org.uk/virtual5k.

Play the St Clare Lottery

You could be in with a chance of winning £1,000, or up to 24 other cash prizes, every week.; only £1 per weekly entry. Sign up at www.stclarehospice.org.uk/lottery.

Set up a Facebook Fundraiser

Set up a fundraiser using Facebook and encourage friends and family to donate; no matter how much you raise, every penny counts. See facebook.com/fund/stclarehospice.



Shop online via St Clare's eBay shop

There are plenty of bargains to be had from quirky collectables to designer clothing, delivered straight to your door. Shop now at ebay.co.uk/str/st-clare-hospice.

Use online, charity shopping portals like EasyFundraising or AmazonSmile

You can generate donations to St Clare whilst doing your normal, online shopping, at no extra cost to you. Visit easyfundraising.org.uk or smile.amazon.co.uk and select St Clare Hospice, then continue your online shop as normal.

For more information, or assistance please call 773750 or email fund@stclarehospice.org.uk. Please note that response times may be longer during this time, but a member of the team will come back to you as soon as possible. To donate directly, please visit stclarehospice.org.uk/urgent-fundraising-appeal.

Emma Sugarman
Senior Communications Officer
Tel: 773737

Email: emma.sugarman@stclarehospice.org.uk

On 8th April, the Chancellor announced a package of financial help to charities, which includes hospices. We hope that this will help to alleviate the financial problems which St Clare must be experiencing. Ed

GREEN WASTE SKIPS

At the time of writing, this service has been temporarily suspended. Please call the Parish Council on 813214 or visit www.stansted.net for updates.

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SCALE MODEL BOAT MAKING

I started model making with simple Airfix models packed in a see-through bag when I was still at primary school. Nearly 60 years later I still enjoy the hobby although the complexity and size has dramatically increased. Today's models can be basic or come complete with Photo Etch to enable upgrade as much as you wish. I now build battleships and other warships circa WWII, which requires a considerable amount of research as the level of build and colour schemes have to be correct for a certain date of the model. This is not compulsory, but for me it is all part of the hobby. The amount spent on upgrades and parts for the model is down to personal taste and the modeller's ability to see and assemble some parts which can be incredibly small. The time taken on each of my models varies, but a 5-foot model of a WWII battleship can take up to 1200 hours, or 1½ years, so it is important to also make a box for the model to prevent dust and to act as a means for safe transportation.



I have a self-contained room (The Bunker) where all my models are housed, plus all the tools to do the job, complete with kettle. I find that time modelling can drift into hours; the results at completion are extremely rewarding, but at the same time it is frustrating when you drop a bit as well. Going to a model exhibition and receiving compliments from a stranger is a fantastic feeling, well worth all the time and effort. The photo is 1/200 scale KM Bismarck circa 1941. Do call me if you would like to find out more.

Peter Beattie
Tel: 07850 329192

QUIZ ANSWERS – DAILY WALK

1. Clock at No 64 Lower Street
2. Peacock crossing sign, Lower Street/Grove Hill junction
3. Canopy over the fountain (note spelling)
4. Buried Millennium capsule, Memorial Gardens
5. Tudor House, Lower Street
6. Former school, Chapel Hill
7. Stansted Hall Lake designed by Humphrey Repton
8. Former Corner Shop, Stoney Common
9. Roof of Y-Z Minimart, Chapel Hill



RANDOM JOTTINGS

Reasons to be Cheerful

Heart lifting: At times like these communities need to pull together and support one another and as usual Stansted residents have really stepped up to the plate. The response to the Surgery's call for volunteers to help deliver essential supplies to those advised to stay in their homes during the coronavirus outbreak has been amazing.

Great British Humour: Shopping for essentials is quite a test of endurance at the moment. Waiting in long queues to get into shops and pharmacies for sometimes an hour or more could be a thoroughly miserable experience. But humour comes to the fore and time passes cheerfully amid light hearted chat and even laughter.

Family Time: During the lockdown families are being forced to spend a lot more time together; a great opportunity to re-discover the art of conversation and imaginative play. It is also a chance to explore latent or new creative talents and hobbies.

Spring Cleaning: An ideal time to get ALL the family helping to tidy and clean the house and garden!

Health Benefits: Efforts to contain what can be a dangerous, potentially fatal disease have bizarrely produced some healthy side effects. Families are out walking more instead of travelling in cars, which is in itself healthier (provided they obey the required two metres social distancing of course) and now that there is less traffic both on the roads and in the air, there is generally far less pollution.

Not Alone: The round of applause on Thursdays at 8.00pm to thank the NHS and all essential workers for their hard work and dedication is a simple but wonderful way to show our appreciation, and display our strong community spirit. We may be forced to self-isolate but we should not feel alone.

And finally ... Have you noticed that you've been nuisance - phone - call - free since the lockdown? Now that's got to be a major reason to be cheerful!

Loki



THANK YOU FROM MS-UK

www.ms-uk.org

Did you know that MS-UK was established in Stansted in 1993, with its offices above Steve Golding in Chapel Hill? Now based in Colchester, it is a national charity which supports those living with multiple sclerosis (MS), a disease of the central nervous system. You may have seen the purple pots at the tills in the Co-op and Steve Golding? You have generously raised over £600 in less than a year with your small change. Thank you. Do you like homemade marmalade? If you are passing our house in St John's Crescent, please enjoy a fundraising pot. Your donations for each jar have so far raised an amazing £1,000 in three years. Thank you. There are other fundraising initiatives planned in the future but for now, thank you everybody for your ongoing support.



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STORT VALLEY ROTARY

www.stortvalleyrotary.com

With our regular meetings cancelled, steps have been taken to keep members in touch and to ensure they are coping with the restrictions imposed to fight the coronavirus. We immediately produced a Newsmail as the pandemic unfolded, to give updates on the progress of our projects and a forum for exchanging information and ideas. We have a 24-hour emergency line for members to ring should a problem suddenly arise. We are taking advantage of a new wonder of communication technology, Zoom Video Conferencing. Firstly, we set up a couple of meetings for our Club management team and then extended this to all members so that we can carry on with regular virtual meetings including speakers. Grati-fyingly all speakers we had booked agreed to deliver their addresses via Zoom. We have also kept in touch with those setting up the excellent initiative called Operation CommUnity. Most of the towns supporting group charities are involved and it offers invaluable help to those isolated and needing support during the crisis. If you think you have what it takes and would like to join, please contact us initially via the website.



Peter Latham
Tel: 507294
Email: yp.latham@uwclub.net

Go for a walk, talk to neighbours two metres away,
All trying to keep the coronavirus at bay.
Love to shop but not allowed to do that,
Like wartime, week's ration carried home in your hat.
Make bread pudding with the stale bread,
Use water not milk 'cos shelves are empty it's said.
Don't mind missing the party, there isn't one
So just look at the seed trays to see how they've done.
How lovely to have a garden to potter in,
Saves you going mad and going round muttering.
Granddaughter's a doctor, A and E business is brisk,
Grandson's a radiographer, similarly at risk.
What strange times have come to pass,
When we can see family 2m away or through glass!

Peter Blascos



THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

Many of us are familiar with pillboxes: those squat concrete buildings dotted around the countryside, often overgrown and merged with the landscape. We are perhaps aware of their connection to WW II, but their origins go further back. The purpose of the pillbox was to protect a gunner while offering him a good line of vision. The concept was developed in WWI and first used in 1917. Early constructions were of a circular shape, hence the term pill-box. In WWII they were first used by the British Expeditionary Force in Flanders. The last batch of pillboxes was built almost 80 years ago to resist a possible invasion of this country. Thousands were installed in 1940-41, many in coastal locations or in defensive lines across the south and east of England. Others were built to form a box around London, but stray examples appear in other places.

Pillboxes varied from the one-man Tett Turret to big emplace-ments for two pounder anti-tank guns. The most common shape was hexagonal. The Royal Engineers decided on the sites and they were built to government specifications by local contractors, although in practice the work was often carried out by volunteers who were paid a *dole*. It is thought that about 15,000 were constructed, of which perhaps two-thirds survive.

Within the Hundred Parishes about 45 were built, mainly as part of a line stretching between Chelmsford and Cambridge, often beside the Chelmer and Cam rivers which formed a natural anti-tank barrier. In Great Waltham parish a *WWII Trail* of around four miles passes 13 surviving pillboxes around Hartford End with informative interpretation panels. The pill-boxes were virtually obsolete as soon as they were built, being designed for an invasion that never came.



Mike Young
Trustee
Tel: 01799 599089



www.humanrootscommunity.org.uk

What a whirlwind of a month! I'm not sure about the rest of you, but this readjustment has left me feeling totally in control at some point and completely out of control in others. Despite the lockdown, we have become busier than ever. Spring was scheduled to be very busy and we were expecting over 150 people to help get our beds ready, sowing seeds, and getting plants in the ground. Unfortunately, we have had to make the tough decision to cancel all our events to help protect the community we wish to support. While this was sad, I am still very passionate and excited about what we can accomplish this year and we still have reasons to celebrate, having achieved the following:

- received the community fridge for Spangles, which will help us support those families in need with fresh food (thanks to Cllr Alan Dean for his £325 donation)
- sown lots of seeds; a passer-by commented that it looked like we were starting a nursery! We have a great mix of vegetables, herbs, and flowers and will be offering seedlings for sale
- continued with preparing the allotment, although scaled down, as we are not able to bring in volunteers
- Homebase donated a lot of plants for our projects, thanks to Ashley Britton, the store manager
- kicked off a local Sunflower competition - follow #StanstedSunflower
- received additional funding to support our Nature Garden project at Birchanger Primary School

We have planned lots of exciting projects; follow us on Facebook and be sure to like and comment on our pictures and videos (and upload your own home gardening photos!). Until next time, be kind and support our community!



Kieran Leigh Olivier
Tel: 07946 783039
Email: keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk



Here is some insight into skatepark culture and the background of the current skatepark. My involvement goes back nearly seven years when I led a fundraising effort to rebuild the old skatepark. The vast majority of the money came from grants, and once the money had been secured, we had a competitive tendering exercise between three experienced companies. The skatepark users were heavily involved in the decision to accept the proposal from *Freestyle*, and we did our best to accommodate their suggested tweaks to the design. The construction process started well but *Freestyle* eventually went into administration, sadly. Fortunately, the park was more or less finished, and we just had to sort out floodlight issues and the new park opened in August 2015.



Although it is called a skatepark, skateboarding probably only accounts for a third of the users. During the day and early evening there tend to be a lot of younger users who take their scooters down to the park; in the evenings the older users on BMX bikes tend to be in the majority with a few inline skaters and skateboarders putting in an appearance. Sean Tompson, one of the driving forces in the fundraising effort, says: "The Stansted skatepark community is a wonderfully diverse group of people from many different walks of life. People's ages range from well under 10 years to 40s. Everyone is very accepting of one another and gives support and advice whenever possible. Where else in our village would you see a mature man and a teenage boy getting along like the best of friends over their shared passion for their chosen sport and lifestyle?"



Sean's description does not mention that it is a very male dominated environment, so it would be nice to see more females. Users value creativity, risk, and freedom, so the skatepark is unregulated and there are no marshals or umpires; however, there is an unwritten code of conduct that experienced skatepark users adhere to, and they tend to get a bit upset with anybody who fails to appreciate what is expected of them. *Snaking* (cutting across someone else's line) is particularly frowned upon. The regulars have a joint sense of ownership of the park and there is remarkably little litter or vandalism. Admittedly over the years the park has attracted a fair amount of street art. The culture tends to be a bit rebellious and anti-establishment, but if you are having a bit of a midlife crisis and you are looking for an extreme sport to add a bit of excitement to your life, you will get a friendly welcome and plenty of encouragement, although you will need a good sense of humour to cope with the banter!

Trevor Lloyd
Tel: 07739 428352



STANSTED BOWLS CLUB HISTORY

In 1906 at the Brambles in St John's Road, a two-rink green was first laid and bowls in the village became a reality. The Club moved to its present location on Recreation Ground in 1912, and is still a popular venue today. The Club founder was Philip Buck and members annually play for the Buck Cup in his honour. The current Clubhouse was rebuilt in 1970 and has seen a number of renovations recently. Quendon-based landfill company, Brett, provided the Club with a grant to help pay for some of the works. More recently the Clubhouse needed a new roof, but the footprint and general appearance remains largely as it was when first erected.

The green is dressed each year with around three tonnes of top-quality soil and has never been re-laid. The surface we play on today is one of the oldest in this part of the country and the same as it was over 110 years ago. This is largely down to the tireless efforts of the first-class green keeping teams we have had over the years, currently led by John Scraggs. The Club membership was founded in 1906 with 25 male members and this number has fluctuated over the years. Surprisingly the Club only allowed ladies to take part in the game around 30 years ago. Now we have 45 members of which roughly a third are ladies. It is a small club but is steeped in history and always looking out for new players, male or female. If you would like to give it a go, do give me a ring.

Peter Beattie
Hon Secretary
Tel: 07850 329192
Email: peterdavidbeattie@gmail.com

UGLEY FARMERS' MARKET

It is very unlikely that the Market will be held on Saturday 16th May. However, some stallholders, particularly pork/beef and lamb, may be willing to deliver.

For information please contact Susan Bone
Tel: 814052; email: ugleyvillagehall@gmail.com.



STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

www.pitchero.com/clubs/stanstedfc2011

The FA decided to expunge the results for all leagues nationally above step 3 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, so the First team and over-45s Veterans season finished with no league champions, promotion or relegation decided. Many national teams question why the FA decided so early compared to the professional game; however, it seemed the only logical decision as alternatives were unworkable in our case. The loss of revenue from those games will obviously have an impact on our ground work and playing squad preparation for next season. We are working with the Essex Senior League in identifying grants. We have no idea when the 2020-21 season will start and as this is our final Link contribution for this season, we ask our supporters to look on our social media sites for updates. In the meantime the Club Committee hope that all the community of Stansted stay safe and well during this crisis. To our 'Airport Army' team Managers, Paul and John, along with all the players, thank you for your wonderful support at both home and away games. Football will be back at Hargrave Park at some point later in the year, without a doubt.

Past and Recent Club History

As Club captain, Billy Coyne stepped up to receive the Errington Cup in the final game of last season, many Stansted followers (Airport Army) were reflecting on what was the most successful Club season we have had in many years. To be able to display not just one trophy, but three, was great testament to the hard work put in by the whole coaching staff and players; we also were victorious in the Gordon Brasted Memorial Trophy and Runners up Shield in the League. With the Essex Senior League now in its 49th season we are proud to still be able to promote the Club as one of the league's founder members, although prior to last season's success our only other honours were a League Title in 2009-10 and two League Challenge Cup wins in 1983-84 and 2010-11. The Club are hoping to build on these latest achievements. Operating at this level in the FA pyramid is extremely challenging; financial burdens, player expectations and the need to compete with other major sports organisations in our geographical area place a great strain on all the volunteers associated with the Club. We started in 1892, and although success has mainly been confined to Leagues and Cup, our Club name still stands proudly in the FA Handbook as winners of the FA Vase when, in the 1983-84 season, the players and fans made the trip to Wembley and beat Stamford 3-2. This was a memorable occasion and is proudly displayed in memorabilia in the Club Committee Room.



Tom Williams
Secretary
Tel: 07921 403842



STANSTED HALL AND ELSENHAM CRICKET CLUB

www.shcc.hitscricket.com

We were raring to go - indeed we are still raring to go. Who could have anticipated the problems that the world is facing

at this moment in time? Well a few scientists probably but did anybody listen? The ground at Stansted House is looking lovely. We had major work done on the wicket, and with the rain, followed by sunshine, our timing could not have been better. Work on the pavilion at Molehill Green is progressing well and should be finished in May. The ground needs more work on both wicket and outfield but this will be done in due course. We have been sending out regular newsletters to all members to keep them informed of progress and giving them links to websites so that they can have a cricket fix if they need one!!! We have no idea when the cricket season will begin. Essex Cricket and the Essex Cricket Board are waiting for Government instructions. Our hope is that we may start the first weekend in July – a pure guess. In the meantime our thoughts are with the families that have been adversely affected by coronavirus. We should also mention the NHS staff who have shown exceptional bravery, and other front line workers. From all of us a huge thank you.



David Brown
Tel: 831011 Mob: 07788 999663
Email: david1.r.brown@gmail.com



Stansted Cricket Club

www.stanstedcc.hitscricket.com

Summer 2020 won't be the same without the sound of leather on willow or cries of "Owzat!" emanating from Hargrave Park this year. The Cricket Club, like most other sports clubs and facilities, is closed as part of the Government directive to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Life bowls us unexpected googlies; that is just how it is. The characteristics of this virus are such it has forced us to retreat into our family units - protecting our most vulnerable, recognising we have to be considerate of others, respecting those who support us in our hour of need, appreciating nothing can be taken for granted and giving us time for reflection on what is really important in our lives. These in themselves are no bad things in the modern age, and maybe we will all come out the other side of this richer for the experience. We wish all our members and extended friends and supporters in the local community and fellow frustrated sportsmen and women a safe summer; stay healthy and symptom free. This is a year where we are required to support each other in a broader sense. We will update our website when the situation changes.

Mike Burgoine
Chairman



CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across

3. Least 7. Physio 8. Enough 9. Rioja 11. Screed
12. Oakham 13. Head in the clouds 14. Useful 16. Frothy
18. Aloof 19. Dusted 20. Europe 21. You're

Down

1. Chicken soup 2. Isle 3. Lord and Lady 4. Tea or coffee
5. Book 6. Egg and chips 10. On the go 15. Fate 17. Ogre

DIRECTORY OF LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

Alzheimers Society	Tel: 01371 872519	Rainbows (Fri)	Sue Pollard Tel: 813734
Air Training Corps 494 Squadron	Tel: 681559/661929 Email: 494@aircadets.org	Rotary Club	Peter Latham Tel: 507294 Email: yplatham@uwclub.net
Beaver Scouts Age 6-8	Angela Madigan Tel: 01371 513028	St John's Road and Area Association	Leila Riddell Tel: 07770 955830
Bowls Club	Peter Beattie, Hon Secretary Tel: 07850 329192 Email: peterdavidbeattie@gmail.com	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Brownies (Tue)	Kathy Shearman Tel: 07724 355533	Shotokan Karate Ryu	Donna Ring Tel: 731752 Email: skr@skr.org.uk
Brownies (Wed)	Susan Scott Tel: 810955	Spangles Family Hub	Tel: 812348 Email: vcl.essexwest- uttlesfordadminhub@nhs.net
CAB	Tel: 01799 618840	Stansted and District Past Rotarians Club	Geoff Lay Email: geoff.lay@ntlworld.com
Corkers Netball	Lizzie Read Tel: 07770 594848	Stansted Badminton Club	Vince Tel: 07793 000107 Raj Tel: 07775 915418
Cricket Club (Adults) (Juniors)	David Hedge Tel: 812509 Keith Ayres Tel: 814471	Stansted Business Forum	Iris Evans Email: iris.evans9@gmail.com
Cub Scouts Age 8-10½	Nic Devine Email: kinglouie.huskies@gmail.com	Stansted Family Café	Ros Page Tel: 810813 Email: contactstanfam@yahoo.com
Day Centre	Tel: 815091	Stansted Football Club	Tom Williams Tel: 07921 403842
Explorer Scouts	Paul Thorneycroft Tel: 01371 876784	Stansted Hall and Elsenham Cricket Club	David Brown Tel: 831011/07788 999663 Email: david1.r.brown@gmail.com
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Rainbow Pre-School 506997	Gill Pursglove Tel: 814242/07966 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net		
Rainbows (Wed)	Rachel Roberts Tel: 078648 21905		

Note: This list will be updated as and when we learn of any changes. If you would like your organisation to be added please let us know. Contact details are on page 1.

BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES or SPECIAL OCCASIONS

If you would like to mark any occasion that is special to you or someone you know, by announcing it in the Link, please email a short message together with your name address and telephone number to: announcements@stanstedlink.org.uk or send the details to 7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG. Details must be submitted by the 8th of the month for publication the following month.

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