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by **noon** on 11th January
for the February issue
by **noon** on 11th February
for the March issue

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EDITORIAL



We frequently hear laments that people nowadays are not coming forward to take on voluntary roles as they once did. Certainly life is beset with more complexities than in days past, many of them of our own making. Stansted is still well served by good folk, as a glance through these pages clearly demonstrates. Possibly the readiness of people to meet a need has always varied either side of the ideal and will continue to do so. However, the rapid changes in communication and technology are less predictable and more far-reaching. In this regard the 'Link' adheres to comprehensible English but with concessions to vernacular, humour, and a capacity to meet changes as and when they may be justified.

Within this scenario and after some 14 years the Editorial baton now passes to Yvonne Ayres. Married to Stuart, she has lived in Stansted for 30 years, 26 of which she has served with 'Helpline', latterly as Organiser. Yvonne knows her village and its people well and I am confident that the magazine will be in considerate yet capable hands and be fit for purpose. She brings common sense and literal accomplishment to the task, so I am sure that our readers join me in wishing her a happy and fulfilling period in office.

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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

What a Gift!

In the episode of 'The Darling Buds of May' entitled 'A Breath of French Air', Pop and Ma Larkin take a holiday in Brittany. A car mechanic sees Pa's crest-embazoned Rolls Royce and takes him for an English 'milord'. Hotel patronne, Madame Dupont, gives her noble guests her own private room! Although quite ordinary, the Larkins act grander than they really are. By contrast, at his birth, Jesus gets the humblest place in the house, there being no space in the proper guest room upstairs. God puts on no airs and graces, but neither should we think of God as simply acting a part. Born of woman, Jesus shared our life fully. He needed sleep, cried, was out in storms, enjoyed parties, made friends, was victimised by enemies, abandoned, and died in agony. How human God became!

Someone once bought me a most wonderful, surprise present – I called it a 'wow gift'. Never would I have thought of asking for such a gift, yet it was something I long had dreamt of having. The world long hoped of a Saviour who would put all things right. The first two letters of 'wow' lead us to wonder. Wonderful is the gift of God that is Christ. Come and worship. Remember, this gift is not just for Christmas. He is for all seasons.

Paintings of the Nativity all show light coming up from the child laid in the manger, making the faces of those gazing down on him radiant with the wonder of God. If we would worship and adore him, giving Christ central place in our lives, that same radiance will enlighten us perpetually and all through the darkness of our winters.

A blessed Christmas and peace enfold you all the year.



Allen R Morton
URC Minister Stansted Free Church



Christmas Services

St Therese of Lisieux (Roman Catholic)

15th December	7.30pm	Carol Service
19th December	2.00pm	Children's Service
21st December	7.30pm	Penitential Service
Christmas Eve	6.00pm	Mass
		Midnight Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	10.00am	Mass
No Saturday evening Mass on Christmas Day		

St John the Evangelist (Church of England)

5th December	9.30am	Christingle Service
Christmas Eve	3.00pm	Children's Crib Service <i>(come dressed as a character from the Christmas Story)</i>
	11.30pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day	9.30am	Holy Communion for Christmas Day
26th December	9.30am	Holy Communion for St Stephen's Day

Stansted Free Church (Methodist/URC)

12th December	10.30am	Gift Service
Christmas Day	10.30am	Christmas Day Service
No service on 26th December		

Quakers (Society of Friends)

26th December	10.30am	Meeting for Worship
---------------	---------	---------------------

Celebration of Christmas

The traditional Celebration of Christmas concert will be held at 3.30pm on Saturday 18th December in St Mary's Church. With Christmas carols, readings and songs, including participation from our local schools, it promises, once again, to be a fantastic village occasion. In addition, 50% of the collection taken will go to the Uttlesford Support Group, Parkinson's UK. All singers in the village are most welcome to join the choir for this village event. Rehearsals will be held in St John's Church from 8.15pm–9.00pm on Thursdays 9th and 16th December. All welcome, just come along on 9th.



Francine Cope

Carol Singing around the village

Come and join the fun! We meet each evening at 7.30pm, and the singing is followed by warm refreshments at around 9.00pm. Details as follows:

- Wednesday 22nd December start at The Dog and Duck, Lower Street and finish in St John's Road
- Thursday 23rd December start at The Rose and Crown, Bentfield Green and finish in Blythwood Gardens.

We are particularly looking for more singers – there is no rehearsing, just come along! Flute and recorder players are also welcome, but please telephone 814059 beforehand so we can bring sufficient music. We will be collecting for the Uttlesford Support Group, Parkinson's UK. Please support us – thank you!



Helen Baker
Tel 814865
Michael Dyer
Tel: 814059



STANSTED FREE CHURCH

Methodist / URC
Chapel Hill

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



Ministers Rev'd Allen Morton
Tel: 757635
Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Rev'd David Keeble
Tel: 01799 522037
Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Lettings Marion and Mike Dyer
7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG
Tel: 814059
Email: lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Preachers for December

5th 10.30am Andrew Brown – New Directions
12th 10.30am Rev'd Allen Morton
Communion and Gift Service for
Whitechapel
7.00pm Café Worship
19th 10.30am Gordon Doyle
25th 10.30am Rev'd Allen Morton - Christmas Day
26th **No service**

Preachers for January

2nd 10.30am Michael Dyer
9th 10.30am Julie Finbow
16th 10.30am Rev'd Allen Morton
23rd 10.30am Rev'd John Buxton
30th 10.30am Rev'd David Keeble
Covenant Service and Communion

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Therese of Lisieux
High Lane

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

Masses Saturday 6.00pm
Sunday 10.00am
Holy Days of Obligation 8.00am and 8.00pm
Tuesday-Saturday 9.30am

Confessions
Saturday 10.00am
and by appointment

Baptisms By appointment

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

Meeting Sunday, 10.30am

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

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

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Giles Tulk
Tel: 817155
Email: stansted.curate@googlemail.com

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

Church Hall Bookings: Joy Lambe
Tel: 817937
Email: joy@popcornwebdesign.co.uk

St John's Diary

Sunday
8.00am Said Holy Communion
9.30am Worship 4 All (1st Sunday)
9.30am Choral Eucharist (2nd -
4th Sundays)

Monday-Tuesday and Thursday-Saturday

8.30am Morning Prayer There are services of
Holy Communion on
Tuesday the first Tuesdays and
9.00am St John's Tots Wednesdays of the
month in Norman
Wednesday Court, Hargrave House
9.00am Morning Prayer and Broome End
10.00am Holy Communion Nursing Homes.

Monday-Saturday
5.00pm Evening Prayer

From the Registers

October

Baptisms

10th Annabelle Leila Juliet Rands
William Nicholas Rands
James Anthony William Forder

Funerals

14th Maureen Bull, age 76 - at St John's
22nd Margaret (Jean) Heal, age 86 - at
Three Counties Crematorium
29th Owen Allaway, age 37 - at Parndon
Wood with Memorial Service in
St John's Church

ST JOHN'S CHURCH HALL

An even brighter future for the Church Hall ...

There are plans afoot to improve access to St John's Church Hall, new toilet facilities for the disabled, improved heating, lighting and decor and a refurbished kitchen. As recently appointed Hall Chairman, I am enthusiastic that with a grant from Viridor Waste Management an even better facility can be made available to all in the local community of Stansted. Originally built with a high ceiling for badminton players, the Hall now needs to be improved for a wider use. I plan to make a survey of local needs, and anyone wishing to make suggestions should contact me. When I took on the responsibility for the Hall, the previous Chairman, Alastair Richardson, had retired after many years at the helm; then the Treasurer, Anthony Minshull, resigned, and the Bookings Secretary, Joy Lambe resigned too - all having served for over 10 years on a voluntary basis, and doing a splendid job for the community. I began to feel somewhat lonely, and just when I thought things could not get any worse, the caretaker, Nigs Hall, fell off his bike and broke a leg! Happily Nigs is now well on the way to recovery. Not to worry. There is a good history and much to build on thanks to the spirit within Stansted. I have the bones of a new Committee and there is much to look forward to in the New Year. I shall be writing more in the 'Link' on the planned work, but if anyone has comments to make please ring me on 461151 (answerphone available) or preferably, email: raysmith9@btinternet.com.

Ray Smith

Worship 4 All Christingle Service

This will be at 9.30am on Sunday 5th December in St John's Church. All are welcome.



WORSHIP FOR ALL

The monthly family service conducted by Rev'd Giles Tulk was held at St John's on Sunday 7th November. The service took the form of a celebration for those children who were christened at St John's during 2010, and nine of them were presented with their first bible. A large congregation joined the many children especially in singing some well-known hymns associated with early school days.



The picture, taken by Margaret Hill, is of Ava (Georgis) McDonald who brought her parents along with her.

Derek Francis

THE 'TOTS' ARE TWO

Around 30 children brought their parents to the Birthday Celebration of the St Johns Tiny Tots at the Church on Tuesday 2nd November - they are two years old. Congratulations. The 'Tots' were really with it this year. Instead of the traditional cake, in-fashion cupcakes were served to everyone, made especially by Lea Parker, one of the mums.

The 'Tots' meet in the Church every Tuesday at 9.15am where tea and coffee is served for the mums and something suitable for the children. Then follows some stories and general fun and games (for the children). Why not join us when you can, we would love to see you.



Our picture, taken by Margaret Hill, shows the group about to descend on the cakes!

Derek Francis

ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the winners of the October draws, who were:

£100: No. 123 - Ann Conroy

£ 50: No. 87 - Ingrid Shervington

£ 25: No. 117 - Joyce Mortimer

The next 3 draws will be as follows:-

November - Tuesday 30th in the Queen's Head at 7.30pm

December - Wednesday 29th in the King's Arms at 7.30pm (to include the extra draw for £200)

January - Monday 31st in the Dog & Duck at 7.30pm.

Hope to see you there.

Francine Cope



SHALOM

Our Christmas party is a bring and share Christmas readings, music etc and cold food. This is at 8.00pm on Monday 13th December at 7 Blythwood Gardens. Our first meeting of 2011 is our 'At home' at 8.00pm on Monday 24th January at 7 Blythwood Gardens. All are welcome.

Marion Dyer

Tel: 814059



CTS AGM and Open Meeting

On Monday 17th January, we will be holding the Churches Together in Stansted AGM in St John's Church. The meeting will begin at 7.30pm with a talk about Parkinson's UK which is the charity we are raising money for this Christmas (see page 2). Everyone is welcome – please join us.

ST CLARE HOSPICE

2009/10 has been a year of consolidation for the Hospice with a strong focus on retail and fundraising. The clinical focus has been on ensuring the best use of our eight in-patient beds that has seen us reaching 90% occupancy and an average stay of 11 days. A time of consultation with our supporters and the wider community is to take place on our plans for future service development. After a successful bid for funding, St Clare recently received a Government grant to totally refurbish the In-Patient Unit. The work has begun and will be done in stages to ensure minimum disturbance to our patients and services. It is 10 years since the In-Patient Unit opened so the funding comes at a great time.

The Hospice shops are doing really well and truly benefiting from the community's generosity and donations. The Hospice is also most grateful to everyone in the local community for their ongoing support and help to raise the much-needed funds with the events they have held. With the festive season upon us you may want to support the 'In Celebration Giving' appeal when, instead of presents, a donation may be given by guests when celebrating an anniversary, a birthday, a wedding or another special occasion. Of course, if a donation is Gift Aided then a further 28p in the £ can be claimed from the Government if you are a taxpayer. The Stansted Friends of St Clare Hospice continue to work hard locally to raise funds and they look forward to seeing you at their events in the New Year. If you wish to join the informal group please do not hesitate to contact me for further details. From everyone at St Clare Hospice may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.



Caroline Bore
Community Fundraiser in East Herts and Uttlesford
Tel: 773751
Email: Caroline.Bore@stclarehospice.org.uk

STOP PRESS

Congratulations go to David Horton from Five Acres who has been commended by the NHS Blood and Transport Service for donating blood on 75 occasions. Perhaps David's example will inspire others.

VILLAGE HARVEST SUPPER 2010

Encouraged by last year's response, the catering and entertainment teams followed previously successful recipes and produced numerous cottage pies and apple crumbles. The entertainment took the form of: a psalm from a very unauthorised version together with three reincarnated Worzels and a duet ('Sisters') by St. John's; 'Send in the Clowns' and 'Fields of Gold' from the Free Church; a rendering of 'Pick a Pocket or Two' by a Fagin in deshabille and Oliver from St Theresa's; and music plus verse from a rejuvenated Quaker ensemble. The performances ended with American songs by the Gneiting family.



Photograph by Margaret Hill

It was a cheery evening from which no-one went home hungry and certainly everyone had good value for a modest charge. The Harvest Supper has re-established itself!

Derek Honour



ST MARY'S CHURCH

There are two special occasions in December when we extend a welcome to all visitors to join in our village events. The first is on Tuesday 14th December at 12 noon to join with the Stansted Mountfitchet Mathematics and Computing College in their Christmas Carol Service, and the second is the annual Celebration of Christmas organised by the Churches Together in Stansted at 3.30pm on Saturday 18th December. We look forward to full houses on those afternoons.

Friends of St Mary the Virgin, Stansted Mountfitchet

We are a newly formed group whose aims are to maintain awareness of the old church, which has served the village of Stansted for over 800 years. We will work to promote interest in St Mary's history and to encourage use of the church for community events. This association will forge a greater link with the Conservation Trust by membership, subscription and the organisation of fundraising events. We are especially hopeful of an enthusiastic student membership to ensure that, not only the church but also its association with the village will be maintained for future generations in Stansted. If you have not yet received a leaflet from us, please contact Audrey Rodgers on 812162.



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Bentfield School PTA

Christmas Fair

2 - 5 pm Sat 4th Dec

Santa's Grotto ~ Tombolas
Homemade Cakes ~ Present Planet
Refreshments including Mulled Wine
Admission 25p or £1 per family



Charles Owen
Piano

Bach, Debussy, Schumann, Ravel

3 pm Sun 5th December
St John's Church

Tickets £12 adults, £1 children
from Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford;
Stansted Carpets; Sonia Levy 815282
or at the door

Norman Court Christmas Bazaar

2 - 4 pm

Saturday 11th Dec

Afternoon Tea ~ Raffle

Admission 50p

All Welcome

VILLAGE EVENTS

December

1	Wed	Mountfitchet Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Mountfitchet Garden Club Party	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
2	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
4	Sat	Christmas Fair	Bentfield School 2 - 5 pm
5	Sun	Music@stansted	St John's Church 3 pm
7	Tue	U3A Making Decorations	Free Church Hall 10 am - noon
9	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
11	Sat	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
		Christmas Bazaar	Norman Court 2 - 4 pm
		Conservatives Supper	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
12	Sun	Manuden Singers Concert	Manuden Church 7.30 pm
13	Mon	Shalom Christmas Party	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
14	Tue	MMCC Carols	St Mary's Church 12 noon
17	Fri	Huw Johnson Concert	St Mary's School 7 for 7.30 pm
18	Sat	Celebration of Christmas	St Mary's Church 3.30 pm
22	Wed	Carol Singing	Meet Dog & Duck 7.30 pm
23	Thu	Carol Singing	Meet Rose & Crown 7.30 pm

January

5	Wed	Mountfitchet Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
6	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
8	Sat	Christmas Tree Recycling	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
11	Tue	Link copy due in today	before 12 noon
		Toe Nail Cutting	Day Centre by appointment
13	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
15	Sat	Jumble & Bric-à-Brac Sale	St John's Hall 2 - 4 pm
17	Mon	Churches Together AGM	St John's Church 7.30 pm
20	Thu	U3A	St John's Hall 1.30 pm
22	Sat	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
24	Mon	Shalom 'At Home'	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
30	Sun	Music@stansted	St John's Church 3 pm

February

2	Wed	Mountfitchet Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
3	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm

The next edition is published in February 2011
To advertise your event please tel 814059 or email
events@stanstedlink.org.uk by 11th January
Inclusion is subject to editorial decision

Manuden Singers

Christmas Oratorio

7.30 pm Sun 12th Dec

St Mary's Church, Manuden

Tickets £10 Children £5

from Fiona 812157 or on the door

Proceeds to Manuden Church
Building Project



CHRISTMAS CONCERT

7 for 7.30 pm

Friday 17th December

St Mary's School

Admission Free

All welcome

Proceeds to the Huw Johnson Club



Carol Singing

Wed 22nd December 7.30 pm

Meet outside the Dog & Duck in
Lower St

Finish at St John's Road (by Surgery)

Thur 23rd December 7.30 pm

Meet outside the Rose & Crown in
Bentfield Green

Finish at Blythwood Gardens

Followed by refreshments about 9 pm

Singers & collectors welcome

Collecting for Parkinson's UK

Recorder & flute players welcome.
Please tel 814059 to arrange music



Victoria Sayles Violin
Martin Cousin Piano

Perform Handel, Ravel and Elgar

3 pm Sun 30th January
St John's Church

Tickets £12 adults, £1 children
from Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford;
Stansted Carpets; Sonia Levy 815282,
or at the door

St Johns, Stansted

Jumble & Bric-à-Brac Sale

2 - 4 pm

Saturday 15th January

Entry £1

to include tea/coffee and cake

In aid of Church Funds



Celebration of Christmas



Carols, Music, Readings, and Poetry

3.30 pm Sat 18th December

St Mary's Church

(parking at Mountfitchet College)

Retiring collection for
Uttlesford Support Group, Parkinson's UK
& Churches Conservation Trust

All Welcome

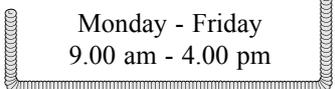
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CHRISTMAS SHOE BOXES

More than three hundred children will have a brighter Christmas because of the shoe boxes filled with presents from Stansted. St Theresa's Church and Seniors' Group packed over 120, and more than 200 were packed in an evening session at Stansted Free Church.



St Theresa's packing on 3rd November

Many people contributed to the boxes, by covering them in advance, by giving gifts and money and by packing. We are grateful to the Stansted Fun Run, which gave £500 from this year's event. Special thanks should also go to the many knitters, who have been clicking needles all year to make hats, scarves and puppets, and to Stella and Frank Skingle who took the boxes to the depot at Harlow and should be in the Guinness Book of Records for the number of shoe boxes you can get in a car!



Shoe Box packing at the Free Church on 4th November

The shoe boxes are given by the organisation Samaritan's Purse to children in need, regardless of their background or beliefs, in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and this year in Haiti. Their project 'Operation Christmas Child' is the world's largest children's Christmas project – devoted to spreading love, joy and smiles to children in parts of the world who really need them. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this.

Helen Baker
Catherine Dean
Eileen Quinn

The second half of the Autumn term has been very busy. In November Class 4 visited the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge to learn more about the Egyptians, which is their history topic this term. Classes 1 and 2 visited St John's Church as part of their work on local places of worship. Our local community police officer, WPC Kelly Roberts, spoke to all the classes about 'stranger danger'. Premium Foods carried out some staff training and treated some of the children to some cooking master classes on healthy eating, which they greatly enjoyed. The travelling book fair arrived, the proceeds of which will go towards funding some books for our new library. Year 6 spent a very enjoyable and informative time at the Veolia Environment and Education Centre in Bushey where they learnt a lot about water recycling. Some children also watched a performance of a Road Safety Play at St Mary's that has supported the work they are doing towards their Cycling Proficiency and Wheelchair Safety Tests.

December will be starting with our 'Glitter morning' and culminating with the Key Stage One performance of 'The Nativity' and the Year 6 Carol Concert. The children will also look forward to a performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' from a travelling theatre company on 7th January. The school were also very happy to receive some high visibility jackets from the Stansted and Stort Valley Rotary Club, which will be very useful for all age groups when they are visiting places in the local vicinity. The school has also adopted a new logo, as shown above, which was designed by two pupils - Devon Williamson and Louis Bacon in a recent competition. A small group of staff and governors are working on our website which we hope to launch in the New Year.

Cathie Bonich
Headteacher
Tel: 813626

Email: admin@bentfield.essex.sch.uk

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

Large graffiti has started to appear on the ugly concrete bridge on the B1383 (Stansted Road). I have contacted Uttlesford Council who say the bridge is managed by Network Rail and is their responsibility. Uttlesford Council have reported it to Network Rail and the reference number is 2766052. The reply from Network Rail is that the removal of the graffiti is 'low priority' as it is not offensive and that "there is no timescale for removal".

Unfortunately, if it is not removed quickly, the bridge will soon become covered. Please would more people contact Network Rail with reference number 2766052 and hopefully it will move up their priority list. Otherwise, give me a hoot if you see me on the bridge in my Marigolds with a scrubbing brush! Problems caused by graffiti on any other part of the railway can be reported via the National Helpline on 08457 114141.

A Jenkins
Resident of Foresthall Park



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The first half of the autumn term has been very busy for the children at Rainbow. We have welcomed many new children who have all settled in well. As well as their everyday activities of playing outside, sharing stories, baking, singing, PE, dressing up, painting, drawing and making friends, there have, as usual, been several extra activities arranged. The older group attended their own special Harvest Festival service at St John's. They performed a song they had been practising for their parents and listened to a short story about harvest told by Rev'd Paul Wilkin. Later in the week they visited some of the residents at Norman Court, where they delivered food in baskets they had made themselves. We have started to have weekly visits from our 'Music Man' Andrew. This has really added to the sessions as the children are enjoying learning new songs, which are further boosted by being accompanied by Andrew on the keyboard. They are also being encouraged to develop early musicianship skills with musical games.

In the early autumn the children were taken with staff and parents to Hatfield Forest where they went on a trail with the rangers, learning about the flora and fauna as they went. Finally the staff and committee would like to make 'Link' readers aware of some important information about the future for Rainbow. Unfortunately the funding that was mentioned in the last issue, which was allocated for a remodelling of the Peter Kirk site, has been withdrawn. If funding cannot be secured by early next year the future of the provision and location of Rainbow will be in doubt. Rainbow Pre-school has been an integral part of our village for 30 years. We are sure that with Stansted's population growing as it is it must remain so. The nursery provision in the village would suffer without it and the children in the village deserve to continue to benefit and enjoy what Rainbow Pre-school has to offer. More information from Gill Pursglove, email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net.

Rainbow Staff and Committee

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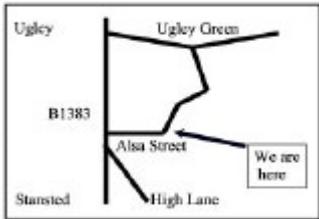
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494 (Stansted Airport) Squadron Air Training Corps

Over the October half term a number of our cadets went down to Dorset on a weeklong camp with the whole of Essex Wing. There were over 250 air cadets on the camp. They were split into groups of around 20 and each day did a different activity. These included archery, sailing, canoeing, climbing and FMST (Fieldcraft and Military Skills Training). A comment one cadet made was "I got to the highest point on the hardest side of the climbing wall – blindfolded!" This opportunity for the cadets is almost once in a lifetime (as it's a yearly thing), with amazing company and leadership for barely any cost at all.

A couple of weeks ago we had an important promotion at the Squadron. One of our Adult Staff, Charles Riley, was promoted from sergeant to flight sergeant. Charles has been a valued member of the Squadron's staff for ten years now. Joining back in 2000 as a civilian instructor and becoming a uniformed member of staff as a sergeant in June 2007, he has given up many weekends and week nights to give the cadets a rounded and interesting life in the Air Training Corps. Charles is an engineer specialising in architectural metalwork. He, along with other Squadron staff, teaches us about aircraft and their workings, in preparation for the exams that cadets take. Charles has numerous qualifications which allows him to run many activities for the cadets: First aider, orienteering coach, basic expedition leader, fieldcraft and archery instructor. The time put into Stansted Squadron by him and his wife Lesley is unbelievable, and I think it is safe to say that our Squadron would not function without the pair of them, with Lesley taking care of all of the administration and being a Duke of Edinburgh assessor. On behalf of the Squadron I would like to say "Congratulations Flight Sergeant Riley and thank you for all the time you have given up and everything that you have done for numerous cadets over the years! "

If you are aged between 13 and 16 and interested in joining us, contact us for more information: Telephone 681559 Mondays and Fridays 7.15–9.30pm (24 hr answerphone) or email: 494@aircadets.org.

Sgt Alice Brooks



Huw Johnson Club

Halloween night went with a swing with line dancing, witches and other scary creatures. We also enjoyed our firework evening at Great Easton and came away well fed. Now we are concentrating on our Christmas Concert which is at St Mary's School on 17th December. Doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Do come along and begin your Christmas celebrations with the Huw Johnson Club. Our New Year dinner at the Chequers will be in February, as we have 'Abbanania' in Chelmsford in January. We wish all our supporters a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all on 17th.

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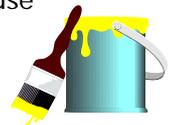
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MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

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November Meeting

Members listened intently to Mrs Linda Blunt's talk about 'Nepal – Its Plants and People'. Mrs Blunt explained the topography of the country – from east to west the country is about 700 miles long and at its narrowest point is only about 60 miles wide. It is situated between two major industrial powers – India to the south and China to the north. Running from east to west there are three main zones: (1) closest to China is the Himal region where the very high mountains are; (2) the central zone where there are high hills (but we would call them mountains!) and (3) closest to India, is the Terai/Ganges River Plain where, Mrs Blunt joked, the land resembles Essex as it is very flat. Running from north to south are ranges of hills, and in the valleys and canyons between, completely unique plants, shrubs and trees to that valley grow. Tourism has opened Nepal's doors to the outside world, but life in remote rural areas has hardly changed. The national flower of Nepal is the rhododendron and over 30 species grow in these isolated valleys. For the orchid lover there are over 200 different species growing wild. By using slides taken on walking holidays and during a year's sabbatical, when she worked in a rural school and with the Horticultural College in Kathmandu, members were shown how diverse the country is – its architecture, costumes, flowers, religions. The people have to be self-sufficient and every inch of fertile land is used to grow crops. The weather, height above sea level, temperature (from very, very cold to over 40°C) and localised micro-climates enable a wide selection of food to be grown ranging from rice to pineapples, apples to wheat. Terracing the steep hills also enables more land to be cultivated. Mrs Blunt explained that her fee would be given to a Nepalese charity she supports and it would pay for three children to be educated for a year. A lively question and answer session followed her talk.

Other News

The Jumble Sale on 16th was a great success and the money raised will be put into our Speakers' Fund. A big thank you to everyone who gave us jumble, came on the day and supported us, grew plants for the plant stall and helped throughout the morning.

23rd October saw our annual trip to one of the RHS Gardens; this year it was Wisley's turn. At this time of year Mother Nature can be fickle, but we were blessed with a lovely day to wander around the gardens and orchards. The sudden drop in overnight temperatures ensured that the leaves were starting to change colour. Our trip coincided with Wisley's Autumn Festival and members were able to wander around over 30 stalls testing and sampling various locally grown/made produce. Over 700 different varieties of fruit trees grow in Wisley's orchards and members were able to see a display of them and also to sample some of the more unusual types. Wisley was also host to 'Europom,' an annual gathering of European apple and fruit enthusiasts. This exhibition, held in a different country each year, enabled members to see a wide range of rare and unusual apples that are not readily available in the UK.

Future Meetings

The meeting on 1st December will be our 'Bring and Share' Christmas Party – times as normal. Please note there will not be a meeting in January, so our first meeting of 2011 will be on 2nd February when we will be welcoming Mrs Olivia Elton-Barrett who will be demonstrating and talking about 'Basketmaking and Willow in the Garden'.

Finally, on behalf of the Mountfitchet Garden Club, I wish all 'Link' readers and editorial staff a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous 2011.

Maralyn Harris
Chairman



STANSTED CRICKET CLUB

We held a very successful Dinner/Dance Presentation evening, organised by skipper Ian Parsons, at The Stansted Hilton on Saturday 23rd October. Over 60 Club members and their guests attended. Guests of honour were Ian and Pearl Devonshire from our shirt sponsors, RCA, and we were entertained by speaker Bob Piries (a retired police officer with a fund of traffic-related stories). Awards were then presented for:

1st XI batting	Charlie Kirby
1st XI bowling	Mohseen Noori
1st XI Captain's award	Fred Kirby
2nd XI batting	Mark Johnson
2nd XI bowling	David Hedge
2nd XI Captain's award	Mark Johnson
Clubman award	Keith Ayres
President's award	David Hedge

We are also most grateful to the hosts and customers of The King's Arms, who recently held a curry night to raise funds for local charities, and have given a generous donation to Stansted Junior CC. It will be used for much needed ground equipment.



The photograph is of the 1st XI with their Division 3 Champions Trophy. Back row: Richard Gardiner, David Ayres, Matt Cope, Fred Kirby, Charlie Kirby, Mohseen Noori. Front row: Ben Baker, Mark Gatland, Ian Parsons (with trophy), Matt Abbotson, Jez Kealy.

David Hedge
Hon Secretary

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE YAKUB ALIBHAI

(an adapted version of the tribute spoken at the memorial service)

The Y & Z Minimarket is one of the last family-owned and family-run shops in Stansted. The late Yakub Alibhai's shop on Chapel Hill survived because Yakub believed in service and made sure that his shop delivered what people wanted. He was one of, if not the first shop in Stansted to be 'open all hours'. If you came off a late train, Y&Z would be open. Yakub was not just interested in simply taking your money and handing over the goods; he was always interested in all of his customers as people and as families, and what went on in the community.



The most significant good turn that Yakub Alibhai gave to this community was to reopen a Post Office counter service in 2006. Several councillors had spent two years or more trying to help the Post Office to find new premises. Literally at the eleventh hour, when Post Office management threatened to make the closure permanent, Yakub agreed to incorporate it into his mini-market. How grateful we all are that he was willing to put himself through training courses to become a sub-postmaster and to jump through many bureaucratic hoops to ensure Stansted's post office opened again. We didn't win all the battles. Bureaucracy got in the way of installing a ramp for disability vehicle access to the shop. There were many mutterings beneath Yakub's breath about people whose jobs seemed to be to stop the right thing being done, rather than serving fellow citizens in the way that Yakub thought was what life was all about.

Yakub happily shared anecdotes with his customers about having met lots of national politicians being interviewed in their homes whilst still working in the television industry, before he and his family came here to Stansted in November 1979. The flowers and cards that came into the shop in the days following Yakub's sudden and sad death were a measure of the warmth and respect that people in Stansted felt for him. Many fine words have been spoken and written to the family since that fateful evening at the end of September when I drove home from a meeting in Dunmow and wondered why an ambulance was parked at the bottom of Chapel Hill.

I know I am not alone in having appreciated and enjoyed knowing Yakub Alibhai. We will miss his humour; his service with a smile; and his many suggestions about how to make Stansted work better. At the memorial service the community was able to show Yakub's son and daughter, Akhter

and Insiyah, and their mother, Zebbie, that all of us in and around Stansted miss Yakub - their father and our post-master - but are honoured to have known him. We can look forward to Zebbie returning to the mini-market early next year and to the Alibhai family business continuing to serve the community of Stansted for many years to come.

Alan Dean
On Behalf of the Stansted Community

MEMORIAL SERVICE YAKUB ALIBHAI

On the occasion of the memorial service for Yakub Alibhai at St John's Church, Stansted on 3rd November it was standing room only as over 250 people packed the church. The service was conducted by the Rector, Paul Wilkin, who was assisted by Giles Tulk, Assistant Curate. Following a welcome to all, Juzar Alibhai, brother of Yakub, read the Sura Al-Fathia in Arabic and English. This is a prayer that is said whilst remembering loved ones who are no longer with us. The poem 'When I must leave' was read by Yaaha Alibhai, the grandson. Two tributes to Yakub were given; one by a business friend, Vaughan Atkinson, and another by Councillor Alan Dean on behalf of the community. The poem 'To those I love' was read by a niece, Insiya Alibhai, and the eulogy by Yakub's daughter, Insiyah Alibhai.



This was a unique and moving service in memory of a man who ran the minimarket for 30 years and later the Post Office on Chapel Hill. He will be remembered by the whole village.

Derek Francis



**Royal British Legion
Stansted & District
Branch**

POPPY APPEAL

I trust that everyone who wished to donate to this year's Appeal managed to wear their poppy with pride. At the time of writing this report the Appeal is continuing but an announcement of the total collected will be in the next issue of the 'Link'.

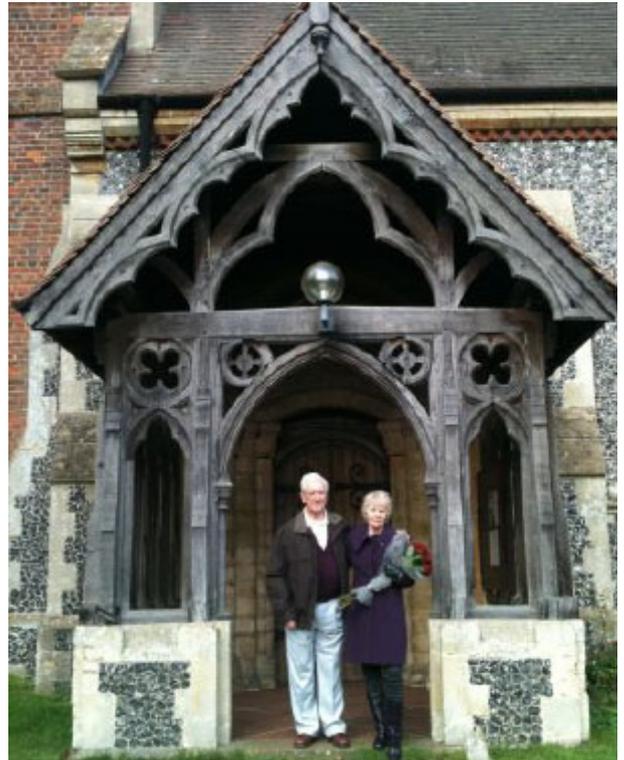
We were short of collectors this year; however several new volunteers came forward and others extended their 'rounds'. Thank you all very much, and to the shops and pubs for allowing us to have poppies on their premises.

John Segar
Hon Poppy Appeal Organiser Stansted and District
Tel: 813289



GOLDEN WEDDING

Mr Clive and Mrs Janet Dellow revisited St Mary's Church in Stansted on Friday 22nd October exactly 50 years after they were married there. The 'golden' couple were happy and excited to be able to go into the church and spend time together remembering their happy day, five decades before.



Both Janet and Clive put their long lasting marriage down to hanging on when others would have let go. The tenacity of the pair has seen them through many difficult times and in more recent years through a series of health problems. The couple have four children and seven grandchildren. The Dellos have maintained many long standing connections with the village over the years. The Rose and Crown in Stansted was once run by the two of them and Janet's parents were the licensees at the Bell and Feathers on Cambridge Road (shortly to be an Indian restaurant). Clive and his four siblings were also born in Stansted. He was also something of a local sports personality playing in both Stansted cricket and football teams. His mother, Violet, was the school cook for many years. Clive even has memories of the war and the effect on the local community, including the story of a young boy who was evacuated from London and came to stay with him and his family. St Mary's churchyard also holds other more poignant memories for both Janet and Clive as Clive's parents Violet and Edward, his brother Tony and sister Veronica are buried there. Janet also has a memorial stone in the graveyard for her parents William and Lillian Iverson. For the half-century since their marriage, although the Dellos moved to Suffolk, they have kept in touch with both friends and family in the village and return regularly. All their children, grandchildren, family and friends send them best wishes and many congratulations.

Amanda Whaley

BAA should accept court verdict and sell Stansted
SSE Economics Adviser, Brian Ross, urged BAA to accept the Court of Appeal's decision and relinquish control of Stansted without any more delaying tactics, such as an appeal to the Supreme Court. He commented that it might be in BAA's commercial interests to try to delay the inevitable for as long as possible, but creating further uncertainty would not be in the interests of either the local community or the airport's employees. Mr Ross concluded that a change of ownership at Stansted Airport would at least create the prospect of establishing a meaningful and constructive dialogue between the airport management and the local community – something that BAA were never prepared to engage in. There is, of course, always the risk that the new owner could be worse than the devil we already know but in this particular case we believe that risk is extremely small.

NATS Postpones Airspace Changes Yet Again
SSE has welcomed the announcement by National Air Traffic Services (NATS) of a further postponement of its plans to introduce new flight paths and stacking areas for the Terminal Control North (TCN) area. A revised date has not been given, but it is thought that it will be at least two to three years before any new proposals are tabled. In explaining this latest postponement, NATS pointed to the recent downturn in air travel, as a result of which there is less urgency on capacity grounds to achieve the changes. UK air traffic levels are not expected to return to their (peak) 2007 levels until at least 2013/14.

Latest News
It has been announced that the Government will begin the process of formalising its aviation policy early in 2011, starting with a scoping document that will be used as the basis of a full consultation the following year. The starting point will be 'no new runways in the south east' within the current Parliamentary term. Shortly after the Secretary of State's announcement, SSE had a formal meeting with his Aviation Minister, Theresa Villiers, to discuss the call for a moratorium on additional runways at Stansted and the issue of the continued ownership by BAA of hundreds of homes bought under the threat of compulsory purchase in recent years, most of which are rented out on very short leases. Her stated willingness to look closely at the issues was encouraging and SSE is providing more information to the Minister for this purpose.

Celebratory Party - Saturday 4th December
The campaign group will be taking time out to celebrate the successes of the year - the withdrawal of the second runway application and change of Government policy. All are welcome to join the celebrations at the annual Christmas party, which this year will be held in Great Easton, near Dunmow. Tickets (£10 per head), to include supper with a licensed pay-bar. To book call office on 870558.

Carol Barbone
Campaign Director
Tel: 0777 552 3091
Brian Ross
Economics Adviser
Tel: 814961 or 07850 937143

APOLOGIES

Due to an 'embarrassment of riches', we were unable to include all the articles and photographs submitted for this edition of the 'Link'.

Editor

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NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

THE PROPOSED NEW HEALTH CENTRE - A NEW CHAPTER

At a public meeting on 18 October, West Essex PCT made the following statement:

'The Trust Board, at a meeting on 23 September, made the decision that its preferred site for the development of a Primary Care Centre in Stansted is the Castle Lotus site (off Lower Street) but at the same time it did not want to take the risk of losing the Foresthall site. The existing business would relocate to Parsonage Farm industrial estate.

Therefore it agreed to run with both sites in parallel and ask Uttlesford District Council to give notice to Taylor Wimpey of its intention to acquire the land at Foresthall under the Section 106 Agreement. It was also agreed that if no appreciable movement to a legally binding commitment on the Castle Lotus site is obtained by the end of the calendar year, The Trust would divert its attentions to Foresthall'.

The Trust's definition of a suitable commitment in this timeframe for the Castle Lotus site would be

- agreement of car parking arrangements
- agreed Heads of Terms subject to planning permission
- agreed design specification
- agreed lease terms

A representative from the developers, who are locally based, was present at the meeting and made the following points:

- The building, which is likely to be of modern design, will be four floors but will be setback and will be no higher than the Social Club.
- Apart from the Health Centre, there will be retail outlets on the ground floor and 2-3 bed apartments (only a small number) on the third and fourth floors.
- The plan is to put NHS dentistry on the ground floor with the Health Centre taking the whole of the second floor. There will be two lifts and direct access from the new car park to the Health Centre.

- A new two-storey car park to the rear will provide 58 spaces while the existing car park will be reorganised to ensure that no spaces are lost.
- The access road will be widened and the junction improved so as to handle the increased number of traffic movements with additional protection for pedestrians around the corner into Church Road.

The timescale to completion, whichever site is chosen, should be similar ie about two years. The practice in St John's Road is happy with either site but, should Foresthall be chosen, the Health Centre will be on three floors rather than two at Lower Street. Facilities on either site would be similar.

The Parish Council hopes that there will be no delay in committing to one or other of the sites as the new Health Centre is needed with urgency. It recognises that the PCT has put in considerable effort to secure a central site and hopes that there is, in this respect, a successful outcome. However, the Council retains an open mind on the outcome given the complexity relating to traffic congestion, access and parking. It is envisaged that traffic movements to the health centre would be up to 400 per day. The plan, along with the views of Essex County Highways, will be eagerly awaited and it is to be welcomed that the developers intend to mount over several days an exhibition of the scheme at which questions may be put (and hopefully answered).

THE PARISH PLAN HAS BEEN ADOPTED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

At a recent meeting the Parish Council voted unanimously to adopt the Parish Plan together with the proposed programme of action points. The Plan will shortly be submitted to Uttlesford District Council for approval and adoption. Assuming this happens, the view of the Parish and Parish Council will, under the localisation policies of this Government, carry much more weight when planning issues affecting the parish are considered by the District Council. It is to be hoped that this is correct but time will tell.

USING SECTION 106 MONEY TO IMPROVE HIGHWAYS

Under the Section 106 agreement, the developers were required to provide a sum of money to fund highways improvements which would improve the situation surrounding the new estate at Foresthall Park.

Following discussions with Essex County Highways the following projects are under serious consideration:

- A footpath from Palmer Way to the junction with Church Road thus allowing safe access to MMCC and the Leisure Centre
- Improvements to the bridge over the brook (near the Black Bridge) and the footpath up to Millfields thus completing a safe walking route for the new St Mary's School to St John's Church.
- Taking action to improve the surface of Water Lane. It should be noted that this does not imply the adoption of this road by ECC.
- The widening of the footpath along Church Road to create a safer route for all pedestrians but particularly for pupils attending MMCC and parents and children walking to the new St Mary's School on Foresthall Park.
- The provision of a safe pedestrian route from Jordon Close to Walson Way.
- Traffic calming measures for Walson Way and Church Road are under consideration in the light that these roads are bus routes (a complication).

The Parish Council continues to hold discussions with Essex County Highways about a number of other issues affecting the village including speeding, the lights on Grove Hill, traffic volumes and speed on High Lane, pedestrian crossings on Silver Street & Cambridge Road, the Fountain junction as well as a residents' parking scheme covering Lower Street and Grove Hill (see elsewhere for details). The achievement of some, alone all of these objectives, will require money which, in the current climate, is likely to be scarce.

BONFIRE AND FIREWORKS EVENT

What a wonderful village event this was and our grateful thanks to everyone who attended. The

weather was very kind to us staying dry not only for the event itself, but also for the essential setting up and clearing away.

Takings on the gate increased from £2015 in 2009 to £3,583 and profit on the refreshments rose from £130 in 2009 to £275 this year. Unfortunately, the cost of the fireworks has also increased greatly!

We cannot hold this event without the hard work of a band of volunteers - too numerous to name here individually - who give up a considerable amount of their time on both the Saturday and Sunday. If you would like to be involved in future years, please contact the Clerk.

Finally, our thanks to Denise and everyone at Elms Farm for making us so welcome, allowing us to use their land, and assisting with transportation on the site!

STANSTED NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The meeting held on Wednesday 29th September was attended by nine Stansted residents who discussed aspects of the village NhW Scheme. Eight residents gave their apologies.

Diane Roberts gave an update on how the scheme was working regarding co-ordinators and the general running of NhW in the village. Alan Johnson (Chair of UD NhW), Peter Caulfield (Crime Reduction Adviser), Kelly Roberts (PCSO) and P.C. Richard Woolgar (Dunmow Police), were present and each gave reports on their individual work within the community, relating especially to NhW.

It was felt that due to the now up and running website that has been set up by IT Specialist Richard Portway, to whom we are extremely grateful, it was decided to have only one main public meeting per year as all information regarding NhW is continually updated and passed on via the site. It was also decided that the smaller steering group would meet as and when necessary to keep things on track.

Provisional date for the next Public Meeting will be Wednesday 25 May 2011 at 7.30 pm in Stansted Free church Hall.

Website address: www.stanstednhw.org.uk

Contacts: Cllr Valerie Trundle 01279 813433
Mrs Diane Roberts - 01279 813089

NEW BUS SERVICE

From 13th December a new bus service (Service 300) will be operating from Saffron Walden, passing through Newport, Quendon, Ugley, Stansted Mountfitchet, Maitland Road Estate, Foresthall Park, then onto Bishop's Stortford.

The service will run weekdays except Tuesdays (due to operating difficulties) with no weekend or Bank Holiday service. There will be two services in the morning from 'The Feathers' Cambridge Road, at 9.43 and 11.37, returning from B/S at 10.23, 12.25 & 14.25. The Foresthall Park times to the village on the return journey will be 10.37, 12.37 and 14.37.

When timetables become available they will be placed in the Library, Day Centre, Surgery, Council Offices and possibly the Post Office. This is a Commercial Service and therefore not subsidised by the ECC and will be reliant on the support and use of the general public in order to maintain the service and hopefully to extend it. The bus will stop at all the normal pick-up points but will also operate on a 'hail and ride' service throughout the journey.

For more information please contact: Cllr Valerie Trundle on 813433 or Joy Thomas on 813871

NEWS FROM UTTLESFORD D.C.

Comprehensive Spending Review

The money Uttlesford spends comes from three main sources- council tax, income from fees and charges and grants from central government. It is this final category that is most affected by this review. The Government has announced cuts to local authority funding on average of 28% spread over four years. The actual reduction for Uttlesford will be confirmed in early December. It has been confirmed that local authorities will be compensated for next year's council tax freeze. This compensation will be paid in each of the next four years.

In order to deliver the savings required the Council has approved a partnership with Harlow District Council for its Revenues and Benefits section. This is responsible for collection of council tax and payment of benefits such as housing and council tax. The shared service which would be based in Harlow is intended to deliver economies of scale.

Although in principle supportive of the partnership I expressed my concerns about the affect of the transfer upon our staff. For some who have childcare responsibilities a move from Saffron Walden to Harlow is not practicable. For those employees who do move there would be no free car parking at Harlow's offices.

I value the opportunity of writing a regular column for The Link. It gives me a chance to inform residents about the District Council and my work as a councillor.

(Cllr Geoffrey Sell)

Those of us on Uttlesford's scrutiny committee completed a review of the district's five day centres in November. The council and the volunteers on the day centre management committees have been asked to consider employing someone to support the management committees in their important work.

Stansted already does this and 'The Stansted Model' seems like a good idea for Dunmow, Saffron Walden, Takeley and Thaxted. The question still to be answered is where the money will come from.

The news of yet another potential site, this time in Lower Street, for the new doctor's surgery and health centre (see page 17) has been greeted with enthusiasm by some people and concern by others. I have practical concerns about traffic congestion and safety at the difficult junction with Church Road and Chapel Hill.

My main worry is whether what seems to be a complicated commercial arrangement including shops and homes can really be made to work in such an uncertain financial climate.

The council has provided a new batch of street signs for Foresthall Park that should make finding one's way around a bit easier. I am pleased that a new, though very limited bus service will connect the Walson Way area with Lower Street and Cambridge Road from mid December. This is small but encouraging progress towards improving transport links with Foresthall Park. More will be needed if/when the primary school and health centre are built there.

(Cllr Alan Dean)

KEEPING WARM

Will you have trouble keeping warm this winter? If your house is leaking warmth, it's also leaking money. Draught proofing, double-glazing, insulating the water tank with a jacket can all keep the heat in. But the most cost effective ways to keep warm are by insulating cavity walls and the loft. The Herts Essex Energy Partnership is offering discounted insulation (£49) until March 2011, and for some people on benefits, over 70 or disabled, it could be free. Contact 0800 980 6026 to check your eligibility.

If your gas and electricity bills are high, then changing to another supplier could be the answer. Log on to www.uswitch.com or phone 0800 404 7908 to find independent price comparisons. Or maybe just changing the tariff with your present supplier would give you a better deal. Phone them and say you are considering switching supplier and ask if they can give you a cheaper rate. Changing the way you pay can also save money (Direct Debit is usually the cheapest). For anyone who is struggling to pay energy bills, there is help available through an organisation called Charis Grants, which can be contacted by email: admin@charisgrants.com or by phone 01733 421060.

I found out this information (and more) from a seminar at the Citizens Advice Bureau. If anyone wants to find out more please contact me on 813579.

Cllr Catherine Dean

DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

1 December	Finance
8 December	Full Council

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Phone/fax: 01279 813214 10am - 1pm

Admin Assistant - Anne Court

Email: parishcouncil@stansted.net

www.stansted.net

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Email: haselhursta@parliament.uk

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COCKNEY 'NITE'

On Wednesday 13th October the residents at Broome End Care Home in Stansted enjoyed a Cockney night. They were entertained by the Pearly King and Queen with songs while enjoying pie and mash with liquor. The dining room was decorated with beer barrels and Union Jacks with the residents singing along, waving their flags.



Julia Cracknell
Activities Co-ordinator



UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

'U R U Neek' – the message I got when Mr Terence Rockell came to reveal a few secrets of his past work as deputy head of National Branch Finger Print Office (New Scotland Yard). After training (with a racing-walker officer) and his stint at Hendon Police College, Constable Rockell was let loose at 19 on Kilburn, North London. Here he soon learned that 'three blasts on your whistle' didn't bring your colleagues rushing to your aid! After only 18 months on the beat, a conflict with a violent criminal left him partly paralysed and, at 21, medically retired. However, the civilian division of Scotland Yard had a job for him and so we learned of the discovery, in the late 19th century, of finger-printing. We were fascinated at the intricate patterns and variations of prints shown on screen slides. Forget DNA! – you share bits of that with your family but only a fingerprint isolates every human being. Our speaker's working career ended rather spectacularly with the arrest and conviction of Denis Neilson for the murder of 16 North London young men. Members were invited to be 'done' for a personal print and some bought the offer; but why so few? What are our WI members hiding? Beware! Mr Rockell is to be found lecturing on cruise ships, ready for you.

In WI news, we have received our 90th anniversary certificate from HQ. The Tuesday craft group welcome more knitters to support their charity. Dorothy Wallace gave a good report of the half yearly council just past. The number of Essex members has risen to 8,800 while the National Federation boasts a near quarter million and rising. Pharmacists advise us to take generic and not branded drugs (ammonia for a bee, vinegar for a wasp? Ooh that iodine hurts! Pass the sal volatile someone!) For the diary: Essex WI carols at Chelmsford Cathedral on 8th December. Our New Year's lunch will again be at the Ugley Chequers on 26th January and yes, we look forward

to hosting the 2011 Spring Group Meeting on 28th April for our five villages.

Phyllis Harrison



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Our November meeting concentrated on a form of artwork with which we are all familiar - village signs. John Weston, our speaker, gave a lot of interesting information on the varied forms the subject took, and illustrated his talk with attractive slides that he had taken. The first signs date back to the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, when he bought the estate of Sandringham in the 19th century, and decided that the several villages it included should have a sign placed on top of their directional finger posts as a form of identification. On his death and the accession of George V, the signs were refurbished, but when the Duke of York, later George VI, suggested in 1920 the provision of village signs generally, the initiative was taken up by a national newspaper and a series of prizes were offered.

The competition was a great success and there were 525 entries, the winner being St Peter's in Thanet. Further signs appeared with the Jubilee of George V in 1935 but all disappeared in 1939 when the War brought fear of invasion. After the War, they were replaced and further new signs were erected with the celebration of the Festival of Britain, the Coronation of Elizabeth II and her Silver and Golden Jubilees and the Millennium. It was noted, however, that the sign-makers were exceedingly busy around the turn of the century so that some villages finished up erecting their signs late! John had many slides taken from all over the country and he showed us the great initiative and artistry involved. Many indicated features of the village, others showed aspects of its past, all in metal or wood and even, in one case, china. Signs commemorated a notable doctor who had served the village, local myths, a 17th century practical joke played on the residents involving a dragon, puns on the name of the village and many other examples. We thoroughly enjoyed John's talk and his slides and will look forward to any more subjects he will be investigating.

Our next meeting on 2nd December will be not only the Christmas but also the members' one. This is the occasion when our members take to the floor and speak about various historical subjects they have been researching. I hope you will be able to attend.

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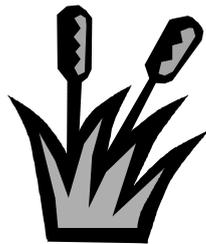
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STANSTED GUIDE DISTRICT

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Senior Section

Vision Service

On 20th October, members of Stansted Guide District gathered in St John's Church for a service to celebrate the Guiding Centenary and to look to the future. Each unit contributed songs, paintings, or poems to the service; there was a parade of uniforms over the past 30 years, and everyone, including parents, joined in with all the hymns. Rev'd Paul Wilkin led prayers and reflections, and Avril Braidwood, a Trefoil Guild member (amongst many other Guiding roles!) talked about the history of the movement and the challenge of the future, encouraging the girls to make the most of the opportunities Guiding has to offer.

Three Guides - Daisy Musgrove, Jessie Smith and Laura Golden, were presented with their Baden-Powell Challenge awards by three Trefoil Guild members, one being Jessie's granny, and the other two, Sonia Girling and Ann Howarth, being former Guide and Brownie leaders in Stansted. This award is the highest you can achieve as a Guide, so it was particularly relevant to have them presented at this special service, and we are very proud of them.



The highlight of the evening came when all the girls renewed their promise or made it for the first time, and received a promise badge especially for the occasion. Along with thousands of other Guiding members round the country, this was at 20:10 on 20/10 in 2010 - a unique moment, and one that we hope everyone will remember forever.

Glynis Prothero
Stansted District Administrator

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Saturday 15th January



Stansted Evening Women's Institute

The October meeting, when we celebrated our 50th anniversary, was a really fun evening, attended by nearly all of our 55 members as well as our Essex County Chairman, June Ward, and Julie Alen, a past County Chairman, and well known to many of our members. Four visitors from our Group Institutes were also present and we were able to raise the roof with our rendering of 'Jerusalem' - not quite Albert Hall standard but not bad for St John's Hall! Chris Hope made a display of 1960 memorabilia from the newspapers of the time and some members supplied photographs from 1960 - how lovely to look back on schoolchildren, teenagers, brides and young mums with babies.



The picture shows five of our founder members, Elsie Stoddart, Margaret Chastney, Rene Sanders (first President) Marion Pretty and Margaret Meadows, cutting the cake made by Brenda Ryan and iced by Betty Unwin. Margaret Chastney did some lovely flower arrangements for the long tables - yellow roses in green glass bottles tied with straw bows and we were served a delicious meal of chicken, roast potatoes and vegetables followed by a choice of tempting puddings, coffee and mints and the cake! However, we all managed to stay sufficiently switched on to listen to our speaker, Keith Baldwin, who gave us a light-hearted look at age, with readings and musings on the things that befall us as we grow older, especially loss of memory and the like. Some interesting facts emerged; apparently the average age in the world is 67.2 years, which surprises me and I think we all know there are more over 65s than under 16s in the UK. So keep on with the walking, keep-fit classes and the 'five a day' everyone!

November brings our Annual General Meeting when a new Committee and a new President is chosen, and at the time of writing has not taken place, so any changes there are not yet known. We are also holding a Chinese Auction to liven up the proceedings; I look forward to finding out what that is. The December meeting is on 9th and we are looking forward to hearing Colin Street talking about his life and work at the Globe Theatre. On 13th January we welcome Simon Gilbert who will be entertaining us with 'Another Opening, Another Show' which should strike the right note for our party night. Please come along and join us at any of these evenings. We meet at 7.45pm in St John's Hall. You are bound to know someone there and what better way to cheer up a winter evening?



Judy Colliver

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HATFIELD FOREST HIGHLIGHTS

Hello Everyone

Christmas approaches and the excitement is building. At the Forest we are keeping busy through the winter months and there is plenty to see and do. The Healthy Walk Group that meets every Thursday is still going strong and always welcome anyone who would like to join. They meet at the Main Gate at 9.45am or by the Café at 10.00am so come along, keep out and about this winter and explore parts of the Forest you may never have been to before.

Saturday 18th December is our annual Christmas Carol Concert in front of the Shell House. We will have the Salvation Army Band playing and we are looking for you all to come and join in with the singing. I will be there singing away, hopefully not too badly! As many of you are aware, the Forest has a fantastic display of mistletoe, a rare and endangered wild plant. Being a very slow growing plant, an average of only 2cm a year, we want to protect as much as possible and so we ask that you do not pick our mistletoe during the Christmas season.

Laura Slater
Community Warden
Tel: 874043

Email: laura.slater@nationaltrust.org.uk



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET U3A

www.stanstedu3a.org

Please note that there will be no meeting in December, as we will be having our Christmas dinner at the Great Hadham Golf and Country club for all members.

At the end of October the Stansted U3A Singers, led by Musical Director Isobel Bradshaw, performed their first ever public concert at St John's Church. The choir have only been together for just over a year, formed at the inaugural meeting of the Stansted U3A and originally consisting of a handful of ladies who agreed to sign up to the fledgling singing group. That small number has grown significantly, and on the night the hall was filled to capacity. The choir performed before a 200 plus audience giving an exceptionally enjoyable and varied performance, ranging from classical to hits from the musicals to swing and pop.



The programme was enhanced by guest performer, Marilyn Cross, who performed excerpts from Roald Dahl's 'Horrible Rhymes' - to resounding applause and appreciation. The concert ended with Cava and Canapés as an after-performance social gathering. Our singers are always looking for new members, and would particularly like some men to join them. As with any activity we run, you have to be a member of the U3A to participate, so if you are interested please come along – you do not have to be a member for your first visit.

The next meeting will be at 1.30pm on Thursday 20th January in St John's Church Hall. At this meeting, our speaker will be Mark Davis whose subject will be 'Parchment to NHS Prescription'. Mark will talk on the history of pharmacy from 4,000 BC to the present day. Originally remedies were obtained from a variety of plants using flowers, leaves, stems or roots. Some well-known ones mentioned were belladonna from the deadly nightshade plant, digitalis from fox-gloves and from poppies, opium or morphine. Leeches are still used for some medical treatments. When a tomb was opened, a parchment prescription was found between the knees of an Egyptian Mummy buried about 2,000 BC. At the beginning of the last century, 80% of medicines came from pharmacists' recipes and 20% were proprietary tablets or capsules, including aspirin, which was launched 110 years ago. By the late 1950s the reverse was the case with only 20% or less being recipes for tincture extracts or powders. From 1965, instead of taking medicines by mouth three times a day, injections were given. These lasted much longer and, therefore, saved many nursing hours. There have been many developments in medicines over the years, and this should prove a very interesting informative talk.

Forthcoming Event

Tuesday 7th December 10.00am: We will be holding a one-off tutored taster session of 'Make your own Christmas/Table Decorations/Wreaths etc'. This will be at the Free Church Hall, Chapel Hill. All that is required is for you to turn up, and if you have anything you would like to turn into a decoration whether it is baubles, fruit or fresh flowers, or even something unusual, just bring it along. Wreaths and oases will be supplied and are included in the fee of only £6 per person, and if this is something that you find you like, we could make it a regular feature in the New Year. Why not come along and join us, even if you have never done this before?. Booking essential. Please contact Cherry for further information.

Friday 21st January: Ely Tour/Cathedral and Pub Lunch.

Finally, on behalf of Stansted U3A I would like to wish all readers a very Happy Christmas and a happy and healthy 2011.



Cherry
Chair
Tel: 817140

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As announced in last month's 'Link', our next concert will be at 3.00pm on Sunday 5th December in our usual venue, St John's Church. It will be a piano recital by the internationally famous pianist, Charles Owen, and his programme will include Bach's Partita no 6 in E minor, Debussy's Images Book 1, Schumann's Papillons op 2 and Ravel's Le Tombeau de Couperin.

The first concert in 2011 will be at 3.00pm on Sunday 30th January and will be given by Victoria Sayles (violin) and Martin Cousin (piano). Victoria began playing the violin when she was only seven years old and, whilst still in her teens, led orchestras at the Royal Albert Hall, St John's Smith Square and St Paul's Cathedral. She attended the Royal College of Music from 2003-2007 and since then has played with the London, English and Scottish Chamber Orchestras, and the Academy of St Martin-in-the Fields Orchestra. She has appeared as Guest Leader and as Associate Leader with both UK and International orchestras and has worked with many major conductors. Victoria is a keen chamber musician and solo recitalist and plays a 1776 'Thir' violin.



Martin is regarded as one of the most exceptional pianists of his generation and has appeared regularly in the major British musical venues since graduating from the Royal College of Music. He made his solo debut at the Purcell Room in 1998 to great critical acclaim. He has performed as concerto soloist with the London Philharmonic, Halle, Royal Philharmonic and BBC Concert Orchestras and has performed many times internationally. He and Victoria have made many appearances together.



Their programme will include Handel's Sonata for Violin and 'Zigueneweisen'; and music by Ravel and Elgar. We are most grateful to Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers who are sponsoring the cost of hiring the piano, and The Countess of Munster Music Trust. Tickets for each concert: adults £12, children £1, are now available from Stansted Carpets, Nockolds Solicitors, Sonia Levy, 31 Chapel Hill, tel: 815282, or at the door. Our final concert this season will be on Saturday 12th March at 7.30pm, when the former Royal Harpist, Catrin Finch, will be making a return visit to Stansted. If you would like further information about us, please visit our website: www.musicatstansted.com

Alan Corbishley

The new school year is racing away already! We welcomed into the school our new pupils and their parents, to the Foundation Stage and into other year groups. The children have all settled in well and so too have our new members of staff. This year St Mary's has a seventh class so that we can grow the school while keeping class sizes below 30 pupils. We have held art and music events and participated in a variety of sporting fixtures (with mixed success!). For the harvest collection this year we again supported Harvest for the Hungry, filling boxes with dried food goods for families in Bulgaria. The Year 6 pupils from several local schools joined us for a Road Safety play 'Chicken'. November arrived very quickly and already it was time to plan rehearsals for the Christmas production! The Key Stage 2 pupils are staging a musical production of Charles Dickens 'A Christmas Carol'. The school choir will be singing at a series of Christmas events including the CTS Celebration of Christmas, and a joint concert with Bentfield, Birchanger, Elsenham and Henham schools at 6.00pm on Wednesday 15th December at MMCC. This 'Stansted Cluster' of primary schools is a new collaboration and we are looking forward to working in partnership in many ways in future.

We are working on two other exciting projects, which will be ongoing all this year. One is to achieve the International School award, which includes building up a partnership with a school overseas. The other is a complete review of our systems for engaging the 'Pupil Voice' and the use of talk across the whole curriculum. One further task has been to renew our school website. We are grateful to Mrs Nicola Ward whose expertise has helped to set up the new site. It is still being developed and staff and pupils are preparing further material to be added. However, if you would like to see the results so far the new address is:

www.st-marys-stansted-essex-sch-uk.org.

If you are new to the area and would like to have a look at our school, please give us a ring on 812212 to arrange a visit.

Christine Tonkins
Headteacher



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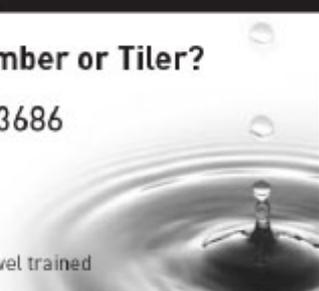
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ROTARY CLUB OF STANSTED STORT VALLEY



Excitement is rising with preparations to take Santa and his elves to visit children and his older fans round the streets of Stansted. Santa is hoping children will be listening out and come to greet him as he passes their houses. Santa starts his rounds at 6.30pm and tries hard to see all his friends by 8.00pm. His schedule for December is:

Friday 17th: Five Acres, Croasdaile Close, Gilbey Crescent, Croasdaile Road, Rainsford Road, Queens Close, White Bear, Alderbury Road, Poultney Road, Mary McArthur Place, Longcroft, Loates Pasture.

Monday 20th: Spencer Close, Greenfields, St Johns Road, St Johns Crescent, Burnells Way, Brewery Lane, Meadowcroft, Colts Field, The Champions, High Mead, Birchalls, High Lane, Lower Street, Gall End.

Tuesday 21st: Canons Mead, Bentfield Gardens, Cawkell Close, Bentfield Road, Wetherfield, Bentfield Causeway, Blythwood Gardens, Old Bell Close.

Wednesday 22nd: Maitland Road, Mount Drive, The Spinney, Stoneyfield Drive, Stoney Place, Rochford Close, Brook Road, West Road, Stoney Common Road, Manor Road, Mountfitchet Road, Priory Drive, St Marys Drive, Park Road.



Colin Woodward accepting a sweet and sending Santa off on his rounds last year.

A few weeks ago we were guests of the Rotary Club of Sawbridgeworth when we were introduced, by fundraiser Malcolm Wells, to his charity Canine Friends. Barry O'Connell, an ex military, ex sportsman paraplegic, then showed us how his life has been transformed since Guy chose him to be his 'partner'. Guy, a large smooth haired black retriever, has been trained to carry out a series of amazing tasks to help the physically disabled to live a more independent life and to detect mood changes which could be life threatening. Dogs trained for the blind are good but dogs from Canine Partners seem even better and the deep joy that Guy brought to Barry and vice versa is amazing. By way of light relief some members and partners enjoyed an evening at the Cambridge Theatre for a production of 'Calendar Girls'. Everyone will remember the international sensation caused by the WI ladies posing in the nude for their calendar. Now ten years later, the charity that was intended to raise about

£500 for a memorial to a member's husband who died from leukaemia, has gone on to raise almost three million pounds for the Leukaemia charity.

Peter Latham
Tel: 507294

Email: yp.latham@tiscali.co.uk



TWAM - Tools with a Mission

I have been involved with Tools with a Mission for a number of years collecting on behalf of my local church, friends and work colleagues. In recent months I have become more involved by becoming an area collector for the Herts & Essex border region. TWAM is a nationwide Christian charity that collects, refurbishes, and then distributes tools and equipment through missionaries abroad, to communities or needy families to help them become more self reliant and able to provide for their everyday needs. Tools, machines and equipment from the following trades are always in great demand; carpenter, metalworker, engineer, plumber, leatherworker, cobbler, dressmaker, tailor, caterer, electrician, car/cycle mechanic and gardener. Sewing machines, knitting machines and typewriters are sought after, as well as computer equipment that is less than five years old. The gift of tools to TWAM cannot be underestimated as it could mean the first step for a family to be self-supporting at the same time as allowing the missionaries to provide help in their local communities. For full details of the work of TWAM and a detailed list of tools and equipment wanted please go to their website: www.twam.co.uk. If you have tools to donate, please contact me to arrange collection.

Peter A. Webb
Tel: 813954

Email: pawtools@hotmail.co.uk

Tools For Self Reliance



The Stansted group of TFSR has run for nearly 20 years and is now shutting up shop. I am grateful to all the volunteers who have contributed to its success in any way. Sadly many of them have now died. People like Judy Goddard, Ted Parsons, Roy Stebbings and Fred Morris spent many hours repairing and sharpening tools in my small workshop. Very much still alive are Rod Davies and Tony Wellings! The aims of TWAM and TFSR are similar, so I am delighted to commend the work that Peter Webb is doing on behalf of TWAM (see his article), and it means that there is still a tool re-cycling facility in Stansted. TFSR continues to thrive around the UK and you can find out more on their website at www.tfsr.org.

Mike Dyer
Tel: 814059

FIREWORKS

Traditionally used only on 5th November, fireworks are increasingly forming part of the celebrations at other times too. If you are planning to use fireworks during the 'Festive Season' please be aware that the resulting noise causes distress to some, particularly animals, and act considerately.

Editor

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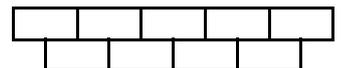


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The under-eights at Grove Cottage enjoyed a full day holiday trip during half-term week. We hired a coach, which made this excursion a little more expensive. With 17 youngsters and 17 carers the journey by coach was much easier, and of course the traditional singing on the coach added to the fun. We hope to organise outings in all the school holidays because the children enjoy them and to give the parents a break.

In November we held a Communications Course to teach sign language. The course leader, Christine Chester of Hatfield Broad Oak, learned to sign as a child because her grandparents were profoundly deaf. When her daughter, Anderley, was born with special needs, it was completely natural for mother and daughter to communicate in sign language. By starting early, Christine provided a bridge to help Anderley avoid the frustration and temper tantrums that result when children can't make themselves understood. At the end of Sunday's course a delighted mother, Vicky Barnes, said "We learned to sign, sing and read in a completely relaxed way and gained a lot from talking to other parents. I am sure my daughter Freya's life will be enriched because of this experience." The three tutors, Christine, Sara and Dawn, all have years of experience with their own children and we were delighted to see the resources available from the Essex Library Service. Despite the benefits of sign language, until now there was nowhere in the area that taught parents and nursery workers how to communicate using sign language. Grove Cottage initiated these courses to fill that gap. Christine has created a practical, hands-on, interactive course that is full of fun and laughter to give people the confidence to start signing. Christine believes signing is helpful to all babies as a way of speeding up the development of speech.

David Scott
Tel: 656085

MANUDEN SINGERS

Christmas Concert 7.30pm Sunday 12th December

Our Christmas concert is a performance of Bach's 'Christmas Oratorio' – one of the greatest works in the choral repertoire, which we will perform with full choir, the wonderful support once again of the Manuden Players, and a good line-up of soloists. Chloe Morgan, soprano, is making her way as a soloist on the London scene, whilst Katy Edgecombe has been a well-known contralto soloist in the Cambridge area for many years; the tenor is our own Jeff Phillips, who can always be relied upon for a dramatic performance; and the bass part is taken by James Priest, who has been awarded an apprenticeship this year with Sir John Eliot Gardiner's Monteverdi Choir, so for him, there are exciting times ahead!



The performance will take place in Manuden Church, and all proceeds will go to the Church funds to support their building project, which is about to start when the bats go into hibernation and won't therefore be disturbed! Included in the project will be a toilet and kitchenette, so Manuden Church is being catapulted from medieval times into the 21st century! Tickets £10 adults, £5 children available from Fiona Bengtsen on 812157, or at the door.

Ian Priest

Cayless Chilli Tournament

We were thrilled that once again, Fran Cayless made the trip down from Nottinghamshire to play in this popular tournament. Fran presented a trophy to the Club when she moved away five years ago. Her wish was that we should play a fun doubles tournament and enjoy a chilli meal afterwards. This year's tournament attracted a full entry of 16 players. The final was won by Joe Hollis and Fiona Pye, who defeated Matthieu Glasson and Kate Rutter 6-3 in an exciting final.

Clower Girls' Doubles Tournament

This was held on 17th October. Eight girls took part in the round-robin tournament and then competed in the knock-out stages. This year's winners were Ellie Sykes and Georgina Hogg, who defeated Evelyn Carter and Anna Rutherford 6-4 in the final. Honorary Club member, Pat Clower, presented the trophies and prizes to the winners and runners-up.

Clower Boys' Doubles Tournament

This was held on Sunday 7th November. Ten boys supported the event, which this year was won by Matt Hollis and Trent Williamson who beat Lewis Bryant and Devon Williamson 6-0 in the final.

Date for your diary:

The next Ladies' Night will be on Monday 13th December between 7.00 and 10.00pm. All are welcome! (Please note the later start time.) The first Ladies' Night of 2011 will be on Monday 10th January, starting at 7.00pm. The Committee is hoping to organise a tennis event for New Year's Day. Full details will be emailed to members nearer the time.

Coaching

For details please contact Chris Hollis on 319155 or Martyn Taplin (Monday night adult coaching session) on 816386. Chris's classes for younger children have now stopped over the winter months. Chris will be looking to start new classes in February, especially for seven to nine year olds. Please contact Chris if you would like to be put on his waiting list.

Used tennis balls

Used tennis balls can be purchased for £1 per tube of four - choose your own! Please contact Jan Hollis on 812073.

Club Playing Sessions

Members are encouraged to attend these open sessions:
Wednesday from 9.00am and 6.00pm
Friday from 9.30am. Sunday from 10.00am

Contacts

Richard Mott (Secretary) 466348, Janet Hollis (Chairman) 812073, Daphne Lunnon (Membership Secretary) 817574.



Chris Hollis

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Mountfitchet Trust Fund Breakfast Meeting

MMCC held its inaugural Business Breakfast in October in the Library. Guests included several local business people, many of whom have actively supported the College in recent years, plus members of the College Trust. The purpose of the day was to introduce people to the College leadership team, outline some of the key developments taking place under this new leadership and to consider ways in which the local business community can support the education of young people. Following the success of the breakfast, it has been agreed to run one each term, the next being held in February. The idea is to develop specific themes for each event so that businesses can begin to work in partnership with education and help us to help them. Thank you to all who attended.

Catherine Anderson
Headteacher

GCSE Certificate Evening

Former students and families returned for a very enjoyable evening to celebrate last summer's GCSE successes. Certificate presentation was followed by refreshments provided by the PTA. Students shared news of their new schools and colleges, although many said that they would have welcomed the opportunity to continue their studies at MMCC!

Mr P Smith
Deputy Headteacher

MMCC Community Team

On 23rd October, students of the MMCC Community Team, ventured out once again to Stansted Library. This time, with the help of Reece Bird, Jack Grimes, Jasper Gneiting, Timothy Hopkins and Cosmina Miscu, the team made animal masks with the children after they had been read a Dr Zeuss story! Although it was a quiet morning, the children that did take part in the mask-making workshop had lots of fun and so did our team! Many thanks to all who support us; don't forget to look out for us around Christmas time when we will be back at the library for some more stories and crafts!

Miss L Gittins

College Production - Wizard of Oz 16th-18th February

MMCC's whole College musical this year is 'The Wizard of Oz'. Following the outstanding success of 'Oliver!' last year, we are hoping to generate even more funding to make this year's production a visual spectacle! We have been running some in-house fundraisers within College, including a cake sale and a 'Wizard of Oz' themed bazaar. In November we held a FIFA competition whereby students played to become the next MMCC FIFA champion. Tickets are available from the College reception from January. Everyone is welcome - we look forward to seeing you! We are looking for sponsorship from the local community with a promise to give you an advert or mention in our production programme. If you are able to offer sponsorship of any kind, please email our producer: lheadley@mountfitchet.e-folio.org.uk.

Miss C Beard
Head of Creative Arts

Christmas Concerts

MMCC will be holding their annual Christmas Service at 12.00pm on Tuesday 14th December in St Mary's Church. Everyone is welcome. The Christmas Concert is at 7.00pm on Wednesday 8th December in the College hall. Tickets priced at £3 adults and £2 concessions will be available from College reception at the beginning of December.

Mr M Rowlands
Head of Music

Geography Trip – Walton on the Naze

Year 9 enjoyed an educational trip to Walton on the Naze where we learnt how coastal erosion works and what protection can prevent this from happening. Our first stop was under the Naze tower where we could see an example of slumped cliffs and different coastal defences they use to slow down the effects of erosion, and where we were able to eat our lunch and buy ice-cream. Sadly however, high tide was in and we were unable to go on the beach. Despite that, we all had lots of fun and enjoyed a day out of the classroom!

Ellise Headley 9HB
Natalie Bailey 9AL



STANSTED BEAVERS

If you were out and about early one Saturday morning recently, you might have been surprised to see a band of marauding pirates out hunting for stolen treasure ... but a closer look would have revealed that they were in fact Beaver Scouts, taking part in a pirate-themed sleepover. Kitted out with cutlasses, bandanas and eye patches they had made themselves, the Beavers certainly looked the part. We set up our indoor camp on Friday evening, complete with Jolly Roger, and then had an evening of games and campfire songs. The Beavers were very excited to be sleeping in tents, and couldn't wait to go to bed! Despite the rain lashing down during the night, thankfully the next day brought sunshine, and we set out on our quest to find the treasure, which had apparently been stolen by a crocodile! Eventually, after unravelling clues we tracked down the guilty party, and the Beavers managed to reclaim the chocolate gold coins.



We have also been busy with autumn craft activities and getting ready for winter by making bird feeders and some lovely gifts for Christmas. If you have a child who would like to become a Beaver, please contact me on 812825. We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Dot Staunton

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DAY CENTRE NEWS

Our next lottery draw is on 13th December and we will have another at the end of January. If you would like to buy a ticket to help support the Day Centre, please pop in and see us. We are also collecting goodies for our Christmas raffle, so if you have anything lying around that we can relieve you of, it'll be well received!

Just a reminder to all that the Day Centre is available for groups to hire; great facilities, including a well fitted kitchen and spacious dining hall. Are there any more budding artists out there who would like to join our Art Group on a Monday 11.00am-1.00pm every week? We can supply materials and tuition from our experienced organiser, Sue. Lots of autumnal scenes to inspire at the moment.

We have two excellent cooks working in our kitchen producing delicious meals three days a week. Why not give yourself a day off in the kitchen and come and see what else the Day Centre has to offer while enjoying some good hot food? For example, the toenail cutting service will be at the Day Centre again on 11th January. Please ring 01245 346106 to book an appointment.

For more information on any of the above, give us a call!

Kat Lupton
Manager
Tel: 815091 or 812144

STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB



At the time of writing this article Stansted FC are at the top of the Essex Senior League and we are still in both the FA Vase and Essex Senior Cup, so our team are flying the flag proudly for Stansted and are playing rather well at the moment – but please come and see for yourselves. In the 'local' derby against Takeley, which took place on 6th November at Hargrave Park, we won 2-0. We drew Romford away in the Essex Senior Cup on 2nd November which we won 2-4 in a somewhat acrimonious game, and we are pleased to announce that in the next round we have drawn Grays at home on Wednesday 1st December – kick off 7.45pm.

On the social side of things we are pleased to announce that we have booked vocalist Laura Jay to perform for your entertainment on Sunday 28th November. She will be performing from 4.00pm–7.00pm but the Club will be open as usual from 1.00pm. For details please ring Terri on 812897 after 4.00pm. The Committee of Stansted Football Club would like to wish all the readers of the 'Link' a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and we look forward to updating you on events from Hargrave Park in 2011.

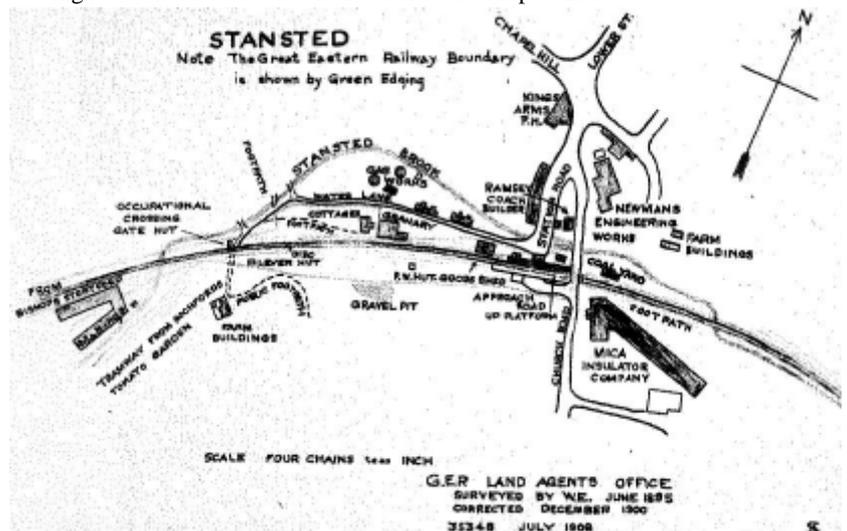
Lynne Furber
Treasurer

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET RAILWAY STATION

Our cover photograph by Tudor Owen illustrates part of the station as it now is. The 'Link' gratefully acknowledges the research and information provided by Ralph Phillips. This article refers to the period up to circa 1990, so there is scope in a future issue for someone to describe developments since electrification. Offers to the Editor, please.

The extension of the railway line north from Bishops Stortford was conceived in 1821 with the intention of linking the navigations of the Rivers Stort and Cam during what was still the canal age. In 1834 the idea was developed for an extension through Stansted to Cambridge and York, to which Parliament gave approval in 1836. Early plans were made by the Northern and Eastern Railway Company, but financial problems led to amalgamation with the Eastern Counties Railway and in 1862 incorporation into the Great Eastern Railway. The existing line from Shoreditch to Bishop's Stortford was to the 5' gauge but in two months in 1844 it was converted without service interruption to standard 4' 8½"

The site intended for Stansted station was land below the present Old Bell Close but in an early exercise of people power (aided it has to be said by William Fuller Maitland) it was changed to its present location. In those days local freight was as important as passengers, so following the opening of the line and completion of the station in 1845, sidings were installed on what is now the lowest part of Elms Farm and either side of the line by Black Bridge (for coal), on the present Riverside Business Park (for malt and grain) and by the Stoney Common Road Bridge (for Rochfords nursery). In 1942 the present car and skate park became the sidings for fuel and bombs for the US 9th Air Force. Older residents remember the laden lorries being driven like "the Devil out of Hell" nose to tail up a blacked-out Church Road. These sidings were later used for construction of the Airport link.



The station gardens were laid out by Station Master Gawthrop in 1926 and latterly tended by Porter Doug Hudgell when its 6500 plants earned a two page article in 'Popular Gardening' and several company awards. The footbridge was at the north end of the platforms until electrification, while near it on the down platform from 1931 to the 70s was W H Smith's newspaper kiosk and a gent's toilet. Happy days! The decorative wind braces supporting the roof are of the Great Eastern period, as are the station building, walls, and waiting room. The 1875 signal box was a major feature until electrification, when it was demolished. However, the greatest change brought about by electrification and an increasing population was the lengthening of the platforms, initially to take eight carriages, and later 12. In the '50s and '60s there was a siding south of the up platform where an empty train waited until it was shunted on to the line to become the 8.28am to Liverpool Street. This, with its first class coaches, was popular with the more affluent of the business and professional community who then formed a significant proportion of Stansted's commuters. The last Stationmaster between 1957 and 1966 was the gentle ex-Arnhem paratrooper George Howell. If space permits, some photographs in the next issue.

Ralph Phillips and Derek Honour

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