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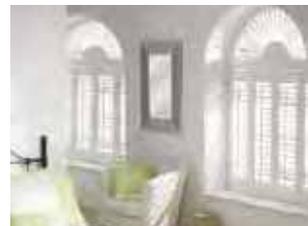
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Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

The Link

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Stansted CM24 8HG

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CM24 8AH

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

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EDITORIAL



The new year has started off well with the news that Taylor Wimpey's appeal to build on land off Bentfield Green has been dismissed (see page 19) thanks to a lot of hard work and dogged perseverance by the Save Stansted Village group and local councillors. No doubt there will be other battles to be fought on planning issues in the coming months, but the knowledge that 'people power' can succeed is very encouraging. It hasn't been such a good start to the year for those residents whose houses were burgled over the Christmas period. Sadly, burglars are still targeting Stansted and the police are appealing for our help to catch them (see page 13). Please be extra vigilant both day and night, and report anything suspicious straight away.

It's fitting that this first issue of 2014 should also be the first Link magazine to have some colour on the inside pages. We're always striving to improve our parish magazine and are very excited at this latest change. It's lovely to be able to print your photos in colour at last, and we hope you'll be as pleased as we are with the finished product. As ever, your feedback is most welcome.

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Stansted network is compiled by Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council.

DISCLAIMER Opinions expressed in this magazine are given freely and do not necessarily represent those of the editorial committee, nor is any culpability accepted for work undertaken by advertisers.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Looking at, or looking through?

The poet George Herbert wrote, "A man that looks on glass, on it may stay his eye; or if he pleaseth, through it pass, and then the heaven espy." In other words, when you look at something you can just see it as it is on the surface, or you can take time to see it in depth. Seeing in depth adds the dimension of meaning. When we look at the world how many of us take time to see it in depth? Our economic system encourages us just to see the world as a collection of resources to be exploited rather than something to be valued and appreciated for more than its mere money value. When we look at others do we see all that they are? I'm often amazed by what I discover about elderly people and the astonishing things they have done in their lifetimes. The people we walk past in the street or ignore on the train have stories to tell that would perhaps amaze or horrify us. The people we dismiss as with collective nouns – asylum seekers, economic migrants, benefits recipients – all of these are individuals with their own stories; and if we took time to hear those stories rather than just the collective descriptions we would realise that there is no 'them', just us.

Above all if we look at ourselves we would see our own astonishing and terrifying possibilities. We are all of us in the process of becoming (in the words of CS Lewis) "a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare". Every decision we make points us in one or other of those directions.

Which way are you going to head in 2014?



Paul Wilkin
Rector of St John's Church



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

Preachers for February

2 nd	10.30am	The Worship Team – New Directions
9 th	10.30am	Christine Heyhoe
16 th	10.30am	Michael Dyer
23 rd	10.30am	Rev'd Stuart Veitch - Communion

The Place on the Hill – every Wednesday and Friday 9.30am- 12.30pm

Our Friday drop-in is proving very popular, with Art for All on the first Friday, and storytime on the third Friday of each month. Come and join us – all ages are welcome.



Shalom

Our meeting on Monday 10th February is at 7 Blythwood Gardens, when Roger Harrison (son of Phyllis) is giving an illustrated talk on his trip to Albania with the Bible Society. Our At Home on Monday 24th February is at 62 St John's Road. Both meetings start at 8.00pm and all are welcome.

Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

Clerk	Sue Moloney 5 Chatter End, Farnham Geeen Bishop's Stortford Tel: 01279 771405
Meeting	Sunday, 10.30am

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Therese of Lisieux
High Lane

Priest	Father John Garrett 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



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 Sally Chapman
Website: www.stanstedstjohns.btck.com

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

Director of Music: Anne Brooks
Email: anne.brooks22@yahoo.co.uk

Church Hall Bookings: Rachel Pocknell
Tel or text: 07972 373994
Email: stjohs.hallbookings@gmail.com

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, Thursday and Saturday

8.30am Morning Prayer There are services of Holy Communion on the first Tuesdays and Wednesdays of the month in Norman Court, Hargrave House and Broome End Nursing Homes.

Tuesday
9.00am St John's Tots

Wednesday
9.00am Morning Prayer
10.00am Holy Communion

Monday-Thursday and Saturday

5.00pm Evening Prayer

MAJOR REPAIRS AT ST JOHN'S

Two significant repairs have recently been completed at St John's Church. The first repair involved replacing the roof of the South Aisle, after the lead was stolen 18 months ago. This work was carried out by Lodge and Sons, who replaced the temporary covering with a lead replacement metal that will be extremely difficult to remove. The new roof will weather to the colour of lead. The picture opposite shows the finished roof just after completion. The cost of this work was partly met by a grant from Essex Environment Trust, who donated £15,000. The congregation raised the remainder of the money required to carry out the work.



The second repair involved a complete refurbishment of the wood block floor in the Church, originally laid during construction of the Church some 120 years ago. It was loose and worn and had become dangerous in places. It was necessary to remove all the furniture and fittings to allow the floor to be raised, cleaned down and refitted before sand-



ing, staining and lacquering could take place. This work was carried out by Between Times, a specialist firm based in Stanstead Abbots, near Ware. The work was partly funded by a grant from Viridor Credits, who generously provided £15,000 towards the cost. The remainder of the cost was met by another grant from Stansted Parish Council coupled with money raised by the congregation through concerts, summer fairs and other donations. The Clergy and Churchwardens at St John's would like to thank everyone who responded to their appeal for funds to conduct this much needed work and especially Viridor Credits and Essex Environment Trust, without whose involvement the continued use of this well-loved, unique building would have been in doubt.

Michael Howes
Tel: 653285

APOLOGIES

In the recent tribute to Martin Cowan (Dec/Jan issue page 11) the word 'pedant' appears in describing Martin's views as a Parish Councillor. It should have read 'independent' – a similar word but with a totally different meaning. Apologies to Martin's family and friends, and to Greg Snow for any offence this error caused.

LETTER FROM THE QUEEN



Following the flower festival held in St John's Church as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June 2012, I wrote to the Queen enclosing six photographs of the displays.

I was very pleased to receive a card and the letter from her lady in waiting, Susan Hussey.

Pauline Mantle

ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the winners of the November and December draws, who collectively scooped a total of £550 in prize money with the extra draw in December for £200 – hopefully this will help alleviate some of their Christmas expenditure! The winners were:

November

£100 No 29 - Mrs Pat Clower
£ 50 No 52 - Mrs Nicola Ward
£ 25 No 80 - Mr Matthew Hollis

December

£200 No 182 - Mr John Elliott
£100 No 172 - Mrs Delia Joyce
£ 50 No 164 - Mrs Barbara Johnson
£ 25 No 210 - Mrs Eileen Quinn

The February draws will take place on Sunday 23rd February following the 9.30am service in St John's Church.

Francine Cope
Tel: 814562



Celebration of Christmas

St John's Church was again packed out for this annual event which included musical items from St Mary's and Bentfield Primary Schools, St John's Junior Choir, and our specially formed CTS choir and band, along with readings plus traditional carols for everyone. Thanks to all who helped to make the afternoon successful, especially Alan Corbishley for his excellent role as master of ceremonies and Anne Brooks as musical director. Thanks also to everyone who gave generously to the retiring collection of £302, which will be winging its way to Care Network (Uttlesford), along with the £236 Village Carol Singing money.

Carol Singing around the Village



This Christmas we were spared the ice and snow of previous years, and even the rain and winds cleared away for our two forays onto the streets of Stansted. Our collection for the two nights raised £236. Our thanks go to all who opened their doors and gave generously to our tireless collectors, to those who sang and played instruments, and to those who provided refreshments afterwards.



Photos by Sean Clark

CTS AGM

Tuesday 18th February at 8.00pm in the Free Church. The quarterly forum will follow the AGM. All are most welcome.

Lent

The churches are doing something very different for Lent this year which involves pancakes – see page 31 for details!

Mike and Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059



COMMUNITY CHOIR

4th Birthday Concert

7.30 pm Sat 1st Feb
Harlow Playhouse

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Tel 431945 or online
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In support of St Clare Hospice

Uttlesforde Orchestra
www.uttlesforde.net

7.30pm Sat 8th Feb
Saffron Hall, S Walden
George Harliono piano

Stravinsky Symphony in C
Liszt Piano Concerto No 1
Brahms Symphony No 2

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Forest Hall School PTA 

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VILLAGE EVENTS

February

1 Sat	Herts & Soul Concert	Harlow Playhouse 7.30 pm
5 Wed	Mountfitchet Club Garden Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
6 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
7 Fri	Stansted Business Forum Ladies' Night	Linden House 7.30 am Tennis Club 7 pm
7/14/21 Fri	Investigators	Free Church Hall 6.15 - 7.45 pm
8 Sat	Uttlesforde Orchestra Concert	Saffron Hall, S Walden 7.30 pm
9 Sun	Car Boot Sale	Forest Hall School 11 am - 2 pm
10 Mon	Pilots Shalom	Free Church Hall 6 - 7.30 pm 7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
11 Tue	Link copy due in today	before 12 noon
13 Thu	WI	Day Centre 7.45 pm
15 & 22 Sat	Stansted Family Café	Day Centre 9.30 - 11 am
18 Tue	CTS AGM and Forum	Free Church Hall 8 pm
20 Thu	Stansted U3A	St John's Hall 1.30 for 2 pm
23 Sun	Snowdrop Sunday	Easton Lodge 11.30 am - 4 pm
24 Mon	Shalom At Home	62 St John's Road 8 pm
28 Fri	Fish and Chip Friday	Day Centre 12.30 pm

UGLEY FARMERS' MARKET

10.00 am - Noon Sat 15th Feb
Ugley Village Hall

Meat ~ Poultry ~ Eggs ~ Honey
Bread ~ Home Baking ~ Preserves
Fruit & Veg ~ Skincare ~ Crafts
Knitting ~ Cards ~ Kindling Wood

Refreshments with cake and bacon rolls



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23rd February & 2nd March

11.30 am - 4 pm (last entry 3 pm)
Complimentary guided tour at 1pm

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*To advertise your March event on this page tel 814059 or
em ail events@stanstedlink.org.uk by 11th Feb
Inclusion subject to editorial decision & availability of space*

 and Chameleon Arts Orchestra

Bach *Magnificat*
Handel *Dixit Dominus*

7.30 pm Sat 15th March
Saffron Hall, S Walden

Tickets: £16 - £20 plus concessions
online www.saffronhall.com
SW Tourist Office 01799 524002
or on the door



8 pm Sat 22nd March
St John's Church

Kammerphilharmonie Europa

Borodin - Holst - Wolf - Fauré
Bach - Schubert - Albinoni

*Tickets adults £15, under 18s free
from Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford;
Stansted Carpets; Sonia Levy 815282,
or at the door*



PANCAKE PARTY

Eat pancakes and look after your heart!

7 pm Shrove Tuesday 4th March
St Theresa's Parish Centre

Everyone welcome - free parking

Part of the churches' initiative
to raise funds for two
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QUIZ NIGHT

7 for 7.30 pm Sat 15th Mar
Forest Hall School

Tickets £10 incl Ploughman's
from Sarah on 07528 520016
Tables 8 or individuals

All Welcome ~ *BYO Drinks & Nibbles*

Stansted Millers

AGM with Wine & Nibbles
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STANSTED 10K FUN RUN

This year's Fun Run will be on Sunday 13th July at 11.00am. The organising committee has remained largely unchanged since the Fun Run began in 1986. We feel that it is time to hand over the reins, and are delighted that the St Clare Hospice fundraising team, led by Anna Baldwin, will now be responsible for the organisation. The event will be very similar to previous years, but the money raised (usually in the region of £5,000) will all be for St Clare Hospice, rather than being split between several charities. Many of you will know what a wonderful service is provided by St Clare, and we hope that those of you who have helped in the past will be able to give your support to this very worthy cause. Further details will be available in subsequent editions of The Link and on the website www.stansted10k.org.uk.

Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059

Everybody at St Clare Hospice is extremely excited about being involved with the Stansted 10k Fun Run and we very much thank Marion and her team for selecting us to pass the event to. The money raised from the fun run will support the local community, within the Stansted area and beyond, by helping us provide our Day Therapy services and our InPatient Unit. We hope that you will be able to support St Clare Hospice on 13th July by taking part. I look forward to seeing you there!

Anna Baldwin
Tel: 01279 773750
Email: anna.baldwin@stclarehospice.org.uk

ST CLARE HOSPICE

Many thanks to the Stansted Business Forum for the amazing sum of £300 from their Christmas Lunch raffle. The Forum's support is gratefully appreciated. Thank you also to the customers of The Dog and Duck and The Kings Arms who often donate their quiz winnings to the Hospice. We do not take people's generosity for granted.

Onesie Week 10th-16th February

We are once again inviting local schools and youth groups, such as the Brownies and Scouts, to wear their onesies for the day in exchange for a donation to St Clare's. If your school or youth group would like to take part in Onesie Week, call 773750 or email: fund@stclarehospice.org.uk.

St Clare Hospice Friends Quiz

Saturday 15th March 7.00pm for 7.30pm Forest Hall School. Teams of eight or less. Bring your own drinks and nibbles. Tickets £10, including Ploughman's from Sarah on 07528 520016 or email: sarah.calder@stclarehospice.org.uk.

Sarah Calder
Community Fundraiser



Caroline Bore
St Clare Friends



CHANGES AT THE LINK

At our AGM in November Derek Honour stepped down from his role as Chairman, and Malcolm Lloyd was elected as the new Chairman. Derek was one of the founding members of The Link back in 1979, serving as its Editor for many years as well as Chairman. Under his guidance the magazine has grown from a few pages of mainly church news with a few adverts and a fairly limited distribution, to the comprehensive, award-winning 40-page magazine that it is today, delivered to every home and business in Stansted.

Production of The Link has always been very much a team effort, but every team needs a leader and Derek has fulfilled that role admirably with his unique combination of tact, patience, good humour and common sense. A presentation was made to him at the AGM, and he was thanked for all his hard work and dedication to our village magazine. Enjoy your well-earned retirement Derek!



Calling All Gardeners and Puzzlers!

We are still looking for someone (or more than one) to share his/her/their gardening tips during the growing season. Just one or two tips/hints per month is all that's needed. Similarly we'd like to include a crossword/sudoku or other puzzle on a more regular basis. If you're interested in fulfilling either of these roles, please get in touch.

Yvonne Ayres
Editor
Tel: 814706
Email: editor@stanstedlink.org.uk



Stansted Cricket Club

The Club is in the process of arranging winter nets; details will be available shortly. Junior outdoor training begins in early May. The Club is arranging a tour in Dorset 23rd-27th June. Any former or retired players interested in joining the tour as player, umpire or scorer would be most welcome. Anyone interested in scoring next season on a regular basis please contact me. Adults wishing to join the Club please contact me; juniors should contact Keith Ayres on 814471.

David Hedge
Hon. Secretary
Tel: 812509

Dylan's Dog Walks

Rob Fuller

2 Miller Close
Foresthall Park
Stansted Mountfitchet
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Dylan's Dog Walks

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STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET U3A

www.stanstedu3a.org



The next meeting is on Thursday 20th February at St John's Church Hall, doors open at 1.30pm. The speaker is Nick Wickenden, Chelmsford Museum's Manager who will be telling us about The Hylands House Project, to restore this beautiful 18th Century house and estate. If you have any unwanted goodies, which can be used as raffle prizes, donations would be most gratefully received. Thank you to those who have already donated. Thank you, also, to Stansted Co-Op, Intercounty, Lino Thomas and Linden House for their support of the Christmas raffle and for donating prizes.

Accounts

As a registered charity, we need to have our annual accounts examined by a suitably experienced person. Unfortunately, the person who has done this for us previously is no longer able to do so and we are therefore urgently looking for a volunteer to help us out. This would only take up a couple of hours of time once a year. This person is not allowed to be a member of our U3A. You do not need to be a qualified accountant, but you would need to have some experience with book-keeping or reviewing accounts, either from your work or from a voluntary activity. If you can help with this, please contact Sally on 647263.

Trips and Outings

An Evening with Pam Ayres has been arranged for May and four places still remain. Please contact Cherry on 817140 if you would like to go. Cherry is also putting a programme together for the Art/Theatre group so if you have any trip ideas please let her know. The Stansted U3A Singers were in action in December entertaining residents at both Premier Court in Thorley and the Stanley Wilson Lodge in Saffron Walden. They also provided the entertainment at the Much Hadham Golf Club's Christmas lunch, the fourth year in a row that they have been asked to perform there, and were delighted with the standing ovation.

Groups

Interested in losing weight and toning up your upper body whilst enjoying the great outdoors? A new group is under way to learn the techniques for Nordic Walking. The first hour of a four hour course was attended by three U3A members in January who met on Bentfield Green. The special poles are available for use from Rob, the trainer. If you are interested in doing the four-hour course please let me know so I can arrange other training sessions. Visit our website for full details.

Seminars

We are very pleased to launch a series of Saturday Morning Seminars which will be open to the public as well as U3A members. Our venue will be the Free Church Hall and our aim is to provide about four seminars a year which will be fun, interactive and informative. As far as possible we will use excellent communicators who have a passion for and expertise in their subjects. Who knows? You might be inspired to take up a completely new interest! We kick off on 22nd March so put that in your diary now.

For further information about Stansted U3A please contact Chris (Chair) 817587 or Sandra (Secretary) 814304.



Caroline Bore
Tel: 813938

A lively group aimed at 7-10 year olds (but with some flexibility for younger school-age children) who enjoy exploring subjects and activities in a fun and interactive way. This term will include some stomp-style drumming activities, adding more pictures to our giant timeline and a mix of new games and familiar favourites, craft activities, stories etc. Last term we explored themes relating to Thankfulness and Remembrance through biscuit-making, drama, Bible stories, games and discussions, and made cards for people who often help us, but rarely get a special "thank you".

Many of the children took part in a live comedy-drama at Taste *Christmas* in December, complete with costumes and even a few puppets. There were lots of giggles over using microphones for the first time! We meet Fridays 6.15pm-7.45pm at the Free Church Hall and there are some spaces available this term (no charge). Please contact me.

Ros Page

Tel: 810813

Email: rospagemusic@yahoo.com

WANTED: PHOTOS FOR FRONT COVER



Our stock of photos is dwindling fast now that we change the front cover each month. We're always looking out for different ideas/subjects for our covers. Have you been involved in a local event, and taken a good photo that captures the moment? Have you taken some fantastic scenic shots whilst walking around Stansted with that new camera you got for Christmas?

If you have any interesting photos you think will be suitable, please email them to us (jpeg format) at editor@stanstedlink.org.uk or give me a ring on 814706 if you're unable to send them electronically. Ideally photos should be of portrait orientation with the main subject towards the left and below centre, to allow for the heading and logos to be inserted without covering up the best bits of the picture. We like the pictures to be topical/seasonal and Stansted related and we do need them well in advance, ie by the first of the preceding month at the latest. I look forward to receiving your contributions!

Yvonne Ayres
Editor

STOP PRESS

If anyone has a suitable photo taken at a local Pancake Day event and can get it to me by 1st February for the March cover please get in touch as soon as possible!

Editor

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SKYWATCH

A monthly look at an aspect of the night sky



You may have heard, a few days before Christmas that something spectacular might, just might, be happening in the sky around Christmas. A large lump of rock, which may have been wandering through the Solar System (or even from another system) for billions of years, had found its way towards the Sun. The trajectory of this lump was very close to the Sun: so close that we could only wait and see whether it would swing round the Sun or fall in to it. Unfortunately it was the latter. Had the lump been able to swing a wider course round the Sun and gone back to the black, cold depths of the solar system it would have been called a comet. As it got closer to the Sun the comet would begin to sport a tail as it swung round. But the tail is driven by the radiation of the Sun as it blows its tight curve which means that our lump of rock would be invisible as the Sun itself blows the boiling detritus of the lump in to the universe. It's best to stay on Earth with a telescope with these things. There are quite a few regular comets that come round the Sun, though they get smaller every orbit. The most famous comet is Halley's. He was the first to track a comet and predicted when it would return. He also realised that he would never see it again in his lifetime because his comet toddles round every 72 years. I saw Halley's Comet around 27 years ago so I doubt that I will see it again either. Finally, you should know that comets have been thought as harbingers of doom for they can turn up at any time, so keep your fingers crossed and if I'm not here next month you know what's happened!

Martin West
Mooncraft Productions

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www.uttlesfordcab.org.uk

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For the last 13 years Uttlesford CAB has been running a specialised service for people living with disabilities who need advice or help managing their finances. Access to advice can be very difficult, and there are many people who do not claim the benefits to which they may be entitled, such as Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and the new Personal Independent Payment (PIP). A one-to-one home visit from an experienced and understanding adviser can provide help with filling in complex forms and purchasing aids and appliances, getting a blue badge, or lowering fuel bills. The implementation of PIP is taking longer than expected and there is a backlog of medical assessments, but we can help and provide reassurance. The team often works with clients who have been referred by health professionals or the social services, but if you, or someone you know, might benefit from this service please call 01799 618840. Our general team can cover questions on benefit-related issues but will pass you onto the Home Visit team if their help is needed. For more information please contact me.

Kate Robson
Tel: 01799 526557



A great time was had by all at our Christmas Party. The children enjoyed a visit from Father Christmas, who gave everyone a present.



The adults enjoyed making decorations, which were then displayed in the church over Christmas.



Plus there were games for everyone – with prizes!



The Place is open from 9.30am-12.30pm on Wednesdays and Fridays, so why not come along to the foyer of the Free Church? No need to bring your purse, everything is free of charge. We look forward to seeing you.

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Staff Changes

Dr Sharif unfortunately left at the end January; she will be missed by all at the practice. We are currently in the stages of recruiting a salaried doctor and hope to have more information in the next issue. Anabel left at the end of December after 10 years in the post as Practice Manager. We thank Anabel for her hard work and wish her all the best for the future. We are pleased to appoint an Interim Practice Manager, Trina Draper, to fill in the post until a permanent Practice Manager is appointed. Nick joined the surgery in December as Assistant Practice Manager supporting the Partners and Practice Manager with the smooth running of the surgery. Nick is our IT Lead, Line Manager to the Reception and Administration teams and deals with complaints. Angie has joined our Reception team.

New Build

As many of you are aware, the surgery is planning to move to new premises bringing more modern services to the practice with a new look. We are now in the final planning stages and hope to have more information in the next issue.

Annual Reviews

We try our best to remind patients about their Diabetic, Asthma, COPD and Epilepsy annual reviews but we have found a number of patients failing to attend appointments or not replying to their review invitations. Please contact reception if you cannot attend your appointment and we will rebook you. If you do not want a review this year, please contact reception and we will update your records. Reviews are very important to your health so please attend them!

Online Appointment and Repeat Prescriptions:

We are now pleased to offer patients online access to our appointment book to book routine appointments and place their repeat prescription order with just a click of a button. Please contact the surgery to register for this service if you have not already done so. You can use the service 24/7 on your computer, iPhone, iPad or Android devices.

Nick Prentice

Assistant Practice Manager

Tel: 813200

The Trustees and volunteers are looking forward to welcoming visitors back to the gardens this year and they will notice some changes that have taken place over the winter. Most noticeable is the opening up of the walkway between the Italian Garden and the Lime Wood where we have uncovered the site of the original stone seating areas. This area will be developed over the coming year with the planting of new hedging and yew trees. We have also improved and extended our toilet facilities and now have electricity in both the Tea Pavilion and the Archive Building.

Our first two open days will be for snowdrops on 23rd February and 2nd March. We will be selling snowdrops in the green and the details and order form for these will be on our website from 1st February for those who would like to pre-order. Delicious and warming homemade soup will be on sale at lunch time along with bacon rolls and burgers; hot drinks and homemade cakes will be available all day. There will be some children's activities available and there will be one of our very popular complimentary guided tours at 1.00pm. As an added bonus, the Essex Austin 7 Club will be joining us on 23rd February for Snowdrop Sunday and visitors will be able to look at these lovely cars while they are with us. We have new opening hours for 2014 with entrance now from 11.30am. The gardens will close at 4.00pm for snowdrops with last entry at 3.00pm, and in the main season the last entry will be at 4.00pm with the gardens closing at 5.00pm. We have lots planned for the coming year including band concerts, World War II Day, craft fair and much more so keep an eye out for our news over the coming months or check the website. We are always on the lookout for new volunteers so if your New Year's resolution was to get out in the fresh air more or give something back to the community why not get in touch on 01371 876979 or email and we will help you achieve your goal.

Helen Carter

Trust Administrator

Tel: 07899 974107

FROM LITTLE ACORNS ...



I took this photo of a baby oak tree on a recent visit to some ex-residents of Stansted, Phil and Mai Hosey who now live in Wimborne. The tree has been grown from an acorn (from around the Forest Hall Road area) that was planted in 2000 for the Millennium, and as a memento of Stansted.

As you can see it's flourishing in its new home, proving that 'from little acorns great oak trees really do grow'!!

Sue Hitchmough

LAST MONTH IN THE NEWS

We read that during Christmas 11 families fell victim to 'heartless' burglars when their homes in Stansted and Clavering were broken into. Essex Police have increased patrols, but want residents to be their 'eyes and ears' and report anything suspicious to 101 or Crimestoppers (0800 555111). The Archdeacon of Stansted, the Venerable Robin King, gave the sermon at St John's Church during his first visit to the parish in December. Finally, plans for the Three Colts public house may allow the 300-year old hostelry to be turned into a residential development. Closed since 2006, its deteriorating condition has long been a cause of concern for local residents.

Source: Herts and Essex Observer

THE CRAFTON ROOM

www.stansteddaycentre.org.uk



ROTARY CLUB OF STANSTED STORT VALLEY

Since I last wrote we have sampled a taste of France with a Bistro evening; enjoyed a lovely trip to a Christmas variety show in Loughton starring our very own cook, Jo and her daughter; hosted a wonderful Christmas lunch with musical accompaniment from the very talented Ros Page; and saw the completion of the third and final stage of our garden, which now boasts a pond and wildlife habitat; thank you to David and Sandra Rowe for their vision and hard work in making this possible.

January has seen us happily welcoming back our customers following a two week break. So here we are in February, Christmas a faint memory and Easter still a couple of months away, so what do we do to cheer ourselves up on these cold dark days? Why not come and join us to find out? Good company, special events and excellent, reasonably priced, home cooked food. Here at The Crafton Room we offer all these things, you don't have to sign up or commit to anything, just come and enjoy, and if transport is a problem just give us a call and one of our volunteer drivers will come and collect you from your home and drop you back after lunch. Menus change weekly and we can cater for all special dietary needs. We are open for hot drinks, cakes, scones and lunch every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10.00am -2.00pm (lunch served at 12.30pm). Pop in and see us or give us a ring; Julie, Jo and a team of fantastic, friendly volunteers are here to welcome you. Don't forget that 28th February is the next Fish and Chip lunch - just call to book your place. We look forward to welcoming you very soon. If you have a couple of hours to spare every now and again and would like to support us we always need volunteers to help with the driving. Please call for details.

Julie Beck
Centre Manager
Tel: 815091

A convivial evening with excellent food took place at the Crafton Room on 23rd November in aid of funds. The French menu with three choices of each of three courses made for much planning and hard work. Congratulations to Julie, Jo and helpers. Look out for other events there; this is a facility we would not want to lose.



Peggy Honour

December was almost exclusively given over to taking Santa on his sleigh round the streets and to the supermarkets. We thank everyone who greeted us with their excited children and so generously contributed to the collection for good causes. We would love to take Santa to more locations but sadly time and numbers of volunteers are very limiting; we do receive fantastic help from Explorer Scouts but we could



still improve with more volunteers. Our indulgence during December was our Christmas Party at Bishop's Stortford Golf Club. Singing a few carols is a long-standing tradition at the event; this year led by Norma Symonds and Joan George.

We are now half way through our Rotary year and President Colin George in his review referred to our newest and most exciting project. We have three bookings with local primary schools for the Life Education Project and more schools waiting until the second fully equipped caravan is made ready later in the year. Independent Life Education Trusts throughout Great Britain and Ireland work under the Coram umbrella to provide a series of courses for children to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed choices concerning their health and wellbeing. This is achieved by specially designed and equipped mobile classrooms, carefully scripted series of courses and staffed with trained educators visiting primary schools and working with groups from pre-school year to year 12. Children are invited to consider the likely effect of making bad or good choices in their everyday lives and encouraged to draw their own conclusions. We have invited Hertfordshire University to devise a long term study to measure the impact of Life Education.

The Rotary Club of Stort Valley meets on Tuesdays, 7.00pm for 7.30pm at the Lemon Tree Restaurant, Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford CM23 2JZ. Rotary provides the opportunity to enjoy convivial activity whilst learning more about our community and of our world. We support a range of good causes and anyone wishing to be involved please contact me or visit our website www.stortvalleyrotary.com.

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**STANSTED
MOUNTFITCHET
WINDMILL**

A Happy New Year to you all from the Windmill Committee. Last year was quite a good year for the Windmill as Spring and Summer openings were slightly up on the previous year.



Our November coffee morning was well supported. Then came the Christmas Fayre where we met a number of people who didn't know about our Windmill. After a short chat they left with our leaflets and promised to come and visit us. The Christmas trees and angels at St Mary's Church were all very impressive and our Windmill tree was no exception, thanks to the artistic

work by Shelia Clark our Secretary, who is a great asset to the Windmill.

We now have two dates for your diaries: the first is our AGM 7.45pm for 8.00pm on Friday 7th March, and the second is our Coffee Morning 10.00am-noon on Wednesday 19th March. Both events are in the Day Centre at Crafton Green. More information next month.

Molly Clark
Co-Trustee
Tel: 816768

**STANSTED EVENING
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE**



We had a busy time like other organisations during the run up to Christmas, having a Stall at the Stansted Christmas Fayre and putting a WI Angel into St Mary's Church for their celebration of Angels and Christmas trees. We really enjoyed being part of both those occasions and meeting up with everyone - what a great start to the Christmas Season. At our December meeting Anita Sacket told us of the places in which she had celebrated Christmas, beginning with Malta where she lived as a child. With her husband she spent Christmases in New Zealand, Jamaica, Portugal and Maryland, all of which have varied customs and food traditions. Everywhere she goes she brings back a souvenir of a Christmas tree decoration and all



these she brought along for us to admire. I happened to win our Christmas tree decoration competition with my Australian Father Christmas on a kangaroo - my souvenir of four Christmases in Sydney!

In November we had a fascinating talk by Graham Williams about his 19 years as a magistrate in Waltham Forest. I was surprised to hear that no training was given when he first joined all those years ago; you just went to other courts to observe. He said that becoming a magistrate was a bit of an eye-opener with regard to the language that one learns! Lots of cases are very routine: traffic offences, non-payment of tax and minor assault cases, and magistrates have very limited powers. Apparently we have the highest figure of

people in prison in Europe, which includes 6500 women! Now many Magistrate Courts are closing and being centralised and morale is quite low. He did lighten his talk with some amusing jokes and gave us a lot to think about. We are interested in taking part to create a quilt/mural to mark the 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta in 2015. That year we also celebrate the 100th anniversary of the WI and will be planning events to mark the occasion. Our speaker on 13th February 7.45pm at the Day Centre is Fiona Rose: 'An Overview of the Life and Work of William Morris'. All welcome.



Judy Colliver
President
Tel: 812470

**CELEBRATION OF ANGELS AND
CHRISTMAS TREES**

The gentle aroma of spices and warm wine that met us when we entered St Mary's Church on Saturday 14th December was most welcoming. What a superb afternoon.



Beautiful decorations on every window sill and fabulous trees and angels all around the church displayed great expertise and imagination from the various local groups involved. Keith Turner, wearing his Christmas bow tie, organised the singing, which was as splendid as ever. Lovely readings came from Yvonne Ayres, Judy Colliver, Derek Francis and Richard Shervington. St John's junior choir and the orchestra trained by Anne Brooks were perfect.



Photos by Tony Graver

I returned on Sunday with camera to take a picture or two when there weren't so many visitors milling around. The two portaloos were still standing to attention at the back gate, and the church still looked fantastic. Thank you to everyone involved, for making the whole weekend such a wonderful event.

Bridget Gott

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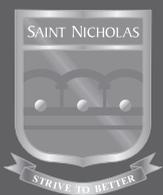
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OUR ROAD



The cul-de-sac once formed the gardens of Spencer House, including the tennis courts. Older residents remember attending enjoyable fêtes there. Spencer Close has 28 three and four bedroom terraced, semi-detached, and detached houses. It has a mixture of long-standing and relatively new residents; some with children attending local schools, others retired. There are some well-known residents such as Tom and Marion Johnson, founders of the Huw Johnson Club; Howard and Ros Page who established Stansted Family Café; and Fran Richards and myself who are Parish Councillors. What do residents like about living in The Close? Mainly its convenient location, situated between the Quaker Meeting House and the Fire Station, with the shops on Cambridge Road, a bus stop round the corner and the station a few minutes' walk away. Some properties have fantastic views over the Recreation Ground and Forest Hall Park. The Recreation Ground can be accessed via an alleyway from the Close, and is an important amenity for residents, as their children and grandchildren can use the play equipment.



Spencer Close was built in the mid 1970s by Boyd Gibbons Ltd. The firm built a large part of Bishop's Stortford after the Second World War. Polo was a hobby of Alfred Boyd Gibbons and he founded a team which included Jimmy Edwards, the well-known comedian. When built, the properties cost £12,000 and £16,000 – prices which seem extremely modest now. One resident told me that on his original deeds, his house, sold by Boyd Gibbons in May 1976, was described as on Chapel Hill Estate. The Close's central location can on occasion be a problem. Some readers will remember that the Central Hall on Chapel Hill, which is now flats, once housed Roxy's Nightclub. Whilst customers were able to dance the night away it was something of a 'nightmare' for the Close's residents, which led to the management of Roxy's installing a barrier across the Close on club nights. Like many other areas of Stansted we have had our share of Airport related parking and commuter parking. Ownership of property in the Close does not just consist of the house but also includes collective responsibility for the area of land known as The Copse. This is adjacent to the Fire Station and contains a number of large trees with tree protection orders. Residents get the benefit of wildlife who make their homes there but also have to deal with resulting leaf fall.

Geoffrey Sell



Huw Johnson Club

We finished 2013 with a carol concert at St John's Church. Thanks to everyone who came along - the church was nearly full. We are also very grateful to all the Stansted businesses who contributed a prize to the raffle. In the weeks before Christmas, the Bishop's Stortford's Knit and Craft Club visited us to help us make some fabulous tree decorations, which was a lot of fun. The Stortford Woodwind Band also came along to play some Christmas songs and carols on our final evening of the year. We are in the middle of our winter break at the moment, but by the time you read this we will have been to see the Robin Hood pantomime at Cambridge Arts Theatre, which we're all looking forward to. We restart Club on Thursday 6th March with a birthday party for Joanne and Andrew, but before then we have our New Year dinner at the Chequers Pub in Ugley in February.

After nearly 40 years, our founders, Tom and Marion Johnson, have decided to retire from the Club. Whilst we hope that they will continue to come along to the occasional evening, they have stepped down from the Committee and have officially handed over the day-to-day running to some of us. Marion and Tom have done a truly amazing, and inspirational, job of running the Club, set up in memory of their son Huw, supporting children and adults with learning disabilities, for over four decades. It is very difficult to express just how much they have given to our members, and helpers, over the years, but we look forward to continuing the good work they started. If you would like to learn more about Club, please contact either Sandra on 812627 or myself.

Katharine Collis
Tel: 461270

CHILDREN'S RECIPE

Vegetable Spring Rolls

50g coarsely grated carrot
50g rinsed tinned beans (cannellini)
50g fresh bean shoots
1 Spring onion
¼ red pepper
1 tbsp Dipping Sauce (plus some to serve)
Vegetable Oil
8 Sheets of Filo Pastry

Method

Pre-heat oven to 200°C/Gas 7.
Put grated carrot and beans into a bowl and mix together. Chop the bean shoots and spring onion and add to bowl. Add red pepper and chilli sauce.
Put some baking paper on a tray and brush with oil ready for the finished rolls.
Take a sheet of filo pastry, lay it on a clean surface and brush with oil. Lay another sheet on top and brush with oil. Spoon on the vegetable mixture.
Fold in the corners, tuck them under the filling, then roll like a sausage.
Place on tray. Bake for 15-20 minutes until crisp and golden.

Simone Teese
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Tel: 07837 008715

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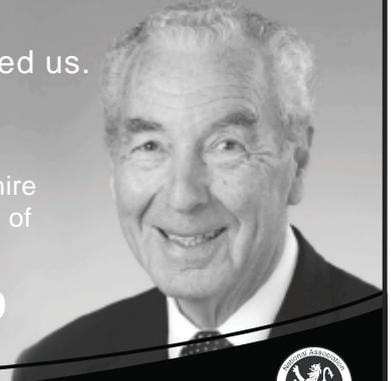
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Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

GOOD NEWS

Good news to start the New Year. The planning appeal for Taylor Wimpey's proposed development of 140 houses Bentfield Green has been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. We would like to thank all who gave their support and acknowledge the hard work of Save Stansted Village. The Parish Council was fortunate to work alongside such a determined group of residents. Alan Storah, the planning consultant who represented us at the Inquiry also deserves our thanks. His efforts and advice went far beyond the call of duty; a victory for localism. The decision was hailed by the Parish Council Chairman as "A fantastic victory for the people of Stansted and for common sense. This decision is a magnificent vindication of the huge amount of time devoted by the Parish Council and Save Stansted Village to stopping Taylor Wimpey at Bentfield Green." The following extract from the Inspector's report demonstrates that he understood our objections:

Understandably described by some residents as 'the jewel in Stansted's crown' Bentfield Green also seems to me to enjoy the tranquil character and atmosphere of a historic village location set on the edge of quiet countryside, connected to but also set apart from the rest of modern Stansted and generally blessed with very little visiting or through traffic.

If you would like to read the decision in full, we can send it by email or you can view it on our website www.stansted.net/uploads/BentfieldRefused.pdf

WELCOME TO TREVOR LLOYD

We are delighted to welcome our new member of staff-Trevor Lloyd. Trevor's role is Assistant to the Clerk and he is already making inroads to the heavy workload in the office. Whilst our community has grown by almost 30% in about ten years, our staffing has remained the same for decades! We look forward to a long and happy working relationship.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Stansted hosted its second Christmas Market on the weekend of 7th-8th December. Over 40 local small businesses set up stalls in the marquee in the Lower Street Car Park offering a wide range of seasonal goods. There were also fairground attractions and the impres-

sive steam engine and fairground organ supplied by Honour Landscapes, all of which contributed to the festive atmosphere. The old Stansted Parish Council fire engine was on display (courtesy of Toby Lyons). The market was well supported by villagers who were entertained whilst they did their Christmas shopping. There was a varied cast of artists taking the stage in the performance area including local opera singers Emily Yarrow and Flora Birkbeck, the Forest Hall School Choir and the Newport School Band, as well as a number of local bands.



The traditional German gluhwein was appreciated by many people and it even got the thumbs up from some German visitors. Stall holders were pleased with the footfall in the marquee and the level of sales they achieved. The organisers were particularly pleased with the 'villagey' atmosphere and sense of community around the event. There was a general feeling that it was a very worthwhile event that should become a fixture in the village calendar. If you have any ideas on how to make next year's Fayre even better please let us know.

SHOW COMMON SENSE OVER "A" BOARDS

Following a heavy handed letter from the enforcement team at Uttlesford District Council requiring businesses to remove any 'A' Boards on footpaths and threatening fines of up to £2,500, the Parish Council raised the issue with UDC. It now appears that there is neither a legal requirement to ban 'A' Boards nor is there a need for planning permission. Provided the boards do not obstruct the footpath and present a hazard to wheelchairs, double buggies and people with little or no sight, then such advertising should be permitted. In this village the footpaths on Lower Street

and Cambridge Road are wide enough not to present a problem. The parish is lucky to have so many shops and businesses and the council would like to support them wherever possible especially given that economic conditions remain far from easy. We have asked UDC to clarify the position and use common sense.

PARISH COUNCIL TAX to rise by 2% in 2014/15

At the Parish Council meeting on 18th December it was agreed to request a precept of £212,00 which compares to £198,000 raised in 2013/14. Based on this number Band D Council Tax is estimated to be £65.77, a rise of around 2% over the £64.69 seen in the current year.

First projections for 2015/16 suggest that Band D Council Tax may rise by 2%. If this proves correct then over the 4 years to March 2016, parish council tax will have risen by 6%. This level is about half the rate charged in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Sawbridgeworth. Helped by a higher tax base, which is largely attributable to new houses at Foresthall Park, a number of achievements can be listed: the rebuild of the library into a multi-service centre can be financed (subject to completing negotiations with Essex County Council), a new part time member of staff employed, two play areas have been re-equipped (and plans are in to transform Bentfield), an extension of Crafton Green car park in 2015, the successful launch of a new Christmas Fayre with lights in Lower Street and, subject to being able to comply with the recently announced Code of Practice, a new CCTV system.

Finally, assuming the completion of the new Crafton Green centre, the hours of opening for the library and Parish Council will be significantly extended.

DEVELOPMENT OF MEAD COURT

We have received notice that the contract for the redevelopment of Mead Court has now been confirmed and work should commence almost as this magazine is delivered! The contractors Willmott Dixon, abide by the Considerate Constructors scheme so we hope that life will not be too intolerable for local residents during the construction phase. If you have any queries arising, please contact Lucy Brown at Uttlesford District Council on 01799 510510.

PINES HILL - ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL EXPECTED

Linden Homes propose to build 73 houses on land beyond the access of Stoney Common Road on to Pines Hill on the B1383. The land is situated in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

A public exhibition was held at the Free Church in November, and following an analysis of the comments received, it is expected that Linden Homes will submit a planning application in January, at which point the Parish Council will consider its position. If you have any comments/views you which you would like the parish council to take into account, please email them to parishcouncil@stansted.net or speak to any Councillor.

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES INCREASE ON OUR BOUNDARIES

Apart from planning applications within the parish, do not forget the impact of developments in communities nearby.

Elsenham - over the past year planning permission has been granted for about 450 new dwellings. Although the application by Fairfield to build 800 new houses has twice been turned down by UDC's Planning Committee, the developers are likely to appeal. In addition under the draft Local Plan a further 2100 houses have been allocated to Elsenham/Henham. At Bishop's Stortford North (between A120 bypass, Rye Street and Hadham Road) East Herts Council seems likely to approve in 2014 an application to build 2200 new homes, plus, we now hear, a further 2100.

Within this parish the two successful applications at Walpole Farm and Elms Farm will add some 200 dwellings. If the Linden Homes proposal at Pines Hill should go ahead, the number would rise to 270. Taken together these developments would add 720 within a two to three mile radius of Stansted Mountfitchet. If Fairfield appeals successfully, this number would rise to 1520. To put this in context the number of dwellings in Stansted Mountfitchet (including Foresthall Park) is currently about 3300. Given infrastructure pressures, the Parish Council has objected to all these developments apart from the 53 houses proposed for Elms Farm.

CITY AND COUNTRY GROUP ARE LOOKING TO EXPAND AT BENTFIELD PLACE

City and Country has been recently listed as one of the fastest growing companies in the UK and has a very successful record. For thirteen years its base has been at Bentfield Place where the management would like to remain. However with a growing number of staff the group need to expand its office space. By the time this edition of The Link drops through your door (or shortly after), a planning application will have been submitted to Uttlesford District Council. Issues that need to be addressed include green belt, access,

vehicle movements and construction traffic. Once an application is submitted, the Parish Council will make its comments. If you have any thoughts on this issue, please contact the Parish Council by email at parishcouncil@stansted.net or telephone 813214.

DAVIES COMMISSION OMITTS STANSTED AIRPORT FROM ITS SHORTLIST FOR RUNWAYS

The Airport Commission led by Sir Howard Davies has not included Stansted on its shortlist for additional runways in the South East. Whilst this is welcome news, this conclusion is being challenged by Manchester Airport Group, the owners of Stansted Airport. It is not yet time to relax, especially as no decision will be reached by the Government until after the election in 2015.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIBRARY AT CRAFTON GREEN

Planning permission has been granted for a new community building on the site of the existing library. It is intended that this new facility will provide accommodation for a library which will have space it can use much more flexibly. In addition the building will enable the Parish Council offices to move to the ground floor, Community Information Services for UDC, Citizens Advice Bureau, a base for the police and a public toilet. Most of these services will be open five or six full days a week which is considerably more than are currently provided. Following further discussions with the library service and the police it is hoped to proceed with the project in the New Year.

EXTENSION TO CRAFTON GREEN CAR PARK

The usage of this car park has risen rapidly over the past couple of years not least because of the growth in businesses in Cambridge Road. The Parish Council has agreed to add about 15 spaces on the grassed area adjacent to Crafton Green House. This extension would be undertaken after the redevelopment of the library site.

VILLAGE LITTER PICK

Are you keen to see our village a beautiful, pleasant place to live? If so we invite you all to join the Village Litter Pick on Saturday 22nd March. This is a community event where we all have the opportunity to enhance the environment by clearing litter from our highways, byways and nooks and crannies. Please meet outside the Parish Council Office, Crafton Green at 10.00 a.m.

All equipment will be provided.

STANSTED POLICE

Come and speak to your Neighbourhood Policing Team to discuss any local issues you may have. They will be at Stansted Library, Crafton Green, Chapel Hill on Tuesday 11th February and Tuesday 18th March at 10.00 am.

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH HAS AN IMPACT

In October Speed Watch checks carried out around Essex resulted in 1414 first warning letters sent, and 79 second warning letters with 13 requiring further action which will either be a visit from an officer or targeted enforcement.



Volunteers from this were at the top of the list for undertaking checks but more volunteers are needed to spread the load and step up activity. Would you be prepared to help? If so please contact the Parish Council by email at parishcouncil@Stansted.net or telephone 813214.

KEEPING WARM THIS WINTER

Uttlesford Citizens Advice Bureau have produced a leaflet with advice on how to keep warm during the winter months. The leaflet contains a thermometer so you can see how cold it really is. We hope to have copies available in the Parish Council offices and in the day centre. An electronic copy can be downloaded from their website.

NEWS FROM UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

From Cllr Alan Dean, Uttlesford District Council

I have continued to question the NHS at regular intervals about the lack of visible action towards the delivery of a fit for purpose health centre in Stansted. I was told by NHS England just before Christmas that they have a committee which in January will consider a business plan prepared by our GP Practice to have the necessary funding released. Let's hope we are only a few months away from the developer starting to build at the site on the corner of Church Road and Lower Street.

The really good news and great community success to start 2014 was the dismissal by the planning inspector of Taylor Wimpey's appeal against the refusal of 140 homes at Bentfield Green. The inspector agreed with what many of us have been saying for months; that development was in the wrong place. He said the effect on the conservation area and the damage to the countryside were not sustainable development. He also recognized that the community was not opposing all development. There are messages here for planning officers, who had recommended approval, and for us all.

By the time the February *Link* is published UDC will have completed its latest (but not last) consultation on where to locate a further tranche of 2,700 homes in the years to 2031. The council was asked in December to set up an independent inquiry into the way the Local Plan has been conducted, but that proposal was defeated.

The district council will be receiving £2.9 million from the government's New Homes Bonus scheme in recognition of the number of homes built in the district in recent years; about 500 homes per annum. This is a lot more than what was expected. Meanwhile, Uttlesford agreed in December to freeze council tax for most residents but to increase council tax only for people receiving benefits. This additional tax burden on the most vulnerable members of our community was opposed by some councillors from all political parties but was backed by the majority of councillors

SIR ALAN HASELHURST SURGERY DATES

January

31st Parish Council Offices, Stansted 5.45 - 6.30 pm

31st The old Armoury, Saffron Walden 7.00 - 7.45 pm

February

28th Town Council Offices, Dunmow 6.30 - 7.15 pm

DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

12 February	Full Council
19 February	Open Spaces
26 February	Highways 7.00 pm + F & GP

CONTACT DETAILS

Clerk - Ruth Clifford. Admin Assist - Anne Court
 Assistant to the Parish Clerk - Trevor Lloyd
 Email: parishcouncil@stansted.net
 Phone/fax: 01279 813214 10 am - 1 pm
 www.stansted.net

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Margaret Ambrose	814675 maggielincoln@aol.com
Maureen Caton (Vice Chairman)	813914 m.caton@hotmail.co.uk

Nigel Collingwood	813428 njcollingwood@hotmail.co.uk
Catherine Dean	813579 catherinemarydean@btinternet.com
Samantha Dunn	810859 samanthadunn@talktalk.net
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John Hudson	814489 john@hudson8889.fsnet.co.uk
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John O'Brien	816772 Johnedobrien@gmail.com
Frances Richards	812748 frannie.richards@gmail.com
John Salmon	814789 sam@salmonfamily.me.uk
John Savopoulos	817687 johnsav8@gmail.com
Geoffrey Sell (Chairman)	815925 sellgeoffrey@yahoo.co.uk
Valerie Trundle	813433 prtvt@btinternet.com

Uttlesford District Council Members

Alan Dean	813579 cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk
Iris Evans	815848 cllrevans@uttlesford.gov.uk
John Salmon	814789 cllrsalmon@uttlesford.gov.uk
Joe Rich	813112 cllrrich@uttlesford.gov.uk

Essex County Council Member

Ray Gooding	813103 cllr.ray.gooding@essexcc.gov.uk
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Member of Parliament

The Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP
 Tel: 0207 219 5214/Fax: 0207 219 5600
 alan.haselhurst.mp@parliament.uk

Police - PC Tom Bastendorff
 Non-emergency 101
 PCSO (Stuart Stranger) Tel: 07889 702340

Neighbourhood Watch
 www.stanstednhw.org.uk

Parish Public Transport Representatives

Valerie Trundle	- 813433
Joy Thomas	- 813871

DIRECTORY OF LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

Alzheimers Society	Tel: 01371 872519	Parkinson's UK Uttlesford Support Group	Contact: Kathy West Tel: 816293 Email:kewest@btinternet.com
Air Training Corps 494 Squadron	Tel: 681559/661929 Email: 494@aircadets.org	Pilots (age 5-18)	Valerie Trundle Tel: 813433
Beavers Age 6-8	David South Tel: 814371	Rainbow Pre-School	Gill Pursglove (Administrator) Tel: 814242/07966 506997 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net
Bowls Club	Doreen Scraggs Hon Secretary Tel: 815036 Email: doreenscraggs@talktalk.net	Rainbow Tots (age 1½-rising 3)	Tina South Tel: 814371
Brownies/Guides	Glynis Prothero District Administrator Tel: 814145	Rainbows	Sue Pollard Tel: 813734
CAB	Tel: 08444 775986	Rotary Club	Peter Latham Tel: 507294 Email: yp.latham@uwclub.net
Corkers Netball	Lisa Menzella Tel: 07827 988732	Royal British Legion	John Segar Tel: 813289
Cricket Club (adults) (juniors)	David Hedge Tel: 812509 Keith Ayres Tel: 814471	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Cub Scouts Age 8-10½	Roger Musgrove Tel: 07736 616665/01799 543466	Shotokan Karate Ryu	Donna Ring Tel: 731752 Email: skr@skr.org.uk
Day Centre	Tel: 815091	Spangles Children's Centre	Tel: 812348
Explorer Scouts	Fintan Lambe Tel: 817937	Stansted Family Café	Ros Page Tel: 810813 Email: rospagemusic@yahoo.com
Friends of St Mary's Church	Audrey Rodgers Tel: 812162	Stansted Football Club	Tom Williams Tel: 07921 403842
Garden Club	Maralyn Harris Chairman Tel: 07919 478144	Stansted Sparks Netball	Gemma Snelling Tel: 07894 944242 Email: gemmasnelling@me.com
Grove Cottage	David Scott Tel: 656085	Stansted Supers Handball Club	Olly Pocknell Tel: 07875 391701
Helpline	Tel: 07704 553727	Tennis Club	Daphne Lunnon Tel: 817574 Email: drlunnon@gmail.com
History Society	Peter Brown Chairman Tel: 812816	Thornbury Badminton Club	Marion or Shirley Tel: 869896 or 815871
Huw Johnson Club	Katharine Collis Tel: 461270 Email: kat_collis@hotmail.com	U3A	Christine Chair Tel: 817587
Inner Wheel Club	Shirley Fordyce, President Tel: 758289	Women's Institute (Stansted)	Judy Colliver President Tel: 812470
Investigators	Ros Page Tel 810813 Email: rospagemusic@yahoo.com	Women's Institute (Ugley)	Dorothy Wallace President Tel: 850215
Little Scrummers	Andrew Poyser Tel: 07738 591232	Whoosh Explore Canoe Club	Helen and Peter Nash Tel: 817453
Millers (Windmill)	Derek Honour Tel: 647213	Youth Centre	Linda Barnes Tel: 01371 873156/ 07920 466923
Mountfitchet Club	John Robinson Tel: 812755		
Music Club	Sonia Levy Tel: 815282 Email: info@musicatstansted.com		
NCT	Anna Sedgbeer Tel: 812257		
Neighbourhood Watch	Valerie Trundle Tel: 813433		

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

BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES or SPECIAL OCCASIONS

If you would like to mark any occasion that is special to you or someone you know, by announcing it in 'The Link', please email a short message together with your name address and telephone number to: announcements@stanstedlink.org.uk or send the details to 7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG. Details must be submitted by the 11th of the month for publication the following month.

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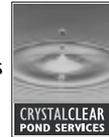
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PILOTS

The Pilots of Stansted Free Church demonstrated their talents in a variety of roles during the staging of the Christmas play 'Jonah and the Whale' on 14th December. Pamela Jenner, the guest artist for the Club, was very pleased with the way all the children had worked hard to put up a final performance. Pilots Club will be taking the play to other venues in the village, as part of community service.



For the Easter term, in addition to the usual activities - art and craft, music, drama and games, the Club will host a series of story-telling sessions from 'Cultures around the World'. The Pilots are also excited about a new photography project featuring wildlife in and around Stansted, which will be led by one of the team members. Any children aged five years and above, are welcome to join in the fun. We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month: 10th February and 10th March 6.00pm-7.30pm in the Free Church Hall, Chapel Hill. Regular updates of the Club activities are on www.facebook.com/pages/Stansted-Pilots. For more information please contact Valerie Trundle on 813433 or email me.

Sanjukta Ghosh

Email: sanjukta@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



www.facebook.com/BirchangerNursery

The children were very busy in the run up to Christmas, enjoying a party at Play Barn in Sawbridgeworth and the annual nativity play. They all played their parts beautifully and very few parents managed to keep their eyes entirely dry! Several new starters have joined in January so the children will enjoy making even more friends. During this half term there will be lots of activities to celebrate Chinese New Year – we will look at the different animals in the Chinese calendar, use chopsticks, dance to Chinese music and learn how to say "hello" in Chinese. Each week during this half term will have 'letters of the week'. We are encouraging the children to think of words that link with our areas of learning and they will get a sticker if they can 'show and tell' anything beginning with one of the letters of the week. We will continue to learn about reading and literacy, counting and numbers, dressing, feelings and behaviour as our older children start to prepare for going to 'big school' in September. We have art projects planned, including glueing and hand printing and learning to use different media and materials. Birchanger Nursery caters for children aged 2½ to 5 and we currently have spaces available. Please call 810800 or email: admin@birchangernursery.org.

The Committee



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Our December meeting saw another informative and enjoyable evening with a presentation by Jeff Page on HOAX - famous jokes of the 18th & 19th Century. Jeff gave us an enthusiastic look at past famous jokes that have been played on people over the years, two of which were:

Mary Toft (1701–1763) from Surrey, who in 1726 became the subject of considerable controversy when she tricked doctors into believing that she had given birth to rabbits. Her claim to have given birth to various animal parts prompted the arrival of John Howard, a local surgeon, who investigated the matter. He delivered several pieces of animal flesh and duly notified other prominent physicians, including the royal surgeon of King George I. Toft was brought to London and studied at length. Under intense scrutiny, and producing no more rabbits, she confessed to the hoax, and was subsequently imprisoned as a fraud.

The Cock Lane ghost attracted mass public attention in 1762. It involved three people: William Kent, Richard Parsons, and Elizabeth Lynes. Following the death during childbirth of William's wife Elizabeth, William became romantically involved with her sister Fanny. They moved to London and lodged at a property in Cock Lane, then owned by Parsons. Several accounts of strange knocking sounds and ghostly apparitions were reported, which stopped after the couple moved out; but following Fanny's death from smallpox and Kent's successful legal action against Parsons over an outstanding debt, they resumed. Parsons claimed that Fanny's ghost haunted his property. Regular séances were held to determine 'Scratching Fanny's' motives; Cock Lane was often made impassable by interested bystanders. The ghost appeared to claim that Fanny had been poisoned with arsenic and Kent was publicly suspected of her murder. But a commission, whose members included Samuel Johnson, concluded that the supposed haunting was a fraud. Further investigations proved the scam was perpetrated by Elizabeth Parsons, under duress from her father. Those responsible were prosecuted and found guilty; Richard Parsons was pilloried and sentenced to two years in prison.

On 2nd January we enjoyed another memorable evening with talks by Tony Wellings on 'Make and mend', and David Perry on 'The Rivers Nurseries, Sawbridgeworth', followed by a quiz on local interests. The next meeting is 6th February 8.00pm in the Day Centre, Chapel Hill when the subject will be 'Stansted in the 40s and 50s' by Peter Brown. All welcome.

Steve Leaney

Tel: 647177

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Norfolk in November

Twenty Scouts and six Leaders travelled up to Wells-next-the-Sea in North Norfolk in November. After settling in we had a campfire with soup and sausage rolls. Saturday was a rather overcast but mild morning, just right for hiking. After breakfast we split into two groups for our Naturalist Badge hikes. One group were driven up the coast to Blakeney, while the other group walked into the town and then headed off to the beach a mile away. Here we joined the Peddars Way, part of the Norfolk Coastal Path, and began walking west to Holkham Gap where we turned onto the beach and stopped for lunch. We then made our way back along the beach and sand dunes to the brightly painted beach huts where we decided it was an excellent spot to fly some kites and have a play on the beach/dunes. About an hour later we made our way off the beach and back to the town. The other group were hiking back to Wells along another part of the Coastal Path. The path was quite water-logged in places. Lunch was eaten near Stiffkey Fen, and after a 30 minute break they headed off again taking in the lovely scenery and views along the coast. It is all mud flats and saltings (some of the most important areas of salt marsh in Europe), with sand dunes and the sea in the distance. The highest point was only ever about 10 metres above sea level. At one point 'The Hunt' appeared racing across the land with a pack of 'hyenas' as the Scouts described it. The group stood back, well out of the way!



Back at the ranch, we had a couple of hours R&R where some Scouts and Leaders had a crafty nap. After our evening meal we watched our film, 'X Men First Class', followed by another campfire with toasted marshmallows and hot chocolate. Sunday morning we headed to the Quayside an hour early as the tide was racing out. Fortunately (or well planned) the drizzle stopped just as we left HQ. We started crabbing straight away and despite our best efforts only caught five crabs before we were dropping lines into mud. Most of us managed to buy a few souvenirs. After lunch, burnt our rubbish and with the HQ all 'ship shape' we headed for home after another successful weekend.

Night Hike Competition

The last Friday in November saw us take part in our District's annual Night Hike competition, this year at Chrishall. We entered two teams with high hopes of winning, as our last win was 2007 with 2nd place every year since. At 9.00pm all the teams began hiking from their various start points. The night was relatively mild but moonless, making it very dark and therefore important to always know where you were. By the 2.00am finish, one of our teams had

navigated to six checkpoints and answered a variety of questions at each.



We were all back at Chrishall Hall by 3.00am and asleep by 4.00am. Breakfast at 7.00am was followed by the shield presentation to the winners. At last, we had won again!

Mike Byrne - Scout Leader
Robert Sadler - Assistant Scout Leader

Stansted Tennis Club



All members are invited to the AGM on Tuesday 11th February 8.00pm at 105 Cambridge Road. The current committee is very keen to hear views and ideas of members.

Christmas Social Evening

This was a very successful evening, attended by 25 members. After playing some tennis, the rain drove players inside where they were warmed up by mulled wine and mince pies. Various fun quizzes kept everyone entertained for the rest of the evening.

Ladies' Night

Monday 10th February 7.00pm. All lady members welcome.

Club sessions

Continuing throughout the winter on Sunday mornings, Wednesday mornings and evenings and Friday mornings.

Tennis balls

£1 for a tube of four from Jan Hollis at 105 Cambridge Road.

Contacts:

Felicity Shakespeare (Secretary) 831771, Daphne Lunnon (Chairman) 817574. For more about Stansted Tennis Club, please visit the website at www.stanstedtennisclub.co.uk.

Chris Hollis

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VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA

I went on a trip to South Africa in November to visit friends, which turned out to be just before Nelson Mandela died. For those of you who are familiar with South Africa, you will know that the climate is very different and that November is very warm, as Christmas is in summer time. Temperatures there were very hot with some days soaring to 35 degrees, which I didn't mind at all. The really interesting part of the trip was visiting Soweto (or South Western Townships), which borders the mining belt in the South. The name Soweto was officially adopted in 1963. It is now an urban area of Johannesburg which is in the province of Gauteng. Soweto is also a place of contrasts, as when you initially arrive there are some beautifully big houses in the suburb of Diepkloof but there are also people living in shacks by the



side of the road. There are some fascinating landmarks in Soweto which include the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital in Diepkloof, which we were told is the largest hospital in the world - it spreads over half a mile. The Orlando Power Station Cooling Towers are tourist attractions covered with vibrant African paintings which will be used for bungee jumping and abseiling with lots of bars and restaurants. The Hector Pieterson memorial, opened by Nelson Mandela, marks the June 1976 Soweto uprising where a number of people were killed marching to protest against the government's policy to enforce Afrikaans in education. It is now a very peaceful place with moving tributes to those who died.



The highlight of the trip was visiting Vilakazi Street where Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu lived. The atmosphere was brilliant with street vendors, bars and restaurants and people everywhere. Nelson Mandela's house was such an attraction that we were all jostling with each other to have our photos taken outside the house. It has now been converted into a museum. Lots of people gathered there after he died. Nelson Mandela was very much revered everywhere and nowhere more than in Sandton, a suburb to the North of Johannesburg. We took the new Gautrain to Sandton City and visited Nelson Mandela Square where there is a massive statue of the great man which completely dominates the square and completely dwarfed

us. The statue was very life-like which was quite uncanny for its size. It was a wonderful trip with many happy memories of Sunday barbecues and being able to swim outside in November which was a real treat.

Iris Evans
Tel: 815848



Nature Notes

Winter is a time of survival for wildlife. Availability of food can determine how animals, birds and insects react to the cold winter months. Our native birds continue feeding, often flying about in bursts of frenzied activity searching for insects on trees and bushes, grubs and worms in the ground, and seeds and berries in hedges and gardens, as well as enjoying the food put out for them. Winter visitors such as fieldfares and redwing (members of the thrush family) arrive from Scandinavia; large flocks of the latter will strip the hedges of their berries. However, some forms of wildlife use the survival strategy of hibernation which involves finding a place to spend the winter in a state of 'suspended animation'. The best-known mammal to hibernate is the hedgehog. After feeding itself up in the autumn and accumulating a thick layer of fat, the hedgehog searches for a suitable site for its winter nest or hibernaculum. This can be under logs or in deep piles of leaves, or in a hole under brambles or under a shed. The nest is about 20" in diameter and is lined with leaves and grass. The animal curls up inside, its body temperature falling to about 10°C, with breathing and heart rates slowed right down. The small amount of energy needed to stay in this state for about five months is supplied by its layer of stored fat. Now and then the hedgehog wakes up, but then goes back into its torpid state until spring arrives. Unlike the hedgehog which hibernates on its own, bats hibernate in large roosts in buildings. Toads hibernate underground and emerge in early March, moving towards water in which to mate. Frogs are already in the water, for they hibernate in the muddy layer of ponds. Slow-worms spend the winter deep down in compost heaps or under log piles until April, and grass snakes also hibernate until temperatures in March or April are high enough to tempt them out again. Insects also try to survive winter conditions by hibernating.



Queen wasps often spend the winter in loft spaces or garden sheds, and many people have clumps of ladybirds overwintering in corners of window frames. Bumble bee queens will spend winter in holes outside, while honey bees stay in their hive, living on their store of honey. Many butterflies (such as comma, brimstone, small tortoiseshell and peacock) hibernate in their butterfly form on the branches of trees and hedges or in buildings, while others such as orange tip, large white and speckled wood, overwinter in their pupa or chrysalis form. The speckled wood is the only British butterfly that can also sometimes hibernate as a caterpillar.

Rosina Kirkwood

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This term we are preparing for the building of our extension – another classroom ready for September. The Year 5 pupils are launched into their Mission X work, a project based on Science and PE, working with Forest Hall School and other primaries. We are looking forward to more sport when the weather improves and fixtures are added to the diary. Finally, we have changed our website address to a shorter and easier version: www.stmarysstansted.co.uk. If you are new to the area and would like to have a look at our school, please give us a ring to arrange a visit.

Christine Tonkins
Headteacher
Tel: 812212



STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

Christmas and the inclement weather has already led to our last four games being postponed. Manager Dave Roach and his coaches have kept the players' fitness levels up by organising twice weekly training sessions. Off the field, the Club continues to attract new sponsors which help us to push the importance of local football in our area. Neil's mobile catering unit 'The Grill Sergeant' is a welcome addition on match days, providing burgers, hot dogs and beverages. Claire's 'Oaks Sports Therapy and Massage' is the players' highlight prior to a home game. Claire and Neil have sponsored new training and warm up attire which is a tremendous gesture. InterCounty have sponsored a new 'Welcome to Stansted Football Club' sign. On behalf of the Club your sponsorship is greatly appreciated.

Home fixtures: please contact us if the weather is bad.
Adults £5, concessions and under 16s £3, under 12s free.

Sat 25 th Jan	v	London Bari – League KO 3.00pm
Sat 8 th Feb	v	Basildon – League KO 3.00pm
Tue 18 th Feb	v	Barking – League KO 7.45pm
Sat 22 nd Feb	v	Bowers & Pitsea – League KO 3.00pm

Tom Williams
Secretary
Tel: 07921 403842



Our Sponsored Autumn Alphabet raised over £700 paying for our 'Welly Walls' and many new resources. All the children received a certificate congratulating them on taking part. Congratulations to Natalia for raising the most money and winning a book token.



Many parents, friends, grandparents, aunts and uncles and the reception classes at St Mary's watched the 'Older' group Nativity Play that took place on 16th December at St John's Church. Many thanks to the CO-OP for donating the tea, coffee and mince pies for the audience. Later that week the children went to Norman Court and sang to the residents there.

A date for your diary - the Pre-school Open Morning will be on Saturday 1st March 10.00am to 12 noon. Refreshments will be provided. All current and prospective families welcome. Rainbow Pre-School takes children from 2½ years to rising 5. If you are interested in applying for a place for your child, please visit our website www.rainbowpreschool-stansted.co.uk for details. You need to put your child's name down now, however young, to ensure a place. Places for 2014 are filling up fast!

Gill Pursglove
Administrator
Tel: 814 242

Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net

PANCAKES FOR GOOD HEARTS

Eat pancakes and look after your heart on 4th March!

Throughout the forty days of Lent, the Churches in Stansted will be fund raising for much-needed defibrillators in the village. A defibrillator is a small device that can be used by a first responder to re-start a heart that has stopped. A considerable sum of money has already been collected by the Kings Arms, so the aim will be to raise enough to have two defibrillators in Stansted. The doctors are very keen to support this initiative, as quick treatment for a heart attack can greatly increase the chances of surviving. The launch of this campaign will be on Shrove Tuesday, 4th March, 7.00pm at St Theresa's Parish Centre with, of course, a feast of pancakes. The new Archdeacon of Stansted, Rev'd Robin King, will be joining us for a pancake or two. Look out for details in March Link, and on posters around the village. If anyone is already trained as a First Responder, please let me know.

Catherine Dean
Tel: 813579

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GUESS WHO I AM

I was born in London and have lived in Stansted with my husband for almost 40 years.

I spent most of my working life with Harlow Council, as a qualified accountant commencing with a stint in The Playhouse Theatre, through everything in-between including calculating rates for the Direct Labour section, the economics of the boating lake (now a marina) on the Stort, housing rents, development of working co-operatives, handling residents' complaints, co-ordination of major repairs and construction works, and much more until 1996.

Thereafter, I returned to accountancy, operating as a contract finance manager which included getting the first school out of special measures, Hertfordshire probation services, and three boroughs in North and East London, where the work was challenging, fascinating and diverse but rarely dull.

Since my retirement in 2009, I have been able to indulge myself by spending much more time walking round the village along the streets, the many footpaths, the twitchells and bridle paths. In winter I always seem to have a 'bad hair day' so I wear a cap as this also has the advantage of keeping sun out of my eyes. Eyes, well yes, I wear spectacles. Walking provides a much more intimate analysis of our village and it has been amazing to see the growth of Foresthall Park and the construction of those other many smaller individual building works taking place around us. I also use the 301 bus 'quite a bit' in order to get to Stortford and Saffron Walden, and am constantly amazed how few miles I have put onto the car's milometer log since 2009, and how much more I can see from the additional height of the bus. I'm also a passionate supporter of a local environmental organisation, being a volunteer Secretary and trustee.

Claim To Fame: In 2012 I received an Uttlesford Community Achievement Award. Guess Who I Am!

STANSTED BUSINESS FORUM

www.stanstedbusinessforum.co.uk

A special Christmas lunch meeting was held in December instead of the usual SBF breakfast meeting. There was a great turnout of 44 members and everyone enjoyed the opportunity to relax and catch up over a fabulous meal provided by Karl and Sarah at Linden House. A raffle raised £170 for St Clare Hospice. Councillor Iris Evans reported that an amazing £1,267 was raised by the SBF Forum for the Christmas food vouchers which were distributed to Stansted families for use in local shops. The Business Forum continues to go from strength to strength with new members joining monthly, and continued support from the Parish and District Councils to encourage business growth in the area. If you run a business in or near Stansted and would like to find out how your business can benefit from joining, come along to the next meeting, which is open to all, at 7.30am on Friday 7th February at Linden House, Silver Street.

Geraldine Allars
Tel: 813318

Email : peter.james@murdochspropertyshop.co.uk

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FOREST HALL SCHOOL



Rehearsals for Forest Hall School's production of the popular West end hit 'We Will Rock You' are well underway. The School has already given the local community a taster of the show by entertaining them at the Stansted Christmas Fayre and surprised the Bishop's Stortford public with a 'flashmob' event. Students are working hard to take you on a journey where Earth's name has been changed to Planet Mall and where mainstream commercial conformity reigns. Everyone watches the same films, listens to the same computer-generated music, has the same fashion sense and holds the same thoughts and opinions. Musical instruments and composers are forbidden and rock music is all but unknown. All are controlled by the Worldwide mega-corporation Globalsoft, which is led by the 'Killer Queen' (Georgia King, Head Girl), and the commander of her secret police, the evil Khashoggi (Bertie Alabaster). Those who dare to stand against Globalsoft's enforced conformity are kidnapped and 'brain-stormed' into submission. A group of 'Bohemians' seek to reinstate the free exchange of live music, Galileo (Jack Headley) joins the Bohemians along with his love interest, Scaramouche (Rosie James), to find the guitar and overthrow Globalsoft.



Through the old ruins of Wembley Stadium they find the guitar hidden in a rock, and, with guitar now in hand, they perform a rousing rendition of the title song, 'We Will Rock You', and conclude with a spectacular arrangement of 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. This 'rocking' performance, jam packed with well-known Queen hits such as 'Another One Bites the Dust' and 'A Kind of Magic' promises to be a great night out for all the family, so join our talented cast and crew and enjoy 'rocking out' on Wednesday 5th March's matinee performance starting at 10.00am or Thursday 6th March/ Friday 7th March's evening performances beginning at 7.00pm. Tickets are available for just £5 for adults and £3 for children from Forest Hall School Reception.

Victoria Owen
Student & Community Administrator
Tel: 813384

GUESS WHO I AM - ANSWER



The Birchanger Wood Trust
Daphne Wallace-Jarvis - secretary of

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BISHOP'S STORTFORD & DISTRICT TANGENT CLUB (EX ROUND TABLE)

My first experience of a Tangent 'Flog It' was certainly a night to remember! There was barely a seat to be had as just over 70 people attended the November event, held in the Crafton Room.



It wasn't just the heat in the crowded venue that produced flushed cheeks when the first lot to be auctioned was announced – a pair of 'nipple warmers'! Amid much hilarity (and sometimes fiercely competitive bidding) numerous items went under the hammer, from kitchenware to Christmas decorations, pottery to posh notebooks. It was all for a good cause and a magnificent £600 was raised for the local MS Society.



The irrepressible Sue Hitchmough and her helpers ensured the evening went with a swing and the refreshment ladies provided delicious teas, coffees and homemade cakes during the break. Thank you to all involved in putting on such an entertaining evening. Sue is threatening to organise another 'Flog It' next year - see you there!

Yvonne Ayres

Photos by Sean Clark



**STANSTED
BOWLING
CLUB**

Carpet Bowls - as this goes to print we are looking forward to our first away match on 29th January at Quendon Bowls Club – report in next Link. If you are interested in Carpet Bowls you are welcome to pop into the Clubhouse any Friday evening from 8.00pm, you will be made very welcome.

Chris Bushnell – we have had to say a heartfelt goodbye to Chris who sadly passed away on 21st December. She was such a courageous lady - uncomplaining, a great sense of humour, a most competitive bowler and a true supportive member of the Club. Rest in peace Chris, you will not be forgotten.

Doreen Scraggs
Hon Secretary
Tel: 815036 or 07812 483178
Email: doreenscraggs@talktalk.net



BEEKEEPING

Now that the Christmas festivities are over, the beekeeper's mind turns to preparation for the coming season. Now is a difficult time; the beekeeper bedded the bees down last autumn, fed them well for the winter and protected them from predators, like woodpeckers (who peck through the wood of the hive and eat the grubs), to mice who find the warm surroundings of the hive an ideal place to spend the winter. We have also treated them for the dreaded varroa mite. However, we haven't seen hide nor hair of them since then as they are now in a 'cluster' of about 2,500, 'shivering' to keep the hive temperature up to 90 degrees throughout the winter. No going outside the hive until spring for the bees. So we don't know if they are surviving the winter.

So how am I preparing for the spring? As Training Officer for Bishop's Stortford Beekeepers Association it is my job to get as many people as possible to take up beekeeping, and with this objective in mind we are again running our 'Introduction to Beekeeping' course in April. At the end of the course the student will be capable of becoming a 'hobby beekeeper', knowing how to source bees, maintain a colony in a hive and extract their honey for sale, through the gaining of the following skills and knowledge:

- Understanding the life cycle and role of each type of bee
- Being able to complete hive inspections competently
- Understanding the reasons for swarming and carrying out preventative measures
- Knowing the different types of hive and understanding the advantages and disadvantages of each
- Being able to build a hive and frames
- Being able to identify common diseases and carry out solutions
- Being capable of extracting honey hygienically
- Being able to source a nucleus
- Knowing how to use the basic equipment

The course will be held over six weeks in April and will consist of five two-hour evening sessions, and at least one weekend practical live session at the Association apiary. It costs £60, including Associate membership, all course material (including a standard text book) and protective clothing. So, come along and learn about bees – it is good fun even if you have no intention of keeping bees, and if you do want to keep bees but have nowhere to keep them, we have land available at the Association apiary. Contact me for more information, and to register for the course.

John Dockerill
Email: training@stortfordbees.org.uk



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MEMORIES OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Driving up to Millway and past the Free Church prompted memories of my time spent at the Congregational Church, as it was then called. I started at a very young age, my mother's family being staunch Congregationalists. They lived at Forest Hall Farm and my mother told me how she had quite a long walk to church on Sunday and had to tell her parents what the sermon was about to confirm she had been there. I recall attending Sunday School and the Black Boys as they were called, which we had to walk round and drop our pennies in the bowl they held, singing "Hear our pennies dropping, listen as they fall, they are meant for Jesus, He will have them all." - for the little children across the sea. As I remember there was a ship called the John Williams that visited the islands. The minister at this time was Rev'd Walker. I spent many happy times in the Lecture Hall at the back of the church. In particular I recall the Tuesday Club where we played table tennis etc. A person I remember with great affection was Paddy Tee who later took up the ministry at a church near Stowmarket. I was a member of the choir for many years. When it came to sermon time we used to go down to the pews in the church. I remember (with some shame) writing in the hymn books! The choir mistress was Miss Olive Tunbridge, a lovely lady, who played the organ. Before it was electrified it was operated by a large pump which was manned by Norman Adams, a great character.

My uncle, Robert Bunting, was the minister's steward for many years. I recall him reading the minutes about what was happening during the service. A good friend was May Jordan who was very good at organising entertainment. I remember us on our knees, cleaning the aisle between the pews and joking about going up the aisle together. We had many meetings at the manse in St John's Road where the minister resided. I recall with great affection the minister, Rev'd Walter Mason. We had a jumble sale where there was a lovely pram which didn't sell. I pushed it up to the manse and left it outside the front door. Soon I received a message from the minister to come and collect it. How did they know it was me? Another minister recalled with great affection was Rev'd Cecil Stewart, who was a great character. Looking back, there were many good times and great friendships were made, many of which endure today.

Richard Pollard



1ST STANSTED SCOUT GROUP NEEDS YOUR HELP

We recently celebrated 100 years of Scouting in Stansted. The group has around 100 members with some great leaders offering fun, excitement, friendship and challenges, BUT we also have a waiting list in both the Beaver and Cub sections. Therefore we are looking to start another Beaver colony and Cub pack. This will mean that we need more helpers/leaders, so if your son/daughter can't get in **this is the only option**. Come and join in the fun at our headquarters in Water Lane. There are young people missing out, so if you can help in any way, please contact me.

Mark Gerber
Group Scout Leader
Tel: 07715 628201

Our November meeting saw the very welcome return of Woodwind of Bishop's Stortford who not only accompanied us in our rendition of Jerusalem, but entertained us with a well-chosen varied selection of popular tunes including songs from the musicals. We even got a chance to make our own 'music' with a weird and wonderful selection of percussion instruments! Our December meeting held in the delightful home of our president Mrs Dorothy Wallace, opened with the sad news of the death of one of our longest serving members Mrs Janet Watts. Her friend Edna Wright paid a moving and very interesting tribute to her. Our entertainer for our festive finale was Peter Gardini, a member of the Magic Circle, who entertained us with jokes and some brilliant tricks. He even showed us how to perform an illusion with two plastic drinking straws under strict instructions not to tell anyone how it was done. Our members and guests from other local institutes then enjoyed a truly scrumptious festive tea, prepared and served by Dorothy and her hard working committee.

Andrea Fitt
Tel: 815922

THEATRE REVIEW

Afraid of the Dark – Charing Cross Theatre

I heard about the play through my mother - one of her friends saw it. My mother sent me a link which outlined the plot and was instantly thrilled and intrigued. Most of the play was set in America in the 1950s - a period of time that I absolutely adore. I'm terrified of the dark and wanted to see



how the play would portray the fear of darkness. I loved the production: the clothes, the language and the attitudes. I also liked that the play had no interval. However, this meant that there were five or so breaks for scene changes where the curtains would close, or lights dim; scary music played, props moved around noisily, as they were placed on, or taken away from the stage. I thought this ruined

the atmosphere created by the previous scene, shattering the illusions and tension. Mark Rice-Oxley, a cast member, was occasionally hammy and over-dramatic; otherwise, the acting was excellent. It appeared well-rehearsed; everyone seemed to know what they were doing, and I enjoyed their character portrayal. Seeing this play made me want to go to the theatre more. I think watching a scary movie is nowhere near as good as seeing a scary production. *Afraid of the Dark* was directed by Ian Talbot, with music by Ennis Thompson. The cast included: Rebecca Blackstone, Mark Rice-Oxley, John Guerrasio, Charlie Anson and Julian Forsyth.

Lauren Nolan

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BIRCHANGER WOOD

I hope that you have been able to get outside and enjoy the fresh winter air. It has been a little wild of late but the sun has been brilliant in amongst the showers and has provided an excellent opportunity for photographing and enjoying a walk through Birchanger Wood. To fund our woodland maintenance, the Trust is selling logs on Saturdays 9.00am-10.00am and 2.00pm-3.00pm from our Compound which is located down the Public Footpath opposite 124 Heath Row, Bishop's Stortford adjacent to the Water Tower. This is the time of year to look at, and identify trees in the wood from their dead leaves. Here are some of the most familiar trees growing in Birchanger Wood:

Hazel



Hornbeam



The hazel and hornbeam are small trees which are normally coppiced. Some of our trees have been coppiced, and to protect their vulnerable new growing shoots from deer, rabbits and squirrel damage, they have been surrounded by 'tree-baskets'. Ash is a hard wood, and they have been growing for so many years we have had to pollard them for safety. The silver birch is readily recognisable from its 'white/silver' bark, but see if you can pick out the difference between their leaves and those of the hazel and hornbeam. Birch trees have only a shallow root system and are usually the



first to be blown over in any storm. The horse chestnut produces conkers and has a completely different leaf from that of the sweet chestnut which produces edible chestnuts. Check out the difference in leaf and fruit. There are both trees in the Wood.

Other trees in Birchanger Wood include the oak which has an easily distinguishable leaf and is a very long-lived tree. It has very hard wood and is eminently suitable for furniture and was always used for constructing sailing ships in days gone by. It is the last tree in the wood to break into leaf in Spring and the last to lose its leaves when winter comes upon us. The beech tree keeps its leaves on the tree all through winter, although they do turn brown. When beech is kept trimmed, it is a good hedging tree since it presents a thick solid hedge and screen throughout the year which provides a haven to birds and small mammals all year round. The field maple (*acer campestra*) is similar to the sycamore tree (*acer pseudoplatanus*), however, simplistically, the field maple 'Acer' does not grow much beyond a large bush, whereas the sycamore variety of 'Acer' grows into a full-blown tree. The leaves and fruit are also similar and both varieties germinate easily and grow voraciously.

Daphne Wallace-Jarvis
Secretary Birchanger Wood Trust
Tel: 812259
Email: dwjwj_44@yahoo.co.uk

PET HEALTHCARE PLANS

We've been thinking for a while about how we can make it easier for our clients to afford the correct, good quality preventative health care for their pets. So often we find problems like flea infestations due to clients using less effective pet shop or supermarket flea products, or parents with young children that haven't been worming their pets properly because they've bought products online that were inappropriate for their needs. We think we have come up with a great idea; at the beginning of February we will be launching our own Pet Healthcare Plans for cats, dogs and rabbits. Pet health plans allow clients to spread the cost of their pet's routine health care over the year, just like other household bills. So for a small monthly fee, the practice will provide 12 months of flea and worm treatments, annual vaccinations, two health checks with a vet, nail clipping, dietary advice and 10% off the cost of pet food bought through the surgery. The whole process of planning and providing treatment is simplified and organised by us, reducing the hassle for you. We will send text or email reminders to tell you when to pick up your next flea or worm treatment and to tell you when your pet's annual vaccination is due. One of the nurses can even apply the flea treatment or give the wormer to make things simpler! Members of the pet health plans will also be given special offers every quarter such as discounts on routine neutering, dental procedures and pet passports. The plans shouldn't be confused with pet insurance, but are a way of spreading the cost of preventative health care that insurance companies don't cover. We think they're a great idea and will hopefully make preventative healthcare for pets more consistent and more affordable. Pop into the surgery and chat to Wendy, Angela or Ollie for more details.

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MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk

The Garden Club does not meet in January so there is no report. Here is our programme for the next three months:

5th February Thady Barrett 'Pests & Diseases in the Garden'. Members' Photographic Competition for 'The Green Bowl'. Subject: A photograph of 'Through the Archway'. One entry per member.

5th March Paul Harrison '365 Days in the Life of a Bulb'.

2nd April Mini Flower Show and AGM. Doors open 6.30pm.

All exhibits to be placed by 7.45pm. AGM at 8.00pm.

Our meetings are held at The Day Centre, adjacent to the Library and car park at the top of Chapel Hill. Doors normally open at 7.30pm for 8.00pm start. Refreshments available before the meeting. Everyone welcome – membership available or come as a Day Visitor, entry £2.50.

Maralyn Harris, Chairman
Tel: 07919 478144
or via contact tab on website

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		Crystal Clear Ponds	24		Herts & Essex Wills	12
		GWB Horticulture	FC		The Will Practice	IBC
		D Honour & Son (Landscapes)	OBC			
		H2O Plants	OBC			
		Steve Hall Garden Services	38			
Paris Legore (Flowers & Gifts)		FC				
Mayfair Ponds		FC				
Mowtivated		38				
Gill Owen (Gardening Services)		38				
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Hypnotherapy	Barnet Fayre	10				
	Lino Thomas	OBC				
	Nicky & Co	OBC				
	Glynis Cheers	10				
	Helen Bartram	10				

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