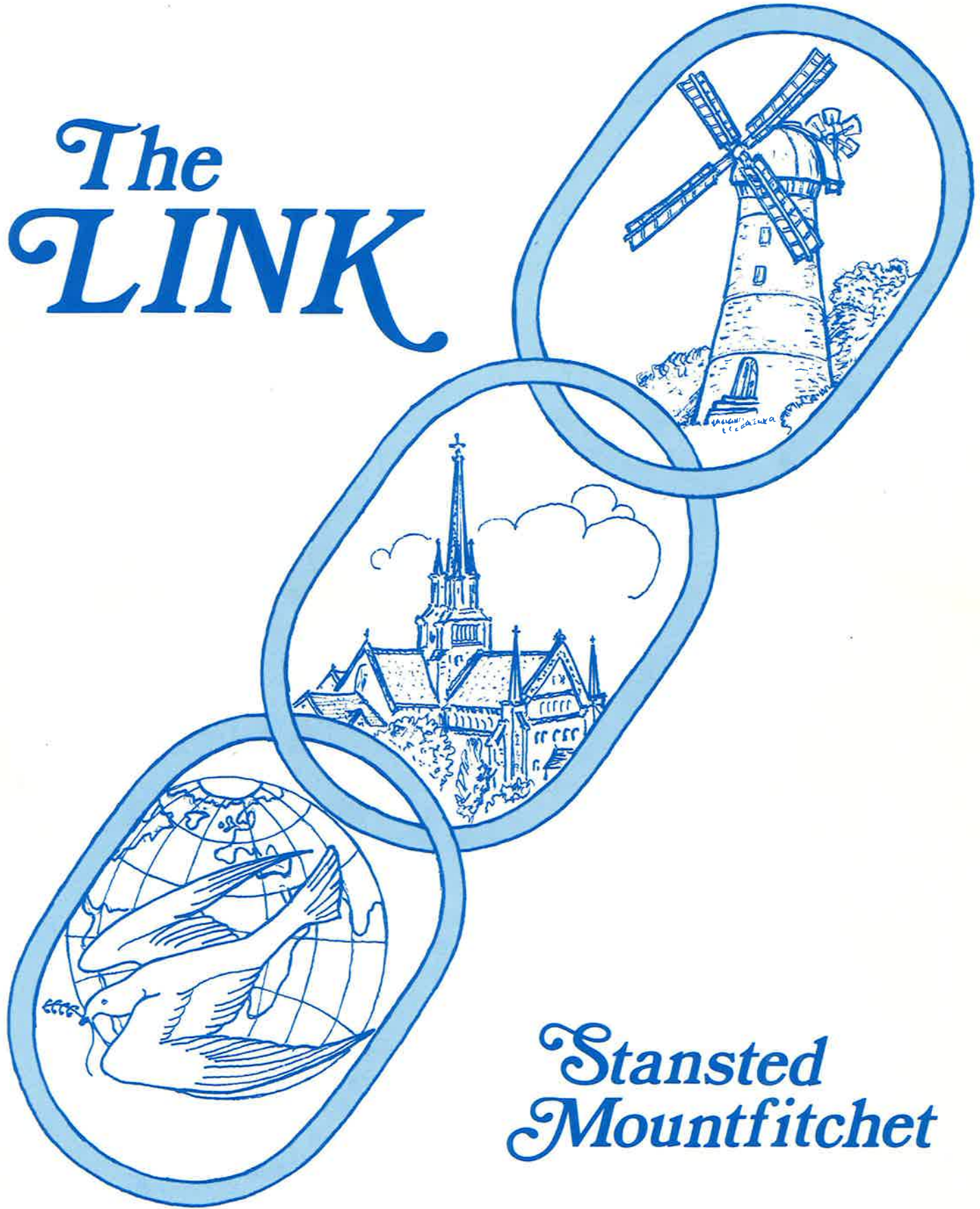


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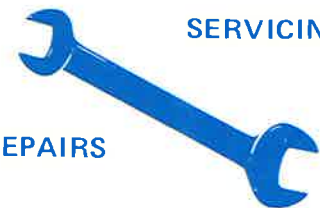
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M. COLLINS Family News

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Indulge in a fantasy for a moment! You have complete control over another human being and you know exactly how you would like him to grow and develop. How are you going to go about achieving your aim? Having absolute control you could make him conform to your will in every detail of his life watching over every movement he makes. You would be using coercive power. Alternatively, you could use the power of persuasive love, letting him have a vision of what he could become and yet leaving him to make his own response in his own way and in his own time. This way is risky; he might not respond in the way you want, but in the end any response he did make would be a firm step forward towards that vision.

God has a vision of what we human beings can become and His almighty power is exercised through persuasive love - not coercive force. He sent Jesus of Nazareth and urges us to turn to him and focus our eyes on his birth, life, death and resurrection. Whenever we decide, in our own time, to turn to Jesus we discover that we are attracted by the helplessness of a child lying on the wood of a manger, by the man who lived his life for others and whose total love led him to be a helpless victim nailed to the wood of the cross. But not only are we attracted. Somehow we are given power to go forward on the journey towards the vision.

The beginning of a new year, the time of new resolutions, encourages us to reflect on how we are responding to God's persuasive love shown us and given us in and through Jesus Christ.



Copy should reach 48, St John's Road
by 13th January for the February issue
by 17th February for the March issue

time to read around a subject before writing an essay - an essay a week is my target, my brain is slowly getting used to the strain.

Our day begins at 7.40 am with Matins and Eucharist, lectures from 9 am - 1.00 pm in forty minute sessions and $\frac{1}{2}$ hr breaks. The afternoon is free for seminars, work placements in schools and hospitals and for that all important Cambridge pursuit - rowing! I found an invitation to join the club in my pigeon hole at the beginning of term - not taken up! The Federation has a boat, but this is a new venture, which is why you've not heard of us being "Head of the River" in the May Bumps! The day finishes with Federation worship and dinner.

My first evening, we all assembled in the large dining hall and I saw a line of white coated "waiters" and was most impressed. I looked again and somehow they didn't seem quite right - I discovered we take it in turns to don these white coats - serve the meal and wash up!

It is good to be at home each evening and to be in Stansted at the weekends - it brings me back to what it's all about, parish and village life - but I am thoroughly enjoying my "double" life and being in the academic world of Cambridge. If you've the energy to climb Staircase A (just inside the main door) and I am in (2A) I should be delighted to give you a cup of coffee - that's another thing I get daily, one-third pint of milk! Back to school!

Thank you all for your support and prayers and kind enquiries. A Happy New Year.

Margaret Booker

Church of England

FROM THE VICAR

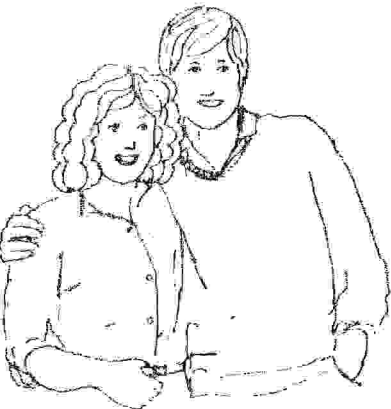
Few Prams! Some months ago I said that we would welcome children at all our services: we want parents to feel they can bring babies, toddlers and older children into church. But I have not noticed an increase in prams or push chairs at our services. What a pity! Some parents have said they find 9.30 am too early to get everyone ready - so we suggest that they come into church at the same time as Children's Church and so arrive at 10.00 am. Parents can always go to the hall first and meet up with the children and teachers there.



Few made the jump! The Church's task with children is to help them grow up in the Christian Faith and although a part of this is learning, yet far more important is worship. Years

ago there were large Sunday Schools but now they have diminished. It was good to see these large assemblies of children but few made the jump from Sunday School to being communicants. Our aim today is to encourage children to become communicants and that is why Children's Church takes place at the same time as Family Communion.

Parent Power



But it is parents who have the most influence upon the religious upbringing of their children. If the parents are weekly communicants - taking their children with them from the time the child is born - then the child accepts worship as a normal part of family life. That I am sure, is the best thing parents can do for their children. Of course later on the child will have to make his or her own decisions regarding worship but as we take such care over our children's education why should we not, in those early years of life, see to it that they are brought into an atmosphere of Christian worship?

No strict rules

Our Children's Church, which meets in the hall every Sunday at 9.30 am, is designed to help parents who are bringing their children with them to worship. It means that while the parents are hearing the Word in church, the children are hearing the Word at a level they can understand. Then parents and children come together half way through the service and go to the altar for communion or a blessing. But we do have strict rules about this. Some parents believe that their children should be with them in church all the time and that the place for religious instruction is in the family. Then children come without parents and we welcome them with joy and open arms.



Food for thought So do give this matter further thought. Remember we really welcome children OF ALL AGES to our services. Bring them with you into worship; take them to creche; let them attend Children's Church; do whatever you wish - but do something.

Adventurers Club

Next month we are beginning an Adventurers Club for children which will meet early on Friday evenings. Brian Wallis is organising this and our aims are to provide a club for all children who want to join and see this as part of our outreach to the community. More details later.

Tiny Tots

A reminder that on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month we have a Tiny Tots service in the church followed by tea and chat in the hall. This is a way of introducing children to the church and it gives Mums a chance to have a natter.

Best wishes for 1983 and God Bless.

People

It means that every month we say goodbye to someone leaving us. This month we say farewell to Ted and Patricia who are moving to Sussex. Ted has been a member of our PCC for some years and we thank him and Patricia for all they have done. Last month Mrs Pamela Cundell moved to Frinton. We thank her for her help especially with flower arranging and sewing.

Congratulations to John and Doreen Newby who celebrated their silver wedding anniversary on 21st December.

.....

CONFIRMATION 1983

We are beginning classes for the Confirmation to take place on 19th June at 10.00 am in St. John's. Anyone who is interested in considering being confirmed should ring one of the clergy.

T H A N K Y O U

Our thanks to Anthony Hobday of 42 Blythwood Gardens who ran in the Daily Express Fun Run and raised over £35. for St John's Appeal Fund. Can you do anything for the appeal this year?



Parish Diary

January

- 1st New Year's Day. Holy Communion 9.00 am
- 2nd Nine Lessons and Carols 3.00 pm St Mary's. No Evensong
- 5th The Epiphany of our Lord. Sung Eucharist 8.00 pm
- 10th PCC Meeting 8.00 pm
- 11th Confirmation Enquiry Evening 8.00 pm The Vicarage.
- 18th - 25th Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- 31st Property Committee at The Rowans, Bentfield Causeway, 8.00 pm

February

- 7th PCC Meeting 8.00 pm
- 14th Service of Forgiveness and Reconciliation 8.00 pm St John's.
- 15th Shrove Tuesday Social
- 16th Ash Wednesday. Holy Communion 10.00 am. Sung Eucharist 8.00 pm

Parish Registers

Baptisms

- 5th December Kay Harrington 2 Maitland Road
- Daren Philip Cordon, 15 Bentfield Causeway
- Jonathan Edward Peal, 10 Cawkell Close
- Kathryn Anna Peal, 10 Cawkell Close

Departed

- 16th December Peter Robert Hawkins 15 Park Road, Aged 44 years
- 17th December Jane Day, 35 Sunnyside, Aged 76 years.

.....

The Carol Singing in Lower Street on the Saturday before Christmas resulted in a contribution of £33.58 to the Save the Children Fund

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PARTNERS IN PLANNING



In the future it will become more important than ever for whole congregations to share in the opportunities and challenges of the Gospel.

We in Stansted are convinced that this sharing is the right way ahead for us, and so we would like to invite you to join us in planning for the future of the Church here: its growth and opportunities.

Sharing in partnership is easier for all of us in small groups. We therefore intend to set up a series of small groups throughout the Parish, each one to meet on three separate occasions.

We would want each group to think about these three things:

Our purpose as a Church

Our long term planning

Our short term goals


Each group will meet some time in each of the following weeks:

January 10-14


January 24-28

February 7-11

If you are interested in coming into partnership with us to plan for the future of the Church here, then we would love to have you in our team.



For more information ring the Vicar on
812203.



Roman Catholic

I like to think of our lives as being in the shape of a cross. The upright - we can call it the vertical component - is man's relationship to God, his response to the first and greatest commandment of all:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your soul and with all your strength.

This upright beam, then, is our prayer life.

The crossbeam - the horizontal component - is man's relationship with his fellow men: his response to the second commandment which is 'like unto the first':

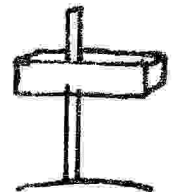
You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

Perhaps one of the greatest difficulties of the committed Christian is working out what is, for him, the correct balance between these two dimensions of his life. There is a very real sense in which we can never solve this problem because the more we pray the more we realise our need to pray, and the more we pour ourselves out for the hungry and the oppressed the more we feel called to serve. I have found my own answer to this problem, in so far as there is an answer, in a consideration of the mechanics of the cross.

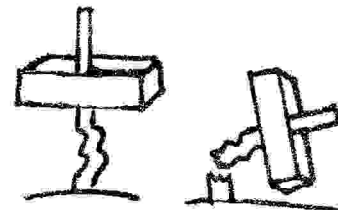
Now, if a cross has a slender upright, the crossbeam it carries must be proportionately slender:



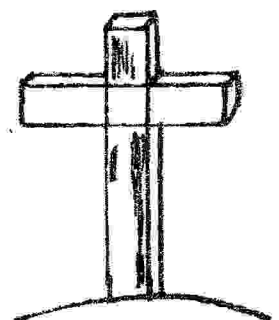
If we gradually increase the weight of the crossbeam, that is, if we try to carry a heavier and heavier load of social action on a weak prayer life, our cross will hold together for a while.



But there will come a time when the strain is too great - and the whole structure will buckle and fall. I believe that this happens to many people who are able to do great things for a while and, then, because they are running on their own energy, 'burn out'.



If, however, we make the upright of our cross immensely strong and solid, if our prayer life is unshakeable and deeply rooted, then we shall find that we are able to support a broad and heavy crossbeam, that we can bear the weight of our brother's pain and suffering, steadily, day by day, because it is not we who are carrying the load, but God.



(from 'Prayer for Pilgrims'
by Sheila Cassidy)

Methodist

Soon we will enter, as the time-honoured phrase puts it, "this year of grace 1983". Will it really be a year of grace? How many years of grace have we already had? And have they been, in truth, years of grace? Passing from one year to another is, for the Christian, a time for such questions, a time for a spiritual check-up.

Perhaps you would want to ask yourselves the following questions, as I want to ask them of myself:

- How long is it since I became a disciple of Christ?
- Have I grown more like Him with the passing years?
- In recent years, have I become more like Him or less?
Have I fallen back?
- In what ways has Christ's mind and spirit laid firmer hold upon us?
- Can I forgive any wrongs done to me more magnanimously and generously?
- How truly do I rejoice when others succeed in some good thing and I, wanting to succeed, have failed?
- Am I still trying to prove myself, to show I'm right, to be first?
- Do I really love people? Or is it that I like others to think that I do?
- What matters most, that God's Kingdom prospers, or that I prosper it?
- Am I more at peace within than I once was?
- Has life become much more a joy and a privilege than once it was.
- Is worship a treasure? Prayer a delight? The Bible God's gold?
- How fully have I allowed Christ to take full hold of my life?
- Am I so sure of Him that I can face the future unafraid?
- Do I distinguish between what I want and what I need?
- What do I need most in 1983?

These are some of the questions I feel I should ask myself and if I am honest the only possible answer to the last question is, "More of God's grace, more of Christ in me."

Harold Fisher.

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Fortnightly Fellowship Meetings at 8.00 pm

10th January - 14 Spencer Close

24th January - 49 Recreation Road

1982 was Information Technology Year in this country. We have been bombarded by a constant stream of propaganda about how life is to become increasingly dependent on electronic integrated circuits which will run all kinds of new devices for us to receive and send information. Soon we are to have satellite television with two new channels and then cable television with a further 30-plus channels. We shall be able to order our groceries and carry out banking transactions via the very same cable which provides our television programmes.

Many homes already have a mini-computer, although used mainly for playing video games rather than running the housework. Even Stansted Methodists recently held a business meeting and were amused by the agenda being displayed in striking colours on a television screen by the host's computer.

So, in a small way information technology has reached the churches. How should we respond? How could we take advant-

age? In the USA a number of religious groups already use satellites to broadcast christian television programmes nationwide. It's big business and we British probably wince at the idea. But should we?

How about dialling a prayer on to your television from Prestel or sending a prayer to the BBC's Ceefax just as you already can send a Christmas message? We might think about using modern advertising techniques to spread the christian message to those who are usually cut off from it. On a practical level the pressing of a button might allow you to send a donation with no hassle to a television charity appeal when existing methods prove enough to put you off. That local cable television programme in 1986 about the church roof in urgent need of repair might end with the message "Press button 2001 to send your donation."

It all sounds rather far fetched, but so would electronic church organs have been not so many years ago.

Alan Dean

United Reformed

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A very happy new year to you and yours from myself and all the members and friends of Stansted United Reformed Church (Congregational Chapel and Presbyterian Church, as was!) In a time when everyone(?) is complaining of the decline of values, it should be of some comfort to know that the churches are still saying to anyone who will listen "Always keep in mind what is true, what is good, what is just, what is pure, what is beautiful, what is virtuous, what is excellent; whatever is worthy of praise so shall the God of peace be with you".

What a great wish for 1983! "May the God of peace be with you." (Phil. 4:8)

So endeth the lesson! Out of consideration for all the volunteers who will put this issue of the LINK together over the Christmas season it is a brief one. To Mair and Joan and Judy and Fred and Michael and John and Mary and Janet and Jan and collators and distributors by the score, our heartfelt thanks. And to you, dear readers and contributors, a good new year.

Eric McIlwain

Society of Friends

It occurred to me that there might be a few people who would like to know a little more about the Society of Friends. So I thought I would tell you about what are known within the Society as "the Books of Discipline". They are not, as this name might imply, a set of strict rules and regula-

tions (except the legal requirements for marriage), but more a collection of writings for the guidance of those who are disciples.

One book called "Church Government" deals with the way the Society is organized and run but it includes a section called *Advised and Queries* - the year for a searching appraisal of what we should be doing both as a Society and individually. The second is called "Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Society of Friends" and this title describes it very accurately. It offers observations, comments and guidance on all aspects of life from within the Meeting and home to "International Responsibilities". Friends make no claim that it is the source of all wisdom, indeed it is reviewed and revised every twenty years or so. And one of the advices requires us to "Be ready at all times to receive fresh light from whatever quarter it may come".

An informal group from Stated Meeting meets about once a month to read and discuss the contents and have found it a useful and enjoyable time together, in spite of the uneasy feeling that we "could do better!"

Peggy Clarke

"Christians attribute the loss of Eden to man's discovery of the difference between good and evil. Before there was ethical instruction there were no ethics, and no wickedness was done, for there was none to call it wicked. But as soon as instruction began, disobedience began, too. Freedom to belong to the Commonwealth of Heaven is the same freedom by which we enter the Competition for Hell. There is great truth in the Eden myth. The sin of Adam is the inherent ability to sin, which is the birthright of humankind. If that were taken from us, we would be cast out from all spiritual adventure. But good people always wish it were not so. They want it to be harder to do evil than to do good: they want to believe that the Redemption of man by Jesus might save them from evil. They want to run away from the bad people, not stay and redeem them. They want to mind the holy well: and keep it in a cupboard, for fear it should get spoilt, or smashed by yahoos.

The search for Wholenight is not for the learned, not for the power wielders, not for the brave. It is a task for those without ambition, for no ambition will be served by it. Nor is this a quest for the moralists: Wholenight makes no one good, and my evils lead to loving unworthy folk, and standing off from saints. And what is this Wholenight anyway? It's what we had in the Golden Age, before all our troubles began - a time which never was."

The above is quoted by kind permission of Frederick Parker-Noddes from his book "Wholenight: The Spirit Quest", and
Fossil Hill Publications.

Village News

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION FOR LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Could you please remind your secretaries to put your fund-raising events in the Village Diary as early as possible to avoid clashing of dates.

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WE ARE GLAD TO HAVE BEEN OF HELP.

Liz Jordan has written to THE LINK to thank us for making known the need for help with the 3rd Stansted Brownie Pack. Two volunteers came forward willingly.

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and WE would like some help too.

So far there has been no response to our request for help with the electronic stencil making and with duplication.

Is there anyone willing to assist - even if only at a time of crisis?

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WINDMILL FUND

In spite of two other fund raising functions on the same morning, Stansted Millers are glad to report that their December coffee morning raised £42.30p. They would like to thank everyone who helped.

13. HARGRAVE HOUSE LEAGUE OF FRIENDS

We would like to thank everyone for their support in showing that Hargrave House is part of our community.

As a result of the Fete held in September, the children now have three armchairs and a settee (very sturdy) which makes their room more homely. Chairs and a table have been ordered for another room.

Proceeds from the Coffee Evening in November was £12.00 and a further £42.00 was raised at a Coffee Morning at 14 Gilbey Crescent in December.

Some of the money will be set aside for the Children's holidays in 1983.

On the 13th December we sang Carols with the children with the help of members of Bishop's Stortford Town Band. The children did "Away in the Manger" in sign language for us.

Many thanks to all who support us and hope you will continue to do so in 1983.

HUN JOHNSON CLUB

When we entered the hall after it had been so beautifully decorated for Christmas our hearts dropped into our boots. We were concerned because the Christmas tree was hanging rather low from the ceiling and was within reach of busy, prying fingers.

As the members arrived we could see their eyes light up and were frightened that Tarzan and the Apes would be the latest game, using the paper chains as vines for swinging through the jungle.

Thoughts of facing Ken and his helpers when all their hard work had been demolished, or alternatively spending all night trying to repair the damage set us thinking about safeguards. Tables and chairs piled into a protective barrier? No, too dangerous; helpers forming a circle around the tree (cowboy and Indian style) and staying on guard all evening? - no good, we were needed as helpers. Ideas came and went but none of them practical.

However, we were quite wrong - the members looked at and admired the decorations and then got on as usual with various activities. What an example of "crossing bridges before we come to them"!

Thank you for your support at the Christmas Market; wasn't Denise delightful using her wheelchair as a mobile shop? She loves to take part and is so happy and cheerful when occupied. I'm sure those of you who saw her lovely smile will agree.

Our thanks go once again to all our friends for help and support given over the past year. We hope you had a Merry Christmas and we wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Chairman: Christine Stiles Bishop's Stortford 812172
 Secretary: Catharine Dean " " 812519

Our Coffee Morning held in October raised £30 and we thank all who attended.

Since our group was formed in February 1982 we have sent £250 to Headquarters. This included the money from collecting boxes. The big Paddington outside Buntings Greengrocers had the grand total of £33.70. The Roll-a-coin box in Peter Wright Hairdresser's Shop had £11. We are very grateful to the shopkeepers who have our boxes and take this opportunity to thank them formally in this publication. We are also interested to hear from any other shopkeepers who would like a collecting box.

We are hoping that our next event will be a Fashion Show in March so watch these pages for further information.

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STANSTED W. E. A.

The winter course of Stansted W.E.A. will begin on Monday, January 17th, at the Quaker Meeting House and will run for ten weekly lectures.

This time our choice is "Victorian Literature and Society", to be given by Mr. D. M. H. Stephenson, M.A., Cert. ED., who will concentrate mainly on the lives of the novelists of the period and how they commented on the society in which they lived. Mr. Stephenson will combine interpretation of the novels and the social history of the period.

The lectures begin at 8 p.m. except for the first evening which will start at 7.30 p.m. for enrolment. All past and new members will be welcome to what we hope will be another popular and interesting course of lectures. For further details please ring Mrs. McBride, Bishop's Stortford 813525.

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STANSTED DRAMA GROUP

The newly formed Drama Group gave its first performance at Furlands, an old people's home in Bishop's Stortford, on Thursday, 9th December.

This particular show of light entertainment consisted of music and songs, dance, poetry and comedy sketches. The show was very well received with everybody wishing that we would go back to entertain them again.

Early in the New Year we plan to put on a production in Stansted and we very much hope that Stansted people will give us their support.

If anyone is interested in joining us please ring Bishop's Stortford 812451, 812710 or 812557.

We hope that with more members and our enthusiasm to bring to Stansted a talented, all round company performing plays and also light entertainment, we can look forward to many happy evenings in each other's company.

For us, it will be a pleasure to give you pleasure.

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The Annual Meeting was held on 17th November. Mrs. Winch was in the Chair and thanked all who had made it a happy and successful one. Mrs. Robinson gave a report on the year's activities; Mrs. Buttery, as Treasurer, presented the accounts which has a healthy balance, and Mr. Gtiggs reported on several outings which had been most enjoyable. Mrs. Eagleton gave an account of the Welfare Sales of Ovaltine, Bovril and Oxos, etc. which helps those who are not mobile. Voting then took place for the Committee, votes being counted by Mr. and Mrs. Humphries. Mrs. McEae was co-opted as Secretary as Mrs. Robinson wished to give up some of her activities. Mrs. Robinson has worked for the Club since it started over 25 years ago, and has done sterling work. Her energy and enthusiasm over the years has been invaluable.

At the meeting on 2nd December, Mrs. Rust brought a doll to be named - the winner was Mrs. P. Howe and Mr. Miller produced a beautiful Christmas cake to be raffled. This was won by Mrs. Stock.

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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - STANSTED AND DISTRICT WOMEN'S SECTION

At our meeting on November 18th, our President, Mrs. Crabb, presented three certificates won in the County Needlework Competition. Two firsts and one second were obtained by Mrs. Venables, Miss Winckworth and Miss Price - two of the candidates gaining 95%. The two top entries will now go on to the Area Competition.

The evening, which was open to non-members, was then devoted to entertainment. This year Keith Turner and the St. Mary's Singers gave us choral numbers, solos and comic sketches which provided a varied evening enjoyed by an audience of about sixty. Delicious refreshments were provided by Mrs. Little and Mrs. Fuller with help from other members. Raffle winners were Mrs. Palmer, Mrs. Jones, Miss Hill, Miss Tome, Mrs. M. Steed, Mrs. Turner, Miss Low, Miss Player, Mrs. Dockerall, Mrs. Crabb, Mrs. Layment.

On January 20th Mr. Stacey from Saffron Walden will show us his slides of Old Walden.

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WOMEN'S INSTITUTE (AFTERNOON)

November: After the election of the new Committee, a talk on Essex Heraldry was given by Mrs. Myra Wilkins. She explained that surcoats bearing the same motifs on the front and back and shields with the same design helped to identify the human being inside an anonymous suit of armour - and heraldry was born. She then described the arms born by the major towns of Essex.

Christmas was the theme of our December meeting when we sang carols accompanied by Mr. A. L. Williams on the piano, while members also entertained us. It was lovely to hear Mrs. Watson sing Holy City and Mrs. Walker giving readings about Christmas. Then we had a good laugh with Mrs. Jordan because 'Nobody wants a fairy when she's forty plus!', Mrs. Stiles hoping to get her two front teeth and Mrs. Gray reciting one of Pam Ayre's poems. Mrs. Thomason won the competition 'A Christmas table decoration'.

We will be back at the Youth Centre in January for the New Year's party.

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STANSTED EVENING WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

What a marvellous Christmas meeting we had. From comments heard it appears that members and visitors enjoyed the seasonal flavour of the entertainment as well as the food and drink! After a short business session, a 'volunteers' chorus launched into a medley of Christmas bits and pieces under the title of "A Christmas Casserole". We started with a reading from Dickens and there were also poems and songs, demonstrations, a strange version of "Cinderella", all interspersed with well-known carols. We finished with readings from St. Luke. There was certainly a rosy glow over everyone in the second half as the liquid refreshment was a hot punch and there seemed to be plenty of it.

Our January meeting comprises a talk on behalf of Amnesty International and Rita Humphries will also be coming to tell us about the Day Centre. A thought provoking evening this will be, I'm sure. Try and come, visitors and new members are always welcome.

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C.N.D.

Although it was not strictly speaking a CND event, several of our women members attended the demonstration at Greenham Common in December. Jan Taylor has written her individual impressions of this event.

As I dragged myself reluctantly from my warm bed on a Sunday morning, noting that it was wet, cold and miserable outside, I wondered 'do I really want to do this?' I did not need to answer myself. This was my chance to take part in what promised to be the most powerful and truly peaceful protest against nuclear weapons in general and Cruise Missiles in particular ever held in Britain, or anywhere in the world for that matter.

From the moment our coach arrived (fully occupied by Stansted and Bishop's Stortford representatives), we were caught up in the atmosphere of hope and peace that prevailed. The perimeter fence had already been heavily decorated by the women who had arrived earlier - a moving display of all that is threatened by these unspeakable weapons.

From the youngest teenager to the many elderly women who were there with pictures, clothes, drawings, woven patterns in the fence, the feelings poured out without words, the climax coming when the eerie quiet of 30,000 women was broken as we linked hands and sang and chanted our wishes for peace in the world. For, make no mistake, **this** was no political gathering. Groups of every hue, both religious and political, feminist and non-feminist, Europeans, non-Europeans, etc. were there with one hope for the future - for any future.

Women are traditionally the peacemakers and the 'cleaners-up' of the aftermath of war. By this demonstration we have shown the way for ALL like-minded people to campaign for World peace - peacefully.

We believe our children must have a future in this world, and faith can move mountains ... and nuclear bombs.

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December was party time for us all - hurray! The children had a boisterous 'tea fight' with Es. Dads had their own 'Bring and Share' party a week later. Everyone would like to thank John and Katy Dockerill for their wonderful hospitality - we all had a smashing time.

January Diary

First time and expectant mums meeting at Crafton Green Clinic on Tuesday afternoons from 2 - 4 p.m. Tuesday 11th January will include a talk by a dentist.

Friday, 7th - Under 1's and expectant mums at 26 Longcroft from 10.30 to 12 noon. Friday, 14th - Under 1's and expectant mums at 52 Wetherfield from 10.30 to 12 noon. Monday 17th - Open House at the Quaker Meeting House from 2 - 4 p.m. Sandra Gould will bring her guitar and sing with the children (approx. 2.45 - 3.15). Friday, 21st - Under 1's and expectant mums at 10 Caykell Close from 10.30 to 12 noon. Friday, 28th - Under 1's and expectant mums at 4a Gilbey Crescent from 10.30 to 12 noon.

There is still a need for breast milk for premature babies at Harlow Hospital - if you can help in any way, please contact Cathy Leek - B.S. 813068.

New faces are always welcome at any meetings, so do bring a friend. Contact Cathy Leek - 813068, Janice Proud - 814463, or Hilary Pinder on 814218, for details.

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CHAPEL HILL PLAYGROUP - Quaker Meeting House, Stansted, Essex

We have many happy memories of 1982. As before, the children delighted us with their interpretation of the Nativity. We all thoroughly enjoyed our Christmas Party. The antics of the Punch and Judy man kept us entertained before we devoured a super tea. A visit from Father Christmas concluded a very happy and enjoyable afternoon.

We wish all our Parents and Friends old and new a Happy New Year.

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SIDEWAYS NURSERY SCHOOL

The end of term festivities went well with an excellent Nativity play performed by the older children, with the little ones joining in the songs and carols. There was scarcely a dry eye in the hall by the end! Both groups had a little party on their last morning with a visit from Father Christmas. The top group also had the thrill of going to St. Mary's School to see the Infant Nativity Play.

Our A.G.M. in November was a useful meeting. Three new members were elected to the Committee and we sadly said goodbye to Sarah Ledger, Marion Dyke, Janice Proud and Joy Brealey. Mrs. Jones of Bentfield County Primary School kindly came along and gave us an excellent talk on 'Preparing Your Child for School', which gave us much to think about.

We have had a most successful year at Sideways and for this we must give thanks to our marvellous teachers and the many parents and others who come in to help. We are looking forward to the new children starting in January; and we hope our rising 5's who left Sideways last term settle quickly and happily in their new schools. Happy New Year to you all.

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OLIVER: Once again, the Drama Club excelled themselves with their performance of the musical 'Oliver'. Four performances to capacity audiences was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The title roll 'Oliver' was played by Rebecca Clear who gave a very stirring and heart-rending performance. Fagin, played by Adrian Peck, looked quite the part with his superb mannerisms and make-up. Other children who took the main parts were James Earp as the Artful Dodger; Anne Marie Barker as Mr. Bumble; Sarah Dimond as Mrs. Bumble; Marianne Quith as Nancy and Adrian Doyle as Bill Sykes. Jessica Kelsey was the narrator. The cast of 80 sang songs with great gusto and clarity.

A big thank you to the production team under the guidance of Mrs. Marion Johnson; to Mrs. Fiddy Jordan, Mrs. Valerie Catton and recorder groups and to Mrs. Wendy Linton and mums for the make-up and to Mrs. Catton for scenery and props.

We look forward in anticipation to next year's production.

Junior Carol Service: The Junior children performed their story of the Nativity in St. John's Church. The theme this year was the birth of Jesus as seen through the eyes of the children. It was a very moving and caring play written by Mrs. Marion Johnson, with music by Mrs. Valerie Catton. The children came to pay homage to Jesus in their own simple way and they met together to form a circle of light to honour the baby Jesus. The service was conducted by the Rev. Barry Rose and the Rev. Andrew Proud, and the audience joined in with traditional Christmas Carols.

Infant Nativity Service: The Infants performed their Nativity play "Neddy the Donkey" - the birth of Jesus as seen through the eyes of the Donkey Neddy. Under the guidance of Mrs. Audrey Costley, Mrs. Margaret Bigland and Mrs. Cathy Low, the infants all beautifully dressed mined the story of the Nativity and sang carols and Christmas songs. A delighted audience of parents and playgroup children thoroughly enjoyed the infants performance.

Collections were made at all the school productions in aid of Save the Children Fund.

P.T.A. Christmas Fair: The P.T.A. Christmas Fair was a great success. Over £450 was raised and the school have now ordered a video tape recorder. Thank you to the P.T.A. for all their hard work and to the many parents and friends of the school who helped and supported the event.

Forthcoming Service: The school will be having its ternly communion service in the school hall on Thursday, January 13th at 9 a.m. This will be the Epiphany Service.

A very happy and peaceful New Year from the staff, children and friends of St. Mary's School.

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3RD STANSTED BROWNIES

Friday night is Brownie night for the 3rd Stansted Pack. It is always such an exciting time with badges to work for, team games to play, songs to be sung, and goodies to be eaten. The 3rd Stansted Pack has been cared for over the past six years by Brown Owl Liz Jordan, and Tawny Owl Kathleen Poole. Sadly due to their family commitments, we have to say goodbye to Liz and Kathleen. On behalf of the parents and Brownies, I would like to thank Liz and Kathleen for their work and the many hours of pleasure they have given to our children. Their stimulating leadership, care and kindness has been very much appreciated.

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Will all members please note our next meetings on MONDAY, 17th January, 1983, and the A.G.M. on MONDAY, 21st February, 1983 - both meetings at 8.0 p.m. held at Stansted Football Club.

Our Dinner-Dance is on Saturday, 22nd January, 1983. Tickets are £10 each. It is being held at Arthur Findlay College, Stansted Hall, Stansted - 7.30 p.m. for 8.0 p.m. Tickets are available (limited number) from Mrs. Griggs, 6 Crossdale Road, Stansted, telephone E/S 813525; any evening after 7.0 p.m.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to wish all members a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

THE MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

Those of you who did not attend our December meeting missed a real treat. Mr. J. R. French, our highly knowledgeable speaker on the subject of growing vegetables gave us some very useful tips, not only on methods of cultivation but on varieties to choose for particular purposes. Sadly, he did not bring us any of his annual 40 lb. of tomato chutney to sample!

The January meeting will be on the second Monday, the 10th, as the first Monday in the month is a Bank Holiday. It will be at our normal venue, the Youth and Adult Centre Annex at 8 p.m. and the speaker will be Mr. F. Brown, an expert on the subject of "Chrysanthemums". Will members please bring a sherry glass to this meeting, and a few goodies (mince pies, sausage rolls, etc.) for a late New Year's celebration.

Please also bring along your orders for Suttons seeds as I need to add it all up and send it off to Suttons before the end of the month. Any members needing catalogues or order forms please contact me as soon as possible - S.I. Frogley, B/S 812617. Remember, it may be your one or two packets of seeds which bring us up to the total needed to get our full 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % discount.

Schedules are now available for the spring and late summer shows to allow aspiring entrants to plan their planting during the next few snowy weeks.

A Happy New Year and productive gardens for 1983 to you all.

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BENTFIELD CUMT. PRIMARY SCHOOL

During the final weeks of last term, the hard work of children, teachers and parents produced a superb piece of Christmas entertainment. The story of Hans Christian Anderson was enjoyed by all who came to our two performances and everyone involved must be applauded for their hard work. All the pupils in the Junior Department took part and it would be impossible to mention any above the others. Nicholas Archer as the Emperor in the Emperor's New Clothes performed his (almost) naked role with great aplomb - not a part every boy would agree to! Every performer was excellently dressed and we had a vast array of queens, kings, princesses, dogs, ducks, swans, mice, fish, gnomes, lumberjacks, pine trees, swallows, beetles, snow queens, etc. Thanks must be given to all the mums and dads who worked so hard producing costumes and props and a special thanks to Sue Pollard, Barbara Lodge, Carole Crosby and Kerry Brice who worked so hard quietly behind the scenes.

Infant Nativity plays never fail to bring a lump to the throat and this year's performance was no exception. Many of the performers were children who had recently attended the Play Group and it is delightful to see them growing up so beautifully.

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

The Mill is open between 2.30 and 7.00 pm on the first Sunday each month from April to October and every Sunday in August. Also open at the same times on the Sunday and Monday of the three Bank Holidays. Admission is 20p for adults and 10p for accompanied children. Parties can be catered for at other times—Ring B.S. 813159 for details.

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