

Feb '98

The LINK



*Stansted
Mountfitchet*

GRAPHIC DESIGN

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PC/MAC INSTALLATION


CELANDINE

DESIGN

TEL/ANS/FAX
817243

EXHIBITIONS/DISPLAYS

DESK TOP PUBLISHING



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01279 813160

59 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted

'The Street'

as grandma knew it.
The half-timbered row
of houses in the
background was
dismantled and
re-erected in Horsham,
Sussex in the 1930's.



Photo from David Martin's Stansted Postcard Collection



Photo Peter Brown

90 years on

Brighter, busier,
better-off and noisier;
a gathering of posts
and wires - but still
unmistakably the
same, and to our
generation

'Lower Street'

The Link is published monthly by Churches Together in Stansted

Advertising and other enquiries to Sheila Parry 16 Bentfield Causeway Tel 814788

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its member churches, village organisations or advertisers.

**Copy to reach 58 Chapel Hill by
12th February for publication on 1st March
12th March for publication on 29th March**

Roman Catholic

St Theresa's Church, Millside

Priest: Rev'd Joe White
The Presbytery, 12 Millside, Stansted
Tel 814349

Masses:

| | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|
| Saturday | Stansted | 6.00 pm |
| Sunday | Stansted | 10.30 am |
| | Henham | 9.00 am |
| Holy Days | Stansted | 8.00 pm |
| | Henham | 7.00 pm |
| Weekdays | Stansted | 9.30 am |
| (Tues-Sat) | | |

Confessions on Saturday after 9.30 mass

A MUSICAL PARABLE

The Parable of the Piano as told by Fr Jim Brand

The battered, dented, well-played piano has obviously suffered but has been loved and has given pleasure. Sometimes we are only given 'Rules of Living' and we are unable to use our inspiration or our heart and soul. We are not able to think it out for ourselves, we are only able to obey the 'rules', terrified that if we do not appear to conform we are lost. In this way as with the pianist, only a part of us is living. If we only play with one finger and then feeling nervous and guilty we are unable to take real responsibility for what we do, unable to put the whole of our being behind our lives. Jesus gave us the whole of himself - we appear to be limited in what we are prepared to give.

It is easier for most people to justify themselves by not living to the limit God has given them and therefore not making any mistakes - therefore not giving the whole of oneself; just the fingertips. This is totally dishonest; playing safe with no imagination.

The violin and the drum are very different from each other but in music they are able to listen to each other, love each other and are able to play the main theme together. This is shared with the rest of the orchestra. What is your main theme? Are you able to share it or are you too frightened and want to play safe?

Listening gives one the chance to play and one cannot be without the other. When listening to a singer we do not notice the accompanist if he is there - we notice if he is not there. The whole performance is incomplete. This is the same with the Holy Spirit, without whom life is incomplete.

In an orchestration every instrument gets a chance to play the main theme - our main theme in life is to establish Christ in our lives. Once we have done that we can keep quiet and listen to others.

We are all different, like instruments in an orchestra - loud - soft - mute - clashing, etc. but all work together to produce the harmonious main theme. Our Pope is the conductor of the music that Christ has written, he makes sure we follow the score!

Mary Warnett

Funeral

12th January Dennis Murphy, aged 41

Society of Friends

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH "ORDER, ORDER!"

The time is 9.30 on a mid January morning. The place is a room overlooking our small garden. I have just returned from walking our dog through Birchanger Woods. When this is published it will be early February and spring may be on its way. In the garden bulbs are sprouting, crocuses and snowdrops are well on their way. Within the woods arum lily, ringwort and dogs mercury are already shooting. We have had a sufficiency of winter rain, perhaps reducing the threat of summer drought. Renewal and regrowth has happened yet again as spring succeeds winter.

There is order in the apparent chaos of life on earth. This order is maintained as day succeeds night. Season follows season and year follows year. There is order in the infinitesimally small molecular level as well as on the astronomical level. I never cease to marvel at this order as witness to our creator.

The following passage from "Quaker Faith and Practices" seems appropriate.

We must guard the abundance and variety of untamed nature and not forget the spiritual resources available to us in the continued existence of unoccupied lands. Year by year silence and solitude are growing more needful, yet harder to obtain and contacts, by this means, with the mind of the creator more tenuous. To conserve nature is thus again a contribution to the fuller life of mankind.

Peter Burgess



Methodist

Meets in Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

Minister: Rev'd Michael Hayman
2 South Road, Bishop's Stortford
Tel 654475

Secretary: Mrs Catherine Dean
49 Recreation Ground, Stansted
Tel 813579

Our Services for February are as follows:

1st 9.30am Mr Ken Mark of Saffron Walden
8th 9.30am Mr Michael Valentine of Bishop's
Stortford
15th 9.30am The Revd Michael Hayman,
Holy Communion
22nd 9.30am Mr Michael Render of Braughing

On Sunday Evening we join with the other churches in our Methodist Circuit for a United Service at Bishop's Stortford at 6 pm when we shall welcome the Revd Dr John Taylor, President of the Conference, as our preacher. All are welcome to join us.

Our Church Council will be held on Friday 20th February at 8.00pm, venue to be announced.

Along with all the people of Stansted we send our love to Father Joe White of St Theresa's and offer our prayers to God for his full recovery.

Church of England

Parish Church of St. John the Evangelist

Rector: The Revd. Andrew Spurr
The Rectory
Stansted Mountfitchet, CM24 8JP
Office: 812203
Home: 815025
Email: andrew.spurr@zetnet.co.uk

Diary for February

Worship will be according to the regular pattern with 8.00am said Holy Communion, 9.30am sung Parish Communion and said Evensong at 6.30pm each Sunday. A said Holy Communion service is held at 10.00am on Wednesday mornings and a time of prayer is kept at 7.30pm on Wednesday evenings.

Other services of Holy Communion include 10.30am on February 3rd at Norman Court, 10.30am on February 10th at Mead Court and 11.00am on February 24th at Hargrave House.

Guest Preachers for the month will include **Mr Peter Jones** at 9.30am Parish Communion on 15th February and **Dr Jane Freeman** at 8.00pm Holy Communion on Ash Wednesday, 25th February.

On February 1st the Presentation of Christ in the Temple will be celebrated and all recently baptised children and their families are especially invited to attend Parish Communion on that day. On Education Sunday, 8th February, children, staff and governors from St Mary's Primary School will be attending and helping to lead the 9.30am Parish Communion.

Funerals

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 19th December 1997 | William May |
| 6th January 1998 | John Gott |
| 7th January 1998 | Mary Evelyn Sarah Pettit |
| 8th January 1998 | Freda Mary Hall |
| 13th January 1998 | Ivy Mary Livings |
| 15th January 1998 | Shirley Matthews |



United Reformed

Chapel Hill

Ministers: Rev'd Margaret McKay
1 Howe Hall Cottages
Littlebury Green
Tel 01799 528155

Rev'd Lydia Rapkin
23a St John's Close
Saffron Walden
Tel 01799 523296

Contact: Mrs Janet Townsend
58 Chapel Hill
Tel 812593

PREACHERS FOR FEBRUARY

| | | |
|------|------|-----------------------|
| 1st | 11am | Mrs C Bonner |
| 8th | 11am | Mr R Friday |
| 15th | 11am | Rev M McKay Communion |
| 22nd | 11am | Rev L Rapkin |





CHURCHES TOGETHER in STANSTED

LENT GROUPS 1998

This year's theme is "Hope in a Time of Change". There will be House Groups on Thursday and Friday evenings and on Wednesday afternoons. The first meetings take place during the week commencing March 1st and full details will appear in the March issue.

The concept of house groups is beginning to gain support in Stansted so we can look forward to good discussions. Do book the dates now and encourage others to come.



The third 'Celebration of Christmas' concert was held on 20th December 1997 and was attended by approximately 200 people. The retiring collection raised £191 after expenses had been paid, of which half was sent to the Emmaus Community in Cambridge and half to the Churches Conservation Trust (the organisation which maintains St Mary's Church). The allocation of 50% of the collection to the Churches Conservation Trust is determined by the rules governing the use of redundant churches.

St John's Choir was joined by singers from the Churches in Stansted and together they performed four choir items. Other items were performed by St Mary's School Choir and instrumentalists, the Lazer Group from St John's and a group from the United Reformed Church led by Valerie Trundle.

Volunteers to read were again requested from all the Churches. The Mountfitchet High School provided the readers this year for the first time and there was an excellent performance by three young readers from St Theresa's Church.

Following suggestions after the concert in 1996, the number of congregational carols was increased to five, with a reduction in the number of choir items. This enabled the rehearsal time for the choir to be limited to three practices and a short run-through before the concert. Due to a large number of commitments for St John's Choir over Christmas and the resulting pressure on their Thursday evening practices, two of the rehearsals were held on Fridays.

Sound amplification was also introduced in 1997 to assist the readers.

If a similar concert is to be held in 1998, the date of Saturday 19th December at 4 pm in St Mary's Church was suggested.



SHALOM

Dates for February

- 9th Rev Martin Cressey on Corrymeela at 4 Greenfields
- 23rd Fr John Glynn - Theology of Hymns at 7 Blythwood Gardens

St Patrick's Ceildh

This is an annual event which is organised to raise funds for the Corrymeela Reconciliation Centre in Northern Ireland. Unfortunately this is still a cause which needs your strong support. Please, therefore, come along on 21st March and not only will you be helping a charity, but also enjoying yourselves dancing, and perhaps singing, to the music of the Cambridge Crofters. Details are on the Village Events page.

STANSTED CONSERVATIVES



Forthcoming Events

Diary Dates for the month are as follows:

- Jumble Sale:** 2.00pm on Saturday 7th February
- Winter Warmth:** Noon on Sunday 15th February

Jumble for the Jumble Sale is urgently required. For collection please ring (01279) 814440 or 814854, or 816249 or 812130.

Winter Warmth will be held at Savages, Lower Street, Stansted, by kind invitation of one of the Vice Presidents of the Branch and his wife, Peter and Kay Jones.

Member of Parliament's Interviews

Friday 6th February

The Old Armoury, 3 Museum Street, Saffron Walden
5.45 - 6.30pm.

Parish Council Office, Crafton Green, Stansted, 7-745pm

Alastair Richardson
815959

GALLOPING HORSE VILLA CAMBRIDGE ROAD

Now the Co-operative Supermarket

The building was erected by Henry Thurston Senior, the well known showman, steam-engine and fairground rides owner, just after the turn of the century. Some years before his death in 1917 he moved to another home in Stansted and the building then became the cycle shop illustrated in this postcard. Henry Thurston is known to have kept engines and equipment in a field behind the house. Together with his wife he is buried in St Mary's Churchyard.

The name is taken from the horse used in his gallopers and shown in stone above the door. We can only hope that it is still there behind the Co-op facade. Over the archway can be seen to this day a horn of plenty, a beehive and the dove of peace. It remains one of our best examples of Edwardian building.

The cycle shop was owned and occupied by the Matthews family until shortly after the First World War. Their grand-daughter Marion Pretty is thankfully still a well-known resident of Stansted.

The postcard, kindly lent by Paul Embleton, is part of the other collection held in Stansted. Paul writes:

"The recent sale of a collection of Stansted postcards has excited a lot of interest in the village and I have had several enquiries asking it if is true that Victorian postcards of Stansted exist. Sadly the answer is no as the earliest card was not published until 1903. At least after nearly 20 years collecting the earliest card in my collection of 400 cards is dated May 1903 and I have never seen an earlier one. Pictorial postcards were not permitted by the Post Office until 1894 and did not begin to become popular until 1899 when a slightly larger card was permitted. It was not until 1902 that the P.O. permitted a message and an address on the same side and it was only then that smaller places such as Stansted were featured. If anyone has a card of Stansted postmarked earlier than May 1903 or which has an undivided back (i.e. 1902 or earlier) I should very much like to see it and to take a copy for the Local History Society photographic library".

Paul Embleton, tel: 812627



Stansted Tennis Club

STANSTED'S "HELPLINE" NEEDS HELP!

Your local voluntary community care service requires new volunteers

A telephone is essential - and use of a car would be particularly helpful as requests for transport are many

If you agree to add your name to our list of volunteers it will not entail any regular commitment

For more details please ring:
Yvonne Ayres (Organiser) - 814706 or
Francine Cope (Chairman) - 814562



Recipe of the Month

Date Pudding and Lemon Sauce

6oz / 170gm self raising flour
2oz / 55gm breadcrumbs
3-4oz / 85-115gm finely chopped suet
6oz / 170gm chopped dates and/or figs
2oz / 55gm honey or golden syrup
2 tablespoons milk
A little grated lemon rind
Pinch of salt

- (a) sieve the flour and salt into a bowl
- (b) add breadcrumbs, suet, dates and lemon peel
- (c) mix well
- (d) make a well in the centre of the mixture
- (e) warm the honey/syrup
- (f) pour honey and milk into the mixture
- (g) mix to a dropping consistency
- (h) turn into a greased basin
- (i) cover with greaseproof paper
- (j) steam for 2½ hours

Serve with lemon sauce:

3 tablespoons golden syrup
2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons lemon juice
Knob of butter/margarine

- (a) boil syrup and water in small pan (do not stir)
- (b) when liquid begins to thicken remove from heat
- (c) stir in lemon juice and butter

1997 drew to close with our Annual Christmas Dinner which this year was held at the Chilli Club in Bishop's Stortford. It was well attended and quite a change from the traditional turkey and Christmas pudding!

Members continue to play tennis throughout the winter. Our men's, ladies and mixed teams play in the Essex Small Clubs Winter League and members support club mornings on Wednesdays and Sundays - we always welcome any new members.

The Tennis Club AGM will take place at 105 Cambridge Road at 8pm on Tuesday 17th March - please support this event as it is your chance to air any views you may have concerning your club.

Junior Coaching

Chris Hollis will be taking over from Linda Kelsey on Thursday afternoons, starting in the spring. The course will run for 5 Thursdays (24th April to 21st May). Ages 11 and under 4.30-5.15pm, ages 12 and over 5.15-6.00pm. The cost for the course will be £13.75. If you are interested please telephone Chris on 466973 for further information.

Norman Elson will also continue to run coaching sessions. Norman can be contacted on 850 057.

If anyone is interested in joining the club they should contact our Membership Secretary, Kate Rutter, on 813053. Any other queries please contact Richard Mott (Secretary) on 466348 or Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 812073.

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Ruth Clifford
Office Hours:
Monday to Friday
10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.



Council Offices
Crafter Green House
72 Chapel Hill
Stansted Mountfitchet
Essex CM24 8AQ
Telephone: (0279) 813214

Seeks "Handy Person" to undertake maintenance work on a part-time basis.

Majority of work is outdoors, therefore hours to be worked are flexible and will be mutually agreed in advance. Jobs include painting, repairs to play equipment, seats etc. basic garden maintenance.

Must have own transport for which mileage allowance paid. Hourly rate £4.50.

Further full details available from: The Clerk, Mrs R. Clifford, telephone 01279 813214.


Uttlesford Carers &
Alzheimer's Disease Society
CARERS SUPPORT GROUP

A talk by David Bright of
Uttlesford Community Travel
2 - 4 pm Monday 2nd February
Quaker Meeting House
Everyone welcome
Tel 01371 875810 / 872519

Coffee Morning
Hargrave Nursing Home

Cambridge Road
10.00 am - 12 noon
Wed 4th February
Entrance 40p
Come and join the residents for
a chat and a piece of cake

HOMEMADE CAKES

10.00 am
Sat 7th February
outside the
United Reformed Church
 Chapel Hill
(in church if wet)

February

VILLAGE EVENTS

| | | | |
|---------|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 | Mon | Carers Support Group | Quaker Meeting House 2 - 4 pm |
| 2 | Mon | | |
| | to | | |
| 5 | Thu | Skip at Crafton Green | |
| 4 | Wed | Coffee Morning | Hargrave House 10 am - 12 noon |
| | | Gardening Club | Day Centre 8 pm |
| 5 | Thu | Local History Society | Day Centre 8 pm |
| 6 | Fri | MP's Interview Time | Parish Council Offices 7 pm |
| 7 | Sat | Cake Stall | Outside URC 10 am |
| | | Conservative Jumble Sale | 2 pm |
| 9 | Mon | Shalom Group | 4 Greenfields 8 pm |
| 12 | Thu | Evening WI | St John's Hall 7.30 pm |
| 14 | Sat | Carnival Line Dance | Mountfitchet School 7.30 pm |
| 15 | Sun | Conservative Winter Warmth | Savages, Lower Street 12 noon |
| 17 | Tue | Tennis Club AGM | 105 Cambridge Road 8 pm |
| 18 | Wed | Huw Johnson Club AGM | St John's Hall 8 pm |
| 21 | Sat | W I Jumble Sale | St John's Hall 2 pm |
| 21 - 22 | | Skip at Crafton Green | |
| 23 | Mon | Shalom Group | 7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm |

March

| | | | |
|---|-----|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 4 | Wed | Lent Groups begin | |
| 6 | Fri | Women's World Day of Prayer | Quaker Meeting House 2 pm |
| 7 | Sat | Scouts Family Quiz | Water Lane 6 pm |



STANSTED CARNIVAL

St Valentine's Day

LINE DANCE

Sat 14th February

Mountfitchet High School

Caller: Valerie Martin

Bar opens at 7.30 pm

Tickets £6 including supper

Tel Margaret on 812743

ST. PATRICK'S



CEILIDH

(Irish singing & dancing)
with the renowned

CAMBRIDGE CROFTERS

8 - 11.15 pm

Saturday 21st March

Mountfitchet School

Refreshments - Bar - Raffle

in aid of the **Corrymeela** centre for
reconciliation in Northern Ireland

Adults £5 Under 12's £2

Tel Dave & Rita Morson 850209

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



'Who is my neighbour?'

2 pm Friday 6th March

Quaker Meeting House

Speaker Mrs Barbara Engel

Everyone Welcome

(men and women)

1st Stansted Scout Group

FAMILY Quiz Night

6 pm Saturday 7th March

Scout Hut, Water Lane

Tickets £1.50 (Food on Sale)

Please tel 814967 or 850631



Stansted
Evening WI

JUMBLE SALE

2 pm

Saturday 21st February

St John's Hall

Entrance 10 pence

Jumble ~ Good-as-New

Bric-a-Brac ~ Books

Raffle ~ Cake Stall

Refreshments

If you have jumble to
donate, please tel 812725

UTTLESFORD COMMUNITY TRAVEL

U.C.T. Office
12a Stortford Road
Great Dunmow
Essex CM6 1DA

Tel: 01371 875787 (2 lines)
Fax: 01371 878206

Our Book-a-Rode service has gradually developed since its launch in September. It emerged from an Uttlesford Council for Voluntary Service initiative to meet an obvious need in our widespread rural district, where public transport is sparse.

We provide a door-to-door service for Uttlesford residents who do not have the use of private cars and who find public transport awkward, either because they live where there is none, or very little, or who have disabilities, are elderly, or otherwise isolated. The vehicles have electric wheelchair lifts so that users can remain in their chair while travelling and an electric side-step to ease entry.

You may have seen our new R-registered Nissan people carriers which have recently been fitted with our green and yellow diamond logos, as well as those of our sponsors. These include Essex County Council, Uttlesford District Council, BAA Stansted Airport and Three Valleys Water.

We now have 3 of these vehicles covering all of Uttlesford, one of which is based in Stansted by courtesy of the governors of Peter Kirk School, who have allowed us free parking. Bill Fegan from St John's Crescent and myself are your local drivers. The others operate from Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow, with their own drivers, but we are flexible enough to cover each other's patches to meet demand.

Qualifying residents join the scheme for an annual £5 membership fee. They may then telephone to book rides at a subsidised cost of £1.50 for the first 4 miles, then 25p for each mile after that. An escort, child or partner can travel with the member for just £1 per trip. Journeys have included shopping trips to town centres or out-of-town supermarkets, visits to friends and relations in hospital or their homes, to dentists, hairdressers, post offices, libraries, clubs, classes, pub lunches, etc. We will also travel out of Uttlesford if a vehicle is available.

As drivers we enjoy and take pride in providing a caring, helpful, reliable service that our members do appreciate and which really is door-to-door. At the start of January we had about 90 members but only a handful were from Stansted so there must be many potential members whose lives could be enhanced who do not yet know of the service. Those readers involved in our village churches, clubs and societies may know of such people in Stansted and we would be pleased if you could help us to help them by putting them in touch with us.

Any enquiries or requests for membership application forms may be made to David Bright or Maggie Craddock in our Dunmow office on 01371 875787 or to me if you prefer.

Brian Linford
9 Park Road
813466



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

In spite of wind and pouring rain 22 people turned out on New Year's Day to hear 5 members give a variety of short talks from a Review of Stansted in 1877, snippets from the Essex County Chronicle of 1899, how some Corn Millers cheated and got into trouble, stage coaches that went through Stansted and was Cecil Rhodes pigeon-toed and left handed.

Let us hope that the next meetings, in the Day Centre at 8pm, are on days and with weather to encourage our usual numbers of twice that of January.

Thurs. 5th February "The Anti-Airport Protest
Movement" by Norman Mead
Thurs. 5th March "Hearty Homely Loving Herts"
with Ann-Marie Parker

Peggy Honour

John Gott - An Obituary

John Gott was a local man - born in Stansted he worked overseas where he married Bridget before returning to live initially in Stansted and then in Bishop's Stortford for the last twenty-five years. The memories for many of us will be of a man with a sense of humour who was involved in many aspect of village life, serving for many years as a Parish Councillor, a role which Bridget still continues, working for the local Conservative branch as well as being involved in other village events and issues such as the annual Arts and Crafts Market and Stansted Preservation Association. Although their divorce was a sad event, it was delightful to see that, in later years, Bridget and John remained good friends while John was a familiar figure in Lower Street each week as he went to visit Mrs Phyllis Watts, Bridget's mother.

John lived life to the full, overcame some serious health problems and cared for his family - indeed he was with Charlotte and her family at the handover of Hong Kong last summer. He will be missed.

Peter Jones

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Last year's entries fell into two age groups. The prizewinning entry in each group is reproduced below. Whether you were winners or received encouragement awards, the Link was delighted to see your efforts. Thank you children!

The little Christmas tree
standing on its own.
Blue, yellow, green red lights
go off and on.
Something sparkly on the top.
A star.
Under the Christmas tree are
lots of presents for all the children.

Richard Honour Age 4

Christmas

It's Christmas eve and here we sit
next to the fire that Granddad just lit
we go to the table all ready and laid
set for the supper that Grandma has made
in the distance we hear bells ringing
there goes St Nick and his reindeer all singing
in the night while we are all sleeping
on Christmas morning sat under the tree
we open the presents and smile with glee
I get a football Rob gets a bike
Karen gets a dolly and Lisa gets a kite
Jesus was born in Bethlehem today
deep in our hearts he will always stay

Adam Lunn Age 10

The Magic Washing Machine

Mrs Golightly, a plump and usually jolly woman, woke up one Monday morning and gave a loud sneeze. 'Atishoo! Raining again,' she grumbled, looking out of the window, 'and my washing machine is broken. I have a cold too, atishoo!'. By the time the eight Golightly children had gone to school, their mum did not feel like doing the washing. 'I know,' she thought, 'I will go and see Wanda the Witch, she will help me.' But when she arrived at Wanda's cottage in the nearby woods, she was not there. 'I expect she has gone shopping,' said Mrs Golightly, 'I'm sure she won't mind if I use her washing machine while she's out.'

Mrs Golightly put all her dirty clothes into the magic machine, which did not need any soap or water, and pressed the button. Suddenly there was a strange swooshing noise. To her astonishment, she saw Billy's red jersey dancing out of the machine with Betty's blue dress; then Tommy's white shirt whizzing round with Sandra's yellow skirt and a dozen pairs of socks whirring round in a ring. As she watched, all the clothes danced out of the open kitchen window and into the wood. She ran after them shouting 'Stop, stop' but they danced on. She could not catch them, and after chasing about for a long time, she went sadly home, saying to herself, 'I'll never use anyone's things again without asking first.'

After a while, the clothes became tired of dancing, and when Mrs Golightly had gone they hung limply from the trees or lay on the ground. Later that day, as she came home through the wood, Wanda the Witch was surprised to see the woodland animals busy gathering up Mrs Golightly's washing. The squirrels were bringing things down from the trees and the rabbits were folding up the things on the ground. 'This washing is so dirty it will be hard to get clean,' sighed a rabbit, and explained to Wanda what had happened.

'If only Mrs Golightly had waited for me' said Wanda. 'A lot of these things are badly torn now. Bring them along and put them in my magic washing machine - it mends clothes as well!!' When the clothes were in the machine, Wanda said some magic words and pressed the button. Soon Wanda and the animals were ready to return everything to Mrs Golightly, who was surprised and delighted with all her clothes that were now clean *and* mended. 'Oh, however can I thank you?' she cried. 'Have you had tea?'. 'No, we were too busy' they replied. 'Then come into my house and sit down. They had a special nutty cake and made such a noise laughing and talking with the Golightly children. What a happy ending, but Mrs Golightly never used Wanda's washing machine again!

ST MARY'S CHURCH DRIVE

Last month the resurfacing of the drive and car park was completed by the Thaxted firm of J.F. Knight (Roadworks) Ltd. They have done an excellent job and the Church, Churchyard and Parish Cemetery can now be approached with some confidence and vehicles can be parked without fear that they will be bogged down. Certainly it all looks very nice and it is to be hoped that the minor problems reported in the press will not recur.

The work cost nearly \$16,000 and is the first major renovation that has been carried out for over 50 years. As will be known, the Parochial Church Council, which is the responsible body, could not possibly have funded the work and the finance was raised by private subscription. At least 125 people contributed to the appeal which was launched at a special Whitsunday service after some initial "pump-priming". At that service there was an inspirational sermon from Roy Tricker of the Churches Conservation Trust and an address by Richard Shervington, one of the appeal committee. He paid tribute to the work of the Trust, to the previous Rector, Bob Wallace and his successor, Andrew Spurr, for supporting the appeal throughout and for dealing with the complicated task of obtaining the necessary Church permissions. He also thanked Mrs Janet Hollis for chairing the appeal committee, the Hon. Treasurer, John Summers and the committee members - Ray Clifford, Basil Irwin, Audrey Rodgers and Phyllis Saban and the many devoted people who tend and maintain the Churchyard and decorate the Church.

The appeal committee would like to thank all those who made contributions, large and small, including the Churches Conservation Trust and the Stansted Parish Council. Their names will be recorded discreetly within St Mary's together with reference to anonymous donations. The committee would also particularly like to thank those whose initial generosity with time, talents and funds provided the impetus for the project. It is a tribute to the people of Stansted that appeals for two major projects associated with church buildings can be successful in a single year. We must hope that this generosity will continue in addressing the increasingly challenging issues of church finance.

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Huw Johnson Club

It was all aboard a Halls coach on Monday 29th December for our annual trip to Cambridge Corn Exchange which had been transformed into Sherwood Forest. Robin Hood, Will Scarlett (who was also Merlin although I was obviously not imaginative enough to see the connection) and Friar Tuck were all there supported by Otis Ardvaak from BBC Children's Television. We all clapped, shouted and laughed in the right places and some of us managed to catch the sweets thrown into the audience.

Of course it didn't matter that not all were lucky because everyone had a bag of sweets provided by the United Reformed Church and we say a big 'thankyou' to their congregation for once again giving us such a welcome gift.

We have now booked this year's holiday at Cleethorpes. We went there in 1994 and those who were with us then are looking forward to our return visit. We have booked a coach again and we are now looking for new ways of raising money to cover the cost. Please look out for posters about future fund raising and come along to these events.

Our AGM will take place this year on Wednesday 18th February in St John's Church Hall, not as in previous years at the Day Centre.

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This term the children are thinking about the village of Stansted. They started by looking at their own families, the members in them, their ages, what they do and where they live. The children then pinned their names on to a large scale street map of Stansted at the place where they lived.

The children then thought about the sorts of things that can be found in Stansted. They made up a list of these things. This was taken further as a group of children made a trip to the Stansted Library where the children were encouraged to find the books themselves. They were each given two cards, each card had the name and the simple picture of one of these things. The children did very well.

Another trip was made, this time to the Stansted Post Office. The children were posting invitations that they had been helped to write. The invitations were addressed to their parents and were invitations to the children's pancake races on February 24th and for a pancake lunch afterwards. The trip was timed to coincide with the post person collecting the letters and put them into the post van. The children were fascinated to receive their letters through their own door!

The children thought about the birds that visit the village. They took part in a project to record the birds that visited their gardens. The project was part of a national survey of birds. They also made a nut and lard bird cake, a lovely treat for birds at this time year.

A trip is planned to Bentfield End Farm in the next few weeks. We are hoping that the children will be able to see some of the new born lambs.

We are also looking forward to the relaunch of the Rainbow Tots group which usually meets on a Wednesday afternoon. The group will have a new name, a new time and a new format. It will be relaunched with a party. Notices will be put around advertising the relaunch. The general idea is to provide facilities such as painting and gluing that have not previously been on offer. Also to hopefully have a new carpeted play area aimed for the younger children and the babies. However, to be able to offer an increased range of facilities at the usual price there will be greater parental involvement so that the responsibility of looking after the children will be shared. For more details please phone Sue Civil. 817843, who is co-ordinating the relaunch.

The January quiz was a great success and the profits made went towards buying new equipment for the Preschool. We are all looking forward to the party for the relaunch of the new group and to the pancake races. I must go now and practice tossing my pancakes!

Lorna Williams
Messy Play Co-ordinator (817197)

For details about the Preschool please phone Ann Conroy (812457).



Stansted Evening

Dancing in lines was how members welcomed the New Year at their January meeting. With Valerie Martin taking them through their paces St John's Hall resounded to the noise of members stamping their feet, bumping into each other and generally enjoying themselves. Hats and jeans were evident and even those who did not join in due to various bad backs, knees, hips, etc. had a very good evening.

After the participants had regained their breath the new committee served a buffet of cheese, pate, mince pies and sponges washed down with wine.

During business members were reminded about the knitting of "Thuggi Jumpers" (names after a village in India) for children in other lands. These jumpers are 'T' shaped. We knit them in bright colours and preferably striped, and all manage to look quite different. We are also collecting unwanted, unfashionable or broken jewellery for the Alzheimer's Disease Society. Our first fund raising event is a Jumble Sale in St John's Hall on Saturday February 21st at 2 pm.

Looking to the summer we are hoping to visit Bury St Edmunds by car and Constable Country by coach and yes, we are already talking about Christmas Shopping which this year will be to Canterbury: more of that nearer the time.

Our February meeting is in St John's Hall and entitled "Wagons Westward with Calamity Jane" by Don Gardiner so it's Stetsons back on by the sounds of it. This meeting starts at 7.45 pm.

Don't forget March when we welcome Ken Crowther, a gardening presenter from BBC Radio Essex. This meeting will be open to visitors.

Brenda Ryan
812725

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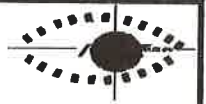
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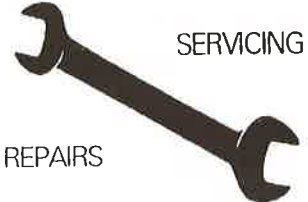
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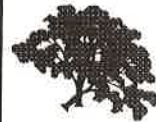
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