

Jan 2002

The **LINK**



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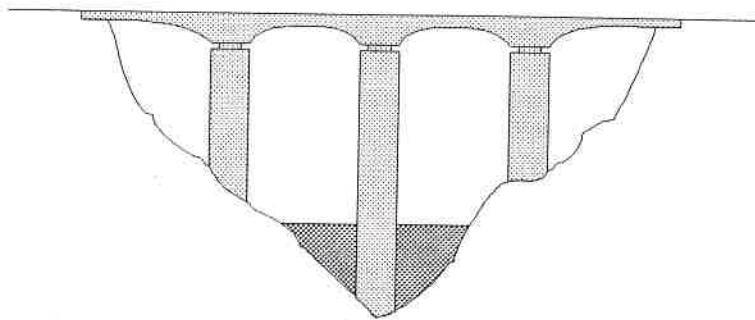
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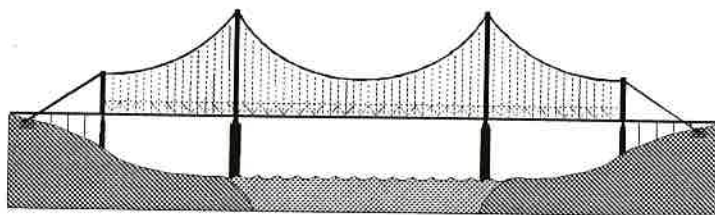
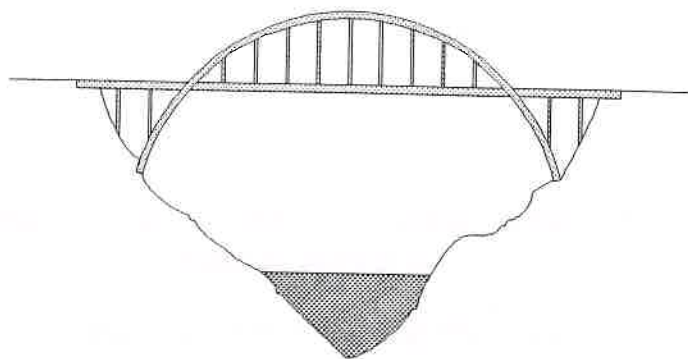
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Day Centre

Enrolment Monday 14th January
7.30 pm
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Entry open to all
Reduced fee for concessions

The Link (price £3.50 per year) is published monthly by Churches Together in Stansted
Advertising enquiries Tel 01279 654945
All other enquiries to Janet Townsend Tel 01279 812593

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**Copy to reach 58 Chapel Hill or email to
stanstedlink@aol.com**
by 10th January for publication on 26th January
by 7th February for publication on 23rd February

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Therese of Lisieux
High Lane

Priest Father Joe White
The Presbytery
12 Millside
Stansted
Tel 01279 814349

Masses Saturday 6.00 pm
Sunday 9 am and 10.30 am

Holy Days of Obligation
8 am and 8 pm

Tuesday 9.30 am
- Saturday

Confessions

Saturday 10 am
and by appointment

Baptisms

By appointment

A HAPPY AND PEACEFUL NEW YEAR TO EVERYBODY

LET US GO TO GOD'S HOUSE

The first weekend on our new site at High Lane had Psalm 121 as our Responsorial Psalm.

It is a happy psalm and speaks about rejoicing when Going to God's House.

'I rejoiced when I heard them say: "Let us go to God's House". A very appropriate sentiment for all of us.

For the Jewish people, of all times, they rejoice especially as they come close to Jerusalem. Jerusalem means the City of Shalom, the place of God's Peace. As we begin praying and worshipping at High Lane may the months and years ahead bring us peace, bring us closer to God and to each other. The Lord promises that He will dispel the darkness of doubt and uncertainty, and give us joy that this world cannot give.

Fr Joe

British Aid for Deprived Children

Thank you everybody for your tremendously generous response to the Christmas appeal.

All the items, which you so generously donated, have gone to George and Marion together with donations for the diesel fuel.

Six years ago George and Marion Mills met Dr Pasechnik. He had been allotted an old kindergarten as a rehabilitation centre for child victims of Cherbonyl. This has been gutted and rebuilt, called the REVIVAL CENTRE. Six years ago this was just one of a complex of 6 with no money available and help was minimal. George and Marion Mills with British Aid for Deprived Children have helped to make this possible. Revival now has 3 buildings, rooms for physiotherapy, hydro-massage, sewing, massage etc and outside there is now a beautiful peace garden with fountains an adventure part, running track and play area. The dedicated staff of Doctors, Psychologists Physiotherapists, Teachers, Cleaners and helpers have made what was a derelict building into the best rehabilitation centre in Ukraine.

The job is not finished yet and Marion and George dream of a swimming pool to enable the paralysed children to have more specialised treatment. This has to be a purpose built building and will obviously cost a lot of money, but with George and Marion on their side I am sure it won't be long before this dream is fulfilled.

George and Marion continue to drive out 6 times a year with the basic items they need for day to day survival and send their thanks for all who have given their help over these years.

Eileen Quinn

UNITED REFORMED

Chapel Hill

Ministers

Rev'd David Simpson
28 Linton Close
Saffron Walden
Tel 01799 526618

Contact

Mrs Janet Townsend
58 Chapel Hill
Tel 01279 812593

Preachers for January

6th	10.30am	Mrs H Kent
13th	10.30am	Rev D Simpson: Communion
20th	10.30am	Rev M Cressey
27th	10.30am	Rev D Simpson

Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to all who gave and helped in making up the shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. 75 boxes were collected altogether and when the boxes were picked up on 22nd November there were already 23,000 boxes in the warehouse at Chelmsford. All the boxes are opened before being dispatched. This year it is hoped that they will be going to Afghanistan.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

The Parishes of
Stansted Mountfitchet
with Birchanger
and Farnham

St John's, Stansted

www.stansted.net

All enquiries

are welcome at
The Church Office
located in the
Upper Room,
St. John's Church Hall,
Stansted CM24 8JP

Monday	Open from
Wednesday	9:00am-
Friday	12:00noon

(01279) 815243
<church.office@stansted.net>

Administrator
Mrs Elizabeth Jennings

Church Hall Bookings
Secretary
Mrs Joy Lambe
(01279) 817937
<joy@stansted.net>

Rector

Revd Andrew Spurr
The Rectory
5 St. John's Road
Stansted Mountfitchet
Essex, CM24 8JP
phone/fax (01279) 812203
<rector@stansted.net>

Assistant Curate
Revd Rhys Martin
43 Gilbey Crescent
Stansted Mountfitchet
Essex, CM24 8DT
phone (01279) 817513
<curate@stansted.net>

Honorary Assistant Priest
Canon Derek Jackson
phone (01279) 652664

Director of Music
Mrs Glynis Morris
phone/fax (01223) 263640
<church.music@stansted.net>

Youth Group
Mrs Katy Dockerill
(01279) 812997

Mother & Toddler Group
Mrs Tina South
(01279) 814371

Housegroup
Mrs Joan Freeman
(01279) 813186
<joanfreeman@zetnet.co.uk>

About a year ago I found myself on the train to London engaged in a conversation with a complete stranger. The subject was powers and principalities and whether I believed in demons. Not the usual stuff of train conversation, but my companion had been trawling the church web site and was asking me about a discussion group we had been running on that very subject.

Churches are not, on the whole, cutting-edge imaginative places to be. Strange, since we are meant to be in the vision business, but we get bogged down in the organisation. Consequently, there was not a great deal of enthusiasm for a church web site when it was mooted three and a half years ago. This was understandable, as far fewer people were online back then. So we put together a few pages, and added some more over time. Although the access logs showed the churches pages to be the most popular on the web site, I had no sense who was reading them or what effect it had.

That day on the train was a sign to me that the web, as a medium, was coming of age. While we live in a culture in which people avoid commitment wherever they can, the web is a way that people can 'window shop', and take a surreptitious peek at something, without having to come out into the open. For churches which take the web seriously, the internet can be a medium for people who may be curious about what the church does, but wouldn't walk up the church path. This winter the church pages are being entirely rewritten, and it would be good for me to learn how useful they are to others and what all else would be good to include, (<www.stansted.net/stjohns/>).

I suspect what is true for the church pages will also become true for the village web site before long. People are becoming

more aware of its worth. One of the first acts of the newly formed Stansted Flood Action Group was to put up some web pages to advertise its mission (<www.stansted.net/sfag/>). We are working to use the web to achieve that almost impossible task of a Village Diary online (<www.stansted.net/diary/>), and there are many more applications which are going to become possible, when the imagination catches up with what is technically possible.

The internet also makes all kinds of dialogue possible. Eighteen months ago I set up a Stansted discussion forum. The computer which manages this forum lives in Palo Alto, California! The traffic on it moves in fits and starts but I think this too will come of age before long, and we may see some interesting dialogue about development, village amenities and the like, as more people become aware of it. You can sign up to the forum from the home page of <www.stansted.net>.

While the last three years have seen more and more people gaining access to the web, there are still a great many who remain excluded. Estimates vary as to how soon the domestic TV will be a realistic web receiver. I suspect it will be when cable services become available locally, some say three, some say five years. So the web is not yet inclusive and we need to remember that, for the time being, it is still a select gathering. But that's not to say that those who can use it to build community shouldn't get on and make a start.

Only a fool would say that online dialogue is a replacement for good old flesh and blood. It isn't, neither should it be. But it does make conversations possible among people we otherwise wouldn't meet. The invitation to this gathering is extended to everyone, it just may take a little time.

AS

St John's Diary

Sundays 8:00am Holy Communion *said*
9:30am Parish Communion
6:30pm Evening Prayer *said*
11:00am Open Door Service on the third Sunday of the month

Wednesdays 10:00am Holy Communion followed by coffee
7:30pm Intercessions and Night Prayer

Tiny Tots is a mother and toddler group that meets on Tuesday afternoons once a fortnight in term-time.

Laser Group is a 12-16 youth group which meets fortnightly on Sunday evenings at 8:00pm for activities in the church hall. The evening concludes with candlelit Night Prayer in the chapel in church.

A **Housegroup** meets fortnightly

From the Registers

Baptism

17th November

Harry John Amos

Funerals

15th November

Jessie Pickard Law aged 101 years
Dorothy Kinsman aged 92 years

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

Meeting Sunday, 11 am

Mary Rice (1923-2001) - A Tribute.

A memorial meeting for Mary was held at the Quaker Meeting House on 1st December 2001.

Mary meant a good deal to all of us at Stansted Meeting. We all relied on her kindness - her arm was always there when needed - and no calls for help ever went unheeded. She had a cheerful, positive outlook on life, a good sense of humour and a very sincere Christian faith. These qualities were manifested in everything she did and although she sometimes seemed self-effacing and diffident; she was in fact strong and self-reliant with a clear analytical mind and firm opinions on important subjects that she did not hesitate to express. She liked plain speaking, practical people and spoke of people she admired as reliable - something she herself manifestly was. She and her husband Leslie had a long and happy life together and despite his eventual long illness and death she remained cheerful and devoted to her sons and grandchildren; her life full of purpose and interest. She was a wonderful friend to a great many people from all stages of her life. She kept in regular touch by letter, phone and visits, particularly when there were difficulties. Just before her death she had been helping an old friend move house and she and another friend were planning a trip abroad together.

Mary was tremendously hospitable and she created a stable home for her family where friends were always welcome. She was a faithful member of the local Amnesty Group for many years and the meetings were often held at her house. She and Leslie were very public-spirited, always concerned for people less fortunate than themselves. They sponsored a young Kenyan boy through Starehe school in Nairobi. He came over to spend part of one summer with them and again, later as a grown, successful young man.

Together Leslie and Mary, with others, were initiators of the Abbeyfield House in Bishop's Stortford. In the early years Mary acted as relief housekeeper and latterly she spent nights there when the housekeeper was away. They both worked as school governors, Mary at the Margaret Dane (now Birchwood) School and Leslie at Bishop's Stortford College.

She always supported ecumenical activities and felt it important that we all worked together for the faith we share.

We shall all miss her in so many ways but we know that her spirit is with us.

METHODIST

Meets in the Quaker Meeting House,
Chapel Hill

Minister Rev'd John Graham
2 South Road
Bishop's Stortford
Tel 01279 654475

Secretary Mrs Catherine Dean
49 Recreation Ground
Stansted
Tel 01279 813579

Email methodists@stansted.net

All services start at 9.30am unless otherwise stated

Services and Preachers for January

6th Joan Kennet
13th Rev'd Jim Gill – Annual Covenant Service
20th Bernard Engel
27th Michael Render



CHURCHES
TOGETHER
in STANSTED

CHRISTIAN UNITY

On Wednesday 23rd January in St John's Church at 7.30pm there will be a time of prayer and reflection for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. All are invited.

Committee Meeting Reminder

There will be a meeting of the executive committee on Tuesday 8th January at 8p.m. in the URC Hall.

Ruth Rawlinson
Catherine Dean



Christian Aid

We believe in life before death

I believe trade should work in the interests of all people

I promise to act with others to change the rules that govern international trade so that they work to eradicate poverty, protect the environment and ensure equal access to life in all its fullness.

This is the pledge that Christian Aid is asking people to sign in support of its **Trade for Life** campaign. Pledges will be forwarded to political leaders to persuade them to place trade rules on the international agenda.

Look out for pledge cards in churches in January and please sign one in support of this campaign.

Pesetas – Lire – Francs – Marks. We may all have some of these in pots, old purses, coat pockets. You won't be able to spend them after this year, so Christian Aid is happy to relieve you of your European currency. This is a fairly painless way to give to charity, so please bring any unwanted coins to the churches and I will pass them on.

Thanks,
Catherine Dean



SHALOM

January Meetings

Monday, 7th January – prayer and praise at the Friends Meeting House

Monday, 21st January – a slide show at the Friends Meeting House

The Alexander Technique

By Pippa Bondy

The Alexander Technique was discovered by a young Australian actor born in 1869. His name was Frederick Matthias Alexander; raised by his mother and one of a large family, he had poor health as a child, so poor that he was educated at home.

By his mid-teens he developed a love and passion for Shakespeare and eventually he left home for Melbourne,

where he studied acting and after some time formed his own Theatre Company. All went well with his career and life until he started to lose his voice during his performances.

Alexander went to many specialists and doctors looking for a cure and help, but nothing worked or lasted. So, at a loss he eventually turned to himself: - to study and observe, to see and understand what he was doing that could cause this problem.

Frederick Matthias Alexander made some interesting observations and discoveries during his quest to try to understand why he kept losing his voice and how he could stop this from happening.

He found that his problem lay in the fact that when he responded to a stimulus (any stimulus: - to speak, to move, to pick something up), he tightened his neck muscles. This had the effect of pulling his head back and down, hence collapsing his spine. The effect of this action was that his whole body became collapsed. He also realised that he had been unaware that this was the case.

In order to change this habit and pattern he discovered that he had to stop the normal way he responded, not just physically but emotionally and mentally. He had to allow his thinking to be, not in what he was *trying* to achieve or do, but to come back to his body, and be where he was in the present moment.

This enabled him to start to release held tension which tightened his neck and collapsed his stature, then to re-direct himself into an upright openness which he called 'lengthening and widening'.

Hence; not only did his posture improve, but so did his voice problem clear up, along with the sickness and problems from his childhood, and his performance and presence was said to be centred, and clear.

So in our modern times the Alexander Technique has grown into a method of re-awakening our mind/body awareness. Helping us to become aware of deep-rooted tension, which is not only physical but also mental and emotional. This can manifest itself in the form of many problems in our life: - such as back and neck pain, postural problems, anxiety, breathing disorders and many stress related problems.

The accumulation of years of tension often means we have become unconscious and 'out of touch' with our body and mental and emotional habits of stress and strain.

The Alexander Technique helps us not only to become aware of the tensions we hold on a psycho/physical level, but also our habitual reactions. Having reawakened this awareness we then actually have a choice to release out of these habits; hence we become less reactive and more responsive in our life and many of our problems clear up on their own. Just as they did for Alexander.

For more information and tuition in the Alexander Technique you can contact Pippa Bondy on 01279 813886.



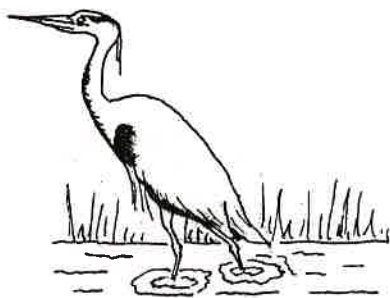
Nature Notes

Grey herons are a common sight in and around Stansted. They often fly overhead; sometimes it's just a solitary bird, slowly flapping its very large wings, with head down and legs trailing beyond its tail. At other times a flock of herons flies over the village uttering harsh cries, haark, haark. They seem to be making their way to or from the lake near the railway line where the spur goes off to the airport.

The heron can be seen wherever there is a source of fish, its favourite food. It will stand for hours like a statue at the edge of a pond or river (you sometimes see them beside the Stort as you pass in the train), its long treacherous beak pointing downwards, head and neck slumped into the body. Suddenly the bird thrusts its beak into the water to seize a fish which it then swallows whole. Herons will also eat frogs, tadpoles, grass snakes and even water voles and young moorhen chicks.

At the end of this month and in early February herons make their way to their nesting site or heronry. They usually build their nests in trees in communal groups of 10 - 30 nests which can be as high as 80 ft. above the ground. They remake the previous years' nests using branches, twigs and leaves. Over the years these nests increase in size and can end up several feet across. In fact they are so thick and bulky that smaller birds sometimes use the base for making *their* nests.

An interesting historical aside: in Victorian times young herons were considered to be 'good eating'.



Rosina Kirkwood



Hello again.

Half term is over, Halloween and Guy Fawkes celebrated as was Christmas and its preparations, all of which were magical times to enjoy with the under five's.

We thought of others last term. The children decorated cakes and sold biscuits to parents and friends. The money raised went to Children in Need.

They were busy learning new songs and carols, making party hats, Christmas cards and crackers and calendars to give as presents for the New Year. There was also a Christmas Disco on 7th December.

We had a train ride at Audley End to see Father Christmas in his grotto and he found time to pay a visit to Sideways before the Christmas party.

The term finished with our wonderful Nativity Play attended by parents, grandparents and friends.

We at Sideways wish you all a peaceful New Year!

Auntie Helen



Well, what a busy time of year it's been! As this goes to print, we are all up to our elbows in glitter and tinsel!

We have been doing lots of Christmas activities: learning about Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, making cards, calendars, stockings and sleighs, decorating our home corner to look like Father Christmas's Grotto, and learning a little play to perform to the parents and carers. We have also been looking at what Christmas is like in Australia; I think it was hard for all of us to imagine a summer Christmas! We have arranged a party with an entertainer on the last day of term, and Father Christmas has very kindly fitted us into his busy schedule!

We have lots of children leaving us to go to big school in January; all of them will be missed by the staff and children, but we are looking forward to making lots of new friends in the new term.

Our theme for this term is traditional stories and rhymes which will include dressing up as princesses and knights, counting and matching with the three bears, and cooking gingerbread men.

The things children say (After playing with a hammer and nails):

"When God made the world - did He use a hammer?"

We are open five mornings a week, from 9:15 to 12:00 Tel. 07773730754 to arrange a visit.

Carol Bullot



Uttlesford District Council 2002 Skip Dates

Mon - Thurs
7.30am - 3pm
Fri am only

7 - 11 January
15 - 19 April

Weekends
7.30am - 3pm
(attended)

16 - 17 February
25 - 26 May

Mon - Thurs
7.30am - 3pm
Fri am only

11 - 15 March
13 - 17 May

Uttlesford Carers & Alzheimer's Disease Society **CARERS' SUPPORT GROUP**

A discussion of carers' issues
over a cup of tea & biscuits

2 - 4 pm Thursday 10th Jan
Quaker Meeting House

Everyone welcome

VILLAGE EVENTS

January

2	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
3	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
7	Mon	Shalom Prayer & Praise	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
7	Mon - 11	Fri Amenity Skip	Lower St Car Pk 7.30 am - 3 pm
10	Thu	Carers' Support Group WI	Quaker Meeting Hse 2 - 4 pm St John's Hall 7.45 pm
12	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughmans	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
13	Sun	Village Music Club	St John's Church 3 pm
14	Mon	WEA commences	Day Centre 7.30 pm
16	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
21	Mon	Shalom Group	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm

February

1	Fri	Mardi Gras evening	Mountfitchet School 8 - 11.15 pm
4	Mon	Shalom Group	
6	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors Garden Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm Day Centre 8 pm
7	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
9	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughmans	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
14	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
16	Sat - 17	Sun Amenity Skip	Lower St Car Pk 7.30 am - 3 pm
20	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
21	Thu	RBL (Women)	Day Centre 7.30 pm



THE VILLAGE MUSIC CLUB

KATHERINE SPENCER
Clarinet
SAM HAYWOOD
Piano

3 pm Sun 13th January
St John's Church

Tickets from Stansted Carpets;
Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford;
Options Hair Salon, Elsenham;
or Sonia Levy 815282
£8 adults, £6 concessions
£3 children

*Sponsored by the Countess
of Munster Trust*

The **LINK**

*Does YOUR organisation have
a special event planned?*

Why not take advantage of
some free local publicity on
the Village Events page?
Closing dates for submitting
items are listed on the front
page of each edition. Items
for next month must be
submitted by 10th January.

Items should be sent to
58 Chapel Hill or
stanstedlink@aol.com

*All items are subject to the
editors' approval*

MARDI GRAS



8 - 11.15 pm
Friday 1st February
Mountfitchet School

PETE BAKER'S NEW ORLEANS JAZZ BAND

Bar ~ Raffle

Proceeds to Corrymeela Reconciliation Centre, N Ireland
For tickets please tel 850209 ~ Adults £6 Family £15 incl light supper



STANSTED FUN RUN

www.stansted.net

Jubilee 10K Fun Run – 16th June 2002

Yes we are back!!

The event is planned as part of the village celebrations for the Golden Jubilee. Please book the date now and start training!

More details will be in The Link and on our website after February.

Marion Dyer 814059
email: funrun@stansted.net



STANSTED FUN RUN PRINTER CARTRIDGE RECYCLING PROJECT

Yes - we are still collecting!!

A big **THANK YOU** to all those who have donated cartridges, particularly three local employers, **AGAR Scientific, Davidson Oakley and Stansted Airport Immigration Dept**, who regularly donate large quantities of cartridges. During the past twelve months we have raised over £130, of which 20% has been given to the Link. This has given us a very healthy start towards covering our administrative expenses for our next run. Please keep them coming - both laser and deskjet/inkjet but not Epson (unfortunately these are no longer accepted).

Please telephone Marion Dyer on 814059 or email funrun@stansted.net - collection can be arranged - or leave in the porch of 7 Blythwood Gardens. *Thank you!*



STANSTED & DISTRICT LIBERAL DEMOCRATS.

Our next Ploughman's Lunches are on Saturday 12th January and Saturday 9th February at the Stansted Day Centre, 12.00 to 2.00pm. All are welcome.

On Friday 1st February at 8.00pm there will be a Cheese and Wine Party at Churchmead, Church Lane, Widdington. For further information, please ring 813432 or 814222.

Ruth Rawlinson

Stansted Art & Craft Market

As promised in our December article we are pleased to be able to report on the donations now given from the proceeds of the Stansted Art & Craft Market, held last October.

The success of the event is reflected in the fact that a record £1,700 has been given to village causes this year, the highest amount since the Market first started 21 years ago.

The money has been distributed amongst certain groups with specific projects in hand - the restoration of the windmill towards working sails; the restoration of the two village Norman Knight signs; Stansted Cyclones (junior football team) towards the purchase of their kit; the Huw Johnson Club towards subsidising the annual holiday for members; Bentfield Primary School who are developing a sensory garden in their grounds; the redevelopment of the United Reformed Church and the refurbishment of the St. John's church hall.

Other groups have received money for their ongoing work: Venture & Tortoise Scouts, Rainbow and Sideways pre-schools, St. Mary's Primary School, Homestart and the production of the Stansted Link.

More members are currently needed on the committee, who start to plan the next event in earnest in the spring. It need not be a large commitment but is certainly a very rewarding and worthwhile way of being involved in village life.

Please call Rachel on 816837 for more information.



GRAHAM SCHOOL OF DANCE

R.A.D. Ballet Classes held in Stansted

Also at Bishop's Stortford
Classes in Ballet, Tap & Modern Dance,
Drama & Singing

For details & prospectus please
tel 01371 878410 or visit us at
www.grahamschoolofdance.fsnet.co.uk

email: philip@grahamschoolofdance.fsnet.co.uk

Stansted Profile No. 41

Captain Graham Thwaits

Stansted Airport and its affairs loom large in local Council discussions and in the national Press, but Stansted village itself is at present little affected by noise or any other aspect of the Airport. Many, if not most, of those who work there do not live in Stansted. But the subject of this month's Profile does. Graham Thwaits is a pilot for Atlas Air Crew Services Ltd, and he and his family have made their home in Old Bell Close. This is their first English home as both Graham and his wife, Karen, and their four children, are citizens of Zimbabwe. Graham's flying career has taken them to various bases in the world, but they hope now to be settled here. They are, of course, very concerned about Zimbabwe's future and their friends and relations there; I am sure that Africa still has a strong hold on their affections.

Graham's parents settled in what was then Southern Rhodesia, and he was born and brought up there. His schooling was during the time that Rhodesia had declared UDI.(Unilateral Declaration of Independence) and was no longer part of the Commonwealth: these were very difficult times with sanctions imposed by the outside world, and frequent guerrilla attacks within the country. On leaving school all white Rhodesians had to join the armed forces or the Police, unless they left the country. Many of the young men did not want to join up but felt loyalty to their country and did not want to leave it. Not a decision that many of us would want to face up to and a very hard one to make. Graham stayed and joined the Army, and after a year was able to transfer to the Air Force.

Karen's parents were English but had settled in Rhodesia before she was born. During the early part of her marriage to Graham they lived in very disturbing times. When the country became an independent African country- Zimbabwe - in 1980 and Robert Mugabe came to power, those who had

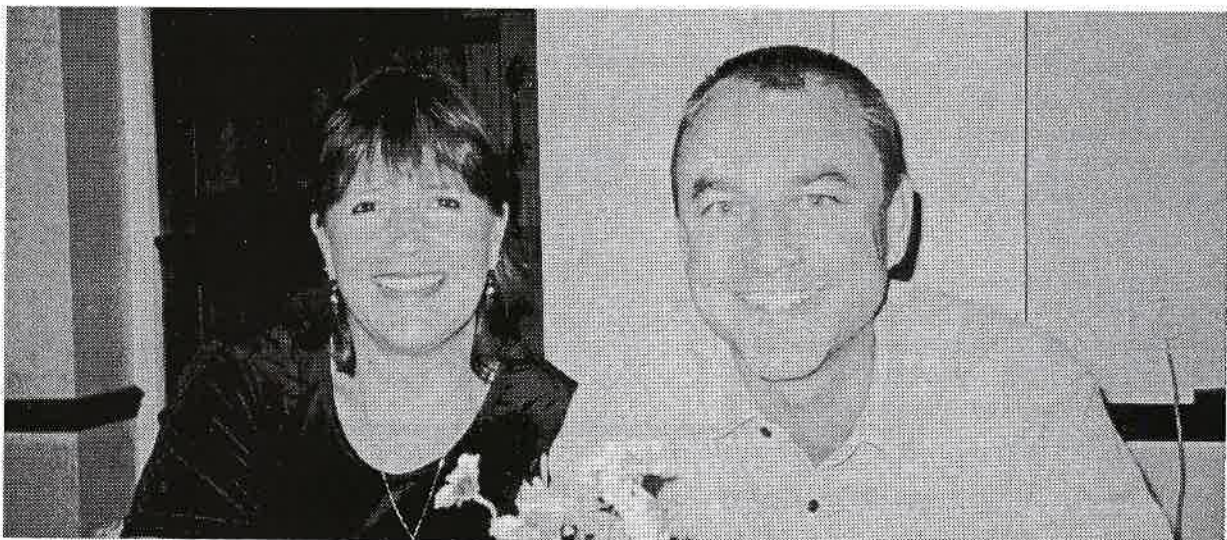
been in the armed Forces were in an unenviable position. So the family moved to South Africa, where they lived for four years, coming back to Zimbabwe when Graham joined the commercial Airline - Air Zimbabwe. In due course the family moved to Dubai where Graham became a pilot for the Emirates Airline. They were there for nine and a half years - seeing Dubai change from a comparatively small Arab town on the edge of the desert to a large cosmopolitan city (although still surrounded by sand !) As the children were now growing up they decided to come to England.

Graham got a job with Go Airline at Stansted, and so the family settled in Old Bell Close two and a half years ago. He was a pilot on Go's European runs for some time, but is now a pilot for the American freight company - Atlas Air Crew Services Ltd - and it is a very different life. He is away from home for longer periods as his routes go to all parts of the world, except the U.S.A. He can, for example, be delivering electrical goods in the Far East, or bringing flowers and vegetables from Africa. Despite his longer absences from home they have a close-knit family life and place a high value on a strong family base. When in this country, Graham currently attends the Quaker Meeting in Chapel Hill.

Karen now works for the local branch of Homestart, supporting three families with particular difficulties, and she hopes to train as a Social Worker. Their eldest son, Ryan, is at Portsmouth University studying Psychology and Criminology (Stansted's future Cracker perhaps !). Their elder daughter, Derryn, and their twins, Simon and Paula, are at the Hockerill Anglo-European College in Bishop's Stortford.

There are strong views held locally about the expansion - or not - of the Airport. But we should not forget that those who work there and come to live and take part in the local community, which Graham and Karen do, have much to offer. Their experiences of other countries and other cultures and their understanding can enlighten us and broaden our perceptions. I hope their welcome here has been a warm one.

Katharine Hurford



Uttlesford District Council

This New Year

This New Year sees The Queen's Golden Jubilee. I think I can just about remember hearing of the death of King George VI 50 years ago in February 1952. I can certainly remember the Silver Jubilee 25 years ago, when, amongst many other activities, the clock on what is now called the Old Court House in Chapel Hill was made to work again. The Norman signs were erected at the northern and southern ends of the village. And lots more.

So what will be done in 2002 to improve life in Stansted? I hear no one has any ideas. Have we run out of collective imagination? I know that my family could celebrate with a new parking area outside the house, or a garden revamp, or a new carpet. All very useful, but very private.

Maybe that's what has changed in the past 25 to 50 years. We may have become much more private and less socially and community spirited. I know that's what the people who have been running the local carnival feel. I'm not wholly convinced.

Yet there is a widespread view that people want good public services, but they are only prepared to pay for what they get back themselves. Some commentators believe that people say they want better schools, better hospitals and roads without potholes, but then vote for the politicians who promise lower taxes.

I attended a meeting in November with victims of October's floods in Lower Street. The district council called it in Saffron Walden. The meeting was billed to discuss whether villages wanted to store sandbags locally rather than have to rely on deliveries from afar when the next inundation comes.

The chief reaction was that people were fed up with sandbags; they wanted action to prevent the floods occurring. But the district council said it had no money, and only provides sandbags as a voluntary gesture! The Environment Agency was portrayed as a hapless body that occasionally scratches away a bit of silt from ditches; a "sticking plaster" approach that makes no lasting difference. And so on. No one has any money to create effective solutions. Everyone passes the buck.

Well! I'm not taking "no" for an answer. Nor is the flood action group that has been set up. I have some optimism that working together for the community will get results eventually. I'm even willing to vote for higher district council taxes if they will pay for results.

So, has the former magic of royalty been overtaken by the make-believe of Harry Potter's Philosopher's Stone? Those of you who remember Mickey Mouse and the Sorcerer's Apprentice will remember that Mickey created a flood by magic and got rid of it by magic. If only it were so easy!

Alan Dean
District Councillor

Tel: 01279 813 579

Uttlesford Futures

As one year passes it is time to look back as well as to the future. However, a man who always looks to the past is like a man with one eye. A man who never looks back is like a man with no eyes. This Russian proverb was quoted Peter Sanders of Local Agenda 21, one of the participants at a Community Conference held in November. The conference was held to launch **Uttlesford Futures**. Increasingly, the District Council has to work in partnership with other organisations. The Local Government Act of 2000 requires the Council to produce a community strategy. This can only be done by working with groups such as LA 21, Essex County Council, Essex Police, Council for Voluntary Services Uttlesford, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust, Businesses in Uttlesford and the Uttlesford Association of Local Councils. A leaflet will be sent to every household in the district asking for your views on the future of Uttlesford. Young people are our future, and it was encouraging that one of the speakers at the conference was a sixth former from Helena Romanes School, Dunmow. He was representing Uttlesford Youth Forum on which are representatives from all the four secondary schools in the district including our own Mountfitchet. I felt there was a lot of goodwill at the conference and a recognition that the quality of life is not rosy for everyone. The challenge will be on all the partners to translate good intentions into practical action.

An Evening with Beethoven

The Council in association with Saffron Walden Arts Trust will be presenting Beethoven - The Last Master. This will take the form of a talk by John Suchet, ITN's well-known newsreader and will be based on his three volume biography of the great composer. A string trio will provide musical illustrations and John will be happy to sign volumes of his book. This will be held on 23rd February at Saffron Walden. Further details from Duncan Hanner, the Council's Arts Development Officer on 01799 510384. As well as promoting events Mr Hanner is happy to give advice to arts groups on funding applications.

Geoffrey Sell
District Councillor

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Clerk Ruth Clifford
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Monday - Friday



Council Offices
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Golden Jubilee

At a meeting held on 4 December, volunteers came forward to form a Golden Jubilee Committee to plan a timetable of events to celebrate the Jubilee in June. Some ideas have been forthcoming from village organisations, but more would be welcome. Please send suggestions to the Clerk. If you would be prepared to serve on the Committee, please also contact the Clerk (01279 813214) - the next meeting will be held on 17 January in the Parish Council Offices at Crafton Green.

Flooding

Two groups have recently been established to look at the subject of flooding in the village - the Stansted Flood Action Group (SFAG) which consists of residents, and the Parish Council's Flood Working Group which comprises four councillors and two representatives from SFAG. The focus is mainly on Lower Street where a greater number of properties suffer, but also covers St John's Road, Stoney Common/West Road, Forest Hall Road. Discussions have taken place with the Environment Agency and Essex County and Uttlesford District Councils.

There is some action planned for the short term, but at the moment this is subject to obtaining further details. However, the SFAG is planning a ramble along Stansted Brook in the near future during which it will clear any litter obstructing the water course. If anyone is interested in joining in to show community spirit, please watch noticeboards and the website (www.stansted.net) for details of date and time.

Lighting

We have been experiencing some difficulties with our contractors recently and repairs to lighting columns have not been as speedy as they should be. If you are aware of any lights which are not working, please inform the Clerk. If lights are day-burning, then it is possible that the sensor is being obscured by foliage and the sensor thinks it is dark! In this case, we need to know the exact location of the property so that we can write to the owners and ask them to trim back the overgrowth. Day-burning lights, which are not obscured should also be reported to the Clerk.

Ruth Clifford
Clerk



The National Childbirth Trust
Education for Parenthood

After all the excitement and activity of Christmas has died down and exhausted parents wonder how on earth they're going to fill those empty days and keep spirits up in the long dark winter months..... help is at hand! A full schedule of activities is planned, for January, for anyone with young children.

There will be messy play and ride-on-toy sessions and a lakeside walk to blow the holiday cobwebs away. Our bi-monthly Open House will take place on Wednesday, 16th January at 10am at Crafton Green Day Centre, Stansted, where anyone with babies and small children is welcome to drop in.

Our regular coffee events continue to take place three times a week, one for each age group, also a monthly Tea & Toast Saturday morning event, for all parents with children under five. The afternoon coffee events are every Monday from 1:30 - 3pm for babies & Mums-to-be, and every Friday for pre-schoolers. Our toddlers get together from 10am - 11:30am every Wednesday morning.

All parents or carers with pre-school children are most welcome at any of our activities, or coffee events. We love to see new faces and you can be sure of a warm welcome. You do not have to be a member to come along to any event although joining helps to fund our core work.

The hectic social whirl is not the only good thing about the NCT....

The NCT is a national charity offering information and support in pregnancy, childbirth and early parenthood and is run by parents for parents.

For membership enquiries or for a free copy of our diary sheet showing you what is going on, when and where, then please call Wendy on 813387.



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For bookings or further information please call Susan Bone on 01279 814052



Royal British Legion Stansted & District Branch

POPPY APPEAL 2001

As I write the 'Big Count' for this year is finished! There are still monies to come in for wreaths etc, but the area total so far is £9,800, comparing very favourably with last year. Thanks must go to all the collectors and businesses in Stansted and elsewhere for their tremendous efforts, and particularly to all those who gave to the Appeal. It is very difficult to visit every home when you are in, so if you were missed I do apologise and hope that you got your poppy elsewhere. There were some parts of Stansted that we just couldn't cover so, and here comes the begging bit: if you feel that you could spare a couple of hours to do a house to house collection next year please telephone me on 813289.

Over the three weekends of the Appeal we man a stand in the Airport Terminal which, this year, raised the magnificent sum of only pence short of £3900! We have provisional permission from the Airport authorities to run our stand for longer during the Appeal fortnight, which we would love to be able to do. When we take anything between £300 to £600 a day it makes sense to try and expand our time in the Terminal, but we need the volunteers. The Airport collection is great fun as you can imagine - just ask Audrey Rodgers about 'her squaddies' - and if you enjoy chatting to and meeting with a great variety of people I'm sure you would love 'doing a stint' at the Airport. We work in teams of two or three people, so you're not on your own, and we would make sure that you are with someone who has done it before. You don't need to be a member of the Legion to help us, so if you feel that you can give us a bit of time during next year's Appeal with the Airport stand, please phone me now on 813289.

The Remembrance Service at St Johns Church was very well attended with the Reverend David Simpson, minister of the United Reformed Church, taking the service and giving the address, and the Rector assisting. May I thank all those who attended, and all those who laid wreaths at the Memorial.

John L. Segar,
Honorary Poppy Appeal Organiser.

STOP PRESS

HUW JOHNSON CLUB

The concert on Friday 14 December was a great success with impressive performances by members and a large audience. Thanks go to the United Reformed congregation for "lending" their church at short notice. The only blemish came afterwards when Tom Johnson suffered a fall which put him briefly into hospital. He is now recovering well.



Royal British Legion Women's Section

In November members of the Royal British Legion joined the Women's Section in a very enjoyable social evening with fish and chips or ploughman's for supper washed down with our favourite white wine.

John Segar presented an award from the Poppy Appeal to our President, Margaret Gabb, for her 50 years collecting for poppies; Doris Bemment also received an award on behalf of her late husband, Don Bemment. Similar awards had already been given to Edie Snow and Barbara Hoffinan at the 75th Anniversary Celebration of Stansted Royal British Legion on 27th October.

Our President congratulated Jean Fuller on her 50 years' membership of Stansted Women's Section and gave her two bottles of wine to show our appreciation of all Jean does for us.

A birthday cake, donated by our Chairman, Janet Hollis, in celebration of the 55th birthday of Stansted Women's Section, was enjoyed by all; and a generous raffle concluded a very happy evening.

We do not meet again until Thursday 21st February 2002 when we hope to welcome Edna and Alan Wright as our speakers.

Pat Clower.



Following on from the success of our first two concerts of the current season, we continue with our first concert of the New Year.

On Sunday, 13th January at 3pm in St John's Church, Stansted, clarinettist Katherine Spencer with pianist Sam Haywood will be giving a recital to include music by Mozart, Chopin, Horowitz and Rachmaninov. Warming mulled wine will be served during the interval.

Tickets, as usual, are available from:- Stansted Carpets, Chapel Hill; Options Hairdressers, Elsenham; Nockolds Solicitors, Market Square, Bishop's Stortford and Sonia Levy, 31 Chapel Hill (01279 815282). Adults £8, Concessions £6, Children £3.

Essex County Council

December is the time of year where the County turns its thoughts to the problems of the budget for the coming year with the intention of setting the Council Tax rate to meet anticipated costs.

Readers very probably know that Council funding is based on three sources of income which are:-

- a) Social Support Allowance (SSA) which is allocation by Central Government.
- b) Business Rate - which is set by Central Government and retained largely by them.
- c) Council Tax which is set by the Council to meet those shortfalls in funding resulting from Central Government grants.

It must be obvious to any reader that the funding system based on a division of this nature is likely to lead to inequalities in result. Essex County is faced with this problem in no uncertain fashion in 2001.

One of the peculiarities of the present local government funding system is that a reduction of 1% in SSA leads to an increase of 3% in Council Tax.

Thus, your County Council, if faced with an increase on this scale, can only set a budget on "mark time rates". Readers will be able to deduce that in the coming year the Council Tax is likely to be in the order of an increase of 10%, not including the District, Parish and Police Authority Precepts.

Not a pleasant thought when this increase is taken into account with other increases, part of other costs and charges.

What the increase is likely to be rests on the SSA rate, but those readers of the National Press will have already noted what this is likely to be.

Should any reader wish to know more on this subject, they should contact the undersigned on 01279 812588.

Richard Wallace
County Councillor
Stansted Division



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

Few people were about and those that were ran from cars to shops and back or scuttled along hunched into their coats or cowering under umbrellas - this was the first Saturday morning in December - wet and cold - and this was the day the Stansted Millers group had chosen for their fund raising stall in Lower Street! No wonder that we did not achieve the turnover of previous years but still worth doing thanks to those who did stop and buy. Windmill tea towels and pictures make acceptable gifts at any season of the year (why not treat yourself). If you require items at any time please ring me on 647213.

Peggy Honour

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Bridges, Their History, Social Purpose, Design and Beauty, a long title for our next session which will commence at the Day Centre on 14th January.

Our lecturer, Mr. Brian Bourn, writes as follows: 'Few of man's creations (except perhaps lighthouses and sailing ships) seem to defy the elements so well for our benefit and security as bridges. This course will examine the history, social significance and principles of design of bridges and also consider some special examples in more detail. These will include the work of such famous engineers as Smeaton, Telford, Robert Stephenson and Brunel.'

We shall finish with modern developments such as motorway bridges the Newcastle "Winking Eye" and the London Millennium Bridge.

The ten week course, held at the Day Centre on Monday evenings will begin on 14th January. The first evening doors will be open at 7.30 pm to allow for enrolment before the lecture at 8 pm. There is a reduced rate for pensioners. New members are always most welcome. If you have any queries please ring Harold Thistle on 813250.



Huw Johnson Club

Many thanks to everyone who supported us on 14th December. We hope you enjoyed the concert. More in the next issue of Link.

Our biggest thanks, however, must go to the United Reformed Church for coming to our rescue when, because of a pipe leak, we were unable to use St Mary's School. We were very grateful especially as it meant using their beautiful refurbished church - "An act of faith".

We are looking forward to our Christmas trip to Cambridge to see "Barnum on Ice".

We wish all our friends and benefactors a happy and peaceful New Year.

Marion Johnson

BUS TIMETABLE

The X40 bus service operates between Bury St Edmunds and Stansted (via Saffron Walden). The service runs on weekdays, Saturdays & Sundays and Bank Holidays (except for 25th & 26th December and 1st January). Reduced fares for senior citizens are available in accordance with the relevant local authority concessionary fare scheme and the BAA Airport's Travelcard is accepted.

However, please note that this is a limited stop service, picking-up and setting-down only at the points shown in the timetable below.

Also, please note, fares are not interchangeable with the Bus 301 Saffron Walden service.

Leaflets on the X40 service are available from the Parish Council Office.

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STANSTED CONNECTION X40

Daily

Bury St. Edmunds, Bus Station	0305	0405	0605	0805	1005	1205	1405	1605	1805	2005
Horringer, Sharpes Lane	0315	0415	0615	0815	1015	1215	1415	1615	1815	2015
Chedburgh, Marquis	0320	0420	0620	0820	1020	1220	1420	1620	1820	2020
Denston, Plumbers Arms	0325	0425	0625	0825	1025	1225	1425	1625	1825	2025
Stradishall, Highpoint	0330	0430	0630	0830	1030	1230	1430	1630	1830	2030
Little Wrating, Rising Sun	0335	0435	0635	0835	1035	1235	1435	1635	1835	2035
Haverhill, Bus Station	0340	0440	0640	0840	1040	1240	1440	1640	1840	2040
Steeple Bumpstead, North Street	0348	0448	0648	0848	1048	1248	1448	1648	1848	2048
Hempstead, Bluebell Inn	0355	0455	0655	0855	1055	1255	1455	1655	1855	2055
Radwinter, Church	0400	0500	0700	0900	1100	1300	1500	1700	1900	2100
Sewards End	0405	0505	0705	0905	1105	1305	1505	1705	1905	2105
Saffron Walden, High Street	0412	0512	0712	0912	1112	1312	1512	1712	1912	2112
Newport, Old Forge	0420	0520	0720	0920	1120	1320	1520	1720	1920	2120
Quendon, Potteries	0425	0525	0725	0925	1125	1325	1525	1725	1925	2125
Ugley, The Chequers	0427	0527	0727	0927	1127	1327	1527	1727	1927	2127
Stansted Mountfitchet, The Feathers	0433	0533	0733	0933	1133	1333	1533	1733	1933	2133
Stansted Airport, Coach Station	0445	0545	0745	0945	1145	1345	1545	1745	1945	2145

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STANSTED CONNECTION X40

Daily

Stansted Airport, Coach Station, Bay 26	0605	0805	1005	1205	1405	1605	1805	2005	2205
Stansted Mountfitchet, The Feathers	0617	0817	1017	1217	1417	1617	1817	2017	2217
Ugley, The Chequers	0623	0823	1023	1223	1423	1623	1823	2023	2223
Quendon, Potteries	0625	0825	1025	1225	1425	1625	1825	2025	2225
Newport, Old Forge	0630	0830	1030	1230	1430	1630	1830	2030	2230
Saffron Walden, High Street	0638	0838	1038	1238	1438	1638	1838	2038	2238
Sewards End	0645	0845	1045	1245	1445	1645	1845	2045	2245
Radwinter, Church	0650	0850	1050	1250	1450	1650	1850	2050	2250
Hempstead, Bluebell Inn	0655	0855	1055	1255	1455	1655	1855	2055	2255
Steeple Bumpstead, North Street	0702	0902	1102	1302	1502	1702	1902	2102	2302
Haverhill, Bus Station	0710	0910	1110	1310	1510	1710	1910	2110	2310
Little Wrating, Rising Sun	0715	0915	1115	1315	1515	1715	1915	2115	2315
Stradishall, Highpoint	0720	0920	1120	1320	1520	1720	1920	2120	2320
Denston, Plumbers Arms	0725	0925	1125	1325	1525	1725	1925	2125	2325
Chedburgh, Marquis	0730	0930	1130	1330	1530	1730	1930	2130	2330
Horringer, Sharpes Lane	0735	0935	1135	1335	1535	1735	1935	2135	2335
Bury St. Edmunds, Bus Station	0745	0945	1145	1345	1545	1745	1945	2145	2345

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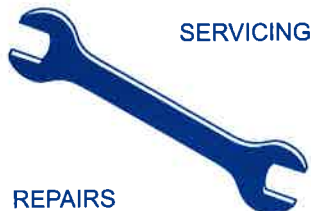
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