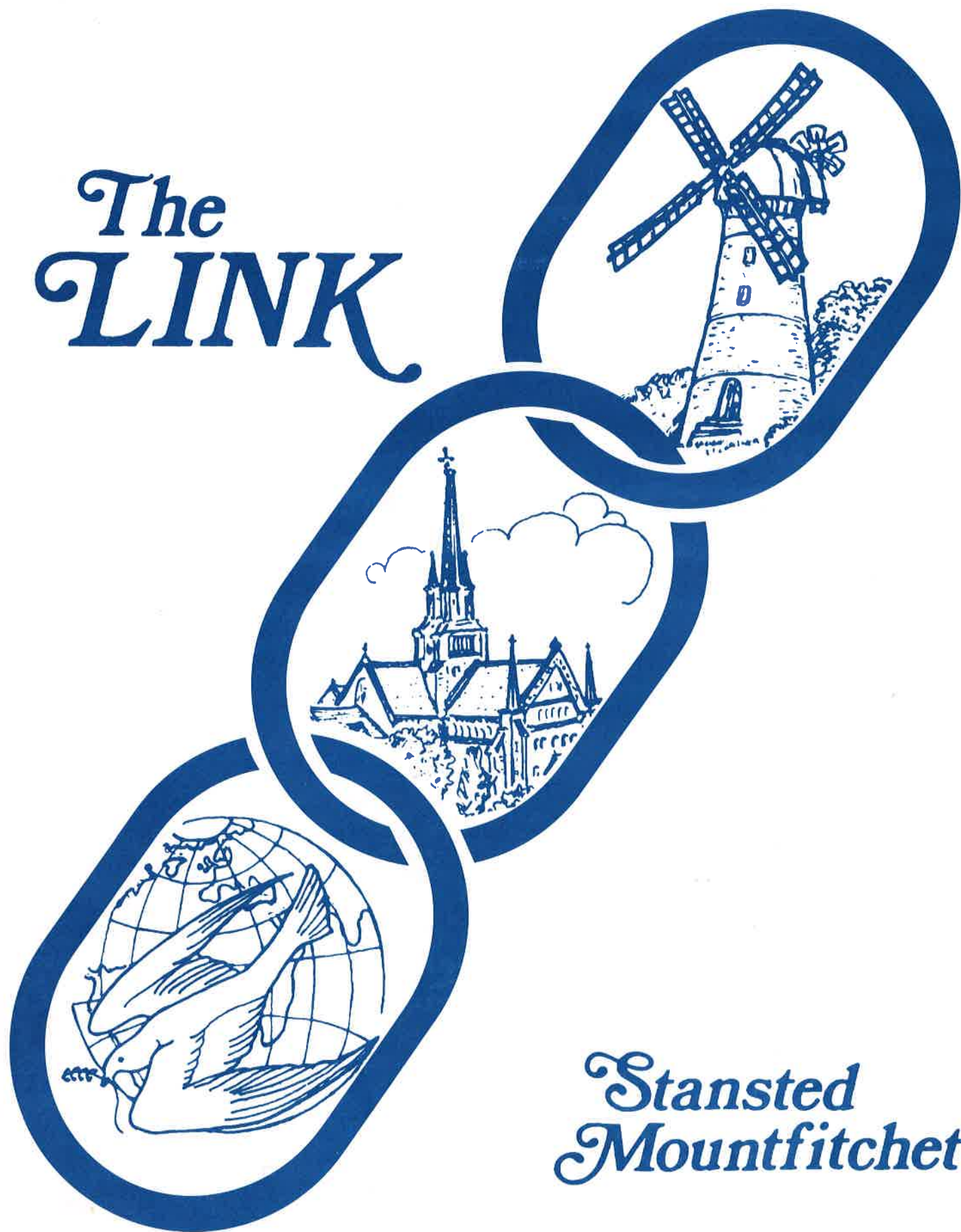


Mar 2002

# The *LINK*



*Stansted  
Mountfitchet*

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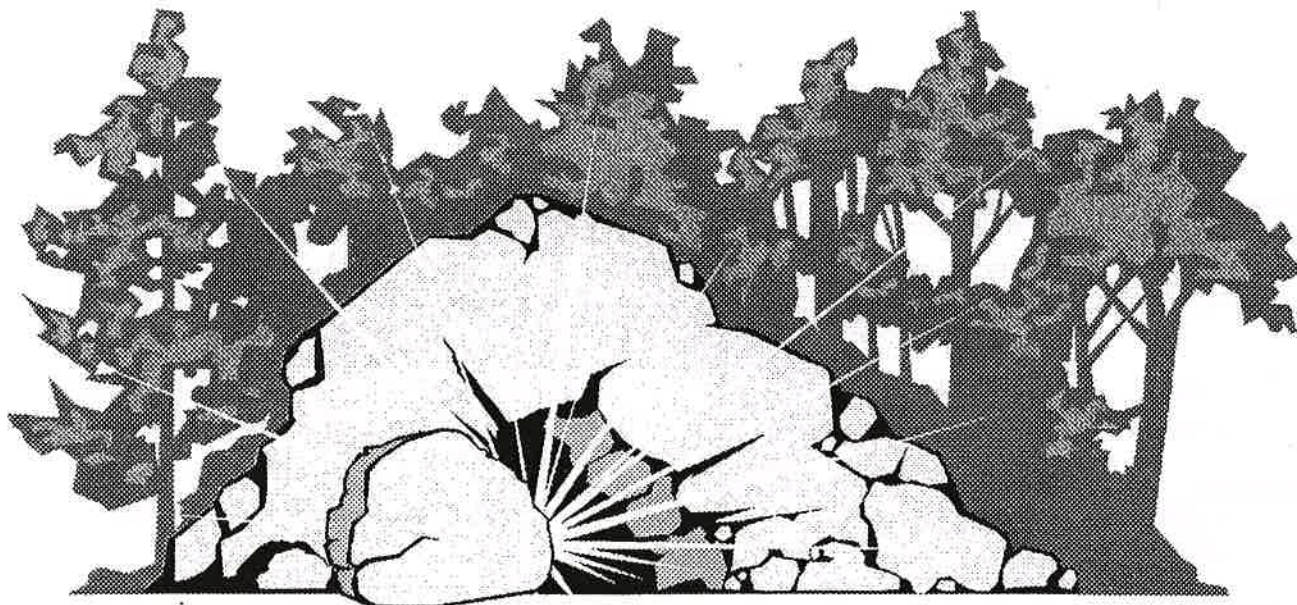


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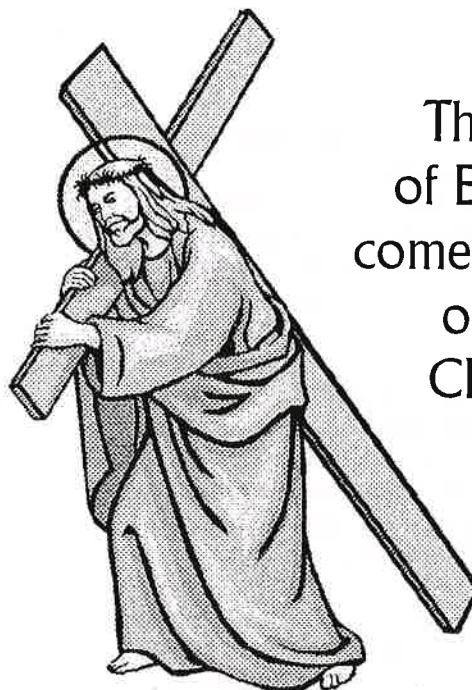
**FREEPHONE 0800 585390**



# EASTER 2002



Join the  
Procession of Witness on  
**GOOD FRIDAY**  
29th March  
from St Therese's Church  
at 6 pm  
by way of High Lane,  
Lower Street and Chapel Hill  
to St John's Church for  
Stations of the Cross  
at 6.30 pm



The Joy  
of **EASTER**  
comes by way  
of the  
**CROSS**

**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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stanstedlink@aol.com**  
by 7<sup>th</sup> March for publication on 23<sup>rd</sup> March  
(please note early copy date)  
by 11<sup>th</sup> April for publication on 27<sup>th</sup> April

# ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Therese of Lisieux  
High Lane

**Priest** Father Joe White  
The Presbytery  
St Therese of Lisieux  
High Lane  
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

## LENT

In the Middle Ages most people followed a pattern of feasting followed by fasting. There was no cold storage or quick transport to make a steady supply of food possible all year round. Therefore, although there was plenty to eat after a good harvest, once winter was past the stocks had dwindled and Lent would be a lean time, whether the church said so or not.

Today, most of us have plenty to eat for the whole year while others are not so fortunate. Lent is a good time to share the plenty we have with others who have very little or who are starving. We do not have to wait for Lent of course to do that. Lent, however, can be a time for giving extra to others and not just giving something up.

Getting ready for Easter is just as important as getting ready for Christmas. The weeks of Lent were once a time when new Christians, who were to be baptised on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter Sunday, were taught about the Christian faith and life. Everyone prepared for the Easter Communion. Wrongs were confessed and quarrels made up. Lent was the time for spring-cleaning lives as well as homes. In our church we renew our Baptismal vows every Easter.

At this very special time of the year we are given another chance to "turn over a new leaf" and become the person God always meant us to be.

Mary Warnett

# SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

**Meeting** 11 am

## People Matter

It was the Sunday after Holocaust Memorial Day, and the following passage was read in our Meeting:-

People matter. In the end human rights are about people being treated and feeling like people who matter. We are reminded graphically of violations of human rights far away and near at hand. In ignorance or knowingly we all violate human rights. We are all involved in the exercise of power and the abuse of power.

The multitude and complexity of the problems of oppression and injustice often seem to overwhelm us. We can do something. Friends are already working in a variety of ways: through international bodies, through voluntary organisations and by personal witness. Those who can give something of their lives to human rights require our support and we can look for opportunities to help those in need around us.

At the international level we affirm our support of Friends World Committee for Consultation and other bodies in ensuring that the standards and ideals of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights are attained, that the World does not slip backwards.

Above all we must take risks for God: look around us to the people who need help; listen to those who experience oppression; engage in the mutual process of liberation.

Extract from "*Quaker Faith and Practice*"

Peter Burgess





# St John's, Stansted

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

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

(01279) 815243  
church.office@stansted.net

*Administrator*  
**Mrs Elizabeth Jennings**

## Diary

### Sundays

8:00am Holy Communion  
9:30am Parish Communion  
11:00am Open Door Service on the Third Sunday in the month

6:30pm Evening Prayer *said*  
**Wednesdays**

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

## Groups

### Tiny Tots

is a mother and toddler group that meets on the second and fourth Tuesday in the month during term-time.

### Lazer Group

is a 12-16 youth group which meets fortnightly on Sunday evenings at 7:30pm for activities in the church hall. The evening concludes with candlelit Night Prayer in the chapel in church.

### Housegroups

Meet fortnightly on Tuesday or Wednesday evening. Currently we are doing a Christian basics course called *Journey*.

*Rector*  
**Revd Andrew Spurr**  
The Rectory  
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*

*Housegroup*  
**Mrs Joan Freeman**  
*phone*  
(01279) 813186  
*joanfreeman@zetnet.co.uk*

*Youth Group*  
**Mrs Katy Dockerill**  
*phone*  
(01279) 812997  
*lazer@stansted.net*

*Mother & Toddler Group*  
**Mrs Tina South**  
*phone*  
(01279) 814371  
*tinytots@stansted.net*

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

22nd Friday 9:15am St Mary's School End of Term service

24th Sunday 8:00am Holy Communion

**Palm Sunday** 9:20am Procession with Palms into church from the Church Hall

1:00pm Much-a-Lunch at St Mary's School  
(See notice)

Monday in Holy Week 7:30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy Communion

Tuesday in Holy Week 7:30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy Communion

Wednesday in Holy Week 10:00am Holy Communion  
7:30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday 8:00pm Holy Communion with Choir, stripping of the altars.  
9:00pm Vigil

Good Friday 10:00am The Good Friday Holiday  
-3:00pm Project  
8:00pm Night Prayer at St Mary's, Birchanger

Holy Saturday 8:00pm Vigil and Holy Communion at St. Mary's, Stansted

**Easter Day** 8:00am Holy Communion  
9:30am Parish Communion and Baptism

St John's Mission Committee

## Munch-a-Lunch

*Invites you to a  
Parish Lunch  
in aid of the*

**Stort Valley Schools Trust**

*At St Mary's School Hall*

**Sunday, 24th March, 12 noon for 12.30pm**

*Tickets available from*

*The Church Office*

*King's Family Butchers*

*The Three Willows, Birchanger*

The Stort Valley Schools Trust maintains a schools worker who, in partnership with schools in the Stort Valley area, provides support with assemblies and religious education and establishment of Christian unions. St John's supports Stort Valley Schools Trust as part of its commitment to Christian education.

# St John's, Stansted

(continued)

## From the Registers:

### Baptism:

January 20th Keeleigh Amy Andrews

### Funerals:

January 7th	James Kirk Telford	aged 72
January 14th	Alice Louisa Foile	aged 85
January 15th	Maureen (Dotty) Sandford	aged 70
January 16th	Doris Mary Reed	aged 72
January 17th	Raymond Austen Finn	aged 95
January 22nd	James Hill	aged 81
January 30th	Gertrude Blakey	aged 83

## UNITED REFORMED

Chapel Hill

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

**Contact** Mrs Janet Townsend  
58 Chapel Hill  
Tel 01279 812593

### Preachers for March

3rd	10.30am	Rev'd J Tollington
10th	10.30am	Rev'd D Simpson - Communion
17th	10.30am	Dr P Cressey
24th	9.30am	Join with Methodists at The Quaker Meeting House
28th	7.30pm	Rev'd L Rapkin Maundy Thursday Communion
29th	11.00am	Group Service at Newport
31st	10.30am	Rev'd D Simpson Group Easter Day Communion Followed by Coffee.

### Activity Fun Day

We are holding an "Activity Fun Day" for Children on Saturday, 16th March, 2002 from 10am to 3 pm.

The activities will include Drama, Music, Art, Craft and Games. This is a new venture for us and we hope that it will be the first of more to come, and we do want our new facilities used as much as possible by the community.

Unfortunately, on this occasion places are strictly limited and not available on the day, but we hope to hold further events of this type so that we may include any that have been disappointed this time.

Valerie Trundle

## METHODIST

Meets in Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

### Minister

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

### Secretary

Mrs Catherine Dean  
49 Reccation Ground  
Stansted  
Tel 01279 813579

### Email

methodists@stansted.net

### Services and preachers for March

3rd	Jean Hay
10th	Rev'd. Harry Wood
17th	Rev'd. John Graham
24th	Michael Dyer – this is a joint service with the United Reformed Church at the meeting house
31st	<b>Easter Day</b> Rev'd. Ronald Rawlings Holy Communion <b>6.30p.m</b> Circuit service at Saffron Walden

**Please note:** There will be no Fellowship Meeting in March



# SHALOM

### Annual Retreat

From Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd March, the Shalom annual retreat will be held at Hengrave Hall and led by Rev. Rhys Martin.

Monday 4th March - Lenten meditation led by Rev. Harold Fisher at 4 Greenfields

Monday 18th March – an Agape supper led by Mary Warnett at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

All meetings start at 8p.m. and all are welcome



### Lent Groups

Lent Groups continue in March on the following dates:

Friday 8th March  
Wednesday 13th March  
Tuesday 19th March

All sessions start at 8pm, and take place in the Quaker Meeting House. We are following a five part course entitled In The Wilderness but each session is free standing.

We are also holding an Agape, with a bring and share meal, at 6.30pm on Sunday, 17th March in the Quaker Meeting House. Everyone is welcome. Please ring me on 814222 for further details.

Ruth Rawlinson

### Chevetogne Visit 2002

We will be visiting Chevetogne in Belgium this year for our Ecumenical Exchange during Jubilee Week.

Leaving on the Thursday morning at 9.15am 6th June and returning Sunday 9th June.

The cost of the trip will be under £100 and will be by coach and ferry from Dover. We usually arrive about 6.00pm and stay with host families. Some do speak English but not all! However this is never a problem! Once we get there all visits and meals are included.

If anyone is interested in knowing more about our Stansted - Chevetogne Exchange please contact Eileen Quinn on 812109 or Francis Mercer on 813945.

Places are very limited as the group in Chevetogne is quite small so first come first served!

We will be holding a Quiz Night at St John's Hall on March 23rd 7.00 for 7.30 pm to raise funds - price £5. Come and have some fun - phone numbers as above for tickets.

Eileen Quinn

### Specs for the Third World

Don't hoard, don't throw away ..... put them in a box/ envelope and drop them in to 4 Greenfields Stansted - from where they will be collected to go off to be recycled and reused in the third world.

Brian Quinn

Having now assessed our figures for 2001, I am sure you would like to know that the number of calls for assistance we received over the course of last year, has reached another record figure of 199. Of this total, 144 related to requests for transport, which again emphasises our need for volunteer drivers in order that our existing volunteers are not over stretched. If any parishioners feel able to offer their services in this respect, we would be very pleased to hear from you. Volunteers need to be generally available during weekdays but there is no regular commitment involved. Examples of requests for transport range from trips within the village (chiropodists, surgery, opticians, etc.) to hospital appointments in Bishop's Stortford, Harlow or Epping. If a request for transport is received, one of our Helpline team ("Listener-In") telephones people from our list of volunteers until an available volunteer is located. Thus, if you were contacted for such a request and it was not convenient for you for whatever reason, you simply say so and our Listener-In will go to the next person on the list. In this way, our volunteers can be involved as much or as little as they choose. All our drivers are reimbursed for their petrol costs. If you are interested in volunteering your services or would like more information, please contact, evenings only, Yvonne Ayres (Organiser) on 814706 or Francine Cope (Chairman) on 814562.

Whilst Helpline's running costs are not excessive and consist primarily of the cost of running the telephone system, along with insurance, periodic printing costs and minor administration expenses, we nevertheless rely entirely on donations from, for example, local fund raising organisations and individuals to keep the scheme in operation. During the 17 years that Helpline has been in existence, assisting the residents of Stansted when required, it has never ceased to amaze me how generous and caring a village this is. Not only do we see the selfless donation of time and energy given by so many volunteers in our scheme for the benefit of those in need, but also, when our funds become a little too low for comfort, everyone rallies to the call to set us straight again.

This generosity has never been more amply exhibited than shortly before Christmas when we were advised that we had been left a very generous legacy by a Stansted resident, the late Mrs Amelia Lightfoot. This very unexpected bequest will be used to cover our running costs, provide the village with some more informative literature about our organisation and possibly some equipment to assist our administration.

**HELPLINE**  
**STANSTED'S COMMUNITY CARE SCHEME**



# Christian Aid

## We believe in life before death

Christian Aid Week is 12th – 18th May. The latest estimates for the total collected in Christian Aid Week 2001 is £13 million, of which £700,000 is re-claimed tax. The amount collected in Stansted last year was also a record. We could make it even more this year by covering more streets, if we had more volunteers.

So if anyone would like to join the band of volunteers in Stansted for a few hours in May, please let me know.



**Bridge the Gap** – Sunday 19th May 2pm -5pm - this is the name of this year's sponsored walk from the City to Southwark and Westminster. Those of us who took part last year had a great time, and if enough people are interested this year, we can hire a coach again. The routes can be designed to suit your pace and interest. And this year you can include a boat trip, as Circular Cruises have offered £1 off a ride from St.Katharine's Dock to Westminster pier.

So that I can order sponsorship forms and maps, please let me know a.s.a.p. if you would like to join us for a fun day out.

**Afghanistan appeal** - last month I reported on the money raised at Christmas in Stansted for this appeal, and thought I would let you have an update on the situation.

Christian Aid has been working through its partner organisations to meet the needs in Afghanistan, using the money from its emergency appeal.

- Three months supply of food has now reached several areas where Christian Aid had been concerned that supplies would not reach the needy population before the heavy snows (which we hear on the news have now arrived).
- Food has been distributed in Kabul.
- Several thousand metric tons of wheat have been delivered in several districts of the provinces of Ghor and Farah benefiting 20,000 families.
- Food has been sent to Badghis, where several villages were facing a severe crisis.
- Tents are providing shelter to hundreds of families who lost their homes during the civil war or during the bombing campaign
- Winter clothing is being manufactured and distributed
- Water and sanitation equipment is being provided to the refugee camps in Pakistan.

Christian Aid acknowledges that working in Afghanistan is very difficult, even in normal circumstances. Security is still a problem, though it is improving. Of course, after the immediate problem of humanitarian aid, there will be the task of re-building Afghanistan for the future. ~Donations are still needed, and also our prayers in this very difficult situation.

**Fairtrade Fortnight 2002**- 4th - 17th March. Fairtrade, based on standards set by the Fairtrade Foundation, provides small-scale farmers with a long-term contract and a fair price for their products. It sets a high standard in terms of environmental and social conditions. By buying Fairtrade products we are helping people and communities. Christian Aid's latest campaign **Trade for Life** is calling for the trade rules to be changed so that the benefits could reach even more poor people.

Look for the Fairtrade logo in supermarkets. There are often special promotions in Fairtrade Fortnight



Catherine Dean



## MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

A large number of people, including some very welcome new faces, heard an excellent talk on Bog and Water Gardening, given by Mr Ken Akers of Great Saling, at the February meeting of the club. He illustrated his talk with slides explaining the construction of a water feature using plastic or butyl liners, as opposed to concrete, which was used a few years ago to form the shape and provide water tightness. He also showed how, with careful planting for shape and leaf colour, you can have interest all the year round in the garden, even without flowers.

The next meeting of the club will be on March 6th in the Day Centre, Crafton Green, when Mr B. Morrison will talk on Fuchsias. See you there.

Janet Townsend.





# QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 pm Sat 2nd March  
Day Centre

Bring your own drinks

£6 (incl supper)

Tel 813871



Mountfitchet High School PTA

# QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 pm Sat 9th March  
Tables of 8

Tickets £6 incl ploughman's  
Please tel Mike on 812780

*Licensed Bar*



**GINA McCORMACK**  
& FRIENDS  
String quintet

8 pm Sat 9th March  
St John's Church

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

## VILLAGE EVENTS

### March

- 2 Sat HEAL Quiz
- 4 Mon Shalom Group
- 6 Wed Mountfitchet Seniors  
Huw Johnson Club AGM  
Garden Club
- 7 Thu Local History Society
- 8 Fri Lent Group
- 9 Sat Lib Dem Ploughmans  
Mountfitchet PTA Quiz  
Village Music Club
- 11 Mon - 15 Fri Amenity Skip
- 13 Wed Lent Group
- 14 Thu Carers' Support Group  
WI
- 17 Sun Indoor Boot Sale
- 18 Mon Shalom Agape
- 19 Tue Lent Group  
Millers AGM
- 20 Wed Mountfitchet Seniors  
Annual Parish Meeting
- 21 Thu RBL (Women)
- 23 Sat WI Jumble Sale  
Green Waste Skip  
CTS Chevetogne Quiz
- 24 Sun St John's Munch-a-Lunch  
Rainbow Easter Family Party

- Day Centre 7.30 pm
- St John's Hall 7.30 pm
- 4 Greenfields 8 pm
- Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
- URC Hall 7.30 for 8 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
- Day Centre noon - 2 pm
- Mountfitchet School 7.30 pm
- St John's Church 8 pm
- Lower St Car Pk 7.30 am - 3 pm
- Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
- Quaker Meeting House 2 - 4 pm
- St John's Hall 7.45 pm
- Mountfitchet Sch 8 am - noon
- 7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
- Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Day Centre 7.30 pm
- St John's Hall 2 pm
- Lower St Car Park 1 - 4 pm
- St John's Hall 7 for 7.30 pm
- St Mary's School 12.30 pm
- St John's Hall 3 - 5 pm

### April

- 3 Wed Mountfitchet Seniors  
Garden Club
- 4 Thu Local History Society
- 10 Wed RBL (Women) Coffee Morning
- 11 Thu WI
- 13 Sat WI Coffee Morning

- Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Day Centre 10.30 am
- St John's Hall 7.45 pm
- Day Centre 10.30 am



CHURCHES  
TOGETHER  
in STANSTED

## LENT GROUPS

'In the Wilderness'

Quaker Meeting House 8 pm

Fri 8th, Wed 13th & Tues 19th March

Sun 17th March at 6.30 (Agape)

All are most welcome

Sessions are 'free standing'

Utlesford Carers &  
Alzheimer's Disease Society

## CARERS' SUPPORT GROUP

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

2 - 4 pm Thursday 14th Mar

Quaker Meeting House

**Everyone welcome**



## STANSTED MILLERS

Annual General Meeting

8 pm Tues 19th March

Day Centre

Speaker ~ All welcome



## Family Easter Party

3 - 5 pm Sun 24th March  
St John's Hall

Games ~ Music ~ Raffle  
Easter Bonnet Competition

Tel Tina 814371 / Yvonne 813071



## QUIZ NIGHT

CHURCHES  
TOGETHER  
in STANSTED

in aid of  
Chevetogne  
Exchange Visit

7 for 7.30 pm Sat 23rd March  
St John's Hall

Light Supper - Prizes - Raffle  
Bring your own drink and glass

Tickets £5 Concessions £4

Tel Eileen Quinn 812109



## Stansted Evening WI JUMBLE SALE

2 pm Sat 23rd March

St John's Hall

Teas ~ Raffle ~ Cake Stall

Tel 812725 / 814433 / 812470  
for jumble collection

No electrical goods

# AFGHANISTAN

By Ian Jonas

It was in the news, it was a big foreign story and we knew that Newsgathering would be asking for volunteers very soon. A sign went up in the office, "Names Please". I went home and discussed it with my wife, Claire - "what do you think, and what if?"

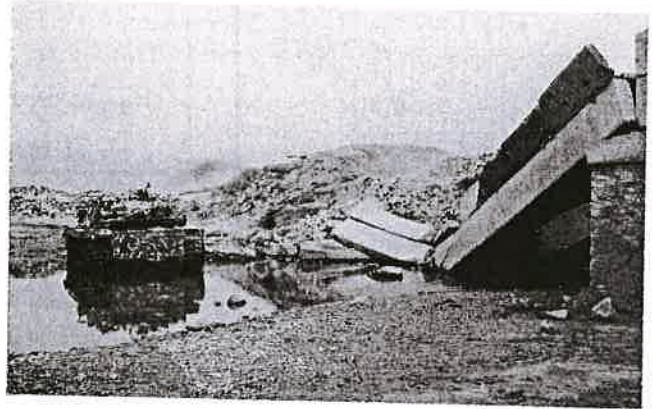
My job with BBC News as a 'Location Engineer' involves working with news correspondents, transmitting their live inserts back to base. This entails using a camera, sound and satellite links, with all the technical paraphernalia that goes in between. Whenever you see BBC News with the words 'Live' on the picture, it will be from my department. In the UK it's generally done with a truck, but in Afghanistan we were to use a lightweight satellite flyaway: small dish, less kit, small generator, but still 500 kilos of kit to fly out and transport into a very hostile environment.

It all started 38,000 feet up in the sky between the airports of Dubai and Islamabad. We flew into Afghanistan from London via Dubai then into Islamabad, Pakistan. Because the journey into Kabul was too dangerous by road due to bandits, we flew into the now famous Bagram Airbase on a United Nations charter plane. I asked where we were likely to be staying when we finally reached Kabul City itself. I could hear people chortling to themselves; ah this doesn't sound good news! War spawns many famous hotels, which seem to be near or in the epicentre of a major conflict and most remain as a 'safe area' - and they become the bases for all the world's newsgathering operations. Beirut, Belfast, Sarejevo and Saigon all had them and the Kabul Hotel Intercontinental was about to become my home for the duration. Of course the name was long since disowned by its rightful owners, but no form of authority existed in the country to battle over a copyrighted name, so it remained.

The small turboprop plane flew into Bagram airbase and did a stomach churning corkscrew manoeuvre out of the sky towards the runway - apparently to avoid possible rocket attacks. We had been briefed that no cameras were allowed on the airbase, and to remain on the tarmac or risk one of the many mines planted in their thousands all over the area - we duly obeyed. All around as far as the eye could see were hundreds of old Soviet Mig planes blown up, hardly a building intact and the detritus of war everywhere. We showed our visas to eight soldiers and officials all armed with AK47 Kalashnikov rifles, they seemed contented enough, and allowed us to board our waiting vehicle.

Now onwards to the city. A Toyota Hiace bus was ready to ferry myself and 5 BBC colleagues along the thirty or so miles into Kabul. This was to be the most amazing journey ever! The road run took us through the Panjser valley, which was the frontline between the fighting troops of the Northern Alliance and the Taliban. The Americans had bombed the area fairly extensively and all the signs were there: huge craters in the mountains, chunks of road missing and all around were tanks and military vehicles - trackless or completely burnt out. We could still see men with guns on

the hillsides, it was impossible to know which side they were from, as pockets of the Taliban still existed, but they were Northern Alliance - or so we hoped! Remember, Mullar Omar had offered a few million dollars for the head of any Western journalist who was captured.



After a few miles the van veered off-road to avoid some huge craters from mines, as the road was still obstructed by the littered remains of ex-trucks and tanks. I was in awe of the beauty of the landscape but still wanting things to hurry along. I could see a large caterpillar tracked machine ahead of us across the road with a dozen men around it. They appeared to be trying to steal it or move it. As we neared them three of the men flagged us down with their guns pointed at us. Don't panic I thought, just routine. Indeed by the smiles on their faces and the handshake with our driver it was just their way of saying hello. I asked the driver what was said, he told me they wanted to know who we were, and where we were going. In order to protect oneself you have to be economical with the truth, so the driver said we were going to stay in the city with his family. Any soldier further down the road could have ambushed us, and removed many thousands of our dollars, then shot us, then melted away into nowhere. The soldiers all communicate with each other with nothing more than a VHF radio, so it is easy to relay information down the valley.

As we drove into the city the roads became busier and the shocking site of a city in ruins met my eyes. I wasn't sure what to expect but in many ways I was surprised: the roads had been patched up although piles of rubble were still all around, and most importantly the men and boys carried on with their daily business. I could see some women in the familiar burhka; Taliban rules forbade women to travel without a male companion - but some had dared to uncover their face.





The shops were busy, men were decanting plastic tubs of petrol into cars by the roadside: it all looked pretty normal. The driving was something to behold. There seemed no road manners and no-one cared who went first, the only way to pass or get anywhere was to use the horn - a lot! The pollution along some roads was choking and obnoxious - thick oily smoke belching out of lorries and cars. I suppose catalytic converters and well serviced cars were the least of their worries.

We passed a football stadium, and someone pointed out it was where the Taliban meted out punishment to transgressors of their rule. A few months ago there were beheadings, and a man who we were to meet later, had his hand cut off for stealing to feed his children.

As we drove, the Intercontinental Hotel hove into view, a fine looking place atop a hill with a commanding view of Kabul City. At the foot of the road leading to the hotel we were stopped by security men with guns, demanding to know who we were and telling us how much it would cost to pass, we paid our way and continued to drive to the entrance. It actually looked rather pleasant on the outside, but we were soon to discover otherwise! A gang of porters helped us carry in our baggage and the flight cases of technical gear; we were to be in an executive suite with adjoining rooms!

We turned the suite into an office, but the kitchen had no hot water, the bathrooms had no running water and the toilets didn't flush - nice! We were soon to learn that when we emptied water down the kitchen sink it flooded the hotel lobby; each time we did so an irate man ran into our room and let rip a string of abuse. Our translators sat there ashen faced while we tried not to laugh at the situation. (When I left the hotel I noticed about ten wet ceiling tiles sagging under the weight of water.)

I threw my kit into my bedroom, third floor room 315, two single beds, no hot water, but cold in the wash basin and a loo that flushed. I was sharing with another colleague Keith, who had arrived earlier so he had cleaned the room already. It took a few days to work out that your room would only be cleaned if you paid the three men who wandered about in the corridor, so it remained like a student's room! To get to the roof where the satellite area and camera position were, I had to make my way up six flights of stairs, none of the lifts ever worked - it became a real slog.

Bit by bit, the kit arrived and Keith and I set up the dish, and then the live position for the camera - looking over towards the city. It seemed half the world's media organisations were there: CNN, BBC, ABC, NBC, Sky, Reuters, EBU, Fox, the Russians, Greeks and many others. I spent almost all my time on the roof and met up with many friends from the past and made some new acquaintances. I even helped out doing a microwave link for NBC America for their prime time anchorman "Dan Rather". He was actually very charming, although I'd heard the stories about his preposterous salary, and ego.

In the moments of quietness I'd get a chance to taxi into town to get food and bottled water for my BBC colleagues. It was

often a case of: we're out filming or we're too busy so you get it, but it gave me a chance to see all the rough edges of the city and its side streets. Chicken Street was where all the media hordes descended, and didn't the locals know it. This was where you could buy the famous carpets, antiques, silver, leather and clothing. It was a real eye opener for me, the men selling were very persuasive, and spoke excellent English. Many almost dragged you into their shops, plied you with a cup of green tea, and commenced their sales talk. At times, many lesser folk would have given in but I came away with some blue wineglasses recycled from clear bottles, and one fabulous carpet. At times the begging kids and ladies became too much, and more than once I saw people screamed at. The little boys would follow you for an hour or more, their line was " Why no baksheesh Mr". Eventually they'd get a note and wander off triumphantly. It seemed so wrong: here I was looking at carpets for 100 dollars, and outside were starving, homeless people. Such is the disparity of war.

Back at the hotel I kept seeing armed men moving cars away from the front of the hotel, and it was not long before word reached us of potential car bombs. As word passed to our safety people and London, a decision was made to move to another place in town, somewhere quiet, and away from all this attention. After all, one large bomb would take out a few hundred of the world's media, Job Done, easy. So after a few days the senior producer and the local fixer found two houses for rent, and after packing up all the kit we made off to our new luxurious homes.

The houses were in a more upmarket area devoid of bombed out buildings, and with reasonable roads. The nice front gardens made them look very welcoming, about 20 years old, with high brick walls all around. We would make one house a TV production office with the satellite uplink, with sleeping rooms for cameramen, picture editors, Keith (my engineer colleague) and myself. The other house was the chill-out zone with a nice open fire and TV, a big table for communal meals, and beds upstairs for the journalists and producers. Two men who would cook us breakfast and a hot evening meal manned the kitchen. They became wonderful comforters with their food, although it took some persuading to 'Westernise' the menu! At first the interiors of the houses were spartan but after a few days of effort they became very homely. We had a large set of steps made out of steel tube welded together in order to reach the roof from ground level, where the live camera position would be. It was interesting to see the locals at work; their arc welder was deadly - two wires strapped straight across the three phase mains coming into the house. Every so often we'd be plunged into darkness as they blew yet another fuse. No problem for them, just connect the wires before the fuses! We realised the power situation was unworkable for a broadcasting environment. I had connected up our generator to work into the house when the local mains failed, which it did two or three times a day. We soon found that paying the local man from the power generation company could lessen this. Apparently the hydro-electricity station that supplies Kabul is only capable of supplying 50% of the demand, so at night a man disconnects streets and homes at random, to lessen the current. We had to keep him plied with dollars!



We had all sorts of grief with generators stopping and taking us off air, which turned out to be dirt in the petrol. We devised a small filtration plant in the garage to help us clean the fuel, some of which seemed to be a mix of petrol, diesel and water. I felt sorry for the people living next door, invaded by hordes of foreigners with smelly clattering generators running day and night. To make matters worse the Ten o'clock News in the UK was 02:30 for them, half way through the night.



The BBC had employed many local Afghani people to help with translation, cooking, cleaning and driving. Many of these people became close friends and had interesting life stories to tell. One man's father was the supreme judge of Kabul, until the Taliban arrived, then when they left the city the power automatically became vested in his son. Although he found it more profitable being in the BBC's employ we affectionately called him "The Judge". Mr Rathmansbig, a man in his 50's, was paid a few dollars to wash up and make hot drinks for the team. He had a great command of English and kept us all in fits of laughter with his amusing accent. "Tea, coffee, why not?" he'd say, "sugar?" We started imitating him behind his back and before long the other locals were imitating us imitating him - funny at the time! He would sit by the back entrance and remove his false leg while he prayed. Unfortunately his head was often whacked by somebody opening the door from the outside too fast. We called him Mr Big. He did a mean cup of coffee in the morning, a lifesaver! One of the translators was in complete awe of working for the BBC; his wage of \$50 per day was unheard of, and he told us he sent it back to his father who had fled to Pakistan. He wanted somebody to smuggle him into the UK and would have paid any amount of money.

We knew that the men who controlled our area wanted to find out more about us, and we'd heard stories of spies being planted. Paranoia set in when we found a new TV cabinet had been moved into the production area, with a locked door. Engineers became lock unpickers for the day, and of course found nothing. One chap who appeared none too bright helped out with the cleaning and was always standing one step behind you, listening intently. I thought he might be one of the spooks, especially when we started moving furniture one day and when somebody mentioned the round table he was suddenly standing there with the table in his arms. He spoke no English? Weird!

The area soon became our home territory, and we discovered a wonderful bakery, which had a constant supply of warm

bread available. They were pure heaven - a bit like a large plaited nan bread. They became our staple lunch diet with cheese.

For many years the BBC had another house just around the corner which was the World Service Radio Bureau. This was about 100 metres away from where the Americans thought a Taliban house was situated, so they decided to obliterate this house with a large bomb. You may remember the pictures when a reporter was doing a piece to camera and as he did so, the windows of the bureau imploded from the force of the American bomb. Naturally things carried on, but much money was spent sandbagging and replacing the glass windows.

After breakfast the camera crews, producers and reporters would sit down and plan their next few days filming or interviewing. Some were to go to the valley at Bamiyan, where the Taliban blew up the giant Buddha statues. This was to be a particularly hazardous trip as the route to the valley was very dangerous, and would mean a day's travel there and sleep under canvas before returning. The safety guy who was an ex-SAS soldier gave advice and helped plan the route. He was in contact with the UN via an UHF radio, and knew all the latest problem areas and hotspots. He was a valued team member, and we all put our trust in him.

One team located a man who had a good story to tell. He had lost his house and wife in a Taliban bomb blast to his house, and in desperation to feed his family he had stolen some dumbbells from a local school to sell for money. When the Taliban found out he was arrested and brought before a mass court held in the Kabul Football Stadium. Here 30,000 people gathered for a sort of open-air massacre. All sorts of "criminals" were here to be beheaded, tortured or have a limb cut off for some minor misdemeanour. Our man had one hand removed for the theft; apparently he got off lightly. Our reporter took him back to the stadium and as he walked around he was interviewed, describing the crowd scenes and the horror of what was going on.

At times the production house would suddenly be full of Northern Alliance people in their colourful clothing. It seemed every other day we would be interviewing the Alliance Foreign Minister Dr Abdullah Abdullah. The house would often become a journalist meeting place for trading ideas and stories. The Americans would come and trade whiskey for help or technical advice. One night Keith and I were asked by the British Embassy staff to help fix up their satellite dish so they could watch BBC World. We duly obliged but at 22:25 we suddenly realised that to return to the house would break the night-time curfew. The Embassy man decided on balance it should be safe, but we took a translator just in case. A good move as it turned out; we had only gone about 300 metres before we reached a roadblock manned by a teenager with a gun. The sight of a Land Rover coming at him with main headlights on must have unnerved him, and as we stopped he raised the gun and pointed it at us. The Land Rover engine was switched off and a window lowered. He stuffed the gun in and roughly scanned around with the muzzle inches away from our heads. Don't panic I thought,

just look straight ahead and let the others do the talking. After a bit of argey bargey he let us past. Again another 500 metres and the same thing again. All the time one is not sure who these men are or what side they support; one thing's for sure - this one wasn't letting us past. We got out and stood motionless by the vehicle, waiting. In the end the translator suggested we paid him 50 dollars, which I did. The money was handed over and he stepped away and gestured us on, phew! As the money flashed before me I wondered how I would explain that one to the expenses unit.



## Nature Notes

Primroses - the 'first roses of spring' - flower this month in damp woods and copses, although they have been flowering in many gardens since Christmas. Another of the early spring flowers is the lesser celandine which belongs to the buttercup family. Known as 'spring messenger' in Dorset, it will be flowering throughout March, decorating hedgerow banks such as along Gall End and Limekiln Lane. With its dark green heart-shaped leaves and glistening golden petals, it was Wordsworth's favourite flower. He noted: "What adds much to the interest that attaches to it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air."

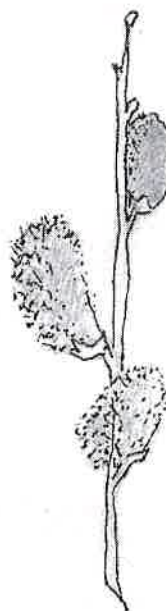


To have been to such a country was truly a great experience. Many of my friends think I must be crazy, and can't see the attraction in Afghanistan. I loved the travel to and from the UK across hostile terrain, and enjoyed meeting the Afghani people. I found them to be kind, gentle and helpful and there was definitely a feeling of "it can't get any worse let's make the most of it and get on with life". They are incredibly resilient, both to the situation and their circumstances, and I feel very privileged to have been part of the original BBC team which set up the Kabul operation. When the situation is right I will not hesitate to return and do it all once more. I hope, with a passion, that when the current interim government beds in and the troops on the streets help with law and order, the country finds itself at harmony and with international aid the country can rebuild its broken infrastructure and economy. I have my doubts because there are still tribal differences throughout the country which remain unresolved, and the terrible repression of women will take a generation to be rid of, but the ordinary man on the street wants PEACE.

Ian Jonas

*(Editor's note: Ian and Claire Jonas and their two children, Charlie and Freddie live in Stansted and attend St John's Church.)*

Photographs courtesy of the author



Next month the starry greater stitchwort will be flowering on shady banks and in light woodland. Its common name refers to the plant's use in easing a 'stitch' in the side; a mixture of stitchwort and acorns in wine was taken as a remedy. Like the bluebell, stitchwort has an ancient lineage; evidence of both plants has been found in Norfolk in peat bogs dating from neolithic times (about 5000 years ago).

Easter is early this year, but the goat willow may just be flowering in time for Palm Sunday. Branches of this large shrub have traditionally been used in England as a substitute for palms. It is known popularly as 'pussy willow' on account of its silky-soft silvery male catkins (once called 'goslings') which become covered with tiny yellow stamens. These catkins are important to beekeepers as a very early source of pollen and nectar.

Rosina Kirkwood

### Integral Yoga

Ugley Village Hall  
Saturdays 10.00am-11.30am

OSCA, Henham  
Mondays 7.30pm-9.00pm

Enquiries to Tom Newstead (Dhira)  
Tel: 07900 654227

Private Classes Available



**STANSTED**  
**JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**  
 Founded 1986 Affiliation No. MY00969 Essex F.A.

Welcome to another Stansted Junior Football club update in the Link.

**ARE THE RUMOURS TRUE ?**

**Have S.J.F.C. found a new home ?**

Yes the rumours are true. We are currently in negotiation with the Parish Council and a local farmer/landowner over the possibility of a ten acre site in the village. The land in question is to the east of the village near Bentfield End. This land is large enough for us to house two 11-a-side and two mini-soccer pitches.

Access to the land is good and there would be sufficient space for us to park thirty vehicles.

We have a long way to go before we can kick our first ball in our own ground but hopefully we're on our way.

This gives us as a village even more reason to support any fund raising within the club and our future events are as follows.

**FAMILY BINGO NIGHT - SAT 2nd MARCH**  
 at The Mountfitchet High School,

We held a bingo night last year and it was a fantastic success. This time we have gone for a bigger hall to allow for more people. Tickets are £1 per person and a family of five can play bingo all night for £12 and win some super prizes.

Ticket Enquiries – Elaine Bright 812928

**PRESENTATION NIGHT - SAT 25th MAY**  
 at The Mountfitchet High School.

Our ever popular awards night – with our famous auction and, hopefully, raffle and tombola ?  
 Full details nearer the time.

**MINI WORLD CUP DAY - SUN 26th MAY**  
 at The Mountfitchet High School.

Starting at mid-day, we will be holding the Stansted JFC World Cup Family Fun Day. Boys of all age groups will be put into country teams and battle it out for the cup.

BBQ , licensed bar and a host of sideshows.

**FIFA 2002 PREDICTION FORMS**

Look out for the World Cup 2002 prediction forms – a simple task of guessing the scores of all the group

games and predicting the World Cup winners and runners up. £2 an entry.

Great fun and a guaranteed minimum 1st prize of £250. Further details contact Glyn on 815851.

Support your local junior football club.

See you next time. Good health. Good luck,

Glyn Warwick  
 Chairman, Stansted Junior FC

**Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council**

Clerk Ruth Clifford  
 Office Hours  
 10 am - 1 pm  
 Monday - Friday



Council Offices  
 Crafton Green  
 Tel 813214  
 Fax 813964

**Annual Parish Meeting**

Please note that our Annual Parish Meeting will be held at the Day Centre, Crafton Green, on Wednesday 20th March at 8pm. Our forthcoming Newsletter will contain full details, including a copy of the Chairman's Report and our Mission Statement along with the agenda.

Mrs Elizabeth Forbes, Chief Executive of Uttlesford District Council will be present and able to answer, we hope, queries raised by any parishioner.

This is YOUR forum to ask about the village and any matter which may affect it or you, so please make the effort to come along - refreshments will be available!!

**Bus Services**

We have just learned that the X40 bus service now has an additional stop at the Saffron Walden Hospital in Radwinter Road.

**Flooding**

We have taken delivery of a stock of sandbags from Uttlesford and these can be made available to people who have genuine concerns about, or a history of, flooding - please contact Ruth Clifford for full details (813214).

Ruth Clifford  
 Clerk

**Sue Leech Chiropodist MSSCh MBChA**  
**Surgery or Home Visits**

Routine Chiropody, Verrucae, Corns  
 and Nail Disorders

**07626 414431**





Here is the first of a new round-up of news from St Mary's School PTFA.

On Saturday 9th March at 8pm we welcome Gina McCormack & Friends, for the last concert of our 2001/2 season, to play a very exciting programme of Chamber Music:-

Mozart's String Quintet in G minor K516  
Dvorak's String Quintet  
Brahms' String Quintet in G major

The members of the quintet are

Gina McCormack violin  
Catherine Yates violin  
David Adams viola  
Louise Williams viola  
Alice Neary cello

The concert will take place in St John's Church, Stansted and tickets can be purchased from Stansted Carpets, Chapel Hill, Stansted; Options Hairdressers, Elsenham; Nockolds Solicitors, Market Square, Bishops Stortford; or from Sonia Levy, 31 Chapel Hill, Stansted (01279 815282). Tickets will also be available at the door on the night. Adults £8; Concessions £6; Children £3.

\* \* \* \*

A forthcoming event not to be missed!!

#### " The VMC Summer Jubilee Party"

Enjoy a concert by young talented musicians; relax with a glass of wine from our licensed bar; listen to jazz while you eat a delicious buffet supper; and have lots of time to meet and greet your friends.

These are the ingredients for our "SUMMER SOIREE" to be held in conjunction with Stansted Parish Council to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee on Saturday June 1st 2002. It will be a family event and will be in St John's Church and Grounds from 6pm.

Watch this space in future issues of "The LINK" for more details but, in the meantime, put the date in your diaries now as 'an event not to be missed' - Saturday 1st June 6pm.

Alan Corbishley

If it's not too late, we'd like to mention the Christmas Fayre and say a big thank you to all the children and supporters who helped to raise a whopping £2,700. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day, even though it was re-located to the Peter Kirk Centre due to the great British weather and flooding in the school hall (thank you for coming to our rescue). In particular, we should like to extend our sincere thanks to all our fantastic sponsors who helped us achieve such a marvellous total. As a result, the children now enjoy weekly music lessons, the football team have an ace new strip and we will soon be welcoming a touring theatre group to perform 'Bully's Paradise' - a play on school bullying (a preventative measure only you understand !).

Whilst the school hall was out of action, members of the Committee and Friends dashed in with paint and brushes before the floor was re-laid. All the walls and paintwork have a fresh new coat - and with the new floor - it looks rather splendid!

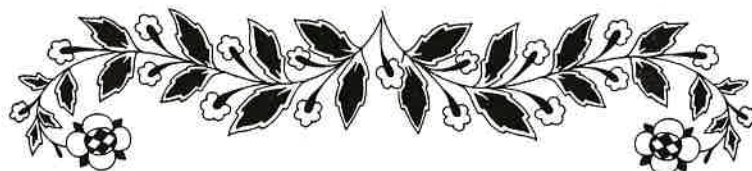
Our next money-raising function is a Fashion Show to be held at the school on 15th April. We are running a Design a T-shirt Competition for the children - and the best designers will be invited to model outfits on the night. We'll also be running a bar - all are very welcome - we're hoping for a good turnout.

We've got masses planned for the near future - an Easter Disco with lots of Easter themed games and a chocolate egg for every child - surely worth coming for ! (21st or 22nd March - tbc). There will be a Golden Jubilee Tea Party in the playground - red, white & blue dress only and a Jubilee medal for each pupil (31st May), and we're getting in gear ready for the Summer Fayre - the theme being Transport (29th June). Does anyone out there have an unusual vehicle/mode of transport ? The more eccentric the better! If so, please get in touch.

St Mary's children are going to be jolly busy in the coming months as we always need their help with the organising - they're brilliant at mucking in - and with the new after school French Club - we hope they'll have time to fit us in !

Au Revoir

Claire Jonas  
PTFA Committee Member





## The National Childbirth Trust

### Education for Parenthood

It's here at last!!! It goes by the memorable name of 'A Pram-pushing, Toddling, Skipping, Parents' Guide to Stansted & Beyond'! Written by members of the branch and funded initially by a lottery grant, the book is now printed and available, priced at £4 a copy. It has no less than 130 pages packed full of information - what to do and where to go locally with your baby or young child. Copies are on sale at Elsenham and Stansted Post Offices, Intercounty Estate Agents, and Bishop's Stortford Tourist Information Office. Alternatively, pick up your copy at any NCT event, or phone Sandra on (01279) 647054.

Much has been planned to fill the calendar leading up to Easter and get us in the mood for Spring. There will be an Easter Craft Bonanza, Easter Egg Hunt, Music Time and various walks or trips to local parks and playgrounds. And not to forget the sanity-restoring nights out for the Mums and Dads...

Alongside these, our regular coffee events in homes continue to take place three times a week, one for each age group, and also a monthly Tea & Toast Saturday morning. The afternoon coffee events are every Monday from 1.30-3pm for babies and mums-to-b, 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. We love to see new faces and you can be sure of a warm welcome.

You do not have to be a member to join in with anything we organise, although joining the NCT does help 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. For people expecting their first baby, full antenatal courses are continually offered and are always in great demand. Four-week refresher courses are also available for those expecting subsequent babies. For more information on NCT antenatal courses in this area, call Rachel on (01763) 271848

Locally, we are entirely run by parents for parents. In addition to the antenatal classes, we can provide breastfeeding support, parental support for new mums, educational and social activities for pre-schoolers, social activities for parents, a book library and several other facilities..

For membership enquiries or for a free copy of our diary sheet showing what is going on, when and where, please call Wendy on (01279) 813387.

## Essex County Council

January is usually a quiet month in County Hall whilst members and staff digest the Christmas and New Year holidays and also determine how the Government decisions on financial support are to be expressed as a budget and what the Council Tax charges are likely to be. The charges will be set finally in March for the coming new financial year commencing on 1st April.

In this report the attention of all readers is drawn to an "Appeal for New Foster Carers" who are asked to come forward to help care for those unfortunate children who have no family and are resident in Uttlesford. The appeal comes as County Council figures show a significant shortage of carers in the west of the county. There are 82 foster carers currently working with the County Council but another 50 are urgently needed.

Councillor Mrs Iris Pummell, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools, says: "We do need to find more foster carers across the whole of the county, but particularly so in West Essex. We want to ensure that we have the very best carer for every child. Local carers, therefore, are important because they can offer children the chance to stay at their own schools and with their friends." She continues: "We need foster carers who can offer long-term placements to children of all ages; short term foster carers to work with children who may go back to their families or who may be adopted, and also relative/friend foster carers."

Anyone can become a foster carer. Carers can be married or unmarried, with or without a partner, with or without children, working or not working.

The County Council offers fee paid opportunities, support and training to help people improve their child care skills and also further career prospects, a 24-hour helpline and the immense personal rewards which come from making a positive difference to a child's life.

Anyone interested in finding out more about fostering can contact the County Foster Line on freephone 0800 801 530, or, if they would like to contact a foster carer for first-hand information, they should contact Helen Anderson, Communications Co-ordinator on 01245 434207, who will be happy to arrange an interview.

Readers are urged to take note of this matter and give it careful thought.

The writer of these reports wishes all readers all good fortune in 2002 and trusts those interested will follow up this matter.

Richard Wallace CC  
Stansted Division  
01279 812588



# Stansted Profile No 43

## Peter and Valerie Trundle

By including Peter Trundle in our series we are again presenting a family which has had close links with Stansted for over 200 years. His mother who is 90 this year continues to live here but Peter's forebears came from Bentfield Bower and the bothy at Hargrave House which still stands, outwardly much the same, on Bentfield Road. Those of course were the days when service in the big houses was an occupation pursued by a large proportion of the population and carried with it its own protocols and dignities. Peter himself was born in Chapel Hill - opposite the then Congregational Church and next door to the Barley Mow pub - a happy association. Peter attended 'Chapel' initially for reasons of proximity but was tempted by St. John's where the choirboys were paid. Any defection to 'Church' was effectively trumped by Olive Tunbridge who dispensed cream buns in the Chapel and there Peter has remained a loyal member to this day, although alas Olive and the cream buns have passed into history. Peter attended the British School in Chapel Hill, again within yards of his home, and received the rugged schooling and experience, for reasons real or imaginary, of the cane wielded by the notorious Mr Enoch. Peter left the School at 15 to begin work at Copleys, also known as the Bishops Stortford Printing Works. After 5 years there he went to the Anchor Press where he still works. Peter has thus achieved 50 years in the industry and 45 years with the one firm. Do these constitute a Stansted record? If not, they are likely to shortly as Peter still puts in several days a week at the Anchor Press works in Portland Road.

Valerie, although born in Middlesex, spent her early childhood in South Wales, of which she has happy memories. Her family then moved to Billericay where her schooling was completed. Not surprisingly, she was sufficiently talented to gain admission to the Guildhall School of Music. Her specialisations in those days were singing, performing and musical theory. She progressed from there to the Royal Academy where she was awarded her LRAM. This in turn led to 2 years at London University where she obtained her Dip.Ed. According to her father, two of her aunts sang with Dame Clara Butt so there is a strong family musical tradition.

She and Peter first met at a wedding in Billericay at which they sang. In 6 weeks they were engaged - rather fast track for those days - and were married in 1963. They then set up home in Bentfield Gardens where they still live. In those days they looked out on the rear of Bentfield Hall or Reed Cottage as it was later known (and which was featured on the front cover of last month's Link). Their front aspect has radically changed but to the rear they have a charming garden framed by the adjacent and magnificent cedar trees in Bentfield Road.

Having been a Scout in Stansted, Peter became a Scout Leader in Elsenham for 8 years during the 60's as well as helping with the youth group at what had become the United Reformed Church. Valerie was also involved with the young people at the Church but by then Paul and Michelle had been born and the demands of motherhood were paramount. However, she soon returned to musical practice by taking the

music post at the Mountfitchet School before moving to Bentfield School in 1979. She was also the peripatetic music teacher at nearby village schools for some 25 years. Private coaching in the piano and singing practice were a natural outlet for Valerie's abilities and following her retirement from Bentfield in 1992 this has become almost a full-time occupation. Numbers of local young people have cause to be grateful to Valerie for giving them a lasting and fuller appreciation of music. In past years she has gathered past and present pupils together to give concerts at the United Reformed Church. However, Peter and Valerie are perhaps best known for 'Magic of the Musicals' concerts and, of course, the Summer Wine Group which flourished for 25 years. The latter was formed with Richard Thomas and Caroline Halliwell in 1975 and was later joined by Luke Thomas. For large numbers of people the Summer Wine were the highpoint of light entertainment in Stansted for many years. Some of their performances were reproduced on disc and so may still be enjoyed.



Peter and Valerie are delighted that music plays an important part in the lives of their children. Paul, who lives at Northleach, is an accomplished horn player while Michelle, who was taught at St. Mary's Convent School in Bishop's Stortford, is proficient on guitar, oboe and piano. Paul and his wife Jacqui have two children and he is the National Sales Manager for an orthopaedic company in South Wales. Michelle and David live in Bishops Stortford and also have an orthopaedic company based near Manuden. They too have two children and continue to be well known in Stansted through the United Reformed Church.

As is apparent, the church has played a large part in the lives of the Trundle family. Peter and Valerie, who is a regular organist there, are delighted with the results of the refurbishment but would like to see more involvement with young people in both church and village. They feel that the efforts spent on funding the building works gave fresh impetus to their congregation. Valerie is a parish councillor and is sure that the council is able to promote the smaller causes which make for a better village. She and Peter add their voices to others in these columns who are grateful for Stansted's friendliness, believing that new people are able to bring new life. Life and good music are certainly qualities that they have brought to us. Please keep it up and thank you for past pleasures.

Derek Honour



# Stansted Tennis Club



## Dates for your diary

Saffron Walden & District Hospital Cup AGM on Tuesday 5th March at 8pm at 105 Cambridge Road, Stansted.

Stansted Tennis Club AGM on Monday 18th March at 8pm at 105 Cambridge Road, Stansted.

## Junior Coaching

Lessons continue on Saturday mornings for children age 6 upwards. If you would like more information please contact Chris Hollis on 01279 319155.

After Easter, Chris will be resuming mid-week afternoon lessons in addition to the Saturday morning slot.

## Ladies' Morning

A hard core of keen lady members meet every Friday morning at the club (9.30am start). All lady members are welcome to come along and join in.

## Men's Afternoon

Saturday afternoon at 1pm is the time for this new slot. It is mainly used as a match practice session for the teams which play in the Essex Small Clubs League; so if you would like to get involved just come along and join in.

## Club Winter League

This is up and running. All scores from the Sunday morning Open Session are recorded and in April the player with the highest game average wins the coveted trophy.

## Used Tennis Balls

Tubes of 4 are available from Janet Hollis. Please contact her on 01279 812073 if you are interested.

If you are interested in joining the Club please contact the Membership Secretary, Kate Rutter on 01279 813053. For any other enquiries please contact either Richard Mott (Secretary) on 01279 466348 or Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 01279 812073.

## AGED 18 - 36 LOOKING TO EXPAND YOUR SOCIAL LIFE?

To find out more, why not visit Bishop's Stortford 18 Plus Group which meets every Tuesday from 9pm at the Half Moon Public House in North Street, Bishop's Stortford or, for more information, telephone Rachel on 813968 or Matt on 321473.

Rachel Butterworth



## STANSTED & DISTRICT LIBERAL DEMOCRATS.

Our next ploughman's lunches are on Saturday, 9th March and Saturday, 13th April at the Stansted Day Centre, 12 to 2pm. All are welcome.

The Supper Club will be meeting on 22nd March at Ugley Village Hall, 7.30pm for 8pm. The speaker will be David Howarth, leader of Cambridge City Council. Cost of the evening, to include supper, is £7.50, and there will be a Bar.

For further details and tickets, please ring 813432 or 814222.

Ruth Rawlinson



## Royal British Legion

## Women's Section

Our next branch meeting will be on Thursday, 21st March, in the Day Centre at 7.30 pm.

We are holding a coffee morning on Wednesday, 10th April, in the Day Centre from 10.30 am. Bric-a-Brac, Cakes, Raffle, Tombola... Everyone Welcome.

Pat Clower



## Huw Johnson Club

Please come!

You are all invited to our informal AGM on Wednesday, 6th March in the United Reformed Church Hall, 7.30 for 8pm. Please come along and discover for yourself what we do throughout the year. There will be cheese and wine served and the opportunity to chat with our leaders and members. We are sure you will enjoy this social occasion.

Everyone enjoyed Barnum on Ice, which was an excellent performance. Our pleasure was doubled as we munched our way through the sweets and chocolates which the United Reformed Church had given us. This has become part of our Christmas tradition and we say a big thank you to all their Church members for this gift. We are now planning an outing to the London Eye in April.

Marion Johnson



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

## LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society has been making steady progress on various village history projects. Your help of course is always welcome and plays an important part in gathering further information. If you have old family letters, diaries, notebooks, photographs, parish magazines or any similar material which may tell us about Stansted in the past they could be important in helping us to further build up a picture of the village in the 20th century or even before. If you have anything that you would be willing for us to see or if you know anyone that may be able to help please contact Peter Sanders 01799 540273.

Our next meeting on March 7th is 'Members Day' and as the name suggests various members will be speaking on their chosen subjects, which we all look forward to as it always produces a most enjoyable evening.

P Brown

### Stansted Hall Cricket Club

This local club, champions of the Herts & Essex Observer League last season, will be putting two senior teams in the League in 2002, the 2nd XI playing in Division 4. We therefore need more experienced players to support the youngsters who will make up the majority of the 2nd XI. Net practice has already started at Bishop's Stortford College on Wednesday evenings from 8pm.

The club also has a thriving junior section, the U/15s and U/13s playing in the West Essex League and the U/11s and U/10s playing friendlies. The first practice for the Juniors will be between 18th and 22nd February at the Herts & Essex Cricket Centre, Sawbridgeworth.

Please contact David Brown, Chairman on 831011 (Seniors) or Allan Love on 817620 (Juniors) for more details.

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### DR PETER RICHARDSON

Within the re-development of the Herts & Essex Community Hospital it is proposed to include a memorial to Peter in the form of a garden.

An appeal has been launched for donations to finance this feature.

Any contributions should be sent to, with cheques made payable to:

Mrs June Whitbread  
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Herts & Essex Hospital  
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Herts



## REMINISCENCES

Stimulated by last month's front page photograph of Reed Cottage, formerly Bentfield Hall, Mr. Edward Laird has written to tell us that Mr. Frank Bull had a garage on a part of the grounds and gave motor mechanics training to soldiers from the Hargrave army camp. We also understand that Reed Cottage itself was used as a British Restaurant during the war.

On another theme Olive Bunting writes:

"In reply to Kath Stevens' question as to how was the money raised for "The Welcome Home Fund" in 1945, the answer is that the Scouts and Guides helped raise some of it. We hired a barrel-organ for a day, dressed as nearly as we could to gypsies, and called at every house in the village. There were two teams, one toured the top half in the morning and the other, the bottom half in the afternoon. I think it was a Bank Holiday. We started at 8am and some folks in the Bentfield Road area were still in bed but they threw money from bedroom windows. I don't think anyone told us off for making so much noise early the morning. It was good fun."



Left to right

Photograph courtesy of Olive Bunting

*Maisie Bunting*      *Molly Perry*      *Angela Ashberry*      *Malcolm Treacher*      *Olive Bunting*      *Joyce Paveley*      *Doris Brett*

57 years on it is remarkable that with the exception of Molly Perry each of the group is still alive. We do not know the identity of the small girl. Any ideas?

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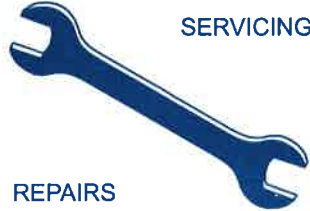
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