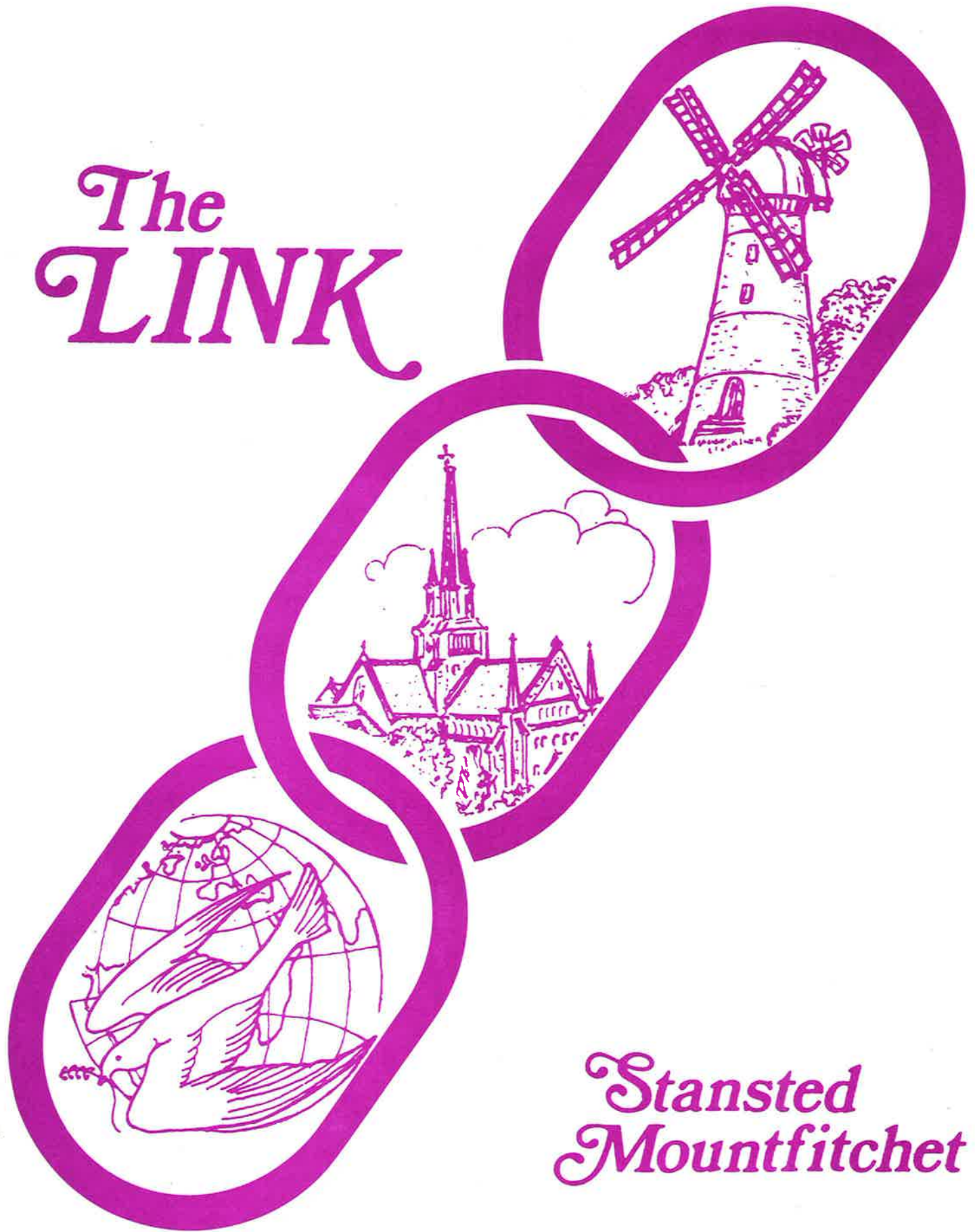


January 2003

# The *LINK*



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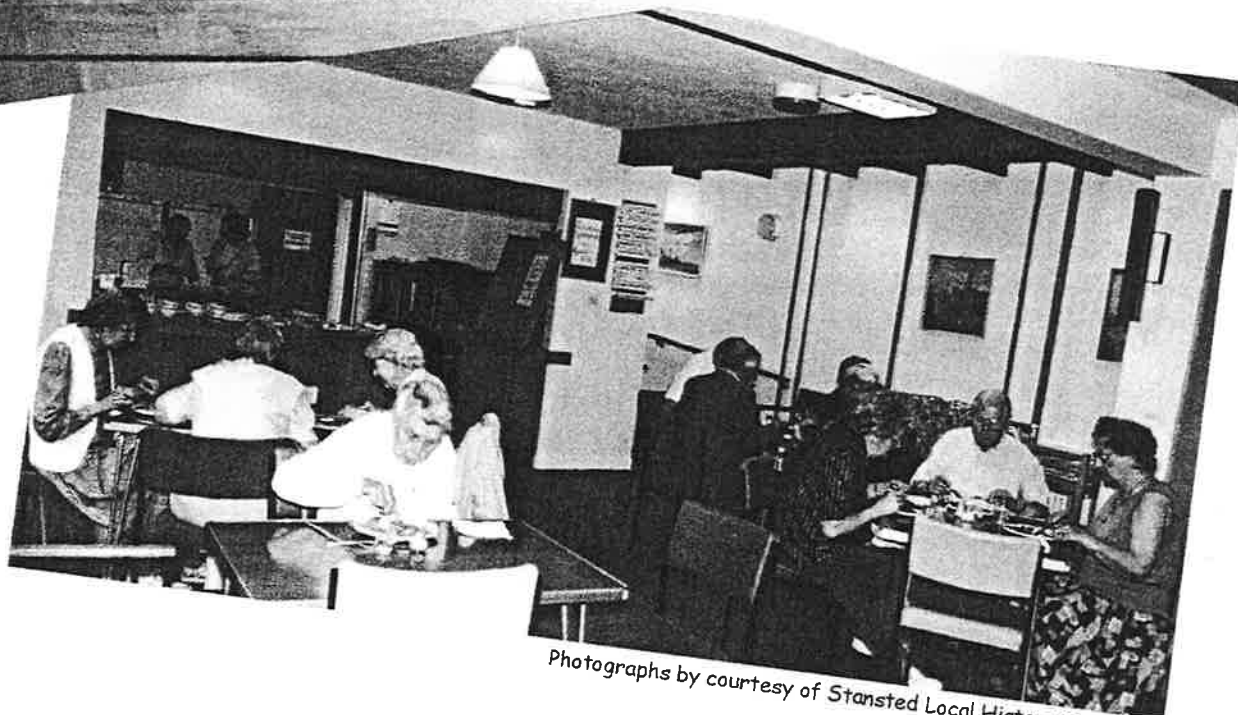
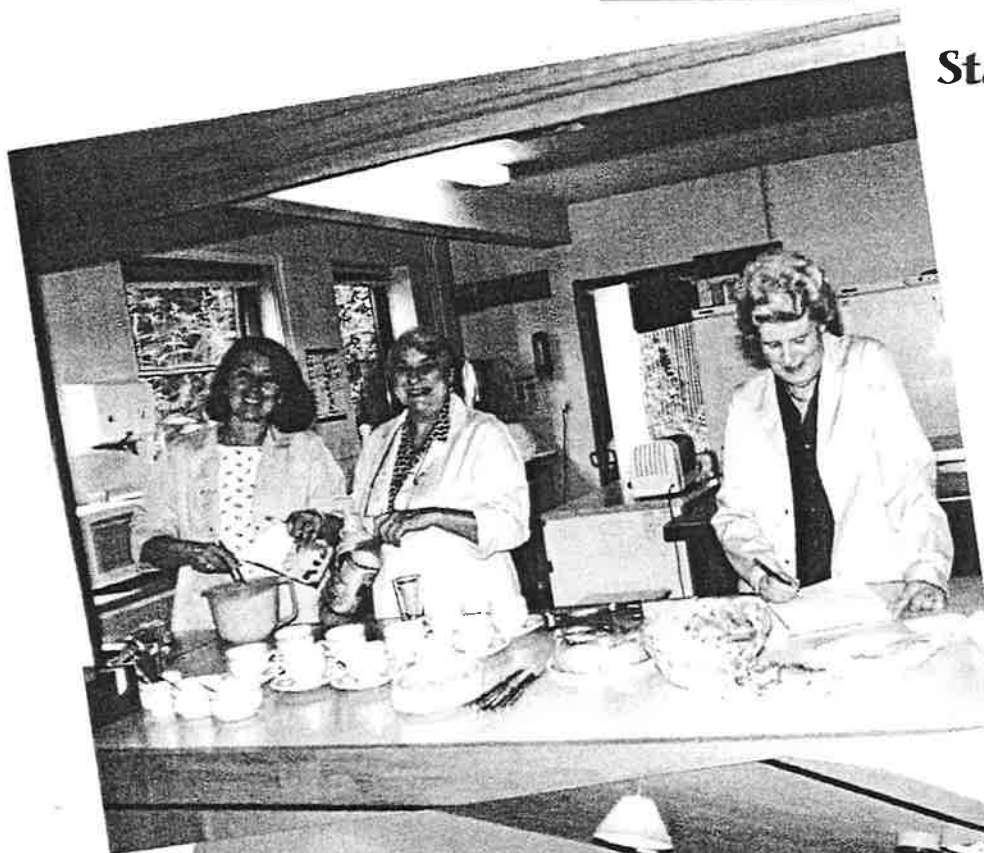
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## Stansted Day Centre

Born 1983 - Still going strong

Brenda Scarr (right) the voluntary Organizer for most of its 20 years is shortly to step down, and is looking for a successor.

The centre is open to anyone over 60 for midday meals (the cheapest in Stansted), and for social events. At other times it is available to local organizations.



*Photographs by courtesy of Stansted Local History Society*

**The Link (price £3.50 per year) is published monthly by Churches Together in Stansted**

Advertising enquiries Tel 01279 812797

All other enquiries to Janet Townsend Tel 01279 812593

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stanstedlink@aol.com**

by 9<sup>th</sup> January for publication on 25<sup>th</sup> January  
by 6<sup>th</sup> February for publication on 22<sup>nd</sup> February

# 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

## We moved in

Last month, at the beginning of Advent, we finally moved into our new Church. First impressions are of great light and space and the sheer scale of the new surroundings. At the same time there is a feeling of great warmth and friendliness, and I think we shall soon feel at home here. At present most of the walls are bare. A beautiful panel surrounds the tabernacle, but the remainder of the artwork has still to be completed, and we are looking forward to seeing this in place.

The beginning both of the Church's liturgical year, and of the calendar year, is a fitting time for starting afresh and beginning a new journey. We are thinking about ways of making full use of our new facilities, and one of a number of new ventures is setting up a book club. The aim is to choose a book to be read over the next few weeks, and then to meet to discuss it. At our first meeting recently we discussed "In Search of a Way" by Father Gerard Hughes. The author is a well-known Jesuit priest who has written a number of books, all of which combine deep spiritual insights with immense practicality. "In Search of a Way" is his account of a walk, a pilgrimage, from England to Rome. This took two and a half months and he camped in all sorts of fields and roadsides on the way. Gerard Hughes writes with great honesty about his own inner journey, as well as the "outer" journey to Rome which helped to clarify many of his spiritual perceptions. During his time on the road, he met all kinds of weather, a variety of responses from people, not always helpful, and especially problems with blisters!

His thoughts about pilgrimage seem especially relevant as we start on a new year: "On the road the pilgrim learns that

searching for God is already to have found him and that direction is much more important than destination, because God is not just an end, nor a beginning, but for us he is always a beginning without end."

Ruth Rawlinson

# 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

## Green Issues

"Try to live simply. A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. Do you keep yourself informed about the effects your style of living is having on the global economy and environment?"

We do not own the world, and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will. Show a loving consideration for all creatures, and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life. Rejoice in the splendour of God's continuing creation."

The above are two of our 'Advices and Queries' relating to the environment. More have recently been added to produce a 'Green Advices and Queries'. We are all very aware of man's influence on the world and its resources and its effects on global warming and climate change. We can do our best to influence politicians and governments, as Christian Aid is doing. We can also examine our own lifestyles to see if we can personally limit our use of valuable resources and, by doing so, influence others. We can think about many aspects: the use of transport, saving energy, saving water, recycling (we are lucky if we live in Uttlesford!), the food we buy and the kind of food we eat. A recent survey of Meeting Houses found that the majority used energy-saving light bulbs, Fair-trade products, ethical banking, individual thermostats and had car-sharing schemes for getting to Meeting for Worship, but there is still some way to go.

We want to ensure that the world, so wonderfully created, is kept safe for future generations - and we all have a responsibility to play a part in that process.

Margaret Whitelaw





**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-12:00noon
Friday	

(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>

Honorary Assistant Priest

**Canon Derek Jackson**

88 Stansted Road  
Bishop's Stortford  
Herts, CM23 2DZ  
phone (01279) 652664

Director of Music

**Mrs Glynis Morris**

Wakeley

Leetes Lane

Eversden

Cambs, CB3 7HH

phone/fax (01223) 263640

<church.music@stansted.net>

Children's Church

**Mrs Marion Johnson**

(01279) 812284

Mother & Toddler Group

**Mrs Tina South**

(01279) 814371

From the Registers for  
November

Funerals:

6th Elsie Ivy Borley  
13th Marie Shaylor 85 yrs  
15th Baby Hannah Jayne  
Rose 2 1/2 yrs  
18th Ivor John Fish

## Jihad

**N**ew Year is always a mental watershed, we look forward while the frenetic days of Christmas shopping and over-indulgence are already a memory. A week later and we will be back to our familiar old ways, reproaching ourselves for even thinking there could be a new beginning.

Back in December, when the malls declared it already Christmas, the church was keeping Advent. All the readings and sermons were about looking for a new world, breaking into the old one, with its bittersweet mixture of judgement and liberation from the cares that weigh us down. We do it every year, because it's important to keep the idea alive. If a religious view of the world has any use, it is to say that we are under judgement; what we do does matter in the grander scheme of things, and it matters to God.

Although Advent and its apocalyptic readings are past, we are still haunted by mini apocalypses of where Al-Qaeda may next strike and whether George W will lead us into Iraq. The irony is that both groups see themselves as chosen warriors, enlisted in a holy war.

I have not met a Muslim who believes Al-Qaeda is a worthy cause. Likewise, Christians should not allow the interests of the White House to be taken as representing Christian culture to the Muslim world.

The Gospel of Mark paints a bleak picture of forthcoming terror. It doesn't matter whether this refers to the end of the world or Roman legions coming to destroy the Jerusa-

lem temple, the key command that Jesus gives his followers is not to take up arms, but to watch and wait.

He takes the opportunity to lead by example, when armed guards come to take him away when he is in the Garden of Gethsemane. He offers no resistance, while his followers fail to watch and wait as he had instructed.

The command to passive resistance and witness is not to wimp out, it is to *stand against*. We saw this in its most classic form in Gandhi's non-violent resistance to British rule. Tyrannical governments always want the oppressed to believe in them, and when they are resisted, they can show that they are not so benign after all. When Aquino felt he had to return to Marcos' Philippines, he was warned that Marcos would kill him. As Aquino arrived, he was shot by Marcos' soldiers, and so evil finally showed its hand in public and the seeds of Marcos' downfall were sown.

Eleven years have passed, yet the abiding image of the demonstrations in Tienanmen Square is of an unarmed student standing in front of the tank. They had succeeded in getting an oppressive government to show its hand, and so began the process of its being dismantled.

Real holy warriors know that you cannot overthrow an oppressor by using the same brute force which keeps them in power. If you do that, you simply replace one tyranny with another and a more powerful one, you do not break the cycle of violence. Jesus' example cost him his life, and resurrection was God's endorsement of his way being the way to God's peace for his world.

Which is the real coward: Gandhi, Jesus, Aquino and that Chinese student, who look you in the eye, or trigger-happy hi-tech militarists who are playing a video game with real bullets against an enemy without a face? Both Bush and Al-Qaeda have a lot to learn about being holy warriors.

Andrew Spurr, Rector

### St. John's Diary

**Sundays** 8:00am Holy Communion *said*  
9:30am Parish Communion *sung*  
11:00am Open Door Service on  
the 5th and 19th of January

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

**Children's Church** meets at 9:30am on Sundays in the Church Hall. **Tiny Tots** is a mother and toddler group that meets fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons in term-time. **Laser 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. A housegroup meets fortnightly and is currently studying Paul's letters.

### Charity Rock Concert

In aid of the victims of the  
famine in Malawi

St John's Church

Friday January 31st 2003

Tickets available from the Church Office

# UNITED REFORMED

Chapel Hill

**Minister** Rev'd David Simpson  
32 Loompits Way  
Saffron Walden  
CB11 4BZ  
Tel 01799 526618

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

## Preachers for January

5th	10.30am	Mrs S. Mckenzie
12th	10.30am	Rev D. Simpson. Communion
19th	10.30am	Dr P Cressey
26th	10.30am	Rev D Simpson

We advance into another year of the 21st century, and as we make and break those resolutions, what's new about another new year? There will undoubtedly be new things in 2003: more advances in the communications and technology field, new discoveries in science to fight illness, new initiatives to fight crime, to feed the hungry, to house the homeless. And the list could go on. So why do we need 'new' things? Is it because we get bored and tired of the old, is it because the new is seen to be better than the old, or does it actually reflect something contained not only within the human soul, but also within the cycle of life itself?

I believe that God created time. The cycle of life, and of nature, follows a pattern of beginnings and ends. When a plant dies, the nutrients return to the soil to provide nurture and life for a new plant. The old provides energy for the new. So as one year ends and another begins, maybe we have regrets from the old year, maybe we carry sadnesses with us, but we can use them constructively to create something new.

As Christians, we are offered new life in Christ as an ongoing principle. Through the death of Christ, the one who came as a human baby, we are enabled to begin again in our relationship with God. That doesn't just happen as we enter a new year, or as a result of a conversion experience, but happens daily, as we continue to be renewed, restored, forgiven. God does not dwell on what is past, but uses all that we are and weaves it into his purposes. We also, do well not to dwell on the past, but to use it constructively and creatively to create a better world. Do we believe it can happen?

Many churches and organisations were involved in the Christian Aid *Drop the Debt* campaign, which had a huge impact on bringing the world's attention to the backlog of unpayable debts owed by the world's poorest countries. *Trade for Life*, Christian Aid's main international campaign is building on the success of the debt campaign, and calls on the world's political leaders to rewrite the rules that govern in-

ternational trade, putting people before profit and releasing the huge power of trade to benefit all.

The beginning of a new year is a chance for all of us to commit ourselves to making sure that we do not dwell on past mistakes, but that we use those experiences to help to create a better and a fairer world for all. We can make a difference!

Sue McKenzie

(Student minister working with David Simpson in the Stansted Group of United Reformed Churches)

## Date for your diary

Don't miss it!!

Another **CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY FUN DAY** will be held on Saturday 29th March 2003.

There will be Art, Drama, Craft, Music, Cookery, and Games, followed by a Special Service for Mothering Sunday the next day.

**MORE DETAILS NEXT MONTH**

# 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](mailto:methodists@stansted.net)

**All services start at 9.30am unless otherwise stated**

## Services and preachers for January

5th	Rev'd Harry Wood - annual Covenant service
12th	Rev'd John Graham - Holy Communion
19th	Joan Kennett
26th	Rev'd John Graham - a joint service with the URC at the meeting house.

There will be a fellowship meeting on Friday 10th January.

The Methodist church in Stansted was delighted to welcome Mary Ecclestone and William Frogley as new members of our church on 24th November.



## CHURCHES TOGETHER in STANSTED

### Christian Unity

On Wednesday, 22nd 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 14th January at 8pm in the URC vestry.

Ruth Rawlinson



## SHALOM

We start our new term on 13th January with a Prayer and Praise led by the Stansted music group at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

On 27th January we will meet in the Friends Meeting House to see slides of Margaret Silvester's visit to Jordan. The theme is "In the footsteps of Moses".

All meetings start at 8p.m. We welcome newcomers to our meetings. Why not give us a try?

A date for the diary:

**Saturday, 14th February**

**Valentine's Dance**

to

**Pete Baker's Jazz Band**

at the

**Mountfitchet High School**

Proceeds to the

**Corymeela Centre for Reconciliation**

## 1950's /1960's ROCK CONCERT

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**St John's Church, Stansted**

**8pm until 11pm**

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through Stansted Regular Aid for the Poor (RAP)*

*Tickets: £5.00*

*Bar*

*Raffle*

Tel: David Morson, 850209, for more information

## IN MEMORIAM

### MRS MARGARET G. GABB

Mrs Gabb, well known to all in the village, died in her sleep during Wednesday night, 4th December, four days after her 89th birthday.

Margaret, as many know, was a long-time resident of the village, for although born in London her parents bought Croft House in High Lane in 1922 and thereafter the winters were spent in London and the summers in Stansted. Her father died in 1924 and the London house was sold. The family then moved permanently to Stansted.

During her youth and early adult life Margaret was a stalwart supporter of the Guides and took an active part in running not only the local troop but also the Guiding Movement in Essex as a whole.

At the outbreak of war she was unable to serve owing to her hearing difficulties but instead worked for the Red Cross Prisoners of War in St James Palace, commuting daily to London through bombing and other wartime hazards to continue her duties. Later in the war she was forced to give up work in London owing to ill health and instead became clerk to the Home Guard Battalion based in Lower Street where she worked for Lt. Col. Slingsby and Major Cawkell.

Once the war ended Margaret devoted her time to village activities, notably the British Legion Women's Section and other related activities.

In 1948 having married Dr Richard Gabb she fulfilled all the duties of a GP's wife in a busy country practice in the days before the National Health Scheme overtook the need for these voluntary and unpaid duties.

After the death of her husband in 1986 Margaret continued her life of service to others and when the Hon Mrs Katharine Ruck left the village Margaret became President of the R.B.L. Women's Section in her place, a task she performed until her death.

Many will recall Mrs Gabb walking about the village helping others and always ready to stop for a chat and a laugh about life and the problems of the modern world! A stalwart support of the Church and a dedicated arranger of the War Memorial flowers, Mrs Gabb died as she had lived, cheerful and determined not to give in to difficulties but fight them head-on. In her life she set an example to us all and she will be sincerely missed by all who knew her.

Richard Wallace



All of us in the Stansted Group of HEAL Cancer Charity would like to thank the people of Stansted for the support they have given us during 2002. We are very lucky to be working in such a caring community. Not only are all our events well supported and collecting boxes regularly filled, but our supporters even organise their own events. One such as the Coffee Morning held by Sandra Ayres at her home on Wednesday 20th November. That was her second such event - be careful Sandra - hold a third one and it will have become a permanent fixture in the Stansted social calendar! We are all delighted by the magnificent sum of over £500 raised in a mere two hours. Sandra has asked me to thank all of the enthusiastic helpers who supported her in the event and also the Co-op, Budgens, Marks & Spencers, Tescos and M. Collins for donating raffle prizes. She is already planning next year's Coffee Morning but knows it will be difficult to beat this year's fantastic total.

So our thanks once again to Sandra, and everyone else who has supported us during the past year. It is not too late, may I wish you all a very happy and successful New Year.

Richard Thomas

## ALZHEIMERS SOCIETY

Val Reavell, the former organiser for the Uttlesford Branch wishes to advise everyone that shortage of money is becoming desperate at a time when claims on their services are increasing. The Branch is now having to get into fund-raising mode by holding events throughout the year. The first of these, on 25th January, is described on our Village Events page. Do please support an excellent cause.

## STORT VALLEY SCHOOLS TRUST

It is encouraging to report that demands for the Trust's work are increasing. It is now looking for a part-time schools worker to assist Suzi Brown. This is a term-time only appointment so would suit a parent with school-age children. Anyone who wishes to know more about the post is invited to get in touch with the Rev'd Laurie Bond at Takeley Rectory, tel. (01279) 870 837.





## Uttlesford District Council 2003 Skip Dates (subject to confirmation)

**Mon - Thurs**  
7.30am - 3pm  
Fri am only

6 - 10 January  
14 - 17 April

**Weekends**  
7.30am - 3pm  
(attended)

15 - 16 February  
24 - 25 May

**Mon - Thurs**  
7.30am - 3pm  
Fri am only

10 - 14 March  
12 - 16 May



## Stansted Branch

### Spring Term

Mondays 13th Jan - 14th Mar

## RURAL LIFE IN EAST HERTFORDSHIRE & WEST ESSEX

Tutor: Tom Doig

Enrolment 13th Jan 7.30 pm  
other evenings 8 pm

## Stansted Day Centre

*Reduced fees for Concessions*

## VILLAGE EVENTS

### January

2 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
6 Mon - 10 Fri	Amenity Skip	Lower St Car Pk 7.30 am - 3 pm
9 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
11 Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's Lunch	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
13 Mon	WEA Spring term begins	Day Centre 7.30 pm
	Shalom Prayer & Praise	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
19 Sun	Village Music Club Concert	St John's Church 3 pm
25 Sat	Alzheimer's Soc. Burns Supper	Dunmow Day Centre 7 pm
27 Mon	Shalom Group	Quaker Meeting House
31 Fri	Charity Rock Concert	St John's Church 8 pm

### February

5 Wed	Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
6 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
8 Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's Lunch	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
10 Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
13 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
14 Fri	Valentine's Dance	Mountfitchet High School 8 pm
15 Sat - 16 Sun	Amenity Skip	Lower St Car Pk 7.30 am - 3 pm



## THE VILLAGE MUSIC CLUB

Sunday 19th January  
St John's Church  
3 pm

## Gary Ryan solo guitar

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Dementia Care & Research

## Alzheimer's Society

Uttlesford Branch

## Burns Night Supper

Sat 25th January  
7 - 11 pm  
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Chequers Lane

Entertainment • Raffle • Bar  
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(alternative to haggis available)  
Free drink to toast the Haggis

Tickets £10 ☎01371 873870  
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event that you would like  
to advertise on this page?*

Please submit details by  
Thursday 9th January  
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58 Chapel Hill or  
email stanstedlink@aol.com

All items subject to editor's approval



## St Valentine's Dance

Peter Baker's  
Crusty Jazzers

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February  
8 - 11 pm

Mountfitchet High School

Bar ~ Sandwiches ~ Raffle

Tickets: £6 or £15 (family)

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In aid of Corrymeela





## UTTLESFORD CARERS

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# STANSTED PUB PROFILE

## No.1 - THE QUEENS HEAD

“Fings are almost what they used to be” at the Queens Head in Lower Street, Stansted, says proprietor, Mr Bernard Irving, who has been pulling pints and calling “Time” for about 14 years, here in Stansted.

Bernard has been in the Brewery trade 35 years and had no regrets leaving a City pub which he and Lyn, his wife, previously managed. They were not impressed with the modern approach to pubs in that area, which were changing with the times, and waved goodbye to the inevitable large TV screens, modern restaurants and live music.

They moved to The Queens Head, Stansted and settled in well, preferring the more traditional village pub and way of life. Bernard’s pub has been listed in the Good Beer Guide for about 8 years; he is very proud of this and the different draught and other beers he sells - undoubtedly the favourite “juice”. Definitely no canned alcoholic drinks could be had in his Pub!! Business has been swinging with the trends, so Bernard decided to hold prices level for two years.



l to r - Eric Hutchinson, Cliff Brown, Bernie & Lyn, and Gerry Lane

They do rely on passing trade - e.g., parents on outings with children, visitors, commuters and people who order “take away” meals from nearby Indian restaurants, Chinese take aways and Fish and Chip shop, nip in while their orders are being processed - to whet their appetites I daresay! I enquired if any famous personalities visited The Queens Head - Bernard very modestly named Kenny Ball, the jazz musician! When prompted, he also recalled a local vicar, Bob Wallace, who was a regular - many readers may well remember him.

The Queens Head, circa 16th/17th century, (actual date unknown because records were destroyed), is compact and comfortable with a friendly atmosphere. It consists of a well-stocked bar, lounge/dining room and a spacious public

bar, which has a darts board, bar billiards and gaming machine. The interior of the lounge/dining room still boasts dated features like beams and very low ceilings. The furniture and furnishings are in traditional styles that complement the character of the Pub. The attractive period windows, frontage and sign (of Queen Elizabeth I) are very much in keeping with other adjacent listed buildings - a nostalgic and historic post-card setting in Lower Street!!



Wendy with Mike Green

Bernard told of an old sage, now sadly passed on, who talked about how different the pub used to be in his time - Breweries changed hands and the property was renovated a few times. Behind the fireplace was an area for stabling a couple of horses and a horse and cart. There was a Tap Room and a staircase leading upstairs from the front entrance - these were demolished to create more space, and now incorporate part of the lounge near the entrance. The main lounge/dining area to the left of the bar, used to be a cottage; mail is still occasionally addressed to The Queens Cottage, as it was then known!!

There is a certain quaint charm about The Queens Head and an ambience people find relaxing and comfortable for socialising, particularly the more mature “lads”! What a jolly bunch they are and seemingly very loyal! Asked if they would like to see any changes to the Pub, regulars Clifford Brown and Eric Hutchinson were adamant they would not return if that happened!! Old mates Gerry Barker and Mike Green (who was a previous landlord), have been going to the Queens Head for yonks!

Lyn, who also worked in the Brewery business, is an attractive, friendly lady, responsible for the kitchen and tasty meals served during lunchtime only. They do organise ongoing “theme” events, such as Thai and Spanish evenings, when delectable dishes (appropriate to the theme) are served. Bernard and Lyn travelled extensively in the Far East and learned the art of Eastern cuisine. Thanks to their expertise, the food goes down a treat and the event is very popular, by prior booking. However, Bernard stressed The Queens Head was essentially a Pub - serving meals was not a main consideration.

Quiz Nights nights are held twice a year and proceeds go to Charity. They also supply a small Library facility: people donate books and then borrow them at 20p each. An excellent idea, providing a valued service; and the proceeds are donated to St Clare's Hospice.



**Ruth & Lyn with charity books**

Sadly, Bernard is retiring in May 2003, therefore, he will be giving up The Queens Head. He has enjoyed his time as a Publican but is looking forward to retirement. We extend our best wishes on the occasion of his retirement and much happiness in the future.



**Lyn & Ruth**

This is a good opportunity to thank Bernard and Lyn for their hospitality and agreeing to feature The Queens Head in the first of *The Link's* Pub Profiles in Stansted.

*Interviewed by Wendy Moss and Ruth Rawlinson.*

*Photographs by Mike Dyer.*



## GRAHAM SCHOOL OF DANCE

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## MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

The December meeting took the form of a Christmas party and quiz arranged by members; everyone enjoyed themselves and went home with Christmas good wishes ringing in their ears.

There is no meeting in January, but at the next meeting on 5th February Mr Allen Gillingwater will talk about Sweet Peas.

We wish everyone a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year, and look forward to seeing you at our meetings in 2003.

Janet Townsend



## Huw Johnson Club

By the time you read this our concert will be a thing of the past but we thank all those who joined us on that occasion. We are now planning our trip to the London Lights on December 27th and our New Years Party on January 17th.

We have three new young ladies at club, Florence, Annabel and Emma. Because we need more drivers they have to pay for a taxi to bring them in from Saffron Walden. If we had another mini bus driver we would solve this problem, as we could use the mini bus twice a month. We could then spread our drivers out over the other two weeks. Please consider this as our members gain so much from attending the Club. The mini bus is kept at the Peter Kirk School. Please ring me on 812284 if you would like to know more.

We wish all our friends a very happy New Year.

Marion Johnson



## STANSTED & DISTRICT LIBERAL DEMOCRATS.

Our next Ploughman's Lunches are on Saturday 11th January and Saturday 8th February at the Stansted Day Centre, 12 noon to 2.00pm. All are welcome.

On Friday 31st January 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 MOUNTFITCHET LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

At our meeting on 5th December, Mrs Olive Bunting recalled for us many of her experiences when employed at the Stansted Sub-Post Office. Starting in September 1936, at the age of 14, her main task was the delivery of telegrams - vital when so few people had telephones - although she soon found her duties expanded to include the many aspects involved in work behind the counter.

With the outbreak of war in 1939 business expanded both in scope and volume, particularly when Army camps were set up in Church Road and Hargrave House. The Post Office was a centre, not only for communication and business matters, but also for Air Raid Precautions. Members were enthralled by Olive's recollections of events and personalities involved in village life at this time. For many, it awoke our own memories of a distant time, for others the idea of working 7 days a week for 6 shillings (30p), less 2d for a National Insurance Stamp, came as rather a shock!

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 2nd January 2003 when we will have another of our ever-popular Members' Evenings. Meanwhile, a Happy New Year to you all!

Ian Seavers

## OH, HOW THE MONEY ROLLS IN

On November 30th a Quiz Night organised jointly by the St John's Hall Committee and the Stansted Village Association raised the amazing sum of £1000, so making each organisation some £500 richer. Some unusual rounds were masterminded by Andrew Arnold which, together with the baked potatoes, made for an evening with a difference.

In addition two very successful Christmas Fairs were held on 7th December at Bentfield School and St Mary's School.

Congratulations to all who made these things happen; we are fortunate to have you.

Derek Honour



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# Stansted Art & Craft Market

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## GALES CAN CUT POWER, BUT CAN'T STOP THE MARKET

The annual Stansted Art and Craft Market was held this year on the weekend of the 26th – 27th October. As in previous years, the art exhibition took place in St John's Church and visitors were treated to the usual high standard of exhibits. In addition to this, a wide range of craft stalls were to be found both here and in the adjacent Church Hall.

In the past few years it seems to have become a tradition that the elements will do their best to thwart the efforts of the organisers by producing something exceptionally unpleasant on the weekend of the market. Two years ago St John's Road was flooded and the village beset by monsoon-like rain. This year it was the wind that did its worst on Saturday night and Sunday morning, managing to plunge the church into semi-darkness for about two hours on Sunday by depriving half the village of power. Despite this, visitors still came out to visit the market in considerable numbers and everyone carried on undaunted, although there was considerable relief that the power returned before it started to get dark outside!

The craft stalls attracted much attention, with the opportunity to throw your own pot (or at least attempt to make something that wasn't too lumpy/squashed/wobbly!) proving particularly attractive to children - of all ages. The prize for this year's raffle was a picture by Clifford Brown which was won by Mr and Mrs Wingfield of Bentfield Causeway.

Thanks to the generosity of those who attended the market, the committee has been able to distribute £1,450 this year to eleven local groups. The following organisations have benefited from this year's Market: Bentfield School, St Mary's School, Stansted Venture Scouts, Stansted Tortoise Scouts, Stansted In Bloom, Huw Johnson Club, Sideways Pre-School, Rainbow Pre-School, St John's Church Hall, Homestart and The Link.

Through this distribution of funds raised from and by local people, Stansted continues to demonstrate that its sense of community is alive and well. Thanks must go to all who contributed in any way, be it through the provision of facilities, donation of time as a volunteer, or simply by attending: without your support this event could not take place and the funds which we give to local groups would not be available. If you feel that you might be able to participate in the running of next year's market in any capacity, please contact Rachel Mortishire-Smith on 816837. More volunteers are always welcome!

Sian Mackey (Secretary)

## BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA

Thank you to everyone who supported the Christmas Fair. The school hall was surrounded by twinkling fairy lights and a 15ft Christmas tree took pride of place next to the piano where the Bentfield choir and recorder group entertained the people gathered in the hall.

Visitors had the chance to buy homemade cakes, crafts, poinsettias, hand painted china, homemade jams and marmalades (courtesy of Sandra Ayres who was raising money for HEAL as well as the school).

The children had a great time with games such as the scalextric challenge, skee blast, pick-a-pop, crossbows and pull a string. They also had the chance to challenge the head teacher Mr Draper to a game of giant connect four.

Father Christmas was busy all the time and certainly needed the cups of tea provided throughout the afternoon.

Our second hand toy stall provided an opportunity for parents to clear out before Christmas - and the children time to stock up!

We had a brilliant raffle with two hampers, a beautiful flower display and donations from many local businesses such as Venture, Barnet Fair and the Royal Tandoori among others.

We raised around £1500, which will be spent on equipment around the school.

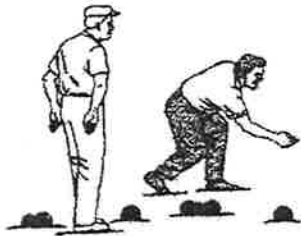
After such a busy event we thought the parents and staff deserved a treat so on the 14th we held a Party Night in the hall with live music from *All of a Sudden*. Everybody enjoyed a good old bop and an opportunity to let their hair down whilst raising money for the school.

On the 18th December it was the children's turn to show off their dancing as we finished the term, as is traditional at Bentfield with a Christmas Disco. The children enjoyed the dancing and games and left for the Christmas holidays with plenty of festive cheer!

The New Year sees us resume our fund-raising with a vengeance. We already have a bike sale planned for early in the Spring where we will be providing all sorts of bike servicing and maintenance as well as holding a sale of second-hand bikes. This is a new project for us, but one we feel will be of great benefit to the pupils and hopefully raise money for the school.

Marnie Tait and Mandy Honour





## STANSTED BOWLING CLUB

Stansted Bowlers and guests gathered for their annual presentation dinner on Saturday, 23rd November 2002. It was decided to hold the function in a somewhat larger venue this year so we hired St John's Church Hall, which allowed us to have 72 attendees.

We had an honourable guest, Bert Wright, the 2001/2002 President of Essex County Bowling Association, who not only amused everyone with a couple of jokes but presented the trophies and cups to the worthy winners and finalists.

Our local catering firm, Hudsons, to whom we are most grateful, provided an excellent meal; without doubt they provide a wonderful service.

To end the evening this year we had the chance to dance to a newly formed band called *Back-track*, whose members consist of two Club members – myself on drums and Roy Prentice on bass guitar. Our President's daughter, Maria Bush, a native of Stansted, was our vocalist, with Derek Peachey on lead guitar and Martyn from Hatfield Broad Oak on rhythm guitar. We all had a great time and the band hopes to go from strength to strength.

This is the quiet period for outdoor bowling clubs now but if anyone is thinking of having a go next year then why not pop into the club on a Friday evening to get the feel of things; you will be made most welcome.

All that remains is to wish everyone a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Rex Turner, Chairman

## ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Over the past few months reports have been written to give readers information on a variety of subjects: Council Tax, Airport Development, Social Service Provision, Bus Transport to name only a few.

In most cases these issues have been those which are most likely to affect the lives of many residents. Hence they are important and have been the cause of much discussion and debate at County Hall, in an attempt to produce solutions which actually meet the need. Unfortunately too, the results of these deliberations very often do not appear until long after any decision is taken. As an example, decisions taken over Social Services matters in 1998/99 are only now coming into effect.

In an attempt to follow up these decisions readers are invited to think of issues which have been reported as being under discussion over the past few years and inform the undersigned how the decisions have affected them.

In the case of Council Tax, for example, might it be suggested that as the decision is taken on a yearly basis the effect over say three years might be a better measure.

Comments and opinions are invited.

Richard Wallace  
County Councillor  
Stansted Division  
01279 812588

## UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Airport Matters

"Round one to the people." That's what it seemed like when Stop Stansted Expansion and others won the court case that stopped the government's consultation on extra airport runways. I was in the House of Commons at the end of November to hear the Secretary of State for Transport, Alistair Darling, announce that the public consultation would carry on until well into 2003.

This gives opponents of extra runways more time to develop their case against unsustainable growth in polluting air travel. Many will argue that if the government is going to permit a massive airport twice the size of Heathrow today, the planes have to take off and land over the sea.

Mr Darling's statement came only an hour after some of us had delivered the Uttlesford "89% Say No" referendum result to 10 Downing Street. It would be exaggeration to claim a direct cause and effect between the two events. There can, however, be no doubt that the local campaign has played a major part in opening up a major national debate. The contradictions between people's rights to fly when and where they want at ever reducing prices and the impact that has on people living near airports and on the global environment will keep many of us busy throughout the coming year.

More immediately, it looks as though Uttlesford has failed to get a reduction in night flights from BAA in the agreement that goes with the permission to expand to 25 million passengers.

A happy and not so noisy 2003.

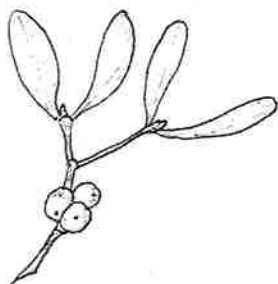
Councillor Alan Dean  
Uttlesford District Council  
Tel: 01279 813 579



## Nature Notes

The season for mistletoe has almost passed, but at one time this plant was held in such high regard that branches were brought into farmhouses on New Year's Eve and kept there to bring good fortune and a heavy crop during the year. Mistletoe has long been thought of as a magical plant and was sacred to the ancient Gauls and Romans. It has also been associated with the Druids: mistletoe which grew on their sacred oaks was considered to have special potency.

The mystique surrounding mistletoe is connected with its appearance and habits. It is an evergreen plant that grows on deciduous trees such as apple, poplar, lime and hawthorn and less often on oak. It has inconspicuous flowers in early Spring on separate male and female plants. In winter the female produces sticky, whiteish translucent berries which contrast with the pair of soft green leathery leaves. A large growth of mistletoe high up in a bare tree in mid-winter, with its berries



catching the light, a plant apparently without roots, was considered to be something quite mysterious. Moreover, it is semi-parasitic: the green leaves photosynthesize in the normal way, providing the plant with food, but the roots penetrate the bark of the host tree and take in water and mineral salts. It does not appear to damage the host tree particularly. It is propagated by birds such as the mistle thrush which inadvertently wipe the seeds into the bark of the tree while trying to remove the glutinous flesh of the berries sticking to their beaks.

Our familiar mistletoe (*Viscum alba*) is the only British representative of its family. It is related to the parasitic Christmas Tree of western Australia; in fact, in Australia generally there are many species of mistletoe. It prefers a mild, humid climate and in this country is most abundant in the south and west of England with special concentrations in the English/Welsh border areas where orchards are widespread. During December mistletoe is sold in large quantities in the market town of Tenbury Wells in Worcestershire. In our locality it is less commonplace, but it can be seen on a poplar growing near Alsa Street, just below Norman House.

Rosina Kirkwood



The National Childbirth Trust

Education for Parenthood

Now that all the excitement and activity of Christmas has died down and exhausted parents are wondering what to do with their over-excited offspring, we can all take comfort in the fact that the NCT has a host of events to help us, and our children, beat those post-Christmas blues!

We have messy play and music sessions at the beginning of January along with a lake walk and plenty of playground visits to blow away the cobwebs. Just in case the weather isn't up to outdoor play, we also have a lunchtime visit to the Playbarn in Sawbridgeworth and a pub lunch at the Moorhen at Harlow. Our regular Open House get-together is held on the 14th January and takes place in Elsenham this month. The 16th January sees us host our AGM where we keep the official business down to about 20 minutes leaving the rest of the evening free for drinks and nibbles! If you're interested in how we run the branch, then do come along.

Our regular weekly coffee events resume again on the 6th January 2003.

The times are as follows:

Monday	10.00 – 11.30am	Toddlers
Wednesday	10.00 – 11.30am	Tiddlers and Tums (expectant mothers and under ones)
Friday	1.30 – 3.00pm	Pre-School

I'm sure these regular get-togethers will prove invaluable in beating those New Year blues! Please come along and meet new people, or catch up with those you already know. For full details of venues, and other events organized by the NCT, please see the village noticeboards.

If you think you'd like to join in with what we're up to, please don't be shy. You don't have to be a member to come along and you can be sure of a warm welcome. Call Sarah on 01279 647022 to get your free information pack which includes a free diary sheet of events.

We also offer antenatal classes to all local parents whether this is your first or subsequent baby – book early for classes by calling Rachel on 01279 718632. Breastfeeding support from a qualified counsellor, is available by telephone from 8am to 10pm, 365 days per year, by calling 0870 444 8708.







## Stansted Evening Women's Institute

There wasn't time to get a report of our AGM which took place in November into last month's Link, but you may like to know that our Present, Mrs Marion Pretty was returned for a further year and that the Secretary, myself and the Treasurer, Sue Holland retain these positions. We're none of us sure if it's that we do such a good job or that nobody else wants to have a go! Although a speaker had been booked before the AGM proceedings began, she had to cancel due to ill health and so we decided to do without and give all the time to reviewing the past year and looking forward to the next. We have a loyal 51 members at present and attendances at our meetings are very good. We also have welcomed over 20 visitors during the past year including men, which always makes the speaker feel better if it is a male! A room full of females can be a daunting prospect as many a male has found out; but I hasten to add that we are very kind to ours and they always enjoy the homemade cakes we have for refreshments.

Last year we supported three special causes by donating our raffle proceeds to the Winged-Fellowship Trust, Youth Group 2000 in Stansted and Breast Cancer Research. We are particularly pleased to see the Knight Sign reinstated at the corner of Blythwood Gardens, which has been re-carved by Alpha Signs of Debden Green and will now be regularly cleaned and maintained by the Parish Council in their schedule of work. We had written to them way back in 2000 to ask that the old sign be refurbished for the Jubilee Year so it is good to see that it has happened. We were supported by the village at our coffee morning in April in aid of this project.

At the end of October, 32 of us, including some husbands, went to the Palace of Westminster for a guided tour with our MP, Sir Alan Haselhurst, which was a really interesting day. He met us on the steps with a young colleague and we were taken around in two groups. I think we were all surprised at how many other groups there were, though not many of them had an MP, and in our case the Deputy Speaker, to lead them. There were a lot of people milling about in the lobbies and amongst them we noticed Tam Dalyell and Glenda Jackson, who was speaking later that day in the House. To left of the entrance to the House of Commons is a bronze statue of Winston Churchill, whose left foot is bright and shiny where people touch it for luck before they enter in! There is a splendid tea room where we ended the tour for a reviving cup of tea or coffee and were able to purchase some House of Commons Chocolates or other small souvenir. Although we were all counted in carefully it has just occurred to me that no-one counted us out again - perhaps there is a loop-hole there, particularly as it was near November 5th!!

Other trips this year have included Kew Gardens at the end of September and a trip to Kensington Palace to see the exhibition of Royal Wedding Dresses and other items. A day

out to Dunmow for Chocolate Cookery, Flower Demonstrations and a Fashion Show by Suzana of Great Dunmow was also enjoyed by several members at the end of November. This was so oversubscribed that some people couldn't get tickets, but they are hoping to organise a similar event in the Spring. This year our County Annual Christmas Concert will be held at the Brentwood Centre and is featuring The London Community Gospel Choir as well as the Brentwood School Band, who have played for us for the last few years. They are a really enthusiastic group and play a variety of music from jazz to Christmas carols. Several of us attend this each year, which seems to set the scene for seasonal celebrations.

I do hope that some of the activities and interests that we have in the WI will interest some of you who have never joined us before to come along. One new member this year, who has lived in Stansted for over 30 years, remarked that she wished she had joined years ago!

Judy Colliver

## Stansted Tennis Club



### John Eyre

John Eyre, our Treasurer, celebrated his 80th birthday on 22nd November. He has been a member of Stansted Tennis Club since 1975. He has recently moved from Bishop's Stortford to Dunmow but still drives over each week to play at every club session and also in matches and the Club Tournament. He is an example and inspiration to us all.

We celebrated his birthday at the club on December 1st. John attended with his wife, Connie, who was also a member of the club and John was presented with a framed Certificate of Honorary Life Membership and a bottle of champagne and members enjoyed wine and a beautiful birthday cake.

### Coaching

Chris Hollis is continuing with junior lessons over the winter months on Saturday mornings. If you would like to find out more please call Chris on 01279 319155.

### Used Tennis Balls

Tubes of 4 balls - still available at £1 a tube. Please contact Janet Hollis on 01279 812073.

If you would like to join the tennis club please contact Kate Rutter (Membership Secretary) on 01279 813053. For other enquiries please contact Richard Mott (Secretary) on 01279 466348 or Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 01279 812073.

Winter membership - October to March - is half price.



December was a very busy month for us, like everyone else at this time of year. We have had a special Christingle Assembly when all of the children were given a Christingle Candle to take home and fill with loose change. The money collected from the candles is to be given to The Children's Society.

The PTFA held a very successful Cake and Secondhand Uniform sale raising more than £50. The cakes were sold out within minutes. On the 4th December some of the children went to entertain the pensioners at the Day Centre with their Carol Singing. There has been a Musical Assembly, which gave the children who have music lessons at the school a chance to perform for the rest of the school.

The Christmas Fayre, held on the 7th December proved to be very successful. Good fun was had by all as the children visited Father Christmas in his Grotto and showed great creative flair in Santa's Workshop. Everyone enjoyed the various games and stalls on offer as well as the refreshments in the Alpine Café. About £2000 was raised - more information to follow next month.

Years 3 and 4 have performed a production entitled 'Christmas Presence' to parents on the evenings of the 11th and 12th December. A very enjoyable evening was had by all. Well done to those involved.

The children were all invited to share in a traditional Christmas Dinner on the 16th December - a chance for all the children to sit down and eat together. An entertainer followed this on the 17th with a Puppet Show held in the School Hall for everyone's amusement.

On the 18th December, the last day of term, a special Christmas Service was held in the church. The reception class performed the nativity for the rest of the school and any parents that wanted to come along and join in with the service. School finished early, at 2pm for all excited children to go home and drive their parents mad while they waited (impatiently) for Father Christmas to make his visit on Christmas Eve!

Back to school on the 7th January 2003.

Finally we would like to take this opportunity to wish everybody a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Sam Fairweather  
PTFA Committee Member



November and December have been busy and successful months for Rainbow pre-school. The older group visited Stansted Airport at the end of November and very much enjoyed looking at the different aspects of air travel.

We certainly feel at home in our new premises and have enjoyed being able to use St Mary's kitchen for baking and their hall for our music and movement sessions. It was lovely to have plenty of space for our annual nativity play on the 13th of December. The children's performance was much enjoyed by all who attended. Thanks must go to the group of Mums who worked hard to produce the stunning new costumes for the children.

All the groups enjoyed a Christmas party during their last sessions of the year and the busy Father Christmas was kind enough to put in an appearance much to the delight of all the children.

We will be fund-raising in the New Year to buy a much needed outdoor shelter. Any donations or sponsorship will be gratefully received.

We are currently full in all our sessions and operating a waiting list. If you are interested in a place at the pre-school from September please contact Gill Pursglove on 814701 for further information.

The Rainbow Committee



## Royal British Legion Women's Section

Our Social Evening on 21st November was, as usual, a great success and our members, together with members of the Royal British Legion and their wives, tucked into fish and chips or ploughman's and washed it down with our favourite white wine. It was an opportunity to thank Vera for 54 years of devoted service as our Treasurer and Janet presented her with a basket of plants from us all. After a stupendous raffle had been drawn a very happy evening drew to its close.

We have no meeting in January and our next meeting will be on February 20th 2003 in the Day Centre at 7.30pm when we shall be entertained by Edna and Alan Wright with their usual interesting slides.

Pat Clower



Hello again.

The last term really flew by! The children were busy making cards, calendars, crackers and decorations for the tree, rehearsing their Nativity Play and looking forward to a trip to Audley End to visit Santa's Grotto by the little train, followed, of course by the Christmas Party.

We learnt about Christmas in other countries as we have French, Spanish, Greek and Russian children at Sideways. The topic for this term, beginning on 7th January, is Winter. We will be learning about winter animals, birds, sports, food for cold weather and things growing in the garden in wintertime. All of these topics are centred around the six Early Learning Goals.

In 2003 Sideways will be celebrating its 30th Anniversary. We will have a Family Disco in February (date to be advised) and lots more celebrations to look forward to.

If you need any more information concerning Sideways please call in any morning to stay and play. You can also phone 816600 during nursery hours Monday to Friday, 9.00 - 12.15 or 813828 any other time.

A happy and healthy New Year to everyone.

Auntie Helen



**WORKERS'  
EDUCATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION**

The spring course starts on Monday 13th January and will finish on 24th March with the half term and AGM on the 17th February. As usual, the meetings will be held in the Day Centre and will start at 8 pm. However, on the first evening enrolment will take place between 7.30 and 8pm. Fees for the course are £26 but the concessions charge will again be £16.

The course is entitled "Rural Life in East Hertfordshire and West Essex" and our tutor, Tom Doig, writes as follows: "The changes that took place during the 1800s, under Industrial and Agricultural Revolutions, had a huge impact on the way of life in our villages and towns. Many of the old traditions were swept away by a tide of "modernisation and mechanisation" and have been lost forever. Nonetheless, considerable folklore and country culture has survived and can still be traced today. We will look at village people in East Hertfordshire and West Essex in the times leading up to and during the Victorian Era and consider the parallels and differences between our way of life today and the trials of existence 150 years ago.

H. Thistle



A very happy New Year to all our members, supporters and sponsors. It seems almost impossible that we are already half way through our 7th season as we prepare to welcome Gary Ryan, one of today's very best solo guitar players. He will be performing an informal concert of popular music for the classical guitar in St John's Church, Stansted on Sunday 19th January.

Gary studied at the Guildhall School of Music and at the Royal Academy of Music from which he graduated with first class honours in 1991. He was appointed Professor of Guitar at the Royal College of Music in 1996 at the age of 27 and has gained a strong reputation across the UK and Europe as one of the finest and most innovative teachers of his generation.

He has been acclaimed in the press, with The Independent saying, ".....a guitarist of outstanding musicality..." and The Telegraph, "...jewel-like precision... technical prowess and insight... such fluency and musicality."

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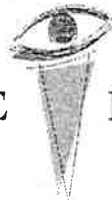
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