

Feb 2004

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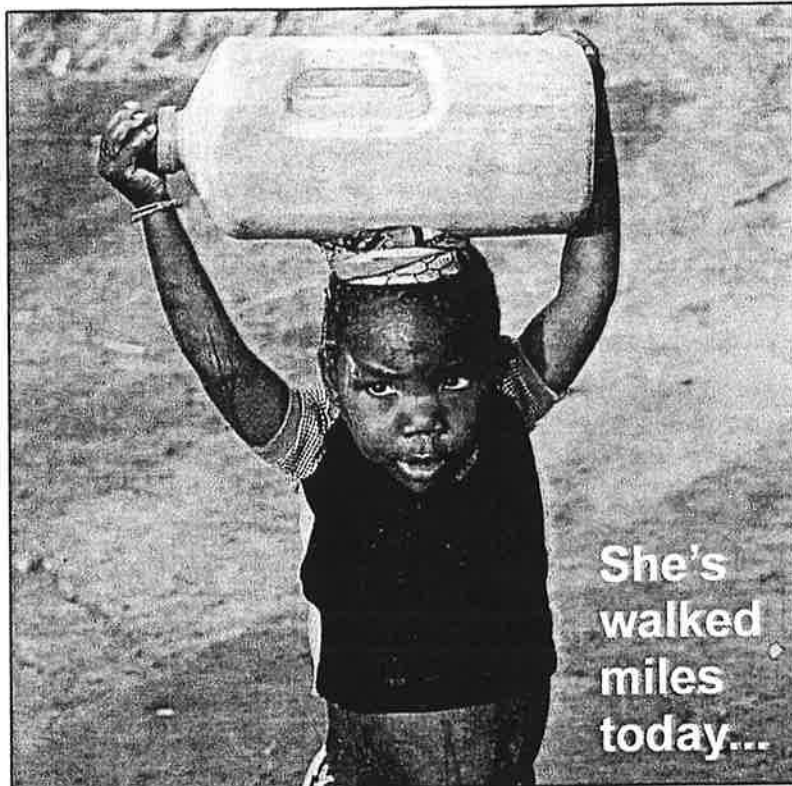
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walked
miles
today...



Water for life

There are better
ways to get it
where it's
wanted

She needs

££££ for pumps & pipes

STANSTED'S OPPORTUNITY TO HELP
come and hear

**PETE BAKER'S
CRUSTY JAZZERS**

with interval contribution by *CHARITY*

Friday 20th February • St John's Church • 8 pm

Bar • Refreshments • Raffle

Tickets £5 • ☎01279 814865 • Proceeds to WaterAid (of course!)

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

Editor: Derek Honour

Advertising enquiries to Wendy Moss Tel 01279 812797

All other enquiries to Janet Townsend Tel 01279 812593

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All enquiries are welcome at **The Church Office** located upstairs in 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

February 25th 2004

Ash Wednesday

The beginning of Lent

Services at St John's

10:00am Holy Communion
8:00pm Holy Communion

Open Door Service

All-age Ecumenical Worship meets in February at St John's at 11:00am.

1st Feb: All-age communion,
15th Feb Baptism

Independence Day cleric

Stansted is to have a new curate in 2004. I am delighted to announce that Dr Caroline Currer has accepted my invitation to serve her title in these parishes. She will be ordained deacon by the Bishop of Chelmsford in his cathedral on 4th July.

Caroline has lived in Saffron Walden since 1988 with her husband Alan (who is a Lay Reader) and three daughters, worshipping at St Mary's. The girls are now in their twenties and more or less independent. She is a university lecturer at Anglia Polytechnic University, (APU) based in Cambridge, and will be working in the benefice on Sundays and usually one evening per week.

Both Caroline and Alan are social workers and started their careers with the Church Mission Society in North West Pakistan, where they helped to establish a mental health service and school for children with learning disabilities. Returning to the UK, Caroline worked at the University of Warwick for ten years, gaining her PhD in 1986. The family moved to Saffron Walden when Alan joined Barnardo's in Barkingside - at the other end of the M11. Shortly afterwards, Caroline started work at APU, where she is now Field Leader for Social Work.

Caroline describes herself as 'the daughter and daughter-in-law of church wardens'. 'I was brought up in the Anglican church, went to a Church school and have served on coffee rotas, as a Sunday School Teacher, Church mission sec-

retary, member and leader of house groups and many other things . . . but ordained ministry will be new - very exciting but quite scary at 50+! I am really looking

forward to joining you at Stansted, Birchanger and Farnham and to getting to know you and journeying in faith together'.

Caroline brings a whole raft of gifts and experience to her ministry, and I shall be looking forward to looking at familiar things through her eyes. It will also be good to have a woman on the team. Stansted is a long time beneficiary of women's ordained ministry including the legendary Margaret Booker, Brenda Wallace, Margaret McKay and Lydia Rapkin.

Details of Caroline's licensing to the benefice will follow, though I expect a 4th July barbecue may well form part of the plans. Expect to see her from time to time at St John's as she begins to acclimatise over the next few months.

AS



Diary

Sundays

8:00am Holy Communion
9:30am Parish Communion
with Sunday School
11:00am Open Door Service
(1st & 3rd Sunday of the month)

Wednesdays

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

Groups

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

Prayer Group for Healing meets monthly in the parish. Contact the office for details of meetings.

Housegroups

Meet fortnightly on Tuesday evening at the Rectory. In February and March the course is entitled: *The story of Ruth: twelve moments in every woman's life*. Leaders: Lyn Hillier & Sandra Wood.

Friday February 20th 2004
live concert featuring:

Pete Baker's Crusty Jazzers

With special guests

Charity

St John's Church, Stansted
8-11pm

Admission £5

Light refreshments bar raffle
Tickets and information
01279 814865

Rector
Revd Andrew Spurr
The Rectory
St. John's Road
Stansted Mountfitchet
Essex, CM24 8JP
phone/fax
(01279) 812203
rector@stansted.net
Day off: Thursday

Open Door Service
(Ecumenical All-Age
worship)
Mrs Frances Richards
phone
(01279) 812748
richkidz@waitrose.com

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

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

Honorary Assistant Priest
Canon Derek Jackson
phone
(01279) 652664

Sunday School
Mrs Sandra Wood
(01279) 647054

Lazer Group
Mr Gary West
phone
(01279) 815243
gary.west@zetnet.co.uk

Housegroup
The Rector

(continued)

Registers for December 2003

Funerals

15th Stanley English age 79 years
30th Emily Irene White age 94 years

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-Saturday 9.30 am- Saturday

Confessions
Saturday 10 am - and by appointment

Baptisms By appointment

I have just come back from a four day trip to Amsterdam with my daughter, Rachel. We had planned the trip in great detail reading all the guide books, as we wanted to see so much. We decided of course to visit the house of Van Gogh, the Van Gogh Museum of Art, and the Rijks Museum with all the Dutch Old Masters and artefacts. We felt we could manage without a visit to the infamous 'red light district' - nothing there for us. However, the guide book did not advocate a visit to the house of Anne Frank and felt that if visited, it should be fleeting.

Nonetheless, we queued for the best part of an hour in the freezing, snowy and bitterly cold afternoon and it was worth every second of waiting - what do these people who write guide books really know!

We were moved almost to the point of tears by the simple testimony of this 13 year old girl. Anne, a Jew, was born in Frankfurt in 1929. In 1933 Hitler came to power in Germany and Anne's father, Otto, had the foresight to move his family to Holland and, with special permission, set up a jam factory. All went well until, in 1940, Germany invaded Holland and by 1941 all Jews had to be registered which,

whether they knew it or not, spelt the end for a large part of the Jewish nation. Otto Frank made plans to hide his family in a secret attic at the top of the house above the factory. They were to be betrayed by an unknown source in 1944.



In the time they were in hiding Anne wrote her revealing and world famous personal diary. The times of hope and despair were all recorded, but above all she held on to hope. She wrote "It is a great wonder that I have not given up all my expectations, because they seem absurd and unfeasible. I still believe in the inner goodness of humanity. It is absolutely impossible for me to base everything on death, suffering and confusion." Poor little girl, so brave and loving, and who went on to lose all her family and friends in the concentration camps, except her father Otto, who survived being rescued by the Russian Army. Anne died of typhus in Bergen Belsen under Hitler's vile and unpardonable wicked regime.

As Rachel and I trod the boards in that pokey little attic behind the swinging bookcase, we felt overcome for the plight of those millions of Jews, who suffered fear and degradation at the hands of power crazed madmen.

The work for human rights goes on under the Anne Frank Foundation today for, as we know, large groups of people are still regarded as inferior on the basis of their 'race'. The Foundation sadly does not see its field of action getting any smaller. Will it never end?

Mary Warnett

ST THERESE'S CHURCH PARISH CENTRE

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UNITED REFORMED

Chapel Hill

Minister

Rev'd David Simpson
11 Church Manor
Bishop's Stortford
Herts CM23 5AF
Tel 01279 504900

Contact

Mrs Janet Townsend
58 Chapel Hill
Tel 01279 812593

Preachers for February

1st	2.30 pm	Rev'd D Simpson
8th	10.30 am	To be announced
15th	10.30 am	Rev'd D Simpson Communion
22nd	10.30 am	Rev'd M Cressey Joint with Methodist
29th	10.30 am	Mrs M Kendall

Dates for your diary

February 1st	Afternoon Tea	3.30 pm to 5 pm
February 9th	Pilots	6 pm to 7.45 pm
February 16th	Monday Club	2.30 pm
February 17th	Coffee Morning	10.30 am
February 23rd	Pilots	6 pm to 7.45 pm

The Induction Service for Rev'd David Simpson to the Linked Pastorate of Stansted and Bishop's Stortford took place on 3rd January at Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford. Friends from all the churches in Stansted joined us for this special service led by Rev'd Elizabeth Caswell, Moderator of the Eastern Synod. We look forward to getting to know and working with the Bishop's Stortford congregation.

David and Sylvia's new address is:
11 Church Manor
Bishop's Stortford
Herts CM23 5AF
Tel 01279 504900

Afternoon Teas begin again 1st February from 3.30 pm. If you would like to come for tea and chat and need transport please ring 814850 before 1.30 pm. We will arrange to pick you up.

Pilots

As from February 2004, Pilots will be meeting alternate weeks on Monday evenings in the Lecture Hall, Chapel Hill, beginning on 9th February from 6 pm to 7.45 pm. All children welcome from age 5 to 14 years. Read the 'Link' for future dates.

Fund Raising

Come and see our refurbished Lecture Hall and have a cup of coffee on February 17th from 10.30 am. There will be a bric-à-brac and book stall as well as a cake stall and raffle.

Over the Easter weekend, 10th-12th April, we will have a Bygones Exhibition in the Lecture Hall, and the Church will be decorated for a Wedding with flowers and wedding dresses and photos of couples who were married in the Church over the years. There will also be a Service of Praise on Easter Sunday evening. More details next month. All proceeds from both events to our Lecture Hall Fund.

ACTIVITY FUN DAY Art & Craft • Music • Drama Games & Cooking *Saturday 20th March*

Stansted URC Premises ~ 10 am to 3 pm

INFORMATION & REGISTRATION FROM:
Valerie Trundle (01279) 813433 or
Michelle King (01279) 758611

by March 1st

Book early - Places limited to 40 children

Children 5 to 14 years Bring a packed lunch plus £2



Also come and join us at our

Mothering Day Service *Stansted United Reformed Church* *Sunday 21st March at 10.30 am*

*The service will incorporate some of the
activities from Saturday's FUN DAY*

JOIN US FOR COFFEE after the service

SNIPPETS 1

The result of January's open meeting gave Stansted's Art & Craft committee encouragement for the future - more members and offers of help. Well done, helpers past; good luck to helpers future.

The Celebration of Christmas held at St. Mary's Church was again beautifully sung and well attended. It raised £291.13 which was shared between Uttlesford Crossroads and the Church's Conservation Trust. This event although much younger than the Art & Craft Market, has also earned its place in the Stansted calendar. Can we appeal for participation this year from the schools and perhaps St Therese's choir; they would round-off a truly village event.

Editor

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 Reception Ground
Stansted
Tel 01279 813579

Email methodists@stansted.net

All services start at 9.30 am unless otherwise stated

Services and preachers for February

1st Rev'd Harry Wood – Holy Communion
8th Rev'd Ronald Rawlings
15th Rev'd Keith Page
22nd Joint service at URC at 10.30 am
29th Michael Dyer

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

People traditionally think of Quakers as Puritans, for whom self-denial is an essential part of life. Not so - at least in the case of chocolate! There are several famous Quaker families associated with chocolate, but one of the leading figures in Quaker history is Joseph Rowntree. A successful businessman himself, he thought he had a duty to improve the welfare of his employees, and mankind in general. This year marks the centenary of his Foundation, by which he transferred a substantial part of his wealth to charitable purposes. It supports a programme of research and development in the fields of housing, social care and social policy. It was set up a hundred years ago to administer his model village in New Earswick, the culmination of his enlightened employment policies. His survey on poverty in York did much to inform thinking and action on the topic in the first part of the twentieth century.

He always tried to deal with the root of problems, rather than just patching them, as he expressed a hundred years ago in the following extract:

"Much of current philanthropical effort is directed to remedying the more superficial manifestations of weakness and evil, while little thought or effort is directed to search

out their underlying causes. The soup kitchen in York never has difficulty in obtaining financial aid, but an enquiry into the extent and causes of poverty would enlist little support."

Perhaps next time you see or eat a Rowntree sweet, you might give a thought to this man who truly lived his Quakerism.

Jane Mitchell



Carol Singing

Hearing Help, Uttlesford, have expressed their gratitude for the impressive sum of £227.99 (every penny counts!), which was raised from carol singing around the village on a couple of evenings before Christmas. We thank all those who brought their voices and instruments to serenade the Hargrave estate and Woodfields areas. Special thanks are due to the residents for being so generous, and to our après-singing hostesses, Mary and Francine, for body-warming punch, mince pies and other goodies!

Helen Baker
Michael Dyer

Christian Aid

We believe in life before death

A brief news round-up

- We complain about the taste of our tap water sometimes, but at least we can be fairly confident that it is not poisoning us. Not so in Bangladesh where people have been drinking arsenic-laced water for years. The effects are only felt after several years when changes in the pigmentation and thickness of the skin are visible and skin cancers occur. Now, thanks to Christian Aid, new shallower wells are being dug and the water is uncontaminated. The work has been done by local people helped by the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh, a partner organisation of Christian Aid.

- You can now have a Christian Aid Visa credit card in association with The Co-operative Bank. Christian Aid receives £15 per account opened, a further £2.50 if the card is used within six months and 25p for every £100 spent. For more information call 020 7523 2225.

Catherine Dean

STANSTED RAP (Regular Aid to the Poor)

The concert on 28th December, to help victims of AIDS in Malawi, raised just under £730, from ticket sales, donations, the bar and the raffle. This is an excellent amount that will be used to fund various projects being run by Moira Chimombo in Malawi – I hope to be able to describe some of these in future editions.

I should like to thank all those who made this possible; the group 'Charity' and Pete and Clare Baker, who gave their performances free, St John's for allowing us the use of the Church, and everyone who helped with all the other jobs that were needed to make the concert a success.

Margaret Whitelaw



SHALOM

Reflections on 2003

At our opening session of 2004 I shared some reflections on the past year, and it was suggested that they may be of interest to a wider audience. Perhaps some readers will even decide that they would like to come along and join us!

Just a quick flick through my diary reminds me of the many happy, special, and some sad moments we have shared at Shalom.

2003 started, as has been the custom for many years, with Prayer and Praise led by Marion and Michael Dyer. In February Margaret Silvester shared some fascinating slides of her journey to Petra - a memorable evening. In February also, we were stunned and saddened to lose Fraser Simpson. It was as though a bright light had been extinguished in our lives, and we still feel his loss dreadfully. Shortly after his death we held a special evening to share our memories of him, including happy examples of his exuberant personality. We offered our prayers for Pat and the family.

At the end of February we made our annual retreat to Hengrave Hall (near Bury), which was much needed by many of us. This year it was led by Rev'd Martin Cressey of the URC. The theme was 'In the Wilderness'; from which we all greatly benefited - a time to have fun, eat, rest and pray together.

We held our usual fund raising event for Corrymeela in the shape of a St. Valentine's Dance led by Pete Baker and his Crusty Jazzers - not so crusty actually as we had a very lively evening! As well as holding our own Lenten

Meditation, we were treated to a one-man show by the ever popular, ever lovely Andrew Harrison, called 'The Road to Emmaus' - not to be missed.

We also had a visit from the 'Christadelphians', who left us wondering what God must think about all the interpretations given to his Word, the Bible, by different Christian sects. Is He angry or just amused?

Later on, we had a presentation by four of our members on 'The Greatest Christians' - similar to the programme on television at the time, entitled 'The Greatest Briton'. However, unlike the programme, we didn't vote on it - how could we?

We held our annual cream tea and auction during the August lull, to raise money for the group. It was good fun, especially when watching the bidding techniques of some adventurous punters! A couple of days later, a group of us visited the British Library and were led through the Lindisfarne Gospel Exhibition by the Curator, Michelle Brown.

Throughout the year we had a great selection of outside speakers, who all left us with much food for thought. They included Andrew Thelwell, RK teacher at the Boys High School; Dr. Elizabeth Harris on her belief in Buddhism alongside Christianity; Rev'd John Graham; Rev'd David Simpson. A do-it-yourself poetry evening with Joanna Heath was great fun, and most memorable was the clown doctor, Patrick Jacobs, who told us of his work in hospitals with sick and dying children.

At the beginning of December we held our own Advent Meditation centred on the Advent Ring, and we ended the year with a Christmas Party including seasonal playlets and carols. To my mind it was another wonderful, varied and fulfilling year.

Lastly, we do not forget the faithful few who go to Whitechapel Mission regularly on Sunday mornings to supervise showers and hand out clothing to the street people.

Mary Warnett

Forthcoming Shalom meetings

Monday 9th February

"What a pity!" – a talk by Rev'd Michael Hayman at the Quaker Meeting House

Monday 23rd February

'What is sacred?' – a tape and discussion with Harry and Edna Goreing at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

Meetings start at 8 pm. Why not come along?

Our annual Retreat at Hengrave Hall, Bury St. Edmunds is the weekend of 5th to 7th March. For details, and to book a place please contact Harry Goreing on 503764.



QUIZ NIGHT

CHURCHES
TOGETHER
in STANSTED

in aid of
Chevetogne
Exchange Visit

Ps'n Qs

Sat 7th Feb

7 for 7.30 pm

St John's Church Hall

Pizza / Quiche n' Salad Supper
Bring your own drink and glass

Tickets £6 Concessions £5
Tel. Eileen Quinn 812109



CHURCHES
TOGETHER
in STANSTED

LENT GROUPS

'Hard Sayings
of Jesus'

Quaker Meeting House 8 pm

Mon 1st, Tue 9th, Fri 19th,
Thu 25th, and Mon 29th March

All are most welcome
Sessions are 'free standing'

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



2 pm Friday 5th March

St John's Church

'In Faith,
Women Shape the Future'

Prepared by the Christian women of Panama

Do come and
join in this World-wide event

VILLAGE EVENTS

February

1	Sun	Afternoon Tea (after service)	UR Church 3.30 - 5 pm
4	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Bookstart	Library 2.15 - 2.45 pm
		Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
5	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
7	Sat	Quiz for Chevetogne visit	St John's Hall 7 for 7.30 pm
9	Mon	Shalom Group	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
12	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
14	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's Lunch	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
14	Sat - 15 Sun	Amenity Skip	Lower St Car Pk 7.30 am - 3 pm
17	Tue	URC Coffee Morning	URC Lecture Hall 10.30 am
18	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
20	Fri	Jazz Concert for Water Aid	St John's Church 8 - 11 pm
21	Sat	Conservatives 'Pie and Pud'	Day Centre 8 pm
23	Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm

March

1	Mon	Lent Group	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
3	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Bookstart	Library 2.15 - 2.45 pm
		Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
4	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
5	Fri	Women's World Day of Prayer	St John's Church 2 pm
8	Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
9	Tue	Lent Group	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
11	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
12	Fri	Lib Dem Supper Club	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
13	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's Lunch	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
		Irish Nite for Corrymeela	St John's Hall 8 pm
16	Tue	Stansted Millers AGM	Day Centre 8 pm
19	Fri	Lent Group	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
20	Sat	Green Waste Skip	Lower St Car Park 1 - 4 pm
		Activity Fun Day	UR Church 10 am - 3 pm
		Village Music Club Concert	St John's Church 8 pm

Irish Nite

in aid of Corrymeela

Music • Singing • Dancing

8 - 11 pm Sat 13th March

St John's Church Hall

Tickets £6 Family £15 incl. refresh.
Bar ~ Raffle

Please tel. Mary on 814190

Everyone Welcome

UR Activity Fun Day

Saturday 20th March

Art & Craft • Music • Drama
Games and Cooking

Stansted URC Premises
10 am to 3 pm

For children 5 to 14 years

Book by 1st March - limited places.

☎ 813433 (Valerie) or 758611 (Michelle)

Please bring a packed lunch plus £2



THE VILLAGE MUSIC CLUB

DAMIAN GIRVIN Piano

8 pm Sat 20th March
St John's Church

Programme includes:

Beethoven's Pathetique Sonata Opus 13

Brahms' Original Variations Op 21 No 1

Chopin's Prelude in D flat,

Nocturne in F sharp, and

Waltz in D flat

Schumann's Kinderzenen Op 15

Poulenc Three Novelettes

Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodie No 2

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Why not take advantage of some *free* publicity and
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Please note, all items are subject to the editor's approval

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IN MEMORIAM

JOAN TURNER

'The Link' has been sad to learn of the death of Joan Turner, a former Chairman of Stansted Parish Council, after a battle against cancer. She died peacefully at her home in Warboys, Cambs.

Joan attended the village school and went on to the Herts and Essex High School. From an early age, she immersed herself in village life and activities and became Captain of Stansted Girl Guides, and a member of the Stansted Church Choir.

She was elected to Stansted Parish Council in 1973, where her main interest and love was working on Open Spaces matters. One of her passions was to ensure that the local footpaths were kept open and passable. As Chairman of a working party formed by the Council, many of her fellow councillors, family and friends remember well her leading from the front to ensure some of the less used paths around the village were cleared regularly! In 1981, Joan compiled a booklet, 'Saunters round Stansted', containing nine village walks, of between two and four miles long. In the foreword Joan, makes a comment so typical of her outlook on life. "Your village and the surrounding countryside is well worth enjoying."

Joan chaired the Council's Open Spaces Committee for many years and was Chairman of the Council from 1984 to 1986 when, for business reasons; she and her husband Keith, left Stansted to live in Cambridgeshire.

Joan met her future husband at school in the village and they grew up as members of the same large group of schoolfriends. After their marriage they lived for some years in the Old Laundry behind Blythwood, moving later to the Recreation Ground. Later, when new houses were built in the seventies adjacent to Bentfield Lower Green, they moved to Longcroft.

Keith has said of her. "She always saw the best in people. She got on and did things. She was a doer." The many who remember Joan know that this encapsulates her so perfectly.

We are all poorer for Joan's death. We give thanks for her life and send to Keith, Kelvin, Karen, Sandra and all their family our very deepest sympathy.

Bessie Blyth Memorial Service

As we all know, Bessie sadly died on 20th October 2003. She will be remembered and loved by many for her immeasurable contribution to village life in Stansted.

A Memorial Service will be held on Wednesday, 11th February at 12 noon, in St John's Church, Stansted, and it is hoped that all her many friends will be there to celebrate her life and give thanks for all she did for so many.

Pat Clower

BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA

As the Spring term gets underway the PTA are busy, once again, planning lots of fundraising activities to keep both the children and their parents happy.

On Saturday 6th March we'll be transforming the hall into a Las Vegas Casino for the evening! Come along for a night of gambling (just for fun!) and glamour. Whether you pit your wits against the Roulette Wheel, or try your luck against the cards in Blackjack, a fun night is guaranteed. The 'punter' with the most chips left at the end of the evening will win a prize, so there's no chance of losing your life savings. If you fancy trying out your skill and luck in the Casino do come along. Tickets are available from the school or by ringing 647650.

On Wednesday 10th March we are holding a second-hand uniform sale and cake bake. This event is always popular, as the parents get to pick up uniform at a bargain, while the children are happily amused at the cake stall. If only shopping were always this stress free! The sale will take place from 3pm allowing time for the adults to get a head start on the cake eating while the children are still at school!

I'm sure the children will be full of the joys of Spring on Friday 26th March at the Spring Disco. Starting at 6pm with the infants and nursery children and continuing at 7.15pm for the juniors, I'm sure everyone will have a great time as always.

And finally, a date for your diaries - Our Big Top May Fair will be held on 8th May 2004, and this year, as the title suggests, we are planning a Circus theme. We are already having lots of fun planning the activities and attractions, so make a note of the date now!

Marnie Tait
Chair, Bentfield PTA



Royal British Legion Stansted & District Branch

As 6th June 2004 is the 60th Anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy, our Rector has agreed that the event should be commemorated during the Church Service to be held on that day, a Sunday, at 9.30 am. We should like to hear whether there are any D-Day veterans living in the village, and if so will they contact our Chairman, Mr David Challis, 01279 815183, or one of the Committee.



Stansted Tennis Club



Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Monday 15th March 2004 at 8 pm at 105 Cambridge Road, Stansted. If there are any current issues to do with the Tennis Club, which members would like to raise, then this is the forum for you. All members are welcome to attend. If you would like to put your name forward to become a committee member, then please contact one of the officers listed at the bottom of this report.

Sunday morning open adult club morning

All current adult members are welcome to come along and join in this session, which starts at 9.30 am.

Coaching

Martyn Taplin is currently holding adult coaching sessions for club members who wish to improve their game. Two classes take place between 2-4 pm on Saturday afternoons. Please call Martyn on 816386 if you would like to find out more or would like to join in.

Chris Hollis continues to coach the juniors on Saturday mornings. If you would like to find out more and get your name on the waiting list, please call Chris on 319155.

Chris is also setting up a list of all those younger players aged between 4 and 6 who would be interested in starting mini tennis lessons. Again, please give Chris a call to find out more.

In the near future, Chris is also hoping to have more time for midweek daytime adult/individual classes, so if you would like to put your name on a waiting list, call him now!

Used Tennis Balls

A tube of four used tennis balls for £1 - who can resist this offer! Please contact Janet Hollis on 812073 if you would like to purchase a tube.

If you would like to join Stansted Tennis Club, please contact Kate Rutter (Membership Secretary) on 01279 813053.

For any other enquiries, please contact either Richard Mott (Secretary) on 01279 466348 or Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 01279 812073.

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Our final concert this season will be on Saturday, 20th March at 8pm, when one of the country's best young pianists, Damian Girvin, will be coming to Stansted to perform a programme of music which includes items that will appeal to all tastes.

Damian was born in Cheshire and was awarded a scholarship in 1991 in order to pursue studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he was taught by Bernard Roberts and Renna Kellaway and was the recipient of many awards and prizes. After graduation, he continued studying at the RNCM with support from The Countess of Munster Musical Trust and the Hattori Foundation. Further studies took him to Amsterdam - working with John Perry - and to the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin under Professor John O'Connor.

Damian has had numerous competition successes including the first prize in the European Beethoven Competition and he is now enjoying an increasingly demanding concert schedule, with recital and concerto appearances at home and abroad. Venues have included St Martin-in-the-Fields, Manchester's Bridgewater Hall, the Palau de la Musica (Valencia) and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.

His programme will include

Beethoven's Pathetique Sonata Opus 13
Brahms' Original Variations Op 21 No 1
Chopin's Prelude in D flat, Nocturne in F sharp, and Waltz in D flat
Schumann's Kinderzenen Op 15
Poulenc Three Novelettes
Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodie No 2

The concert, in St John's Church, Stansted, will start at 8pm and tickets are £9, Concessions £7, Children £3, and children of members £1.

Available from:

Stansted Carpets, Chapel Hill, Stansted
Nockolds Solicitors, Market Sq., Bishop's Stortford
Options Hairdressers, Elsenham
Sonia Levy, 31 Chapel Hill, Stansted
(01279 815282)
or at the door.

We feel sure that many will want to take the opportunity to hear this highly talented and acclaimed young man, and, with this early intimation of the date, hope that you will note the time and place and buy your ticket early. 'The Times' described Damian's playing as 'poetic', and, with this wonderful programme of music to look forward to, we should be in for quite an evening!

Alan Corbishley

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

January has been dominated by many discussions over how to react to the Government's new policy for a second airport runway at Stansted by 2012. The Council disagrees with the Government and we all know that governments don't build airports. Will BAA? I am not convinced. A second runway at Stansted is far from being a done deal. Uttlesford has started to plan its strategy for opposing Mr Darling's White Paper. We are working with neighbouring authorities and Stop Stansted Expansion. My only disappointment was at having to miss the overcrowded public meeting at Mountfitchet High School. I was away on a training course. The large turnout showed that local people are as determined to continue the fight as they were in July 2002, when this debate began.

It's council budget time. A lot of discussion is taking place in and around Westminster about modifying or scrapping the council tax system. Our council tax bills have risen by 70% since the present Government was first elected in 1997, as the Government has reduced its funding for council services. Fortunately, I expect the tax rise this year will be in single figures after last year's rise of nearly 20%. I am afraid we are not likely to see a fairer and more acceptable system introduced for at least three years.

There have been some early developments in finding a suitable location for the long-awaited new medical centre. These have focused on the Elms Farm site just past the railway up Church Road. The idea from the landowners is to tidy up and redevelop just the farm site with the centre and a small number of houses, including some 'affordable' homes. It does not include development on the adjacent open part of Stansted Park, which would spoil the splendid view from Chapel Hill. Discussions are still at an early stage.

Councillor Alan Dean
Leader of the Council

How is your Council doing?

Most of us need to know how we are doing whether as employees, patients or students. What can we do to improve? Councils are no exception. The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) was introduced in 2002 as a new way of inspecting councils. It forms part of the Government's aim of ensuring improvement in public services and is led by the Audit Commission. The assessment involves looking at a council as a whole, taking into account the results and outcomes of previous inspections. The outcome of the CPA process should be a clear and complete picture of the council and a judgement about a council's 'proven capacity to improve'. It will provide the baseline for the council to plan what needs to be done to make improvements.

Uttlesford's CPA inspection will take place in the week beginning 23rd February. Prior to this the Council submitted its self-assessment report. This is where we state where we think we are and what our strengths are. Some of

these, which are above the national average, include staff sickness levels, proportion of council tax collected, satisfaction levels of council tenants and invoices paid within 30 days. Taking into account that there has been a new administration in post only since last May, we have rated ourselves as a Good Council. Councils that are classified as such tend to have strong services overall, know when to make improvements, provide effective leadership and management, have high levels of ambition and are mainly focused on what matters to their communities.

The outcome of the inspection will be whether the Audit Commission agrees with our assessment. It will place Uttlesford in one of five categories:

Excellent / Good / Fair / Weak / Poor

Watch this space for further news of how we do.

Councillor Geoffrey Sell
Tel 01279 815925
email: cllrsell@uttlesford.gov.uk

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

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



Council Offices
Crafton Green
Tel 813214
Fax 813964

It has been a busy time at the Council with preparation of the budgets for 2004/05. We are pleased to report that the Council has set a precept of £108,000 - an increase of only 2.8% on last year. We are hoping now that Uttlesford and County will keep their increases to the bare minimum, but we wait to see.

As we go to print on 'The Link', we are also going to print with the Parish Newsletter - watch out for it coming through your door soon. It contains news of the Council's activities, dates of meetings and useful contact telephone numbers.

The main issue to highlight is the possible loss of the monthly civic amenity skip at the Lower Street Car Park. In order to achieve its Government Recycling Targets, Uttlesford District Council needs to increase the volume of material which it recycles. It is therefore possible that, from April this year, we will have fortnightly recycling containers in the car park for green waste, metal and wood. The monthly skips have proved financially very costly, and if they were to continue, the Parish Council would have to meet the landfill site disposal costs - up to £400 on each occasion.

As we have more information made available to us, we will endeavour to pass it on to you, either via the Newsletter or the notice boards and local press.

Ruth Clifford

Local Occupations

No. 2

Dentist

John Jaques

Although now retired for over three years, John is still well remembered in Bishops Stortford, Stansted and beyond, as the cheerful dentist who operated from the surgery at The Limes in Stansted Road, Bishop's Stortford. When I asked John what had first led him towards dentistry, I should not have been surprised at his reply. "The school dentist" was his immediate response, "the whole system was so grim that I was convinced that it could be done so much better and with consideration for the patients". They were the days of anaesthetics only being used when really necessary and the boys being numbers to be dealt with as quickly as possible. However John's first job on leaving school was to be a Field Trials Officer with Pan Britannica Industries at Waltham Cross where he worked under Dr. Hessayon, the well-known author of gardening books. It was interesting work but did not satisfy John's urge to improve what was manifestly wrong. He mustered sufficiently good A level grades to gain admission to the Department of Dentistry at Leeds University. There followed five hard-working but happy years. John remembers his first patient, when as a raw entrant he was sent to the Extraction Section and had to remove seven teeth. The elderly man was concerned when John stopped at the regulation seven maximum - he wanted them all out! In those days a dentistry degree meant a five and a half days working week in practical application or lectures and most evenings on bookwork. The end of week hop or a quick few pints were well earned respites. On graduating he spent some time as house surgeon at the University.



In 1963 he returned and became assistant to Mr. Inman whose surgery was at The Limes. With the house it was love at first sight. "I knew as soon as I stepped inside that it was the place for me" he said. When Mr. Inman moved to Horsham in 1965 John shared the house with two other dentists each of whom worked independently. Later he was able to buy the practice. As with medicine, the small one-person practices were slowly giving way to group practice. The other dentists in The Limes moved on over a

period of years, so leaving John as the sole practitioner. It was a very happy practice and it says much for John that he was able to retain all his staff for his last 15 years at The Limes. These trusty part-timers were able to combine the roles of nurse, receptionist, bookkeeper and general secretarial duties - a situation that just could not be perpetuated now.

To John the three principles of good dentistry are Patience, Dexterity and Relationships. In his earlier days extractions were more commonplace and the longevity of present-day teeth is seen by him as a benefit of fluoridation of toothpastes (which I have to admit demolished my long-held illusion that pastes are largely cosmetic). It is children's dentistry that has seen the greatest improvement and children were among his favourite patients. I gained the impression that John became as much a friend as a practitioner with his patients and my own recollection of The Limes is one of good cheer and, of course, the parlour-like waiting room. I cannot imagine the typical air of impending doom ever permeating that room! John's reply to the question of how he related to the NHS was predictable, "paperwork and bureaucracy". Here again John's team-building qualities stood him in good stead for he was able to hive-off most of this to his staff. John remained within the NHS to the end. He saw the demise of the old amalgam fillings (which seem to be longer-lasting than their successor materials) and the introduction of a compulsory anaesthetist when other than local anaesthetics are used. The only disaster which John could recall was when some five dentures became wrongly numbered with the inevitable mismatch, the results of which fortunately were quickly put right.

John found his profession to be satisfying but very hard work. A full day's concentration was quite draining specially in middle age, and retirement came both as a relief and an opportunity to indulge his life-long ambition to travel. (A gap year was unheard of in the sixties.) As this is being read in February John will be walking in Victoria, Australia. He is of course known for his walking almost as much as his profession, which doubtless accounts for his fitness and youthful figure. In dentistry or out of it John is superb company and I am sure he went some way in achieving his goal to "make it better".

Derek Honour

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Newsletter

St Mary's Primary School
Parents, Teachers and
Friends Association



Hello again,
Last term finished with a fantastic Nativity Play (not a dry eye in the Hall!). The children had made salt dough figures for their Christmas trees and decorated plant pots filled with bulbs for the spring. These were bought by delighted parents and friends and, together with money raised from the raffle, we raised nearly £100 for Nursery funds. Father Christmas also called in and 'John the Music Man' entertained at the children's party.

Our Ofsted Inspection over the two days went smoothly and we had an excellent report. The inspector particularly mentioned how confident and friendly the children are and how aware they are of their village and its surroundings. She also commented on the kind, caring and friendly staff and the rapport with the children.

The topic for this term is Food. We will be out and about around the village calling at the local shops – the butchers, greengrocer, baker's shop and the local supermarkets. All types of food will be tasted and talked about, drawn, coloured and painted.

We will be doing lots of fund-raising this term for new equipment for our science box. What? Is yet to be decided at our next committee meeting.

The spring term is an exciting time with new things to look forward to, outside play, exploring and looking at how the trees and shrubs get their new leaves and to watch for bulbs coming through the soil. Maybe we will have some snow!! (Children love it don't they?)

Tesco have had their Easter Eggs on the shelves since the beginning of January, it's almost half-term – but it's still only early February – 2004 is gathering pace already.

It's a quieter period in the school year as the children settle down after the hectic build up to the Christmas holidays. However, an additional class has been slotted into the already busy day as some of the children are enjoying weekly French lessons from The French Club based in Hertford. The children have received books and tapes that are used alongside oral tutorials. It has proved an extremely popular extra-curricular class and we're sure all the children will want to cross the Channel for their summer holidays this summer in order to practise their newly acquired language skills!

Another school initiative was a four week Golf Course given by a visiting PGA professional earlier this month. The places were limited but so over-subscribed that another course is being arranged for the very near future. We're not sure of the pupils' final handicap but the main thing is that everyone had a marvellous time.

The Early Birds Club continues each Thursday at 8 am (yes – 8am!) with Maths lessons for the higher achievers. I'm not sure who deserves the most admiration: Mrs. Wood for coming in so early to teach, the parents for getting the children to school on time, or the children themselves coming in for extra Maths lessons!

We're looking forward to welcoming Andy Scott of Ipswich Town Football Club who will be coming along this month to coach both boys and girls from Years 3 and 4. It's a brilliant opportunity to have professional coaching and to build up confidence in the children – no matter what their level of skill. Watch out North West Essex League ...

The School is participating in Education Sunday, a nationwide Christian school event, to be held at St John's Church on 8th February. Year 3 children will receive Bibles as well as take part in the Service. All are welcome at Church and to the Reception afterwards to be held in school.

On 12th February, the PTFA will be holding their annual Valentines Disco for the children - always a popular event. The discos, plus other PTFA functions raise vital funds to pay for the 'extras' as well as helping the school budget stretch further. In these times of ever-increasing financial constraints, it is wonderful that the school has such supportive pupils, staff and parents as well as a thriving PTFA. We are eternally grateful to the local community and businesses for their continued support and sponsorship. There will be more news next month on planned expenditure now, and for the future.

Maybe this time of year *isn't* so quiet after all!

Claire Jonas
St Mary's PTFA

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Stansted Evening Women's Institute

Our January meeting always takes the form of a party, preferring to celebrate the New Year in this way rather than at the December meeting. The evening began with a rousing rendering of 'Jerusalem' accompanied by a musical recording supplied by our speaker for the evening. Not quite the Albert Hall but very adequate for St John's Hall. Incidentally members were delighted to see that the building improvements in the hall have been finished so that all the chairs and tables can now be put tidily away into an easily accessible room and the whole of the hall is clear!

The President, Marion Pretty, was presented with a silver President's brooch which has been purchased by the Institute for her and future Presidents to wear as a symbol of their office. Members were told that almost all of those going to Denman College on the 'Awards Scheme' had booked their Courses and most of us are going on the same weekend which means that we can arrange travel between us. This June Stansted Mountfitchet will be making its impact on Oxford and especially our college!

Members were told that a letter had been written on their behalf to Alan Leighton, chairman of the Post Office, to protest at the continued closure of our Post Office in Stansted and the lack of any reliable information about its future.

Our Speaker for the evening was introduced; Ray Spiller from Ashingdon, Essex, gave an interesting and amusing talk on how he came to own every 'Number One' record that has reached the top of the charts since they began in 1952. He began his collection in 1995 and took three years to complete it, covering thousands of miles, making hundreds of phone calls and spending around £4,000 in the effort. About two years ago he turned his collection into a business and is in huge demand to play at Weddings, Anniversaries, parties, etc; at one of which he met a member of our County Executive Committee who persuaded him to audition as a W.I. speaker and is now in our Speakers Handbook. Members were able to give him dates of special meaning to them and he could play the appropriate 'No. 1' within seconds! He was thanked for giving us such a rousing start to the year by Kath Johnson. Food and wine was served throughout the evening and ended with us all singing some old favourites - they don't write them like that anymore!

Not all meetings are quite like that, but there is always a welcome, so do come along sometime if you haven't tried us before.

Judy Colliver
Hon. Secretary
Tel 812470



STANSTED FUN RUN

Yes the Stansted Fun Run is back!! This year's event will be at 11 am on Sunday 11th July. We invite all those who are keen runners or walkers to start their training soon, and maybe those who are less energetic will be willing to help us on the day? Further details about the run and what help is required will be in future editions of 'The Link'.

Although we did not have a run during 2003, we continued to collect laser toner and deskjet cartridges for recycling. We raised a total of £227 of which 20% (£45) was given to 'The Link' who help us with advertising. The remaining 80% will go towards administrative expenses for this year's run, which means we can give more of the money we raise from entry fees and the raffle to charity. A very big thank you to those of you who donated, and please keep those cartridges coming (see separate notice for details)!!

Marion Dyer
Tel 814059

STANSTED FUN RUN



PRINTER CARTRIDGE RECYCLING PROJECT



A big **THANK YOU** to all those who have donated or promised to donate toner cartridges. During 2003 we have raised the magnificent sum of £227, so please keep them coming - even the little deskjet cartridges are worth something.

Just a reminder - we are collecting empty cartridges from laser or deskjet/inkjet printers for recycling. 20% of the money raised will go to the Link, the remainder towards this year's Fun Run administrative expenses. **Unfortunately we cannot accept Epson cartridges, or own brand, such as Viking.**

Please telephone Marion Dyer on 814059 - collection can be arranged - or leave in the porch of 7 Blythwood Gardens.



Thank you for your help

STANSTED CONSERVATIVES



There are some upcoming events that readers may be interested in:

Saturday 21st February
'Pie and Pud' at Stansted Day Centre, 8 pm

Saturday 28th February
Constituency Annual Dinner at Colne Valley Golf Club,
Black Tie event.
Tickets £40. Speaker: Geoffrey Van Orden MEP.

Saturday 10th July
Summer Ball at Colne Engaine (near Halstead) with supper,
live entertainment, auction and much, much more! Further
details will be available shortly.

Sian Lloyd



Happy New Year to everybody! Last term seems a long way away but I seem to remember we all had a good time!

Our topic was 'Shopping', and in the earlier part of term we had clothes, book, shoe, and green grocer shops. By the end we were all enjoying Christmas shopping - mainly toys! The Christmas activities included making cards, calendars and decorations. We also made a Christmas pudding this year and everyone made a wish as they stirred the ingredients. I hope everybody's wish came true; mine did!

The last week of term was a very busy one. We all went to the 'big' school to watch the Key Stage 1 perform their nativity play. It was an excellent performance and we all enjoyed seeing friends that had left nursery in September.

The children enjoyed a Christmas party with delicious food provided by the parents, a magical entertainer and a visit from Father Christmas, who gave them all a present of a book, pencil and a balloon.

The Reception children came to see the dress rehearsal of our nativity play (a big thank you to all at Sideways for the loan of the costumes), and on the last day of term the parents, relatives and friends came to watch. The children put on a brilliant show, considering their young age, and there wasn't a dry eye in the house! We said goodbye to the leavers who were moving on to school, and we all look forward to welcoming the new children starting this term.

The things they say:
After watching our Nativity play, one of the reception children said, "Why did you copy our story?"

We are open:
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Tues, Thurs 9.15 am-11.45 am and 12.30 pm-3 pm

Telephone 07773 730754 (Nursery) or
01279 814037 (Admissions secretary) for more information.

Carol Bullot (Nursery Manager)

FEBRUARY

Latin 'februarius' from 'februa' a purification feast held in this month.

2004 is a Leap Year. An extra day is added every four years to allow for the difference between a year of 365 days and the approximate 365¼ days it actually takes for the Earth to circle the Sun. Years ending in 00 have to be divisible by 400 to qualify as Leap Years and the other years by 4.

The system was established in 46 BC by Julius Caesar and modified in 8 AD. In 1582 it was replaced by the Gregorian calendar, named after Pope Gregory XIIIth. When introduced, a discrepancy of 10 days had occurred and most Catholic countries jumped from 4th to 15th October to correct this, causing people who did not understand the calculations to think that 10 days had been 'stolen' from their lives! When Britain changed in 1752, New Year's Day was also moved, from 25th March to 1st January. Averaged over 400 years we now have a year of 365.2425 days, very near the actual 365.2422. Verses to help remember how many days are in each month are still chanted today:

"...excepting February alone, and that has 28 days clear, and 29 in each leap year" from a Nursery Rhyme c. 1555 and

"Thirty days hath November, April, June and September. February hath twenty-eight alone and all the rest have thirty-one" from Chronicles of England 1570.

"Well dost thou, Love, thy solemn Feast to hold in vestal February" is from St. Valentine's Day by Coventry Patmore. At one time a woman would never propose marriage to a man, although some felt this unfair, but with an extra special' day, allied to St. Valentine, the idea of being able to do so soon crept in, it is said as early as the 5th C in Ireland. In 1288 in Scotland it was established as a recognised practice. If the man refused to wed payment of a fine was often expected in the form of such items as a pair of gloves or a dress.

February is also a month of Revolutions: France 1848 resulting in the proclamation of the second Republic and Russia 1917 abdication of Nicholas II and collapse of the tsarist government.

Also a month noted for rain "Feb, fill the dyke with what thou dost like" states 'February's Husbandry' by Thomas Tusser (1524-1580). Longer daylight hours become more noticeable now, so on a gloomy day, think of coming spring and ponder on the fact that February is an interesting month.



Nature Notes

At this time of year squirrels are competing with the birds for the peanuts put out in our gardens. They do not hibernate and are active the whole year round. Squirrels are rodents (from Latin *rodere*, to gnaw) and belong to the same animal family as chipmunks and marmots. The ancestors of the modern squirrel first appeared in North America about 28 million years ago.



pine cone stripped by squirrel for seeds

Unfortunately in most of Britain, including the Stansted area, it is the grey squirrel we see rather than the native red squirrel which prefers coniferous woodland, especially pine trees and larches.

The grey squirrel, which is a native of the eastern U.S.A., was first introduced to Britain (but not to the rest of Europe) in the 19th century, but it was in the first three decades of the 20th century that there was a noticeable increase in numbers. By 1930 grey squirrels were found all over south-east England and as far as Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. Today they are widespread and have displaced the red squirrel in most areas, mainly because they are not so particular about habitat: they frequent deciduous woodland, parks and gardens. Their diet consists of acorns (which red squirrels cannot digest), nuts (including beech mast), leaves and shoots and they also strip off the bark of trees in order to reach the sapwood underneath.

They produce their young in early summer and keep them in their nest or drey until they can feed themselves at about ten weeks. The drey is a large, untidy nest of twigs and leaves, often wedged into a tree fork and is more rounded than the wood pigeon's similarly untidy nest.

Rosina Kirkwood

Last month's Nature observations produced another reader's cry of anguish at the depredations wrought by muntjac deer. Does anyone know of an effective deterrent?

Editor

MOUNTFITCHET SENIORS

PROGRAMME

Meetings at the Day Centre - 2.00 pm

February 4th	Quiz
February 18th	Games
March 3rd	Woodwind of Stortford
March 17th	Games – Grand National Money In
April 7th	Games – Grand National Draw
April 21st	Games – Clothes Show
May 5th	Half Day Outing
May 19th	Guest Speaker – Miss Jean Reay
June 2nd	Games
June 16th	Full Day Outing
July 7th	Games
July 21st	Peggy Entertains
August 5th	Games
August 18th	Games
September 1st	Full Day Outing
September 15th	Games
October 6th	Games
October 16th	Autumn Sale
October 20th	Clothes Show – Games
November 3rd	Games
November 17th	AGM
December 1st	Music
December 15th	Christmas Party



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It has been a very Happy New Year at Rainbow pre-school. Over the Christmas holidays new windows were installed in our classroom and this has enhanced our premises even further.

The highlight of the month was the official opening ceremony of our new shelter on Friday 9th January. We were delighted to welcome Sir Alan Haslehurst to open our new shelter. Around 20 parents and committee members past and present attended the ceremony. The children had painted a rainbow banner which Sir Alan cut in half to officially open the shelter and then he cut our delicious celebration cake.



Sir Alan Haslehurst cuts the rainbow

The opening of the shelter is the culmination of two years fund-raising by the pre-school and the committee would again like to thank all those who contributed in any way. If you are a former parent and have not yet seen the results of your fund-raising endeavours you are welcome to visit any time.

The theme of the term has been travel and we have enjoyed looking at different methods of transport and talking about our holidays. The older group visited David Webb Travel in Stansted and had a fantastic time learning about different travel destinations. A dozen four year olds is not the usual clientele but we were very grateful for the warm welcome that we were given by the company. Play activities have reflected the theme with a check-in desk, complete with luggage labels and suitcases being set up in the corner so that the children could check in and take their seat in our aeroplane. To follow up the aeroplane role play children in the older group visited Stansted airport to see the check-in process for real.

Once again we celebrated the Chinese New Year with the children trying out different Chinese dishes and taking part in a traditional dragon dance.

If you are interested in a place at the pre-school from September please contact Gill Pursglove on 814701 for further information.



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Our next ploughman's lunches are on Saturday 14th February and Saturday 13th March at the Stansted Day Centre, 12 noon to 2pm. All are welcome.

The Supper Club will be meeting on Friday 12th March at Stansted Day Centre, 7.30pm for 8pm. The speaker will be Chris White, who is second on the Liberal Democrat candidate list for the East of England in the European elections on 10th June. Cost of the evening, to include supper, is £8, and there will be a bar.

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

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SNIPPETS 2

A serious issue emerges from the Parish Council's entry on page 11 concerning skips. There is already a noticeable increase in bin bags dumped on road verges and in hedgerows, so please put the word around that there are comprehensive skip facilities in Saffron Walden, Harlow and Bishops Stortford (which is available to Uttlesford residents also). Editor:



**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Our meeting on 9th January took the form of a Members' Evening, when the speakers come from within the Society. We look forward each year to these occasions and this one did not disappoint. Recently, the diaries of Ian Hill were donated to our archives by Jane Sell; they contained extracts, which were thought to be of interest to us. In Paul Embleton's absence, they were read by Pam Seavers and Frances Lyons. Ian Hill lived in Stansted from 1946 until his death in 1979 but at the beginning of the War he had volunteered for the Thames River Police and later transferred to the Ministry of Aircraft Production under Lord Beaverbook. This wry account of his experiences gave great amusement. His account was written later after he had developed multiple sclerosis and was confined to a wheelchair. Nevertheless, for 25 years he travelled to work in the City from Stansted – we were all greatly impressed by his spirit.

Next, Judy Colliver and Marion Pretty entertained us with three humorous poems. We now know how to travel from the Mansion House to Buckingham Palace without going along a street, and we understand Noah's contractual problems in building the Ark. What really struck home to many present, however, was a poem dedicated to those born before 1940, listing the changes we have seen – thought provoking!

David Harrison has recently been studying the two Minute Books kept by the Trust which managed the Fuller's Almshouses – not easy as the first book was used for 150 years and was not kept in chronological order! The Trust, formed in 1796 by William Fuller, provided first one, then two sets of Almshouses for poor, elderly women in Hoxton and David told us of some of the key events recorded. In 1880, the Trustees decided that Hoxton was no longer a suitable venue for looking after the 'inmates' and, with the approval of the Charity commissioners, a new building was provided, the 28 residents being moved to Stansted in 1883. Eventually this building deteriorated and conditions considered suitable in the 19th century were no longer acceptable. By the 1960s, severe criticisms were recorded, which the Trustees were unable to rectify through insufficient funds, but happily the Springboard Housing Association took over responsibility in the 1980s and completely up-graded the facilities. We were pleased that John Hollis and Ray Clifford, both of whom had close involvement with the Trustees, were present to add detail to David's research and to answer Members' questions.

Finally, Peter Sanders told us of a clock which had been given to him by Mary Ecclestone. Originally displayed in Green's Stores, the clock face was inscribed 'WILLIAM SANDERS, STANSTEAD' (sic) and Peter had looked into the clock's background. Born in 1802 in Finchingfield but soon moving to Stansted, William Sanders was originally a

carpenter by trade at a time when many such were living in and around the village. Having obtained some basic training in cleaning and repairing watches from a friend in 1828, William set up his own clock-making business in Silver Street. Peter had discovered something of William's life, particularly his turbulent relations with the old and new Independent Churches and the Court case brought against him by the mother of an apprentice he had taken on, and whose training was declared inadequate; a decision which proved expensive to William. He eventually died in 1880.

We meet next on Thursday, 5th February, when Derek Honour will be telling us of "Humphry Repton in Essex – Then and Now" – hope you will be able to join us.

Ian Seavers



"It won't go unnoticed that the Government's aviation White Paper urges airport operators to arrange fresh-air trips to the countryside for children, and says schools may have to have 'quiet rooms' so children can recover from the trauma of aircraft noise," said Carol Barbone, Campaign Director of Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE). "Will they offer homeowners 'quiet gardens' for summer enjoyment too?"

Indications are that residents who suffer 69 decibels of aircraft noise or more, and experience an increase of 3 decibels over their existing level, could receive a compulsory purchase offer, although there is no guarantee. Despite the fact that a proposed second runway in the position indicated in BAA's notice to residents has existed since 1983, nothing will be confirmed until a planning application is made – and that is months away. Meanwhile, noise and pollution levels could build as use of the existing runway expands towards its permitted limit of 25 million passengers annually.

Around 44,000 people across the region would be affected by airport noise alone (based on the standards applied by the World Health Organisation), without taking traffic noise into account. Noise in a rural environment is more evident than in towns so would be far more noticeable across great swathes of Hertfordshire, Essex, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk - under the flight path as well as near major roads.

Further information -

Norman Mead, Chairman, SSE
01279 659483 or at campaign office 01279 870558

Carol Barbone, Campaign Director, SSE
07775 523091

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