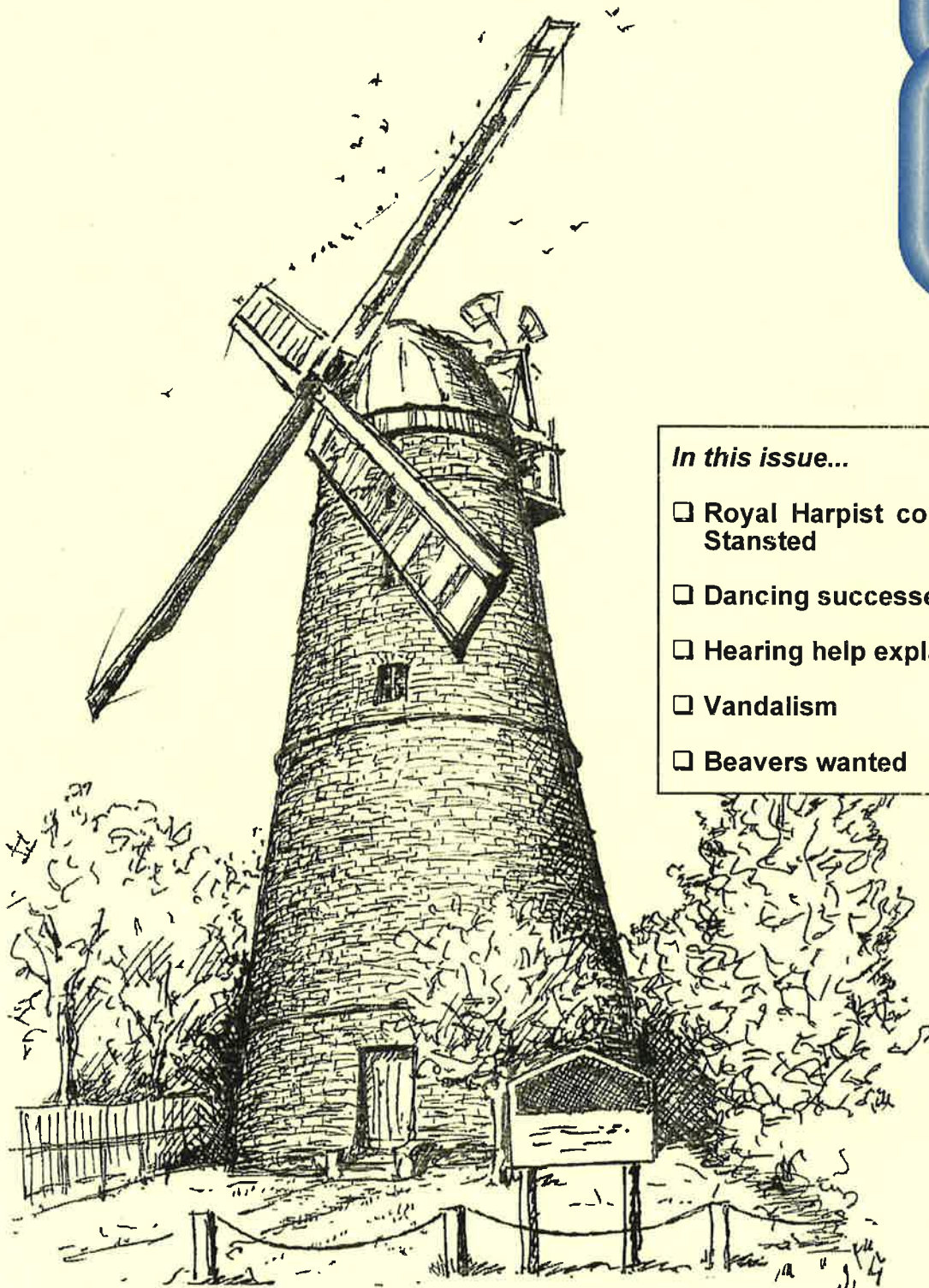


Stansted Mountfitchet

The Link



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Copy to reach 58 Chapel Hill or email to stanstedlink@aol.com

by 13th January for publication on 29th January

By 10th February for publication on 26th February

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Chapel Hill

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

Contact Mrs Janet Townsend
58 Chapel Hill
Tel: 01279 812593

Preachers for January

2nd	2.30 pm	Rev'd D Simpson
9th	10.30 am	Mr P Smith
16th	10.30 am	Rev'd D Simpson and Rev'd K Page - joint Covenant Service and Communion
23rd	10.30 am	Mr M Dyer Joint with Methodists
30th	10.30 am	Mr G Doyle

Please note that on 2nd January we will **not** be serving Afternoon Teas but we hope to see all our friends again old and new on 6th February. Please don't forget - if you need transport contact 812593 or 814850.

During 2004 we have been joining together for worship with our Methodist friends on the fourth Sunday each month. As from January 2005 this increases to two services each month. The service on 15th January will be a joint Covenant Service and communion led by Rev'd David Simpson and Rev'd Keith Page. This is a very significant step in our journey on the road to joining together with our friends in the Methodist Church.

METHODIST

Meets in Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

Minister Rev'd Keith Page
2 South Road
Bishop's Stortford
Tel: 01279 654475

Secretary Mrs Catherine Dean
49 Recreation Ground
Stansted
Tel: 01279 813579

Email methodists@stansted.net

All services start at 9.30am unless otherwise stated

Services and preachers for January

2nd	Mike Render
9th	Rev'd Ronald Rawlings
16th	Joint service at the United Reformed Church Annual covenant service led by Rev'd Keith Page and Rev'd David Simpson
23rd	Joint service at the United Reformed Church led by Michael Dyer
30th	Rev'd Hilary Cheng

Our church fellowship meeting is at 8.00pm on Thursday, 20th January at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

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Masses Saturday 6.00pm
Sunday 9.00am and 10.30am

Holy Days of Obligation 8.00am and
8.00pm

Tuesday-Saturday 9.30am
Confessions Saturday 10.00am

and by appointment
Baptisms by appointment

As you read this New Year will be with us and the New Year celebrations will have taken place and 2005 will have started.

Once again many of us would have made New Year resolutions and just how many will have survived even to the end of January? By now many Christmas decorations will have been packed away for another year, the Christmas tree will have been put out in the garden, or replanted, or perhaps packed away with the Christmas lights.

For the traditionalists they will wait for Twelfth Night, Epiphany, before taking down the decorations. Twelfth Night, Epiphany, commemorates the coming of the Magi to Bethlehem with their gifts for the infant Jesus. I guess we can all recall the story of the Magi and Herod but what is the significance of these gifts, the Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh?

Gold, one of the purest of metals, represents the Kingship of Jesus and puts His presence on earth above others. As we say in the Creed - "He is the only Son of God - through Him all things were made, for His people and for our salvation."

Frankincense has always been regarded as sacred and when burnt it helps to improve our connection with God and therefore the effectiveness of prayer - "our prayers ascended to God on clouds of incense." During Jesus' life He was constantly at prayer to His Father in heaven and so Frankincense reminds us of the need to pray.

Myrrh was one of the materials used for embalming and so reminds us that we all must die and even Jesus died to save us so that we can enjoy His heavenly kingdom with him.

It is too easy to see these as prophetic gifts in the sense of gold for a king, frankincense for a priest and myrrh for suffering and death. They are far more than this and in the way they are used are both instrumental and symbolic in the transformation of ourselves and others and the situations we are within, for unless prayer and healing are used as instruments of transformation of our lives they are not of any use at all. We all must have hope that we will succeed in keeping the resolutions that we made on 1st January to improve our lives and those around us, for without hope we are dead, because out of difficult situations comes inner power, hope, rebirth, inner strength, wisdom and maturity.

God bless you all and have a happy year.

Francis Mercer



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

The Bishop of Colchester will be presiding at a **Confirmation Service** on *May 8th 2005*

Preparation begins in February with 12 weekly sessions of a course called

Living the Questions
www.livingthequestions.com led by the Rector.

This is open to anyone seeking confirmation and any who would like to join confirmands as they prepare.

Please call 812203 for details or email rector@stansted.net

Happy New Year

I cannot watch **Big Ben chime 12.00 midnight without a thrill of expectation, the sense that this could be a new beginning.** Yet experience tells me this is not sensible. I have little sense that the headlines in 2005 will be very different from those in 2004 – stories of politicians and their personal antics, conflict and poverty in one part of the world or another, and the economic ups and downs of one company or another. Of course, to the actual people involved it matters a lot whether the media storm is in my own backyard or that of a colleague; whether the bombing is in my country or yours, and whether the company that has crashed is one in which I have some investment. Most of this touches us very little, though. And closer to home, don't many of us start the new year paying off the debts of the old, whether in terms of bills for Christmas shopping or diets to lose the weight we gained? A new start perhaps, but one that is dictated by the past.

I have never seen New Year Resolutions as more than a bit of fun, but I have a friend who takes them very seriously. Every year, she lists 10 goals for the coming 12 months, writes them down and sends them to her friends. Then she evaluates progress a year later. She is careful to include a range of things, at all levels. Some are easily achieved, some less so. This may sound a bit over the top, but it does have the advantage of helping her to really think about what she wants for herself and those around her.

Without some sense of what we are hoping for, it is easy for every year to pass without note. If we have no hopes or goals, why should things be any different in 2005? In my work environment, we have to write yearly action plans, and targets have to be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Realistic and Time-bound. In a way this is what my friend is doing for her own life. I find the idea a bit daunting, but I can see its benefits.

This is relevant to wishing each other a 'happy New Year'. When we say this, we probably mean that we hope the year will not be characterised by pain, misfortune or illness. But many people live with such things on a daily basis. What does happiness mean in this situation?

One dictionary defines happiness as 'the state of pleasurable content of mind, which results from success or the attainment of that which is considered good'. I like this definition, because it forces us to ask ourselves what it is that we consider to be good. It means that happiness is different for each of us, and does depend on our goals or aspirations. It becomes possible to see someone who gives his or her life for a good cause, suffering personal distress as a result, as happy. It is also possible to be happy in this sense even when life is hard, provided our goals or aspirations are realistic in the light of our own situation.

Happiness is not about being glamorous and having lots of money. We have seen too many celebrities living lives of despair to think that it is. It is more to do with having some sense of what we consider to be 'good', and then doing something towards achieving that, insofar as we can. Most of us – though not all, it is true – have some scope to achieve at least some of our goals if we can only decide what they are.

The question for me then, is whether getting back to being size 14 is part of what I consider 'good' (alongside more lofty aspirations). If so, it's back to *Weightwatchers* and raw carrots in 2005. And no, I don't intend to report progress in this column next year. Happy New Year.

CMC

Diary

Sundays
8:00am Holy Communion
9:30am Parish Communion with Sunday School

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 Church Office for details of meetings.

Housegroups There is a reading group studying Philip Yancey's *What's so Amazing About Grace?* at 5 Bentfield Gardens each Wednesday, contact Andy at 813003; and *The Bluffers Guide to the Bible* at the Rectory on alternate Tuesdays, Contact Andrew 812203 or the Church Office for details.

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

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The Church Office
(01279) 815243
curate@stansted.net

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

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Mrs Sandra Wood
(01279) 647054
sandra@stansted.net

Church Hall Bookings Secretary
Mrs Joy Lambe
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joy@stansted.net

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

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

Housegroups
The Rector
(01279) 812203



(continued)

From the Registers for November:

Funeral

4th John Walter Prise age 77

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

Meeting Sunday, 11.00am

I first took an active interest in Quakers over a decade ago and it has always been in the back of my mind to get involved again. I have been an 'attender' at Stansted Meeting for over seven months now and would like to explain what this means to me.

I carry a little card entitled 'What Do Quakers Say'. It states the following:

There is something good in all people (a tricky one this, but I am working on it).

All people are equal before God.

Religion is about the whole of life.

We meet in stillness to discover a deeper sense of God's presence.

True religion leads to respect for the earth, and all upon it.

Each person is unique, precious, a child of God.

That just about sums up how I feel.

At the Meeting House work has now been completed on our new user-friendly access, a wide ramp, rails and double doors. We have also recently carried out a fair amount of clearing and improving the garden, added some planted tubs, a metal obelisk, a small rockery and put seed dispensers in the trees. The latter has attracted a remarkable variety and number of wild and domestic creatures to the garden. If any of you living in the vicinity of the Meeting House are wondering where your cats disappear to for hours on end, your furry friends have joined the Quakers, and can be found 'waiting in silence' though possibly not to discover a deeper sense of God's presence, more likely for some unfortunate bird or squirrel to be caught off guard.

As Quakers do not gamble, it would not be appropriate to lay odds on Andrew Spurr (December 'Link') getting his wish for a five year break from 'tacky Christmas' (I ignore the whole thing and feed the ducks on Finchingfield pond on Christmas Day). We would be very happy for him and 'his lot' to come and sit quietly with us next Christmas, although we are not always that quiet and there is a fair amount of laughter when appropriate. The nearest thing we have to the Clergy is our Rambling Rector rose bush, so a visit from Stansted's real one (Rector that is!) would be most welcome.

Jennifer Meadows



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

On Wednesday 26th January the Churches Together in Stansted Ecumenical Prayer Group will be led by the Rev'd Andrew Spurr. All are invited to join in this special evening of prayer at St John's Church, 7.30pm to 8.00pm.

Francis Mercer



SHALOM

On 17th January there will be an evening of Prayer and Praise at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

On 31st January, at the Friends Meeting House, there will be a talk by Sue Jagelman, a friend of Francis and Joan Mercer, about her trip to Brazil on behalf of 'Save the Children'.

All meetings start at 8.00pm and everyone is welcome to join us. Just turn up!

Catherine Dean
813579

**INTERFAITH QUIZ
15TH JANUARY 2005**

You are warmly welcome to a quiz to raise funds for The Stort Interfaith Group on **Saturday, 15th January 2005, at St John's Hall, Stansted, 7.00pm for 7.30pm start**. The quizmaster will be David Morson. Please bring your own drink. Refreshments will be provided, and a raffle will be held.

Tickets £5.00, available from David Morson 850209, or at the door. Tables of six to eight persons are recommended.

The Stort Interfaith Group comprises members of different local faith communities who are trying to work together to overcome divisions in our society. Funds are necessary in order to facilitate meetings, to produce a newsletter and other promotional materials, as well as organising educational events.

David Morson



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VILLAGE EVENTS

January

5	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
6	Thu	Bookstart	Library 2.15 - 2.45 pm
		Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
8	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
9	Sun	Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
10	Mon	WEA course begins	Day Centre 7.30 pm
12	Wed	(change) Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
13	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
14	Fri	Jazz Concert	St John's Church 8 pm
15	Sat	Interfaith Quiz	St John's Hall 7 for 7.30 pm
17	Mon	Shalom Prayer & Praise	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
23	Sun	Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
		Village Music Club	St John's Church 3 pm
30	Sun	Burns Lunch	St John's Hall 12.30 pm
31	Mon	Shalom Group	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm

February

2	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
3	Thu	Bookstart	Library 2.15 - 2.45 pm
		Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
6	Sun	Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
		Afternoon Tea (after service)	UR Church 3.30 - 5 pm
10	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
12	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's	Day Centre noon - 2 pm

Quiz Night

in aid of

Stort Interfaith Group

7 for 7.30 pm

Saturday 15th January

St John's Church Hall

Tickets £5 incl refreshments

from 850209 or on the door

Raffle

Bring your own drinks



Uttlesford District Council 2005 Skip Dates

Green Waste, Metal & Wood

Please note:

9 am - 3 pm Sundays only until further notice

9th January

23rd January

6th February

20th February



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St John's Church

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QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 for 8 pm Sat 26th Feb

Day Centre

Tables of 6

Bring your own drinks

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Prize for best dressed Scots person

String fever

*former Royal Harpist
Catrin Finch performs
in Stansted later this
month. She talked to
Andrew Spurr about
taking a back row
instrument to
centre stage.*

I can't remember when it started, but I must have been safely into young adulthood when I became aware of classical music becoming sensual. It was probably about the time that Anne-Sophie Mutter's publicity featured the dark-eyed German violinist leaning into the camera. Since then, it has been a definite career boost for a brilliant musician if you are female and glamorous, or male and slightly raffish.

Catrin Finch's press pack had her portrait settled in the lavish curves of her harp, or jump-suited in its foreground à la Emma Peel. On the day of our meeting, had it not been for the huge light-blue quilted wedge shadowing her, I would have missed the entry of the gentle elven figure unselfconsciously towing it down the aisle. She had just returned from Los Angeles and was about to rehearse a charity Christmas programme, at Chelsea's Royal Hospital, for the Imperial Cancer Fund.

In the eighteen months since Catrin was booked to perform later this month for the Village Music Club, her career has accelerated. Last year she signed with the *Sony Classical* label, confirming her place in a league with the over-glam Vanessa Mae and the well-un-raffish Yo Yo Ma, not only as a world class musician but as an innovative performer as well.

You become slowly aware of her enthusiasm as its story unfolds. Catrin describes growing up near Aberystwyth in the early eighties, taking piano lessons in a household already alive to the sound of her siblings playing music. It was being taken to Lampeter that the five-year-old first saw the harpist Maria Robles perform. "I don't know what it was, but if you've ever seen her, she is one of those people who is just bursting with flair, and she is so dramatic. It was when I saw Marisa that I decided I was going to be a harpist, and that was that."

It was not long before she outgrew the local peripatetic harp teacher at her school. While on a harp course in North Wales her mother was told that

Catrin should go away and study full time. Horrified at the prospect of sending her away, Catrin's mother engaged Elinor Bennet, one of the top Welsh harpists, to teach her daughter, even though it would entail a weekly five hour round-trip from Aberystwyth to Elinor's home in Caernarfon. "It is an incredible thing now to look back on but, for eight years one of my parents would take an afternoon off from work once a fortnight, and I was allowed to take the afternoon off from school. So many people milling in to make something work and for all that time, we did these trips up to Elinor. I look back on it now and, at the time, I really didn't appreciate so many different people, even that my father's work would say, 'OK, we'll give you the afternoon off just so your kid can have her harp lessons'. Fabulous, and I look back on it really proud and thankful to my parents."

Catrin's years with Elinor Bennet saw her first broadcast performances: among the earliest were two appearances on BBC's 'Blue Peter' in 1989 and 1990. And she began to gather prizes, including first prize in the junior section of the World Harp Festival in 1991, and second prize in the senior section in 1994, aged only 14.

When Catrin was 16 she moved to the Purcell School in London to study with Skaila Kanga, with whom she continued her studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Her awards continued to come as she built up valuable orchestral experience during her six years as principal harp in the National Youth Orchestra.

It was in 2000 that the Prince of Wales, so taken with her performance at his 50th birthday celebrations, revived the post of Royal Harpist, last occupied in the reign of Queen Victoria. A two-year appointment, Catrin's tenure was extended to a second term that recently concluded and which she remembers warmly. "It was in my second term with the Prince in 2002 he said that he would like to commission me a



work, and pretty much the same time the BBC Welsh Orchestra said, 'We would like to play the concerto of your choice with you to perform on St David's Day'. So I put two and two together and said, why can't the Prince commission the piece we play on this special day and, even better, why not a double harp concerto? When the time came, Elinor and I together premiered *Over the Stone*, and that was fabulous."

The Prince commissioned Catrin's compatriot Karl Jenkins, best known for his work *Adiëmus*, to write the six movement symphony. Catrin's first album for Sony *Crossing the Stone*, was produced by Jenkins and was released earlier this year, featuring an excerpt from the Prince's commission and including forays into world music and jazz, as well as a harp transcription of Debussy's *Claire de Lune*. "I think Debussy got it wrong and this was meant for the harp all along. It's so harpistic in the writing, everything about it." Though, she admits, *harpistic* is not easy to

define. "You know once you hear it and difficult to explain unless I can play it to you. *Claire de Lune* is ethereal, magical. The harp has the most amazing delicate sound, and there is a lot of music which is suited to that, and a lot of French impressionists are suited to the harp. Certain periods of writing which have been atmospheric is very much a harp thing; whereas if I'd tried to do Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto, it's so clearly not a harp thing. You can tell what a harp thing is, everybody secretly knows."

Catrin is certainly not a harpist content to remain on the back row of an orchestra. As many styles of music, classical and modern, now cross over into each other, and as technology has made the harp an instrument that can be pushed to new limits, so she has been able to give free rein to her precocious interest in any style of music which would be well suited to the harp.



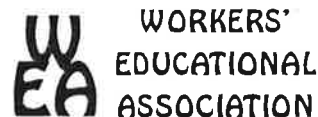
For the Mostly Mozart Festival, Catrin played an early piano concerto (K414) transcribed for harp. "It worked very well and it was one of his earlier and therefore simpler ones; it's not very chromatic, chromaticism is what causes the problem for us with the pedals so there's obviously a limit to how quickly you can move your feet. But the only Mozart thing for harp is the piece for the flute and harp, which is mostly overplayed I think, so we tried to do something a bit different, so we transposed and transcribed that Mozart concerto. Transcribing is something you have to do when you play a lesser core instrument. I don't see any reason not to do it, so long as it works. And there are pieces that work and pieces that don't, and the K414 worked fabulously as it was a more delicate piece. It was not atmospheric, I wouldn't call Mozart atmospheric but it somehow suited the sound of the harp. The harp can be very clear; Bach works very well because of the clarity involved. It's just a matter of playing around, some things work and some things don't and you just have to try it and you have to be open for trying things."

Over the long term, Catrin wants to explore new renderings of known music that can be performed on the harp. Some material already out there is reasonably straightforward, "The best are the ones who have tried to keep it as close as possible to the original, so we're talking about keyboard music now because it's basically the same: left hand and right hand, it's the same principle and I would probably try and change as little as possible. But on the other end of the scale, I play a really good version for the solo harp of *The Moldau* by Smetana, a fantastic full

symphony orchestra job. I felt that it is personally just a really good transcription of that for the harp." In time she hopes to play her own part in the adaptive process, though not for a while yet. "It's not something I would go near yet, because I haven't studied it myself. But it is something that I would like to learn to do. And you have to learn how to do it, it's a skill, it's definitely a skill, but obviously it's low on the agenda right now but definitely something for later on."

In the immediate future, Catrin is compiling lists of music that she would like to record. "We're thinking of a concerto album because there are lots of fabulous ones for the harp. There's a great one by Hinestere who was an Argentinian, a very fine piece, and we're hopefully going to get some commissions." On the more experimental side, Catrin has begun to explore the big band era of jazz. She hopes to start an eleven piece big band, with a trumpeter friend from her Royal Academy days. This doesn't sound obviously harpistic, but Catrin is undaunted. "And there are always new things I'm playing around with, new projects and, as a musician, you just have to try it out. But there's no such thing as a mistake in music really - that's the bottom line, which is quite nice. You know yourself what you like and what you don't and you just have to be honest with yourself and, if it isn't working out, you just have to put a stop on it." ●





"The Harp used to be a bit of a joke instrument," says Catrin Finch. "You know, the blonde at the back of the orchestra doing her knitting." She goes on, "Only in the last 20 years has the modern harp come of age – the old ones were not robust enough although they had a great, delicate sound. My harp, which is three years old, has 3,000 moving parts, it's like a robot, but you can now play anything written for piano or jazz in a way which you couldn't before."

Catrin has recently relinquished her role as Royal Harpist, a position that started in the Middle Ages but had been vacant since 1872 until it was revived by Prince Charles after Catrin performed at his 50th birthday celebrations in 2000.

Our third concert of this, our ninth season, on Sunday 23rd January at 3.00pm, will feature Catrin, and her programme will include: -

Prelude and Fugue in D Minor – J S Bach
Claire de Lune – Claude Debussy
Concert Fantasy on Lara's Granada – Carlos Salzedo

The concert is at St John's Church, Stansted, and tickets are £9, concessions £7, children £3, and children/grandchildren of members £1, available from:

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

The final concert in our current season is on
Saturday 5th March at 7.30pm – The Carducci Quartet.

Alan Corbishley

The next 10 week course starts on Monday 10th January at the Day Centre at 8.00pm. (Registration will start at 7.30pm.)

We are very pleased to have Dr Rosemary Williams again and this time she will be talking about the 'Napoleon Experience'.

The life of Napoleon and his activities are always of considerable interest and this year is the 200th anniversary of the day that he crowned himself Emperor and Josephine Empress in Notre Dame in 1804.

Dr Williams will be dealing with his rise to fame and then his fall, his opinion of 'Perfidious Albion' and his settlement of Europe.

In addition, Dr Christopher Doorme, an expert on Napoleon's military escapades will be coming for two weeks whilst Dr Williams is away and so we should get a very comprehensive knowledge of his life and the effect on the Europe of that time of one of Europe's most fascinating and controversial characters.

The fee for the 10 week course will again be £29.50 but the concessionary charge will be £21.

Further details can be obtained from Harold Thistle (Tel: 01279 813250).

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UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

The primary care trust has begun a public consultation on a plan for a new health centre and doctors' practice at Elms Farm in Church Road. Forms are available from the parish council and the St John's Road practice.

Hundreds of petition forms have flowed in from the 'Focus' petition calling on Post Office Counters to restore our local service. Discussions have been continuing to find a solution that might include some other public services coming together in one place. Unfortunately, this is likely to be at least a year away, which is disappointing but I hope is better than no news at all.

A month is a long time in politics, to vary a familiar quotation. I wrote last month that the regional assembly had endorsed the East of England Plan at the beginning of November. Yet at the beginning of December another meeting of the assembly in Hatfield suspended that endorsement. I voted for the suspension in response to the Government's recent failure to announce any funding for strategic transport projects in Essex and other counties of the region. Meanwhile, consultation on the plan continues until the middle of March and you can get details from Stansted library, the district or parish councils and on the EERA regional assembly website at www.eera.gov.uk.

At Uttlesford we are deep into getting the books to balance for next year's budget. There will be service improvements, lots of efficiency savings and the council tax is likely to rise by less than £10 a year. But more about that next month.

A Happy New Year to everyone.

Councillor Alan Dean
Email: cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk
Tel: 01279 813579

WATER, WATER, BUT NOT EVERYWHERE

Apropos the East of England Regional Plan (see Alan Dean's Uttlesford report), some of you may have heard the recent programme on Radio 4 regarding the problems of providing water for the SE of England. I understand that a desalination plant is already having to be built for London and the shortage will worsen with further building and increase in population. We are inclined to be thoughtless in our use of water with washing machines, power showers, cleaning cars, watering lawns, etc perhaps regarding the drop we use as not making a difference.

This could be the biggest problem in the area in years to come and one wonders if the Government has given it enough long-term consideration. What can we do to bring pressure to bear and in our individual small ways help to conserve this precious life-giving resource? Perhaps, whilst giving to Water Aid and such charities, we had better also think nearer home!

Peggy Honour

LOCAL DANCERS' SUCCESSES

Several of the pupils attending dancing classes at the Quaker Meeting House (and at Bishop's Stortford, Takeley and Church Langley) have recently achieved distinction.

Saskia Pronk from Stansted, along with Demi Aldred, Alex Bennett and Tom Bennett from Bishop's Stortford, have won places for the 2005 season in the London Children's Ballet, performing in an adaptation of Oscar Wilde's 'The Canterville Ghost'. They will be dancing at The Peacock Theatre, Aldwych, London, part of the Sadlers Wells Theatre Group.

Congratulations are also due to five pupils for achieving places in the prestigious National Youth Ballet company for this season: Saskia Pronk, age 10, from Stansted, (middle of picture) along with Isabella Wright, Demi Aldred, Alex Bennett and Tom Bennett from Bishop's Stortford have danced at a performance at the London Palladium, and also at the Birmingham Hippodrome and The Playhouse, Sevenoaks.



Nicole Gipps, from Stansted, and her dance partner Elizabeth Pitt, have successfully entered the world of dance festivals this term – they have already won a place at next year's Regional Finals for the All England Dance Competition – very well done!

Three pupils from the dance school have also done extremely well to win places at the Royal Ballet School as Junior Associates. Corinne Cox, Alexander Bennett and Thomas Bennett will all travel up to the Royal Ballet Upper School in Covent Garden for fortnightly lessons to continue their training in Ballet, National Dance, flexibility and strengthening. Alex and Tom have also been chosen to perform with The Royal Ballet in this year's Christmas production of 'Cinderella', at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Janie Bennett

These classes are held by the Graham School of Dance.



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SIDEWAYS PRE-SCHOOL NURSERY NEWSLETTER

Hello again,

What a busy term this has been. Our theme was all about Autumn. The children collected bugs, different coloured leaves, made a nature garden, talked about fruit, made jam tarts and sandwiches and tried lots of different foods in our 'Café'.

The friendship tree to promote kind behaviour has grown lots of hand print leaves!!

Our Art Gallery has received lots of kind comments from Hall users, especially the ladies in the Art Classes.

We enjoyed going into St Mary's school to look at the fantastic rain forest the children have created. It caused much chatter about the animals and insects we saw!

Fund raising this term has included the Sponsored Nursery Rhyme sing-along (£248), sale of Christmas Cards at St Mary's shopping evening (£50), on-going collecting of spare change to make a collage of the Sideways smiley face logo.

We also thought of others not so fortunate at harvest time and donated several boxes of provisions to the Whitechapel Mission.

December was a very busy month for us. With Christmas fast approaching, we made Christmas cards, calendars and crackers; Liam's mum, Sam, helped the children make super cards - very professional! The children rehearsed very hard for our Nativity Play which was on 6th December, and was attended by lots of parents and friends, along with children from St. Mary's. Tuesday 7th was our Children's Christmas Party with, of course, a visit from Father Christmas, and on Wednesday 8th we went to Audley End for a train ride through the woods to see the gentleman in red again!

From January we will be welcoming younger children for our Toddler Time on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.00am until 10.30am. This is to encourage parents and carers to meet for coffee and a chat while their children enjoy messy play and toys and books that are geared to the younger group.

Sideways Pre-School Nursery is open every day, Monday-Friday from 9.00am-12.00 noon. We have a few remaining places for the next term for children of 2½ to rising 5. So if you are interested in finding out more, please call in and see us any time; stay and play, you will be made very welcome. The new term starts on 10th January.

Please support your pre-school; we are a vital village amenity, which if you don't use us, you could lose us!

Auntie Helen and the Team.

HEARING HELP - UTTLESFORD

We have been operating our free service to the Hard-of-Hearing throughout Uttlesford for many, but a few words to explain our work may be helpful.

Those who wear hearing aids feel very isolated if the aid breaks down or does not appear to work properly. Frequently the problem is a minor one which can be cured by changing the battery or cleaning the mould and replacing the tube; few people realise that this should be carried out regularly. Problems can either be dealt with at the regular monthly hearing help sessions held by us on the last Tuesday at the Day Centre in Stansted or in Saffron Walden (first Saturday), Dunmow (last Friday) and Thaxted (last Thursday). Alternatively we can call at people's homes, including the local care homes. There are also servicing facilities available at most of the local hospitals but as the details vary they are not listed here. However, aids can be checked and moulds adjusted between 9.00am and 12 noon on the first and third Thursdays of each month at Saffron Walden Hospital for aids issued there or by Addenbrookes.

We can also advise on how to go about getting a National Health hearing aid and what other devices are available to make life easier for users and their families. We can demonstrate equipment which will enable them to hear broadcasts without the rest of the family or their neighbours being disturbed by too high a volume. Advice and demonstrations can also be given on telephones, portable door bells, wake-up alarms, smoke alarms and other devices to help them.

We are supported by the health authorities who have helped in the training of the majority of our volunteers and we are able to carry out minor repairs except to the electronic portion of the aids. Although we can advise private hearing aid users we cannot deal with non National Health aids. We are a voluntary organisation, funded solely by the annual subscription of £3 pa to members and by donations, but we neither make nor sell any form of aid or equipment nor do we carry out hearing tests. Unfortunately we cannot supply new batteries as we cannot obtain them free.

Minor servicing and advice can be very time consuming but do not need the services of a trained professional; some of those we help are referred to us by Audiology Departments. We can also give talks and demonstrations to health care staff and other groups to draw attention to our organisation.

We used to be known as CamTAD, which stood for Campaign for Tackling Acquired Deafness. We changed the name because the acronym did not relate to the kind of work we do or the area we cover. We have leaflets and small posters available for display in surgeries and other public places which can be obtained from Mr E M Planterose - 01799 522915.

Potential users of the service are asked to note that for a home visit they should ring Mrs Christine Hutson on 01799 501682 and for other information either the Helpline or myself on 01799 522915. The service on any other number has been discontinued.

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St Mary's Primary School



By the time you read this article, Christmas will be just a memory. At the moment in school, we are in the middle of the customary Christmas chaos that is going on in schools everywhere. We are well into rehearsals for our Key Stage 1 production, *The Very Hopeless Camel*, the songs of which I already know really well, just from working next door to rehearsals! One of our performances this year will be specially for grandparents. We are also preparing our Christmas Service for the last day of term, which will be based on how God uses the most unexpected people and circumstances.

Recent visitors to St Mary's will know that part of our entrance hall has been converted into a part of South America! We enjoyed working on this as a whole school with Art Solutions. For two days the school was awash with newspaper, masking tape, glue and paint, resulting in the production of a leafy rainforest, with macaws, hummingbirds, snakes, ants, spider monkeys, a jaguar and even a lovely sloth. We had tremendous fun and children learnt a great deal about what is actually found in a rainforest. Come and see for yourselves!

Marion Johnson recently took an assembly, explaining about Christingle and to encourage children to attend the service at St John's. The children are now collecting money in their Christingle envelopes in aid of The Children's Society. We also value Andrew Spurr's input with his fortnightly assemblies in school.

During this term, as a staff we have continued to use our meeting times to improve children's learning. One aspect that we have particularly developed has been ICT (Information and Communication Technology), due to its importance in our children's futures. We now have two interactive whiteboards in classrooms – which are proving to be exciting teaching and learning tools (when they work, as with all technology!). Our website is also being redeveloped at this very moment and in time this will improve our communication with parents and the wider community further. At the moment there are some photos on it of the rainforest that I raved about earlier in this article. So if you are interested in seeing how it all turned out, have a look on www.st-marys-stansted.essex.sch.uk

I expect 2005 to be an exciting year for St Mary's, as we continue to work on making our school the best possible environment to help the best sort of learning to take place. I finish by wishing all 'Link' readers a Happy New Year from everyone in the school and hope that we will have the opportunity to work with more of you during the coming year.

Wendy Wood
Headteacher

We were as usual very busy during December. Children in all groups enjoyed numerous seasonal activities. Christmas cards and 2005 Calendars were made for Mummy and Daddy, individual Christmas cakes were baked and iced and preparations were made for the annual nativity play and Christmas concerts.

On 8th December a new event was added to our annual calendar when the older children paid a visit to Norman Court to entertain the residents. A variety of seasonal songs and nursery rhymes were sung, complete with actions. An enthusiastic rendition of 'We wish you a Merry Christmas' brought the concert to a rousing finish.



Rainbow Children Performing 'Incey Wincey Spider'

We very much enjoyed our annual nativity play performed by the older group on Monday 13th December. The costumes and singing were brilliant and the occasion was a moving one for all the mums, dads and grandparents who attended.

We held parties for children in every group on the last day of term and were delighted to welcome a special guest in red who had taken time out of his busy schedule to deliver some special gifts.

If you are interested in a place at the pre-school please contact Gill Pursglove on 814701 for information about our waiting list or e-mail at: info@rainbowpreschool.net.

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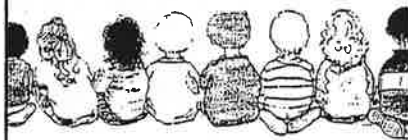
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Quality Status

You may have read in the local press that the Parish Council is the first one in Uttlesford to be awarded Quality Status - an initiative set up by the Government and National Association of Local Councils. Our Chairman, Catherine Dean, said "our Clerk Ruth Clifford has worked very hard putting together the portfolio of evidence to support our claim. Our Council has always followed correct procedures and been aware that it is accountable to parishioners. We feel that this award not only recognises the achievements of Stansted Parish Council, but that it also acknowledges the importance of the first tier of local government." In order to apply for Quality Status, the Clerk also had to pass her AQA in Local Council Administration, which Ruth did in October.

Litter and Recycling

We hope that by now you will have received the new and comprehensive leaflet from Uttlesford District Council relating to the doorstep collection and recycling in general. It is inevitable that, by mistake, some houses will have been missed on this delivery, but we have spare copies in the Parish Council office.

Memorial Gardens

By the time you read this article, the railings and remaining brick pier should have been removed from the front boundary of the Gardens. We are arranging for the remnants of the hedge to be grubbed out. The two brick piers are due to be rebuilt in the Spring, after the frosts and icy conditions have passed. The refurbished gates and railings will then be re-erected. Weather permitting, our contractors should undertake the major tree work during January. The Council will then be able to see just how the Gardens look, and make plans for re-planting with shrubs etc. The War Memorial will be professionally cleaned after the tree work has been completed.

Vandalism and General Anti-Social Behaviour

Unfortunately, we cannot end this report on a positive note. We have experienced an inordinate amount of vandalism recently, particularly targeted at the children's play areas on the Mountfitchet Estate and Recreation Ground. At the end of November, the timber playframe at Stoneyfield Drive was completely destroyed - it must have taken the culprits a considerable amount of time to demolish the 6-8" diameter timbers. Sadly, it appears that despite the area being surrounded by houses, no reports were made to the Police, or indeed the following day to the Parish Council. A week later, the fencing around the play area at the Rec was damaged. It was repaired the following day, only to be vandalised again two days later.

The Parish Council is working closely with our local Police and Police Support Officers to bring an end to these problems, but we need your help - this is a community issue. Along with the vandalism - which costs you as parishioners to repair - there is also general anti-social behaviour. This is not acceptable in our village, but can only be stamped out if the Police are told of incidents AT THE TIME.

We realise that people think there is little point ringing the Police if the Stansted Station is shut. **This is wrong.** Information can be passed through to the main switchboard. If a crime is occurring at the time (but not worthy of a 999 call), you can ask for a patrol car to attend. If you discover that a crime has taken place, you can ask to be put through to PC Neil (Jack) Russell if he is on duty (PC no 1758), or to our Support Officer, Sharon Cooper (CPSO no 7415). If neither is on duty, the main switchboard passes the details of the incident through on computer to the Stansted Police Station so that it is picked up as soon as the new shift starts. We have undertaken this exercise twice recently and it works, so please do it!

Catherine Dean
Chairman
Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

OPINIONS DO COUNT

Health Centre

We are now aware that a defined public consultation period has begun. The Elms Farm site has much to commend it but also carries long-term risks in environmental terms, particularly that of creeping urban erosion in Stansted Park. We are invited to comment, so hopefully there will be a response which provides a clear collective summary of Stansted's feelings. Please ensure that your voice is heard and don't be deterred from obtaining yet another form from the Parish Council.

Post Office

One could comment ad nauseum on the problems arising from its absence. The powers-that-be should know the strength of local feeling and be injecting some urgency into actually providing a service. Are there not mobile post offices which could bridge the gap until premises are found and equipped? Our experience, although unusual, cannot be unique so it should be incumbent on the Post Office to be prepared for such situations. In the meanwhile thanks are due to the courteous staff at Elsenham for coping with the additional load.

The Editor

STOP PRESS

The Celebration of Christmas was again held at St. Mary's Church. It was an outstanding performance by the augmented choir and greatly appreciated.



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For more information please ring
Howard Toynton on 01799 542324
or Dave South on 01279 814371



SNIPPETS 1

The photograph of "Stansted" which appeared in the November issue was identified through its serial number by Paul Embleton. It is not of our village but of another Stansted (same spelling) near Brands Hatch in Kent. It nevertheless has a remarkable similarity to the view from the Farnham road towards the row of houses just N of Ridgewells garage in Birchanger.

Mention of the garage reminds me of the recent death of Michael Ridgewell. Michael, his sister Joan and his father Rowland, were near-lifelong residents of Birchanger and Stansted and partly but not wholly through their family business and the Parish Council made many friends in Stansted. It may be inevitable but it is none the less sad when these links with our recent past are lost.

The Huw Johnson Club's Christmas concert was again well attended and provided the expected crop of both intentional and incidental laughs. It has now earned a place in the annual calendar. Well done, Marion and members. Donations and the raffle raised £555, a wonderful reflection of the generosity of Stansted people.

The Editor

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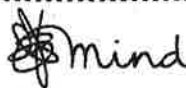
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Stansted Evening Women's Institute

Over 40 members came along to hear the speaker, David Edwards, at our December meeting, despite all the other things going on at this time of year. David Edwards is a glass engraver having first become interested in lettering as a boy at school and having a career in the RAF for 22 years. He met people along the way who got him into the art of engraving on glass and he eventually had his own business having retired from full-time work as an engineer. He brought along some wonderful examples of the dishes, wineglasses, vases and ornaments that he engraves with flowers, animals and pictures of all sorts, to the customers' own wishes - so that every piece is unique. His wife whom he met whilst serving in Wales actually comes from Bentfield End; she is one of the Turner family, and so it was her wish to return to the area once he retired. They now live at Takeley and David is still offering a service of engraving special gifts as well as appearing at craft shows where he does demonstrations.

Members were told of the very successful flower classes held in November and were able to admire the results with some photographs on display taken by Brenda Ryan. It was agreed that a different member would do the flowers each month for the President's table now that so many of us can!

Several members expressed a wish to attend next March's AGM at Southend, when David Shepherd and Gyles Brandreth will be speaking.

We are also planning a dinner in the summer to celebrate our 45th anniversary as an Institute in the village. The WI Movement as a whole will be 90 years old next year and many celebrations will take place over the whole country - how different things must have been in 1915.

We were entertained after the coffee break by three members: Margaret Chastney and Kath Johnson who read amusing poems and prose and Pearl Wellings who led us in carol singing.

Do come along and join us this year.

Judy Colliver

SNIPPETS 2

The Great Pothole Contest has languished as a result of some large-scale resurfacing during the past year, all of which has made us a safer place. There was for some weeks an intriguing hole at the top of Chapel Hill but even this spectacle has now gone. How long will it be before there is another anonymous void to excite our interest and slow the traffic?

The Link congratulates Francis Mercer on attaining his 80th birthday. Francis and Joan are two people who are seldom mentioned but do so much behind the scenes. Without folk like them Stansted would grind to a halt. The Editor



BENTFIELD SCHOOL PTFA



Essex County Council

The PTA had a very hectic end of term with their Christmas Fair. The afternoon was really enjoyable, getting us all in the Christmas spirit nice and early. Santa, as always, was a big hit with the children as were all of the many activities and games on offer.

The event raised £1,500 which is fantastic and brings our total raised this term alone to just short of £3,000.

This is a tremendous achievement and has only been possible through the hard work and generosity of the staff, pupils, parents and friends, so a huge 'thank-you' to everyone.

This money is going towards a substantial new play structure for our foundation stage playground and we are now well on the way to making this dream a reality!

Marnie Tait
PTFA Member



STANSTED & DISTRICT LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Our next ploughman's lunches will be on Saturday 8th January, and Saturday 12th February, 12 noon to 2.00pm, at the Stansted Day Centre. All are welcome.

Our first event in the New Year will be a cheese and wine party on Friday 21st January, 8.00pm onwards, at Churchmead, Widdington.

For further information, please ring 814222 or 813432.

Ruth Rawlinson



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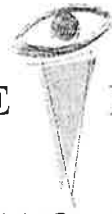
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REMINISCENCES CONTINUED

The most interesting reminiscences recorded by Mrs Pollard have certainly brought other readers' own memories of those times. It may be of interest that some advertisements, accounts or bills of those very shops and businesses mentioned have survived. Those so far found are being recorded, put together and hopefully will be preserved as part of our village history. An example of those that Mrs Pollard mentioned are: Green's Stores 1950, Central Hall 1910, The Barley Mow 1947, Herrington's 1927, R. Vercoe 1927, C. A. Houghton 1947. Perhaps occasionally others may be carried by the 'Link'. If any reader has such items they may like them included within the village collection.

Peter Brown

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*(Why don't the pubs advertise nowadays?
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would welcome a renaissance! Ed.)*



Aviation And Ponds - Impact On Toads And Frogs

We have just put a link on the SSE website (under 'what you can do') about a garden ponds survey to look at toads and frogs and the impact of aviation upon them. The work is being undertaken by students and lecturers at Brunel University. The link takes you to the following site where there is a simple questionnaire about your observations on ponds:

<http://dea.brunel.ac.uk/ife/research/projects/amphibian/survey.html>

If you or your friends and neighbours have ponds, you might like to take part.

THE JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THE AIR TRANSPORT WHITE PAPER STARTED 13TH DECEMBER

Plans for a second runway at Stansted and other proposals to expand passenger capacity at Heathrow and Luton airports could be stopped in their tracks or radically rethought if the first-ever Judicial Review of a Government White Paper, which started at the High Court on Monday, 13th December, is successful.

The challenge to the Air Transport White Paper has been mounted by a consortium consisting of Stop Stansted Expansion, the Heathrow campaign group HACAN, the Luton campaign group LADACAN and the London Boroughs of Hillingdon and Wandsworth. It is being heard in parallel with a second claim from a group of five Essex and Hertfordshire local authorities.

The High Court will hear evidence that the White Paper addressing the future of air transport over the next 30 years, published on 16th December 2003, was fundamentally flawed, that it reached its conclusions in material breach of the process which should have been followed in the consultation and made substantial changes in the course of the consultation which the public were not advised about and therefore were not able to comment upon.

The challenge by Stop Stansted Expansion and its partners will highlight four key flaws in the White Paper:

1. The absence of a commercial justification for a second Stansted runway, contrary to the Government's own requirements for the consultation
2. The failure to make clear in the consultation that the ending of runway alternation at Heathrow – a method of ensuring some respite from overflying for people living in West London – could be a short-term alternative to a third runway

3. The failure to consult on the extended runway proposals put forward for Luton (the consultation examined two completely different options for expanding the airport)

4. The failure to provide information to the public about alternative development proposals for airports which had been submitted or to give proper consideration to these options and the failure to inform or consult the public about other fundamental shifts in the Government's position which took place during the course of the consultation.

Regarding the development of a second runway at Stansted, one of the key criteria demanded by the consultation was that commercial viability was a "hurdle which must be passed for new and existing airport sites." It is clear that a second Stansted runway can only be commercially viable if cross-subsidised by Heathrow and Gatwick revenues – something which the Civil Aviation Authority has repeatedly made clear it is not prepared to sanction.

The challenge by the five local authorities, meanwhile, addresses the failure of the Government to carry out an environmental impact assessment before proposing development at Stansted and the fact that the White Paper is over-specific in determining the location of a second runway without such an assessment. It also attacks the White Paper on Stansted economic issues and the failure to consult on the extended runway proposals at Luton.

Speaking ahead of the court action, Peter Sanders, Chairman of Stop Stansted Expansion, said: "We do not underestimate the scale of the challenge before us because the courts have never before overturned a Government White Paper. "However, we believe that in this particular case we can clearly demonstrate to the High Court that the Government's enthusiasm to sanction massive airport expansion in the South East resulted in its bungling and bulldozing its way through to the White Paper, ignoring proper processes and its own groundrules and chopping and changing the issues under consideration without consulting or even informing the public of the changes."

"Our aim is to overturn the conclusions of the White Paper and force the Government to think again about the whole issue of airport expansion in the South East," he continued. "This action is just one element in our much broader campaign founded on challenging expansion through a range of legal avenues, the planning process and economic routes to defeat the unsustainable proposals once and for all."

The presiding judge, Mr Justice Sullivan, has set aside six days for the combined hearing although there will be further opportunities for the claimants' barristers (David Smith and Daniel Kolinsky) to input during the hearing of a separate but related third claim from property developer Persimmon, due to be heard from 20th January. A decision is not expected before February 2005.

Carol Barbone,
Campaign Director,
Stop Stansted Expansion
0777 552 3091
cbarbone@mxco.co.uk

Stansted Tennis Club



Christmas Dinner

Many thanks to the Bowls Club for providing such an excellent venue for the Tennis Club's annual Christmas dinner, which took place on Saturday 4th December. A delicious three course meal was provided by outside caterers and with a record 38 members attending it was the most popular Christmas meal for many years.

Club Open Sessions

All adult members are welcome to come along and join in any of the following open club sessions:

Sunday mornings from 9.30am

Wednesday mornings from 10.00am

Wednesday afternoons from 2.00pm

(please note the new time for the winter months)

Friday mornings from 9.30am

Coaching

Martyn Taplin is currently holding adult coaching sessions for club members who wish to improve their game. Two classes take place between 2.00-4.00pm on Saturday afternoons. Please call Martyn on 816386 if you would like to find out more or would like to join in.

Chris Hollis' junior groups are now restricted to Saturday mornings. These will continue until March when it will be light enough to play again during weekday afternoons. Chris will be available for individual lessons at various times during the day, so whether or not you are a current member of the club and are interested in having a lesson, please call Chris on 319155.

Half-price Membership

Why not take advantage of the half-price club membership, which runs from October to March? Just call Kate Rutter on 813053 for full details.

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

Chris Hollis



MONZE, ZAMBIA helping dreams come true

Visiting Stansted Castle, particularly during these wet cold days, brings home the hard conditions our forebears coped with. However, these buildings are very similar in construction to ones still in widespread use around the town of Monze, Zambia.

Next door in Bishop's Stortford is a reminder of that town's son and great entrepreneur, Cecil Rhodes, who left this world with De Beers and present day Oxford based Mandela Rhodes Foundation.


Despite the wealth behind de Beers, and the fortunate few through Rhodes Scholarships, education is still a privilege to those without parents in Zambia. The Monze Education Fund, a locally based registered UK charity, was established to support schools and orphaned pupils (caused through Malaria, TB and AIDS) in Monze, a town about the size of Stansted, nearly two hours drive from Victoria Falls. The charity is run by volunteers and this includes a Trustee based in Zambia who helps co-ordinate projects with the school. This ensures that practically every penny raised goes to those who need it. The Fund's philosophy is to support a culture of self help rather than nurturing one of dependence. For example, life saving mosquito nets (as part of the WHO, USAID and local UNICEF programme) are sold by Monze pupils – the profit (about 60p) from each net sold goes to the school and its orphans.

Supporters of the Monze Education Fund have run several events, the results of which are starting to make a



tangible difference to the kids in Monze. One new fund raising scheme provides CAA qualifying Charity Flights in a light aircraft, and all proceeds go to the Monze Education Fund. So if you would like a flight yourself or would like to mark a special occasion and treat someone then you could benefit two causes at the same time ! For more information contact tony@wood-and-co.com

If you would like to help MEF please contact mef@monze.com or call 01279 652766.




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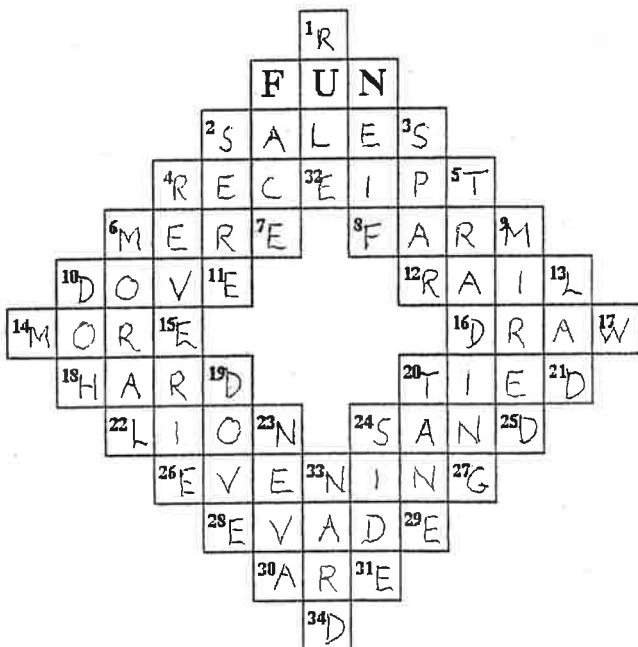
Admission is free; just come along.

EUREKA!

We are delighted that Carole Crosby has replied to our appeal for an illustrator. As you can see from our front cover, she brings much needed expertise to our pages. Welcome to the team, Carole.

ANSWERS TO THE FIRST CROSSWORD

We hope that you had a stab at the earliest known puzzle which was reproduced in our December issue.



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