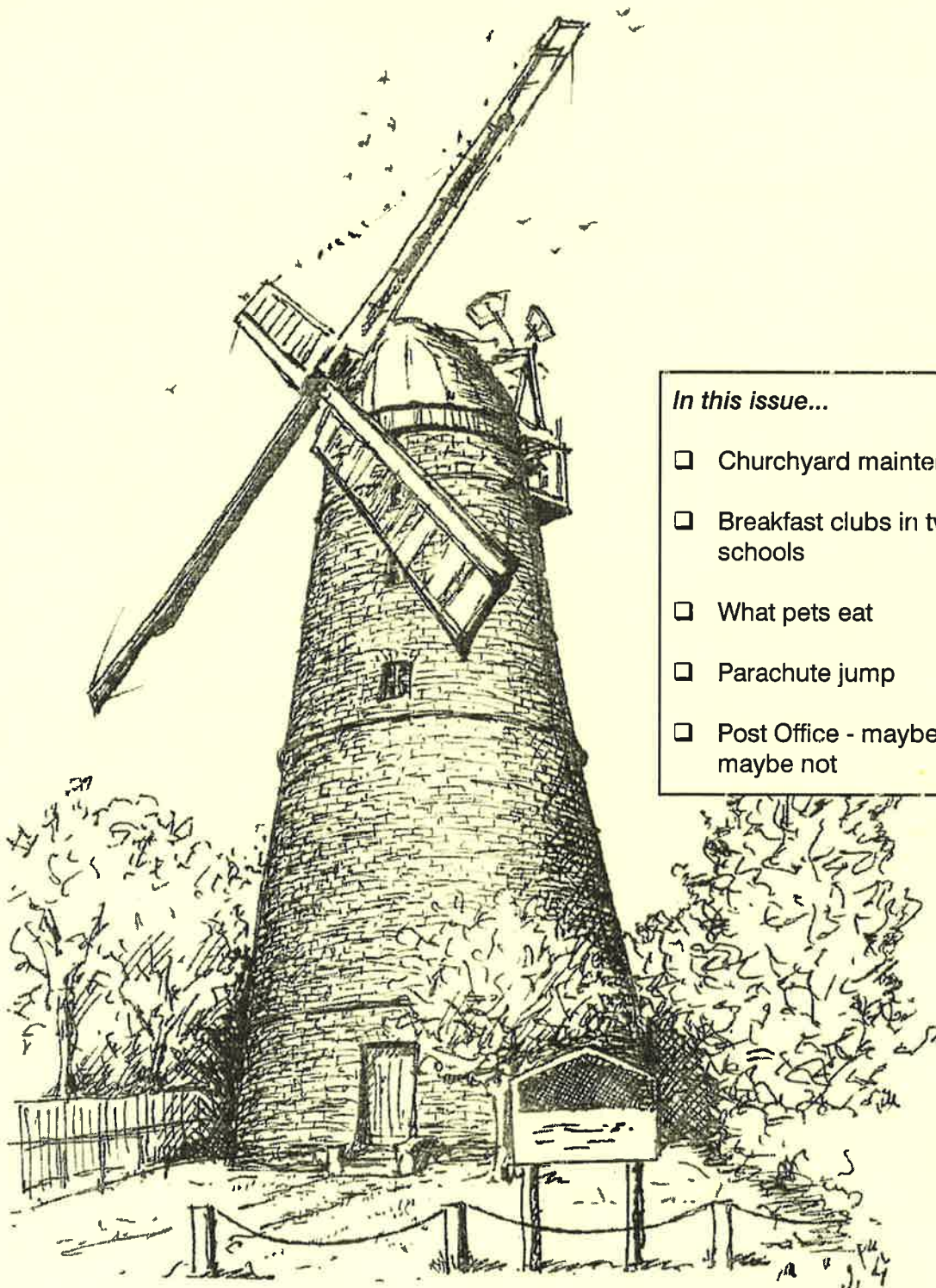


Stansted Mountfitchet

The Link



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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 July

3rd	2.30 pm	Rev'd David Simpson
10th	10.30 am	Mr G Doyle
17th	10.30 am	Rev'd David Simpson (with Methodists) Communion
24th	10.30 am	Julie Finbow (with Methodists)
31st	10.30 am	Miss Joan Kennett

Dates for your diary

3rd July	3.30 pm	Afternoon Tea. For lifts telephone 814850 or 812593
4th July	6.00 pm	Pilots for children 5-13 years. For information telephone 813433
18th July	2.30 pm	Monday Club, open to all. For information telephone 815137
18th July	6.00 pm	Pilots

Pilots' Service

On Sunday 12th June Pilots led the morning service in the United Reformed Church. About 12 Pilots were brave enough to be involved and they really enjoyed taking part. The theme was 'belonging' and as well as songs, readings, prayers and a sketch involving the congregation illustrating some of the work that they had been involved in during previous weeks at the Pilot evenings. Everyone had plenty of fun, sharing their ideas about 'belonging' and it was evident that the Pilots had many gifts to offer to family, friends and their Church.

During the last few weeks of this term the Pilots' programme will include a drama evening, a barbecue and a games evening.

New members will be very welcome to join us when we begin our meetings again in September. The Pilot organisation is for children and young people aged from 5 to 17 years.

All enquiries to Valerie Trundle 813433.

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 July

3rd	9.30am	Ros Page
10th	9.30am	Rev'd Keith Page
17th	10.30am	Joint Communion service at URC led by Rev'd David Simpson
24th	10.30am	Joint service at URC led by Julie Finbow
31st	9.30am	Christine Heyhoe

On Thursday 14th July at 8.00pm there will be a church fellowship meeting at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

Ever felt tired and weary – not being able to see the 'wood for the trees'? This was me a few weeks back. So a most welcome gift was two days and an empty diary! I managed to grab a short break away. Living near a busy airport is not always a blessing, but, for me, the new daily service to the Isle of Man is most convenient!

It was wonderful to be able to walk along the shore and look across and see clearly the Lake District – then to scan round and see the hills of southern Scotland. A retreat is not an escape. A change is as good as a rest. It is great to be quiet sometimes, to see different things, breathe in new air, and get a fresh perspective. Then, refreshed, back to the business of life and living.

A retreat offers some real time for prayer. I have developed a number of ways of praying over the years. I find it helpful to walk. I also find it beneficial to *say* (rather than *think*) my prayers. The problem with prayer is often that we don't know how to start, so I just simply start chatting to God. At first it does not make much sense, yet in just a few sentences, I get going famously! Jesus went on many retreats. The Gospels reveal how often He went off to pray. Not to escape reality, much more, to bring new perspective to what life is all about, and how to cope with our problems. Whenever we are seeking new perspectives, take time out to listen to God. It can be challenging. It is always a rewarding experience!

Rev'd Keith Page

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Holy Days of Obligation 8.00am and 8.00pm

Tuesday-Saturday 9.30am

Confessions

Saturday 10.00am
and by appointment

Baptisms By appointment

Restoring Relationships

A little while ago I attended one of the Aid Organisations' Area Conferences. I have also been, at the same time, a member of a discussion group looking at relationships with ourselves, with our Christian community, with the world and with God. Perhaps at first sight an area conference and a discussion group do not have anything, or very little, in common. Let us look first at the work of the Aid Organisation and its relationship with those who are in need, particularly in our own country.

If you are part of a minority group, your relationships with others outside your immediate group can be very tenuous, particularly if you have a handicap. For instance, the children of Afro-Caribbean families, or children in care, are more likely to miss out on education by not attending school; or again, families in areas of deprivation are more likely to miss out on the basic qualities of life. It is to these areas that Aid Agencies bring help.

Let us now look at our Christian relationships, first with ourselves. We all have many conditions that affect our relationship with ourselves: grief, anxiety, guilt, apathy - to mention only a few. Our relationship with our own Christian Community can be impaired by jealousy, 'one-upmanship', dislike and other human failings. In our relationship with the world, we can ignore the cry for help from others; turn the other way when faced with an unfamiliar situation, such as refugees needing help; or forget about areas of conflict, where a few moments of our time to send that card to our MP or a Government Minister would help raise awareness of the situation.

How about our relationship with God? Do we have a relationship with God - and if not, what keeps us from having one? There are the familiar things we know as Sin, but also other more meaningful things in life, such as our relationship with others, the 'looking the other way' when things happen which we don't want to get involved in, the refugee, the handicapped person .. the list can be endless.

However, for the 21st Century Christian, God's 'saving work' makes more sense, if one looks at it as being integrated with today's world. If one is faithful to convictions of justice, non-violence and the needs of the poor and downtrodden, then we return to a positive relationship with God. This brings me back to the beginning - if we recognise the needs of the many

minority groups in our lives, as helped by the various Aid Agencies, then we are recognising God in our world, and through this restoring our relationship with ourselves, with our fellow beings, with God.

The other day, I came across the Prologue from Edward Elgar's Oratorio 'The Apostles' (taken from Isaiah 61) and I think it sums up how we should live our lives in the 21st Century: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. To give unto them that mourn a garland for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

Francis Mercer

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

812410

Meeting Sunday, 11.00am

Some Friendly Advice

I read a lovely story recently about a person who went to a school to teach the children about his particular form of practice. His practice he said is merely his chosen way to live and respond to each moment of this very precious and short life that we have been given the privilege to live as human beings. Part of it involved a short lesson on a how to meditate.

He had brought along some tools of the trade in the form of a bowl-shaped gong. He asked the children to close their eyes for a minute and then he rang the gong. After a short while he asked them to open their eyes and then asked them not to shout out the answer but to raise a hand if they knew where the sound had gone. Each and every child thrust their hand up flicking the fingers (some with both hands) with enthusiasm and radiant smiles.

I'm not going to offer you any of the answers the children gave because that is not the point of this, but just STOP..... allow yourself a minute just to imagine how fresh, spontaneous and lively the mood in the classroom must have been at that point.

This feeling is the feeling we trade away every time we make a decision based purely upon 'making things easier for ourselves'. Our world is full of visual and aural displays offering us 'solutions' to make life 'easier'.

Do you think that if the classroom was filled with adults the atmosphere would be the same? What is it that we lose when we become members of the adult world? Each of us has the power to change the way our world is perceived, just as wearing shoes is as if the surface of the world were covered in soft rubber. Try it ... just listen.

Graham Thwaites



Pick and mix society?

Some thoughts about commitment

I have a friend who runs a workshop on spirituality for all comers – those of any religious persuasion or none. It is very popular. What has challenged my friend (herself a member of the Society of Friends) is the extent to which many seem to try one church or faith group for as long as it seems to them to be beneficial for them, and then move on to another. Along with banks and electricity suppliers, perhaps faith groups can no longer command any 'brand loyalty' as we all shop around for the 'best deal' in spiritual terms.

Now there is something in this that is no doubt very healthy. For too long, churches have been able to cater for those who are committed and neglect those outside who need to hear in terms they can understand the good news that we believe we have to share. And no doubt one could make a case for the argument that in matters spiritual, as in matters temporal, a bit of competition and a broad product range are no bad thing for the consumer . . . but hang on a minute. Are we really becoming 'consumers' in the arena of matters of faith? Is faith something that we can dip into and out of – *'Tired after a long week? Try a hot bath; a quick swim or maybe an hour's meditation'* ? Certainly meditation (and other forms of prayer) can be a way

of 'unwinding', but this is not all it is, and it seems to me to become problematic once we detach it from a context of commitment. What's more, we cannot assume that relationship with God (which is surely what spirituality is about, whatever the name we give to God) will be soothing and relaxing – it may well be deeply challenging and disturbing. Presumably this is the point at which we are encouraged now to move on, rather than staying and working through the questions the experience raises.

All this has got me thinking about the importance of commitment. Any of us who belong to organisations – whether spiritual or secular – for any length of time know something about commitment. We know about its downsides (like the fact that if you turn up for the meetings, you are likely to get landed with the jobs; like wondering why you don't seem to have free time like 'everyone else'), but we also know about the joys of it. And we know that some of the benefits and joys only come when we have stuck with it for a while. Part of my concern about the 'pick and mix' approach to life is that you miss out on those things – relationships with other members that have survived a few nasty moments, and the deepening shared understanding of what we are doing

contact us

all enquiries

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church.office@stansted.net

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(01223) 263640

church.music@stansted.net

website

www.stansted.net/stjohns

In and around St John's



Living the Questions is a course in Christian faith over twelve weeks. Using video clips from a number of eminent Christian thinkers and social activists, *Living the Questions* covers many of the ways in which Christian faith touches the everyday concerns of ordinary life. A new course will be starting in September, call Andrew on 812203, if you would like to know more.



The Life and Spirituality of Thomas Merton. Thomas Merton died in 1968. He was a member of a very strict Catholic order of monks which he went to after student days which were not very holy at all, and where he had begun to write. In the monastery he began to develop his gift, writing books on prayer and spirituality and then speaking out on civil rights, the Vietnam War, nuclear weaponry and peace. In his later years his focus turned to Hinduism, Buddhism and then Zen, leading him to seek dialogue with D T Suzuki in Zen and the Dalai Llama. There will be a housegroup in September looking at Merton's life and work. Six sessions will cover his biography, his spirituality, his writings during the Vietnam war and the Cold war, his social justice writing and his interfaith dialogue and mysticism. To sign up, call the Office or talk to Andrew.

• *Rector's Barbeque.* This year on **17th July**, proceeds to St John's young people's work. Tickets from the Church Office, book early to avoid disappointment - 815243 <church.office@stansted.net>

together.

Those are all things that faith groups and other organisations have in common. In matters of faith, my concerns about a 'pick and mix' approach go further. It is no accident that the major Christian rites with which most people are familiar (marriage, baptism, funerals) are all about commitment in one form or another. And the family meal of the Eucharist is really about God's commitment to us (now that is a truly amazing thought).

All this came to mind when I saw the final part of the recent TV series 'The Monastery'. I was very struck by the reactions of participants to the deep commitment that is acted out in the monastic life. By the time this magazine is in print, I will have been ordained as a priest – perhaps that's where all these musings about commitment come from. Not quite the same as entering a monastery (or a convent) but a pretty big commitment all the same. Perhaps faith hopping isn't such a bad idea after all . . . ? No, I don't think so.

CMC



26th - 29th August
Cheltenham Racecourse

The 2005 Greenbelt Festival
Benedictine monk Laurence Freeman on meditation; John Bell, from the Iona Community; Allan Boesak, veteran anti-apartheid campaigner; Richard Rohr, theologian; The BBC will be there for the first time, offering media workshops; The Reduced Shakespeare Company and so much more . . .

To join the Stansted expedition to Greenbelt this year, call the Church Office on 815243.



From the Registers

Baptisms

- May 15th Jessica Rosanna Roberts, Amy Olivia Marns, Emily Grace Marns

Funerals (at Parndon Wood crematorium)

- May 19th Gilbert Raymond Lilley (88)
- May 27th Anne Mary Smith (61)

Christian Aid

We believe in life before death

The amount raised in Christian Aid Week this year was £2086.17p. This is more than I had expected, as there were less collectors this year than in previous years. However those who gave were very generous and I am delighted with the result. The only disappointment was that some large donations were not gift aided, so Christian Aid is unable to claim almost 30% tax on these. I think some people cannot believe that the tax man really does give something for nothing!

Campaigning gets results!

Thanks to campaigning by Christian Aid supporters and others, the Commission for Africa report supports Trade Justice not free trade. Martin Drewry, head of campaigns at Christian Aid says it much better than I could – "I cannot overstate the importance of what has been said by the Africa Commission. More important still, I cannot overstate the importance of your contribution. It is clear that without your incredible and passionate campaigning – including protests, meetings, letters and postcards – this turnaround would not have happened."

The next hurdle is of course the G8 summit being held at Gleneagles at the beginning of July. It would be great if the G8 leaders could endorse the words of the Africa Commission's statement that "liberalisation must not be forced on Africa through trade or aid conditions."

As I write this, news has broken that world leaders, ahead of the G8 summit, have agreed to cancel the debt of the poorest countries. Christian Aid has been pushing for this in its 'drop the debt' campaign. If the G8 summit can agree fairer trade rules, then the future for Africa and other disadvantaged areas of the world will be much brighter. So keep sending the postcards, wearing the wrist bands and praying for justice for the poor and vulnerable.

Catherine Dean



Stansted Open Gardens for HEAL Cancer Charity

Once again, thanks to the generosity of Stansted's gardeners, 15 gardens will be open to the public between 2.00pm-6.00pm on Sunday 10th July. This is the sixth year of this event and, as usual, there are a wide range of gardens to be seen, large and small, from cottage to Mediterranean, providing ideas and inspiration - and all for £4 per person (accompanied children free).



As in previous years there is a mixture of old favourites and some which are opening for the first time. We look forward to seeing you - maybe you will spot the Blythwood Peacock on your walk! Programmes will be available on the day at Crafton Green or from the participating gardens, or can be obtained in advance from any HEAL committee member. For further information please telephone 813710.



SHALOM

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

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



Council Offices
Crafton Green
Tel 813214
Fax 813964

Meetings

Monday 4th July - we will have an evening with members of the Lydia Fellowship at the Quaker Meeting House.

Monday 18th July - poetry and music in the garden of 7 Blythwood Gardens, followed by a bring and share supper.

All meetings start at 8.00pm, and new attendees are assured a warm welcome.

Our 20th Anniversary celebrations take place in September. We have tried to send invitations to all those who have been associated with Shalom in the past. If we have accidentally left you out, and you would like details, please contact Marion Dyer on 814059.

The core group will meet on 11th July, and we would welcome suggestions for our future programme. Please let one of us know - Catherine Dean, Marion Dyer, Edna and Harry Goreing, Derek Honour, Mary Warnett and Alan Wheeler.

Catherine Dean 813579

RELAUNCH OF THE JOY CHARITABLE GIFT TRUST

Registered Charity No: 1025413

The Joy Charitable Gift Trust was formed in 1993 by a gentleman whose wife had been ill with Alzheimer's disease. Sadly this gentleman died some four years ago and the Trust has been dormant for that time. There is now a new board of Trustees who have relaunched this Trust to continue his good work.

When he was caring for his wife he was in a position to buy whatever help he needed but he realised there were many carers in a similar situation to himself but who were unable to afford the help they needed. Therefore his idea of the Gift Trust was to offer some financial help to these carers and patients.

The help the Trust can offer is in the form of small grants towards, for example, a piece of equipment, respite care, short breaks, etc. The Trust is unable to pay ongoing grants. If you are a patient with dementia or a carer who feels we may be able to assist, or if you would just like further information, please write to the following address:
PO Box 8998, Stansted CM24 8WY

All requests are dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner. We look forward to receiving your enquiry.

Valerie Reavell, Trustee

stansted.network

By the time you receive this edition of the 'Link', the new-style parish newsletter should have arrived, or be about to, through your letterbox. This is the first edition of stansted.network (in parallel with www.stansted.net, our website). Due to the lack of a digital camera, we have been unable to include photographs this time, but aim to correct that for the next one in the autumn. We are asking parishioners for their opinion on a variety of topics which are facing the Council, and any feedback would be appreciated and considered.

Playscheme

The main task ahead over the next few weeks is the organisation of the Summer Playscheme. Fortunately, Rachel Butterworth has agreed to be the Leader again this year, and we hope to run for three weeks from 25th July-12th August at St John's Church Hall. The scheme will be open primarily for 5-11 year olds, although older siblings (up to 14) may also be accommodated. We are currently looking for staff to work with Rachel as assistant leaders. The hours of work are 9.30am-4.00pm, although a job-share would be considered. Hourly rate is £5.60. Successful applicants will be CRB checked. In addition, we are looking for staff to supervise the lunch period to enable the leaders to take a break. Cover is required from 12 noon-1.30pm. If you are interested in receiving further details, please contact Ruth Clifford at the earliest opportunity.

Fountain

The keen eyed amongst you will have noticed that the railings around the fountain are once more complete!

Churchyard

For those of you who are not aware, the Parish Council organises the grass cutting contract at St Mary's Churchyard, and contributes 60% towards the cutting costs. (That is where our responsibility ends!) Due to confusion with the contractor, who had forgotten that he had entered a three-year contract, the first cut has become long overdue. By the time you read this 'Link', I hope that the situation will have been rectified. If not, please rest assured that the matter is in hand.

Mrs Ruth Clifford, Parish Clerk
ruth.clifford@stansted.net



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St Mary's Primary School
SUMMER FAYRE
Saturday 2nd July
12 noon - 3 pm

FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT (OPEN TO ALL)
STOCKS ~ TOMBOLA
BBQ ~ STRAWBERRY TEAS
MESSY LUCKY DIP

For more details tel 812212

St Peter's Church Ugley
'Duet'
Sara Grimshaw (soprano)
J. John Moorman (tenor)
present a selection of popular music
7.30 pm Saturday 2nd July
Tickets from 01799 543480
or Stansted Carpets (from 1st June)
£12.50 incl glass of wine & nibbles
Proceeds to Church restoration fund

UGLEY GARDEN FETE
2 - 4.30 pm Sat 9th July
Raffle ~ White Elephant ~ Cakes
Dog Show ~ Plants ~ Games
Nearly new ~ Tombola ~ Books
BBQ ~ Teas & much more ...
... in the lovely gardens at
The Cottage, Snakes Lane

VILLAGE EVENTS

July			
2	Sat	Summer Fayre 'Duet' in concert	St Mary's School noon - 3 pm St Peter's Church, Ugley 7.30 pm
3	Sun	Windmill Open Afternoon Tea (after service)	2 - 6 pm U R Church 3.30 - 5 pm
4	Mon	Shalom Group	Quaker Meeting Hse 8 pm
6	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm Day Centre 8 pm
7	Thu	Bookstart	Stansted Library 2.15 - 2.45 pm
9	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's Ugley Garden Fête Village Music Club Soirée	Day Centre noon - 2 pm The Cottage 2 - 4.30 pm St John's Church 6 pm
10	Sun	HEAL Gardens Open	2 - 6 pm
9	Sat / 10	Sun Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
14	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
16	Sat	Music in the Park	Bentfield School 2 - 8 pm
17	Sun	Parish Barbecue	Rectory garden 12.30 pm
18	Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
20	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
23	Sat	SK8 Fest	Lower Street car park 11 am - 4 pm
23	Sat / 24	Sun Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
24	Sat	Village Glyndebourne	70 The Street, Manuden 6.30 pm
August			
3	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
6	Sat / 7	Sun Green waste, metal & wood	Lower Street car park 9 am - 3 pm
7	Sun	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm



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MUSIC
in the park
Saturday 16th July
2pm - 8pm
live music all afternoon
bouncy castle ~ games
BBQ ~ beer tent
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Last month we heard from our Headteacher, Wendy, about her working holiday in Kenya. We often hear about the work the PTFA do in raising much needed funds for the school. This month it is my turn to give an insight into the way the Governing body is involved in the running of the school. For those of you who do not know me, my husband and I have lived in the village for 40 years and I have taught at St Mary's three times during my career, finally retiring in 1997. Needless to say I have seen many changes in teaching methods and taught quite a few Stansted folk!

I had been a teacher governor for several years and was delighted to be asked to carry on as a Diocesan representative when I retired. I have now been Chairman for five years through which time I think St Mary's has experienced some of its greatest changes. Although it is now a smaller school it is buzzing with activity. As you enter the front door at the moment you are met by a rainforest collage which was created by every member of the school and so they all feel justifiably proud of it. The school motto is boldly displayed above the door - "caring, sharing, preparing for life" - which leaves you in no doubt what goes on here. It sets the tone for everything you see happening in the classroom. When you talk to the children they are very confident and usually tell you that the Headteacher's favourite word is learning. You get the impression that it is their favourite word too and they are in no doubt as to what their targets are and where they are displayed on the classroom walls.

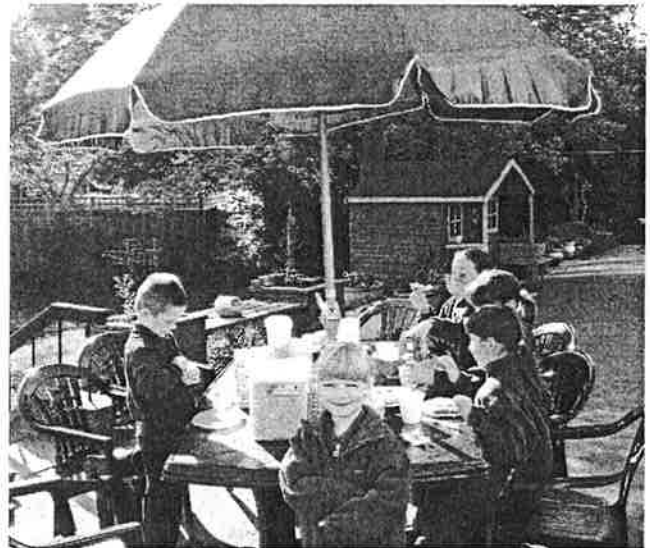
So how do the governors contribute to the life of this vibrant school? We are gradually becoming more involved in the strategic planning for the school by joining with staff and parents to formulate new policies. We visit the school to talk to the children about many aspects of their school life, look at the work they are doing and talk to the teachers. Each year we produce an annual report for parents so that they know we are fulfilling our statutory duties. Of course the Headteacher and the staff deal with the day to day running of the school so our job is more a monitoring role.

We are very fortunate at St Mary's to have a dedicated Headteacher and a hardworking staff who have worked as a team to improve the learning and teaching. The Governing body help to support them by keeping closely in touch with the school in many different ways, which we feel is a great privilege.

Rosemary Minshull

Crunchy Munch Club

The Breakfast Club at St Mary's Primary School has been running since the beginning of January. It provides breakfast for up to 16 children every morning in a family atmosphere. Children are learning important social skills as they interact with older or younger children around the breakfast table. A wide range of food is on offer with the emphasis being on healthy eating. Fruit salads and smoothies have been particularly popular. In good weather children have the opportunity to eat outside around our patio table, enjoying breakfast in the sunshine.



After breakfast children take part in a range of activities, both indoor and outdoor, including swingball, jenga, arts and crafts, crazy maze and dance mat. The children who attend Breakfast Club absolutely love it. They are able to eat a good breakfast in a caring environment, are learning to interact with older and younger children and are encouraged to take responsibility for clearing up. At a recent open morning for parents many remarked on the politeness between the pupils and what a good breakfast they were all eating. We have enjoyed several themed breakfasts, including Pancake Day and Red Nose Day. In July we are looking forward to celebrating an American one.

Vicki Brice

John Evans (Jo)

Elizabeth is very grateful for all the kind messages of sympathy and to all friends who came to the Church for Jo's funeral and for the many contributions to the Stroke Unit Fund at Princess Alexandra Hospital.

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BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

For many years the school has had a very successful After School Club run by Sue Pollard. Now, in addition, we have a new **Breakfast Club** which runs before school starts in the morning. Run by Carol Neylon, this is proving to be very popular. Our children can now be cared for at both ends of the working day!

As the summer sun fills the playground our children run with glee onto the large playing field shaded by mature trees. Packed lunches can be eaten, picnic style on benches or on the ground and ball games played enthusiastically in the open area. This is a busy time of year. Class 6, most of whom are enjoying their last few weeks at the school, have walked to Mountfitchet High School for lessons with specialist teachers in both ICT and Science. Uttlesford District Council has been running its very successful Health and Sport programme with the class under their instructor Dave. This has been a very fun way to learn about the body and how it works, together with how to live and eat healthily. Continuing with the sports theme, our Rounders team have been playing inter-school friendlies against Henham and Ugley and Howe Green Schools. We sent two teams to the Hockey Tournament played at Newport Free Grammar School.

Class 5 have had a series of visits from Angela Rodda, drama teacher from Saffron Walden County High School, in support of their course work on the Ancient Greeks. They performed a play to the upper school, outside in the Greek fashion of course! Our Foundation Stage have been out and about. The Nursery went to Henham Garden Centre and Reception spent a beautiful sunny day at Linton Zoo.

The waiting is finally over! Yes, it is time for **Music in the Park**. For those of you who don't know, we're holding this annual event on Saturday 16th July from 2.00pm-8.00pm. This is one village event not to be missed. We have a fantastic line up of bands this year with music to suit all tastes and plenty to get us all up dancing. You can bring a picnic and spend the afternoon relaxing with friends whilst being entertained by some of our best local musicians. We also have a BBQ and Bar to 'top up' the picnics, plus bouncy castles and games for the children. Tickets are available from the school office, any PTA member or by ringing 647650. Please come along and join us for what promises to be a fantastic family day out.

Marnie Tait



RT HON SIR ALAN HASELHURST MP INTERVIEWS

Friday 8 July 5.45 – 6.30 pm
Parish Council Office, Crafton Green, Stansted

Friday 2 September 5.45 – 6.30 pm
Foakes House, Town Council Office, 47 Stortford Road, Dunmow

If anyone is requiring any assistance please telephone 01799 506349 and we will do our best to help you.

Happy Birthday SYBIL



90 years young on 2nd July 2005

Born in 1915 to Ernest and Nellie Turner, Sybil was their only daughter. Her mother died when Sybil was 13 and she left school to run the family home for her father and elder and younger brothers. Ernest was a farm worker (later a gardener at Shortlands), and life in Stansted was hard for most families. A bright child at school, she did not let her shortened education dampen her enthusiasm for learning, and to this day is still an avid reader of a wide range of books. What little leisure 'teens and twentys' had in those days was spent walking to Ugley Village Hall for dances. With the coming of the Second World War her two brothers were called to serve in the Army, and during this difficult time Sybil met and married Thomas Eagleton, a Bombardier in the army, but by 1944 was left a war widow with two young sons.

Fiercely independent, Sybil worked hard to make a life for the family, firstly by working in the larger houses in the village, then later in the Co-op butchery in Cambridge Road (now an off-licence) where, despite her small stature, she could be seen humping sides of beef to the chopping block. She later moved over the road to the general Co-op stores where she worked until failing eyesight forced her retirement at 65. She also found time to be a Sunday School Teacher, Akela to the thriving Cub Pack, and later helped with the catering at the Day Centre.

Throughout her life, Sybil has never complained about her lot, and is a wonderful example to her sons, daughters in law, grandchildren and great grandchildren who love her dearly, and are immensely proud of her achievements. At the age of 90, and still living in the house she was born in, she must now be one of the oldest original Stansted residents.

Happy Birthday, Sybil.



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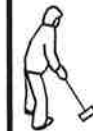
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PET POISONING AND THE FLEA SEASON

We have had several anxious enquiries in the last few weeks about an article that appeared in a national newspaper recently. The article was about lily poisoning in cats. A cat had licked lily pollen from its fur after brushing past a vase of flowers and had died as a result. There are many plants that are poisonous to animals - narcissi, euphorbia, poinsettia, acorns and viburnum to name a few, but the incidence of poisoning is very low. Lilies have come to the forefront because of their recent popularity as a cut flower. Most cases of poisoning in cats have been due to them eating the leaves and flowers. The toxins in the lily cause kidney failure and if you suspect your cat has eaten any part of the lily plant, you should ring your vet immediately. However it should be stressed again that the incidence of poisoning is very low.

It just goes to show that we can't always control what our pets choose to eat. One such example was Barney, a cheeky 12-week-old Labrador puppy. His owner brought him to the surgery one morning as he had been vomiting all night. He looked very miserable and his tummy was definitely painful. An x-ray revealed what looked like a foreign body in his stomach. We operated the same day and removed half a corn cob. When we told his owner, she remembered that in true Labrador style Barney had been hoovering up after a barbecue the previous evening! Barney made a good recovery and went home wagging his tail a couple of days later. Ten days later we took his stitches out and he had made a complete recovery. A week later Barney was back, again looking very poorly and having been vomiting all night. Another x-ray revealed a possible blockage and this time we removed a sock from his small intestine. Some animals just never learn!

Over the years I have been amazed at the variety of objects we have removed from the insides of various pets. These have included a large number of stones, golf balls, squash balls, walnuts, several items of jewellery, enough socks to keep my feet warm for a good few months, ring-pulls from cans, a toe exerciser (!?) and several pairs of pants. The nicest pair was black and lacy and the dog belonged to a very large man with many tattoos!

Just a reminder that the flea season is here again. We've seen a number of itchy cats and dogs in the last couple of weeks. Next month I hope to tell you all about fleas and how best to control them. However the most important thing is always to get your flea products from a vet. Supermarkets and pet shops are not allowed to sell prescription only medicines, and it is these products that are the most effective. Every year we get people who have spent a fortune on supermarket flea products only to find their pets still have fleas. Come to us first and we can sell you the correct product for your situation and the advice is free. We can even apply the product for you if you find it difficult. Sounds like a good excuse to come in for a chat with Sally and Jan!

Ilse Pedler
Partner, Mercer & Hughes, Veterinary Surgeons



The National Childbirth Trust
Education for Parenthood

The National Childbirth Trust (or NCT) is a charity offering information and support in pregnancy, childbirth and early parenthood. It achieves this through running antenatal classes, having enquiry/advice lines, and organising activities for mums and children. The Stansted and District branch which covers Stansted, Elsenham and Henham as well as other surrounding villages, currently has around 50 members and we are always looking out for new people to join us.

The summer is finally here and we have lots planned to keep you and your little ones busy over the next few months. There is something for everyone with events for July and August including a nature reserve walk, a paddling pool party, a cream tea afternoon, a teddy bears' picnic at Audley End and two seaside trips to Frinton. Hope to see you at some of these events!

Advance warning of our next **Nearly New Sale: Saturday 15th October**. Put it in your diaries now and start sorting out the unused clothes and toys, ready to sell on the big day!

Our three coffee groups continue to meet regularly: **Tiddlers and Tums** for pregnant mums and those with babies or children who are not yet walking; **Toddlers** for mums with children who are walking confidently, and **Pre-school** for the older children. We ask for donations of 50p per family for these coffee events and many of the other activities are only £1 per child. You do not have to be a member to come along to any of our events, so do feel free to come along and join in.

If you would like to receive a free listing of events being held during the summer or if you want any further information about the NCT or our branch, please email StanstedNCT@skygod.demon.co.uk or phone the branch enquiry line on 0870 4211508. If you would like to book for our popular antenatal classes, call Sandra (early in your pregnancy) on 0870 7656284.

Vanessa Gibbons



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MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

At the June meeting, Mr. Brian Creasey gave an interesting illustrated talk on 'The Garden Restoration and History of Easton Lodge'. Until the 16th century the estate was the site of a royal hunting lodge. In 1590 Queen Elizabeth I gave the estate to Henry Maynard, who built a mansion in 1597 and made many additions and improvements to the mansion and the grounds in the first half of the 17th century. In 1847 a major fire severely damaged the Elizabethan house. Only the Jacobean wings remained, so the house was rebuilt in 1848.

In 1865, when she was just three years old, Frances Evelyn Maynard inherited the estate from her grandfather. This was to the dismay of her older relatives who demonstrated their displeasure by throwing pats of butter at the latter's portrait during the reading of the will. She married at 21 and became the Countess of Warwick ('Darling Daisy'). As Countess she became well known as a socialite, not least for her scandalous liaison with Edward, Prince of Wales. Later in life she became known for her socialist beliefs, and indeed in the 1920s tried to give Easton Lodge to the Labour Party and the TUC, but neither took up the offer. In the 1890s the Countess laid out gardens around a small cottage in the deer park, Stone Hall, about one and a half miles from the main house.

In 1902 the Countess engaged Harold Peto to redesign the gardens of Easton Lodge. Peto set about creating a garden fit for a Countess and her high society friends. Formal lawns and borders, a yew walk, wooden pergolas, an Italian garden with balustraded pool, a Japanese garden and a lime avenue with its own tree house demonstrated both Peto's passion for architecture and a combination of French and Italian influences. By 1903, the new garden design had been completed, the remains of which provide the framework for the gardens today.

Harold Peto's tree house was built in an oak tree believed to be between four and 500 years old. Built specifically for adults, it provided a vantage point from which the Countess and her friends could view the Essex countryside. Unfortunately, it fell into total decay in the 1980s but it is hoped that it will be restored in time.

In 1918, another fire, allegedly started by the Countess' monkey, severely damaged the Jacobean wings. These were rebuilt and Lady Warwick moved into the West Wing. At the beginning of World War II the estate was requisitioned by the War Office. After the Army moved on in 1943, an airfield was constructed for the USAAF. 10,000 to 12,000 trees were removed to make way for the runways. In 1944 the Americans were replaced by two RAF squadrons. Tom Johnson, a well-known Stansted resident, remembers flying from there in a Horsa glider. After the war the site became a vehicle storage depot for the Army. In 1947 it is known that there were 34,000 vehicles parked there! In 1950 the estate was returned to the family.

In 1950, Maynard Greville, who was a respected arboriculturalist, demolished the Victorian additions to the mansion and started to create an arboretum. He died in 1960 and most

of the property and stonework was sold off, the gardens completely abandoned and nature took over.

In 1971, Brian and Diana Creasey purchased the West Wing. The house came with approximately one and a half acres of land, which they set about reclaiming from the jungle of brambles, briars, nettles and the concrete foundations belonging to the old kitchens and stable block. This new work has included a fishpond, a pergola, sunken lawn, conservatory and rock garden. In 1993, a further four and a half acres were acquired. This land had been totally neglected for around 45 years and the whole area was covered in brambles, nettles, fallen trees and many unwanted saplings (many over 50 feet high). During the next three years the whole area was cleared and about 200 trees felled. Lawns were re-laid, flower beds created and the pavilion restored with its own newly constructed pool and surrounding garden. A rose walk was created in front of the old balustrade of the house. In 1995 the remainder of the gardens were leased from the Countess' descendants. By 1996 the overgrown Italian Garden was cleared and the original borders were marked out in preparation for permanent planting. Many plant labels were found at the bottom of the Italian pool allowing it to be replanted with water-lily species that grew there originally.

A central feature of the Countess' cottage garden at Stone Hall was a yew and box living sundial, about 30' diameter and 14' high. Although the garden is no more, a replica of the sundial has been recreated on the south lawn of Easton Lodge as a unique millennium project. Mr. Creasey finished his talk by saying that at the present time the future of the gardens is threatened by expansion plans for Stansted airport.

At the end of the talk the Chairman, David Loynds, thanked Mr. Creasey for his interesting talk and said that it was good that there are people like him who are prepared to give time and money to preserve our past.

The Chairman then announced that at the last Committee meeting it had been decided that a 'Give and Take Stall' for any gardening related items would be introduced. The next meeting will be held at the Day Centre at 8.00pm on Wednesday 6th July, when Mr. Ken Collins will talk about 'The Gibberd Garden Trust, Old Harlow'. Please join us. Admission for non-members is 75p. Alternatively the annual membership (May - April) costs £7 single or £11 joint.

David Loynds



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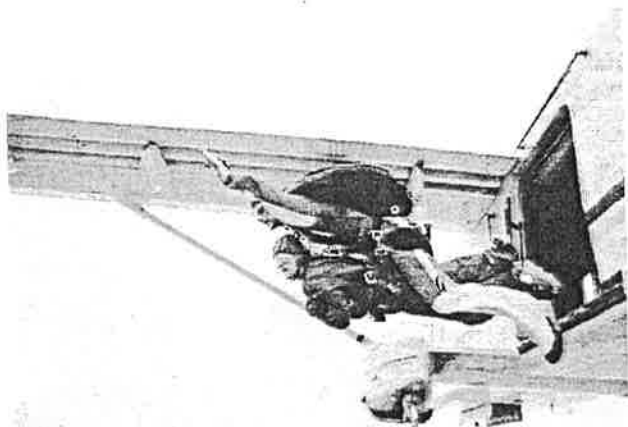
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Myself on the way

As many of you may know, myself, my son Alan and his friend Mark undertook to jump out of a 'plane on behalf of the above charity. So many people have suffered from MND in Stansted and the courage and determination of a personal friend suffering from the disease was the inspiration that led to this fund raising effort.

I am delighted to say that all went well and, though possibly not something I personally would make a habit of, it was an incredible experience which I am very proud to have undertaken.

Sponsorship for the jump has been fantastic, and I would like to say a huge thank you to all who have been so generous, and to those people who have helped find sponsors, coming from far and wide, as well as locally. The final total may not be known for some time, but is likely to be in the order of some £2,000, with which I am obviously delighted.

Thanks to you all for your support.

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DAYS OF THE WEEK 4. TUESDAY

Roman dies Martis - the day of Mars, God of War
In French Mardi
German - Dienstag

We take the name from the Saxon Tiu, the god of war and the sky. Old English Tiwesdaeg was from the Norse Tyr (son of Odin) or the Germanic Tiwaz. He was an ancestor god of mythology, depicted as an old sage dressed in animal skins and bearing a sceptre in his hand. It was said that he was the only one brave enough to approach the wolf Fenris whose open mouth stretched from sky to earth. Tiu managed to overcome it but had a hand bitten off in the process.

We all know of our traditions of Shrove Tuesday, or Pancake Day, when eggs and dairy products had to be eaten up before the Lenten fast. The Russians had Pancake Week, 'Maslenitsa' from the Russian word for butter, with a different celebration or party on each day. Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) is celebrated in many parts of the world with carnivals culminating on that day. Carne-vale - goodbye to beef!



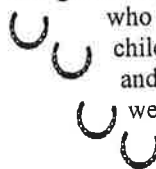
On the Tuesday of Easter week, at St Michael's Church, Bristol, children who attend morning service are given large spicy buns. Under a bequest of 1739 this was originally meant only for the choirboys who, as a special treat, had 'Tuppenny Starvers', much bigger than the usual penny buns.

In Romania, Tuesday is generally considered a bad day and if it rains it will rain all the week. On Tuesday you should not begin a journey, ask a girl to marry you, get married, or move house or you will be ill and no important work should be started then. If a woman washes her hair on Tuesday she will lose her husband and if she makes soap, risks being thrown into the boiling water. You have been warned!



Greek people also believe that Tuesday is the unluckiest day of the week. It was on Tuesday 29th May 1453 when the city of Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks. If Tuesday falls on the 13th of the month that is particularly unlucky, in the same way as Friday 13th is regarded by others.

Hock Tuesday, which falls in the week after Easter (Hocktide), is still celebrated in Hungerford, Berkshire. Appointed officials known as Tuttimen, who once collected tithes, parade carrying decorated poles with an orange on top. They are accompanied by an Orange Scrambler who trades oranges for kisses or a penny fine. A lunch follows for VIPs who then have horseshoes nailed to their shoes, and children outside the Town Hall are given oranges and hot pennies. So it says on the West Berkshire website or who would believe it!



Peggy Honour

Stansted Tennis Club



Primary boys' singles tournament

Thirteen primary aged boys competed for this year's singles trophy which was held on Sunday 23rd May. The boys were split into an older and a younger age group, in which all competitors within each group played three games against everyone else. The older group was won by Thomas Taplin and the younger age group by Henry Kirby. Next followed the knockout stage, where the players were seeded according to their performance in the round-robin stage. The quarter final results were:

Thomas Taplin beat Richard Berry 4-1
Lawrence Hogg beat Jack Willson 4-2
Joe Hollis beat Henry Kirby 4-1
Alex Lupton beat Christian Holmes 4-2

In the semi finals Thomas Taplin beat Lawrence Hogg 4-2 and Alex Lupton beat Joe Hollis by the same score. After a very gruelling afternoon of tennis, it was Alex who had that little extra remaining as he beat Thomas 4-1 in the final.

Forthcoming diary dates

Sunday 26th June

Paul Bristow junior doubles tournament

Sunday 10th July

Clower secondary boys' singles tournament

Club tournament and hospital cup tournament

The draws for these are now up on the club notice board. Please could all participants be aware of the matches they need to play. This is a very busy couple of months with a lot of matches to be arranged.

Open adult sessions

We are always looking for new faces to come along and join in these sessions, which are held on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday mornings as well as Wednesday afternoons.

Coaching

Chris Hollis 01279 319155 and Martyn Taplin 01279 816386 are both available for coaching at the club; please phone either for more information. Chris runs the junior groups during the week and on Saturday mornings, and is also available for mid-week individual or group adult lessons. Martyn runs two Saturday afternoon adult sessions and is also available for individuals.

Tennis balls

These are available at the cost of £1 for a tube of four from Janet Hollis at 105 Cambridge Road, Stansted.

If you would like to find out more about the club, please telephone Richard Mott (Secretary) 466348, Janet Hollis (Chairman) 812073 or Kate Rutter (Membership Secretary) 813053.



An evening of exciting music featuring talented young musicians is promised at our **Summer Soiree**, on Saturday 9th July at 6.00pm in St John's Church. There will be live jazz in the gardens during the interval. Tickets £12 adults, £6 children available from Stansted Carpets, Chapel Hill or Sonia Levy 31 Chapel Hill, telephone 815282.

Ten years old ...

January 1996 saw the Village Music Club's inaugural concert with Howard Davis and other musicians performing a varied programme of music accompanied by Sonia Levy. On Sunday 29th January 2006 at 3.00pm we shall be celebrating our birthday when we shall welcome back Bernard Roberts, international pianist and for many years a Professor of Music at The Royal College of Music. He will be playing works by Mozart, Beethoven, Rachmaninov and Schubert. The previous day at 4.00pm Bernard will be holding a Master Class for selected local piano students.

Other concerts next season are

Saturday 29th October 2005 at 7.30pm

Jack Liebeck – violin, Timothy Hughes – 'cello, and Charles Owen – piano

Sunday 4th December 2005 at 3.00pm

Morgan Szymanski – Guitar

Saturday 25th March 2006 at 7.30pm

The Coull String Quartet

Membership for next season is now available: Individual £30, Concession (pensioners over 60 and university and college students) £28. Present members who renew before 31st July can do so at the discounted rates of £28 and £25. Apply please to The Membership Secretary, The Village Music Club, c/o Little Fosters, Cambridge Road, Stansted CM24 8BY.

Alan Corbishley



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

On any day when there is a brisk south-westerly, you may see the sails turning; this happened once in June and excited local interest. We hope to have your interest again when the annual Windmill Fête comes around on Bank Holiday Monday 29th August. It is one of Stansted's popular summer events, so please come and join us.

Derek Honour



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COEXIST

(Church Of England eXiles In Search of Truth)

A New Village Society?

Our rector's diary for early May prompts the possible formation of a new interest group - 'COEXIST'. Why? Because some of us would like to avoid party politics in the Church and prefer the, perhaps old fashioned, tradition of parish priests, like village schoolteachers, avoiding public involvement in them. Similarly, for many years the local political parties have observed a self-denying ordinance of keeping politics out of the 'Link'. It does not seem right for our parish priest, who has a responsibility for all people in his parish, to use his position to break those traditions.

Although I was not the member of the Conservative old guard who 'spotted' the Rector on Election Day I certainly relate to that man's nostalgia for traditional values and at least some of the morality of the Bible - a book conspicuous by its absence in St John's; as is the title 'Church of England' from the 'Link'. It is hard to recall any priest publicly declaring himself to be one of only two Socialists in our village, or proclaiming his voting intentions to his wider congregation. To pronounce that only one political party has 'the right policies', or to imply that the Prime Minister of the day is a war criminal would have been regarded as 'just not on'.

Similarly, to condemn over a third of the our nation's electorate, rather more among Stansted's parishioners, as 'collectors items' or to imply that they just do not care about economic oppression, rampant hunger or fraudulent interest rates, is wrong. I for one hate such inequities but have learned that the political policies our Rector espouses usually result in their getting worse. Patronisingly to suggest that younger Conservatives make no pretence of representing Christian civilisation is, perhaps arrogantly, to assume that there can only be one model for that civilisation and that no other point of view is worthy of consideration.

For some time now it has seemed that there is no room for 'dissenters' from the latest fad, political or otherwise, in our Parish Church. Certainly in discussions I have had with the Rector I do not believe it is my eyes that have glazed over nor me that has been the brick wall to communication. Frankly I am neither much interested in, nor edified, by the marginally offensive slang of the Rector's 'mates' and would prefer to see more emphasis on dignity, decency, good manners and respect for all, irrespective of their legitimately-held points of view. Those who share these concerns may contact me on 812022. Thank you.

Editor's note

The Mission Statement of the 'Link' includes "item 7. It shall not publish party political propaganda or any matter of an anti-religious or offensive nature." The Editor does not consider that this principle has been infringed, but is aware that any material referring to a political party has to be handled with sensitivity and asks that all contributors compile their copy accordingly.

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**Stansted
Evening
Women's Institute**

The month of June brought a special event in the calendar of the WI Movement as a whole, being the 90th Anniversary of the founding of the WI and a very special AGM at the Albert Hall on the 8th. Four of us were lucky enough to attend this meeting with our delegate Rosemary Minshull, who represented three other Institutes in our area. We got the 8.06am train from Stansted and arrived with the commuters at Liverpool Street about 9.00am, where we decided to take a taxi and were driven through London in style to join the thousands already queuing to get in. The taxi driver took one look and said he would make a hasty retreat until I told him that Jane Fonda was coming along to speak later!

Non-delegates had seats as far up as you can go, so we had a wonderful birds-eye view of the Albert Hall and the 6,000 or so other members. You have to be there to appreciate the sound of all these women singing 'Jerusalem' accompanied by the organ. We were somewhat surprised to find on every seat a wonderful free gift of a large black canvas bag, filled with leaflets, postcards, a pen, chocolate and a drink - courtesy of the Post Office who were 'proud to be sponsoring this event for the WI'. We wanted to tell them that we would rather have our Post Office back again!

The meeting was its usual high standard; the two resolutions concerning Care of our Environment and Farm Milk Prices were both carried with an over 99% majority. Jane Fonda spoke passionately about her work with the Third World and teenage pregnancy. As you can imagine the press were there in full to cover her part in the day - a pity they did not remain to hear Julia Unwin from the Food Standards Agency and her work with supplying mobile buses to schools so that children can again get some experience of hands-on cooking.

We also enjoyed Baroness Helena Kennedy who came straight from a court hearing to speak on miscarriages of justice (before going off to the House of Lords) and Bill Bryson who has returned to live in England because he loves our sense of humour as well as our country. He is at present engaged with English Heritage in a campaign to tidy up the streets of Britain. Apparently there are 29 agencies who can put up boards without permission. The WI is helping with this project and some of our members will be going around Stansted to identify areas which need improvement.

At our own June meeting, Brian Darcy spoke on living with ghosts in the Tower of London. With the aid of slides he had taken, he told of his many years as a yeoman warder living in Queen's House, showing the public around and telling them ghost stories, which would not be hard to believe on a dark January night when the Tower is locked and no-one can get out! Worryingly it mostly seemed to be women who walked about headless and who had met their fate on the block. He eventually became the curator and warden of the Jewel House before retiring some five years ago.

We are sending nine knitted blankets to various countries in Africa through the charity 'Feed the Children' and hope to knit jumpers for this cause too. Next month we are having a cookery demonstration called 'Something Different' so why not come along and see if it is!

Judy Colliver 812470



**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

The annual summer outing on Saturday 4th June took the form of a visit to Horham Hall near Thaxted, opened by special arrangement. Whilst it is regarded as one of the finest brick Tudor houses in Essex many of us were also impressed by the selection of pictures and furniture, none of which seemed out of place. It was apparent that it is a family home with a delightful blend of unspoilt history and modern facilities.

The Hall was begun before 1520, enlarged circa 1575-1580 and again added to in 1660. We were able to see at close quarters the oriole window that receives much architectural acclaim, as do the splendid Tudor chimneys. It has a large hall with an interesting quatrefoil frieze, together with a screen passage. There is a parlour where Queen Elizabeth received an overture of marriage from the Duke of Anjou and a bedroom in the north wing where the good Queen genuinely slept on two occasions.

The well kept gardens, lake and moat make a suitable frame for the building and have that restfully informal quality which is normally associated with a later period.

Even the procession of aeroplanes on the landing approach failed to dent our appreciation of a local treasure. Long may it remain in caring hands.

Derek Honour



**Huw Johnson
Club**

Recently we all enjoyed our BBQ and disco. Sandra and Paul provided the food and Paul did a fantastic job with the cooking. Our members certainly have great appetites. On this occasion, Garry gave us the disco, and I'm sure most of our members danced off the extra calories! A big thank-you to Sandra, Paul and Garry for giving us a great evening.

We have certainly had a variety of music lately. The Bishop's Stortford Woodwind Group entertained us one evening; our members joined in with gusto, singing, dancing and beating out the rhythm with percussion instruments. By the time you read this, we will have already enjoyed our 'Music on a Summer's Evening', with many thanks to all the Lenton family and to *Charity* for helping our funds in this way. Now we look forward to our week in Porthcawl, with many thanks to all our benefactors who have made this holiday and our special coach possible.

Marion Johnson

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The New Civic Year

The annual meeting in May marked the start of the new civic year. The new Chairman (Cllr Peter Wilcock) and Vice-Chairman (Cllr Bill Bowker) who both represent Newport ward were elected. The leadership of the Council and chairmanship of the policy committees remain in the hands of the Liberal Democrats. The current composition of the Council is Liberal Democrat 29, Conservative 10, Independent 4 and 1 vacancy.

Your councillors are playing a significant role in both the administration and the work of the Council as a whole. Alan Dean was re-elected as Leader of the Council, Vanessa Pedder continues to serve as Vice Chairman of the Environment Committee and Anne Marchant is a member of the very busy Licensing Committee. My major responsibility is chairing the Transport and Highways Committee. I am also a member of the Stansted Airport Advisory Panel which monitors the airport's activities, and am also involved in the work of the Constitution Task Group which is looking at ways to improve the Council's structure. One of the things we are currently looking at is area forums.

Transport matters

Transport is becoming a more important issue both locally and nationally. The committee is responsible for car parks, decriminalisation of parking enforcement, the locally determined programme and residents' parking. Uttlesford is predominantly a prosperous rural district. As such it has one of the highest car ownerships in the country. Number of private cars currently licensed nationally:

1960	5 million
1980	14 million
2004	25 million

People have got richer, while the real cost of driving has fallen.

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

I hope the saga about the search for a new post office in Stansted took a step forward in June. The District Council has granted planning permission for Sworders' auctioneers in Cambridge Road to build a new auction centre. This will be in the redundant quarry on the east side of Cambridge Road to the north of the village immediately past Alsa Street (or Snakes Lane, as many of us know it).

If Sworders' project goes ahead, which I think is likely, the existing premises will become vacant. The District Council will be working in the coming weeks and months to see whether the various interested parties are able to agree a scheme that would include a new post office.

Former district and parish councillor, Ray Clifford, left Stansted in the middle of June to live near one of his daughters in Merton Park in SW London. I spoke to Ray the day before he moved. He was naturally sad to be leaving Stansted after living here getting on for 50 years. Ray put a lot of his life into the local community through our councils until 2003. I have Ray's new contact details for anyone who would like to get in touch. Ray promised to come back to visit Stansted from time to time.

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

A BOUQUET to the County Council for dealing effectively with the large clump of Japanese Knotweed near The Limes in Silver Street. This is an environmental triumph even though there is a risk of reinfestation.

Ed.

"Could a picture paint a thousand words ?"



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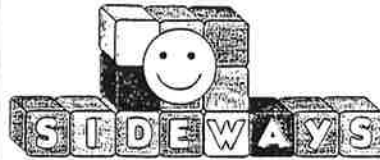
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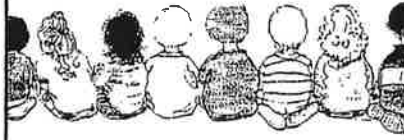
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Progress is evident as expansion plans delayed

I am pleased to be able to report that our efforts to oppose expansion at Stansted are beginning to bear fruit as we see from BAA's recent announcements that its hopes for increasing capacity on the existing runway and for developing a second runway are slipping further and further into the future. It is also clearer than ever that our position on the lack of a commercial case for the development of Stansted has been vindicated by the unanimous opposition that we have seen from the airlines themselves over the last few weeks to both increased charges at the airport to pay for development and to the idea of cross subsidy. We have also been encouraged by their preparedness to use legal means to challenge BAA's investment strategy as well as fighting through the planning system. Calls for the break up of the BAA monopoly of south east airports have also been made with renewed vigour, representing a further threat to Stansted expansion.

This is most encouraging given SSE's emphasis since the White Paper on focusing effort on the key battlegrounds of commercial viability, the planning system and, of course, through legal avenues which continue to show promise for further attack on competition, compensation and compliance grounds in the UK and in Europe. Nevertheless, much remains to be done to defeat BAA's proposals.

Reinforcing expertise and alliances

While much of our work lately has been taking place away from the media spotlight for strategic reasons, the campaign accelerator remains firmly pressed down. We continue to strengthen our team in preparation for the impending planning application to increase capacity on the existing runway from 25mppa, which BAA is preparing for submission next spring. We also continue to invest in our relationships with those with influence in this debate – investors, politicians and civil servants, journalists, special interest groups, local authorities, parish and town councils, other community groups threatened by airport expansion and, of course, our members and the people of this community – to ensure that we harness the understanding, knowledge and support of every possible ally in our campaign. If you have skills or contacts that might assist, please tell us.

Night flight disturbance continues

SSE has condemned the Government over its recent announcement of a further 12 month postponement of action to address the severe problems of sleep disturbance caused by night flights.

New controls on night flights at Stansted, Heathrow and Gatwick airports were due to be introduced in October 2004 and these have already been put off for 12 months. The new announcement by Transport Secretary Alistair Darling once again postpones any real relief for those who currently suffer their impacts. This is despite a promise made to local communities by the Government in its 2003 Air Transport White Paper that it would "bear down" on the problem of night flights.

Stansted already has the second highest permitted number of night flights in the country and the current annual limit of 12,000 movements is thoroughly misleading because it only covers a 6½ hour quota period. SSE is calling for the noise quota period to be extended to at least the full eight hour night-time period from 11pm to 7am and is highlighting the particular importance of at least eight hours undisturbed sleep for school children and pre-school children.

The current number of permitted night flight movements at the three major London airports are: Heathrow 5,800; Gatwick 16,450; Stansted 12,000. Actual movements (2003) were: Heathrow 5969; Gatwick 13,155; Stansted 9046.

Peter Sanders, Chairman



ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

BAA has now published its proposed timetable of consultation for the second runway at Stansted as follows:-

Jul-Oct 05	Public Consultation on Airport Draft Interim Master Plan and +25 Million Planning Application.
Nov 05- Jan 06	Public Consultation on BAA's preferred location for the new runway.
Spring 06	Public Consultation on road and rail schemes for the new runway Publication of Airport Interim Master Plan and +25 Million Planning Application.
Mid 06	Environmental Impact Assessment studies for the new runway. Public consultations on Airport Draft Final Master Plan.
2007	Publication of Airport final Master Plan
2013	Earliest date for new runway to be operational

This all looks to be a dismal prospect; however, this 'earliest' date for the runway to be operational does assume that all of the consultations and approvals run to their planned programme and they do not appear to expect any opposition to the proposals. Essex County Council has identified the fact that the Environmental Impact Assessment is to follow the Publication of the Interim Master Plan and will oppose the mockery that this suggests. Couple this with the opposition which is proposed from the Chairman of British Airways who is fighting the cross subsidy of Stansted expansion from revenues derived from Gatwick and Heathrow and it must be hoped that the 'earliest' date can be pushed much further into the future.

Ray Gooding, County Councillor, Stansted Division
Tel 813103 Fax 814506
email: cllr.ray.gooding@essexcc.gov.uk



What a wonderful few weeks it has been at Rainbow. At the end of May we held our annual obstacle course but this year, thanks to the fantastic fund raising efforts of children and parents, we did not use this event to raise money. Children from both Rainbow Tots and Rainbow attempted the obstacle course 'just for fun' completing up to 10 laps, collecting a different sticker each time. After their exertions a delicious ploughman's lunch was served to parents and children who finally cooled off with an ice lolly.

The highlight of June was our annual outing to Willows Farm. Children from all groups, accompanied by parents and siblings, travelled by coach to this fantastic children's farm. The children (and grown-ups) very much enjoyed looking at the farm animals and playing in the adventure playgrounds. I think everyone was very sad when it was time to go home and I am sure that many of the children will be nagging their parents to take them back again another day.

We have been very successful in our voucher collection schemes; we have over 3000 Tesco vouchers which will enable us to purchase further software for our computer and enough Sainsbury's vouchers to buy some parachutes. We still need a further 400 Persil Stars if we are to have enough to purchase some paint but we are hopeful that we will reach the magic number.

The children are preparing for the end of term which we will celebrate in traditional style with our annual teddy bears' picnic. We shall be sad to say goodbye to the children who are starting school in September and wish them well in the future. We will also be participating in the July Fayre at St Mary's school. Please come along and support our jar tombola.

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

Vicki Brice

STANSTED RED CROSS WEEK MAY 2005

May I thank all those people who so kindly gave their time to collect for this very worthwhile cause and everyone in the village who contributed so generously. We raised the record sum of £1257.83.

In addition to that good news, Christine Stiles very kindly hosted a coffee morning during the week, at which we raised £156. I would like to give special thanks to Christine and her husband Bill for their kindness in organising the morning in their home and also to all those people who donated raffle prizes and cakes. It was a very happy occasion and has given us the grand total of £1413.83.

Diana Pelly

STANSTED FIRE STATION

Many thanks to everybody who turned up for our 'Annual Plant Sale' on the forecourt of the station. The regulars never let us down and as usual it was a great success even though it was a very chilly morning.

I would like to say a special thank you to Pete and Queenie Brown, Sarah Hollis and Michaela and Charlotte Bitten who very kindly gave up their time to help on the day.

Donations from this year's proceeds go to the Fire Service National Benevolent Fund, Windmill Restoration Fund and Stansted Tennis Club Floodlight Appeal.

Hope to see you all next year.

Christine Monk

ANOTHER SCHOOL, ANOTHER VIEW

From Alastair (local cousin to Adrian Mole)



The end of term is in sight at last and will I be glad! It began when I went back after Easter. The teacher at the gate sent me home. He said the pipes had burst and the ceilings had fallen in. Whoopee! I phoned my friend Darren and we said we'd meet the next day and try out his new computer game. Darren said his teacher had told him to practise it to improve his manual dexterity, whatever that is. That was the good news, now the bad. My teacher phoned to say he had homework for all of us and asked me to collect it from the school. There was a mountain of it! He must have stayed up all night. I think he should be sued for cruelty. My dad says there's no point in having a disaster if you can't get something out of it. All I got was depression. Perhaps I should have got a letter from the doctor. My dad says they should teach us plumbing and plastering and then we could mend the school ourselves and get paid for it. He does have good ideas sometimes.

When we got back you'd think they'd give homework a brake. No way! They said we had to make up for lost time. What lost time? At least next term there's Christmas to look forward to.

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Hello again!

After another busy half term, we are now cruising towards the end of the school year. The first half of the summer term was very varied with lots of cooking, trying out new foods, making gingerbread men, a Victoria sponge and, at snack time, encouraging the children to make their own sandwiches and to butter and spread toast. A special thank you to Matthew, who joined us from Mountfitchet High School for a fortnight of work experience. He was a great hit with the children and the staff. Our Quiz Night was a great success raising over £300 for school funds. Many thanks to everyone who made it possible. The Mole Hall trip and picnic was good fun. The children behaved beautifully as usual and everyone enjoyed seeing all the animals and birds, especially the peacocks.

This half term our topic is 'The Senses'. We hope to cover all five senses starting with 'Seeing Eyes'. The importance of looking after our eyes, binoculars, magnifying glasses, mirrors, and opticians' charts will all be making an appearance. In the last week we will bring all the senses together with a display of the children's work for parents and carers to see.

A trip to the Fire Station is planned for Wednesday 15th June. Watch out for a bunch of soggy firemen that day! We will be doing a sponsored 'Pedal Push' to raise funds for the nursery and also for Childline. As usual, we will be organising a trip on the train to Newport Play Area, and our Sports Day will be held at the end of term after a special lunch for our children leaving for 'big school' - so one busy half term is coming up.

To Ben, Jayden, Jemma and Katharine, all starting big school in September, we send our best wishes for the future and we look forward to new faces joining Sideways for the autumn term. If you would like further details of Sideways, please call into St John's Church Hall any weekday morning from 9.00am-12.15pm to see what we do, and why not 'stay and play'! We also have a brochure available for you to take away. If you would like to register your child, please call 01279 816600. We still have a few places available for the autumn term, so please let us know as soon as possible if your child would like to join us.

Auntie Helen and the Team



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Our next ploughman's lunches will be on Saturday 9th July and Saturday 13th August at the Stansted Day Centre, 12 noon to 2.00pm. All are welcome.

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Ruth Rawlinson



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