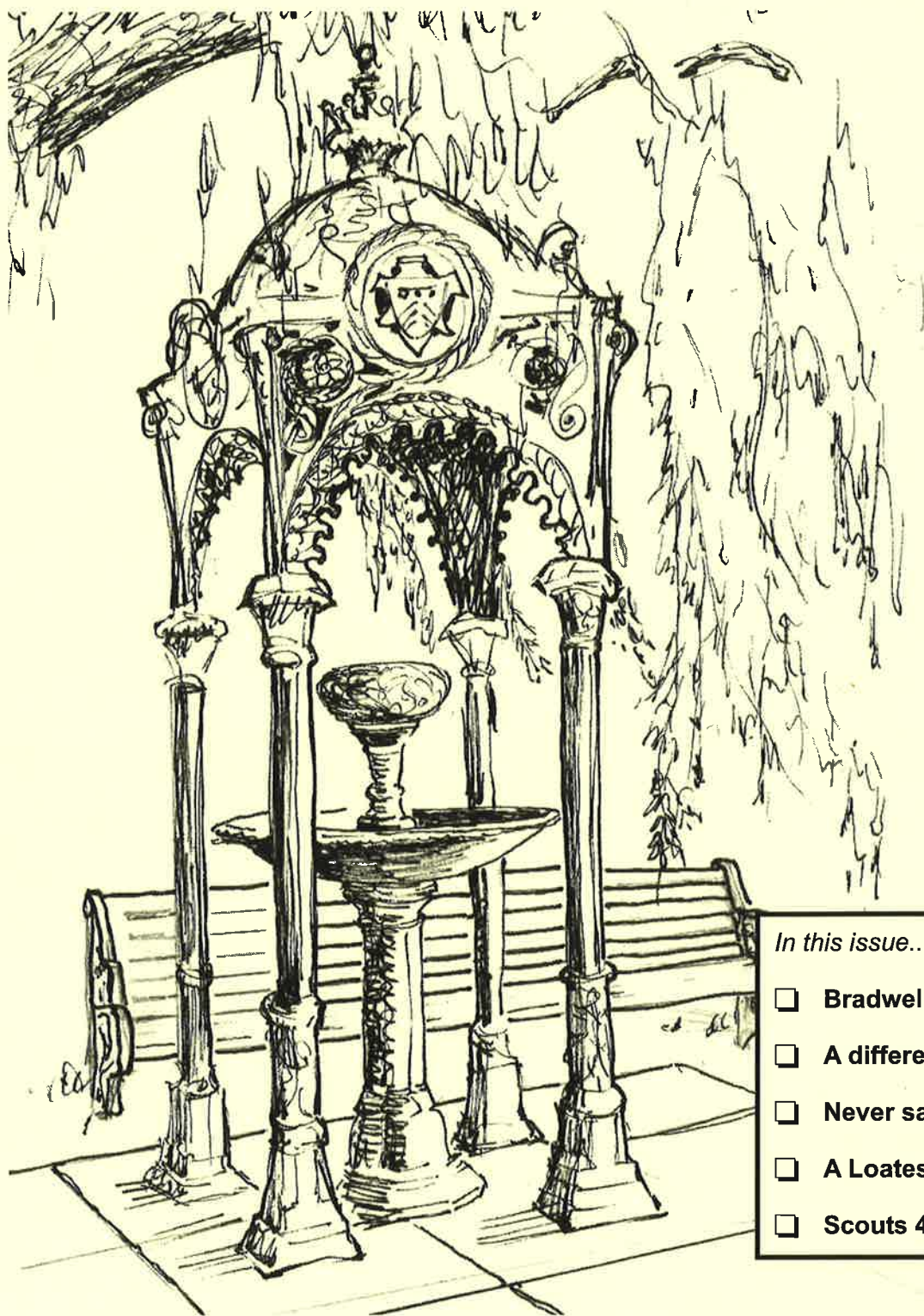


Stansted Mountfitchet

The Link



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Summer Reading

Even when I don't go away on holiday, one of the things I usually manage to do in the summer is to catch up with some 'non-essential' reading. I do a lot of reading for my job, but that is different to being able to choose what to read. And this year I have two very different things in mind. The first is the new – and final – Harry Potter book. My copy is on order, and may even be finished by the time this edition of the 'Link' is published. Will evil triumph or will Harry and his friends defeat the evil wizard Voldemort? I hope that I know the answer, but I can't wait to see how things work out.

The other book that I want to read is Richard Dawkins 'The God Delusion' – quite a contrast. It has been on the best-seller list, and my husband tells me that he has seen many people reading it on the train journey to London. To state his purpose in his own words, Dawkins' aim is this: "If this book works as I intend, religious readers who open it will be atheists when they put it down". I hope not, but we shall see. Reviews suggest that Dawkins' attack is on a very outdated and oversimplified version of belief – and itself not well argued - but I would still like to see for myself.

I frequently meet the argument that religion is the root of all evil. Were it not for religion, there would be no terrorism, for example. This argument seems to me to be fundamentally flawed. Yes, religious differences are often tied up with conflicts and violence, but then religion is by its nature a thing that people care about. Were we somehow to abolish formal religions, people would disagree (perhaps violently) about other issues if they cared about them enough. And if there were nothing we cared about, what sort of world would it be?

I was moved by the concert held on 7th July in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, because it seemed to me to be a celebration of things that we value, which she exemplified for many people. To celebrate these things on a day that was the anniversary of destruction through terrorist bombings seemed to say something about the importance and triumph of good. And another book that I have recently read also speaks of the growth and strength of the spirit amid tremendous hardship and constraint. This is 'An Evil Cradling' - Brian Keenan's account of his time as a hostage. In his captivity, much of which was shared with John McCarthy, Keenan - who does not speak of himself as a Christian - says that "at times God seemed so real and intimately close" and that "captivity had recreated freedom" - a freedom and meaning that they discovered to be within themselves, and indomitable.

I think that I will probably have gained more understanding of God this summer through reading Harry Potter's struggles against evil, and Brian Keenan's testimony to strength in dark times than I will through engaging with Dawkins' suggestions that God does not exist. I spend much of my time reading rather dry academic texts, and learn a great deal from them. Certainly there is a place for reason and sound argument – in relation to matters of faith as in other areas. In relation to the bigger questions of life, though, my heart is most touched by reading that stimulates my imagination, conjures up moments of magic, and gives me a vision of human courage and the search for meaning.

CC

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St John's Diary

Sunday

9:30am Choral
Eucharist

11:00am Open Door
Service

(all age worship) 3rd Sunday

9:45pm Night Prayer

Wednesday

10:00am said Holy
Communion

7:30pm Ecumenical
Prayer Group

There are services of Holy Communion on the first Tuesdays and Wednesdays of the month in Norman Court, Hargrave House and Broome End Nursing Homes. Junior Church meets each Sunday at 9:30am. (Children return to church halfway through the service.)

The Lazer youth group meets on Sunday evenings at 7:30pm

From the Registers

June

Baptism

17th Benedict Peter Alan Coggins

Wedding

16th Gina Suzanne Lee to Stuart James Thomas

Funeral

17th Joan Elizabeth Mercer, age 87 -
at St John's

ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD TREES

It has become apparent that two mature beech trees at the eastern end of St Mary's churchyard are in a declining condition, and one has lost limbs after some high winds. Following a detailed inspection, it is evident that these two trees have come to the end of their useful lives, and a decision has been made to fell them. This decision was taken with great reluctance as these trees have benefited a beautiful churchyard for many years. However, if left, they could prove dangerous to visitors, so they cannot be saved.

Although St Mary's church is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, the churchyard itself remains the responsibility of St John's Parochial Church Council (PCC). The cost of felling and removing the trees will be at least £8,000. This represents a sizeable proportion of the income of St John's Church, which comes mainly from members of the congregation. Consequently, the PCC intends to approach other organisations for financial assistance.

Stuart Ayres

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

Meeting Sunday, 10.30am

At the Bradwell Pilgrimage this year, Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor took 'Spiritual Ecumenism' as the title of his address. A week or so before I had been to our General Meeting (a gathering of Quakers from East Anglia) and the subject of the talk was 'Quaker Spirituality'. So those themes have been going round in my mind.

The dictionary definition of spirituality is 'relating to the spirit or soul' which simply underlines the difficulty of defining something you cannot pin down. Connecting this with ecumenism reminds me once again that we have far more that joins us than separates us. Jesus' words and example are simple and easy to understand, albeit extremely difficult for us to act on, and they form the basis of Christianity. Over the years I have worked with several different ecumenical groups, and have never felt any fundamental differences between us. We work together easily knowing that we are all aiming at the same goal, however hard to achieve.

Great strides have been made in Christian unity in many areas - not least locally in the creation of the Stansted Free Church - but I have sometimes felt that the 'rules' for joining a particular denomination give the impression that the one you are joining is 'better' than others and underlines the doctrinal differences. Every denomination has a procedure for becoming a member - the Quakers' one is perhaps the simplest but a procedure nevertheless. I have a hope (a dream, perhaps) that one day there will be a simple Christian statement that we could all make. There would, of course, be variations in worship, partly because of tradition, and partly because, as one of our Advices says, each of us has a particular experience of God and each must find the way to be true to it. The differences in ways of worship enrich and stimulate us all. Simplistic thoughts, perhaps, but Christ's commands were simple.

Katharine Hurford

ROMAN CATHOLIC

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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

Sacred Places

Recently, a group, comprising Catholic, Anglican, Quaker, Baha'i, Mormon, and Humanist, met to join the celebration of the Summer Solstice with our Druid friends. We gathered in a beautiful country garden, through which runs the River Arun, and under the mighty branches of a 400 year old oak tree. The ceremony was very simple, honouring the four corners of the earth with symbolic artefacts, and prayers of thanksgiving to the Creator for all his gifts.

The afternoon continued with reflections from all present on what 'sacred places' meant to them. The Druids hold glades and groves as places where nature joins with the spiritual, and oak trees hold special significance. Looking up through the branches of the magnificent tree, I could see how praise comes easily when confronted with the power and gentleness of huge oaks, supporting all kinds of life, and the green leaves swaying in the breeze giving shelter and coolness to those beneath.

Our Mormon friend spoke of the sacred place in the United States where the Garden of Eden was said to have been, and light-heartedly commented it was more like a desert and that his garden in Horsham was more beautiful. Nevertheless the place was sacred because of association with the idea of Eden's garden and we pondered on what makes a place sacred. It can be where revelation came to one, or some particular spiritual event happened or where a saintly person lived and worshipped. We considered then whether anyone had a private and quiet place where they go when confronted with pain or pleasure in their lives.

We also reflected on pilgrimage to the Sacred Places of our own traditions, which all seem to have. For Catholics, places like Lourdes and Fatima are sacred as appearances of Our Lady took place there. Our churches and cathedrals contain the relics of holy people, thereby making them sacred. These special places could also be where the leylines, energies of the earth, are particularly strong and churches have been built upon them. We talked of the mystery of Chartres Cathedral made particularly sacred due to its position on a rare convergence of energy levels.

We agreed that we were all pilgrims on the same journey but taking different routes. These reflections and the meeting together of people from various traditions, respecting others' viewpoint while maintaining their own way, made the day very special indeed - and sitting in the beautiful country garden of a cottage situated in a quiet spot where runs the River Arun and shaded by the outstretching branches of an ancient oak, I could almost believe, to quote Rupert Brooke, that I saw "A faun apoeeping through the green"!

Rita Morson



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SHALOM

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 Stansted CM24 8AQ
 Tel 812593

Preachers for August

5th	10.30am	All Age Worship
	2.30pm	Rev'd Trevor Sands
12th	10.30am	Karen Taylor
19th	10.30am	Rev'd Stuart Veitch Holy Communion
26th	10.30am	Nigel Courtman

Other Activities

Sun 5th 3.30pm Outreach tea in the Foyer

Mon 20th 2.30pm Monday Club

We were very sad to say farewell to Keith and Fran Page on 15th July, but wish him well in his new appointment in Leigh. Our new Methodist Minister, Rev'd David Mullins, and his family arrive on 2nd September. During August we are under the pastoral care of Rev'd Trevor Sands, the Methodist Minister based in Saffron Walden (see above).

News from Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church
HYMNS OF PRAISE (Local style)

When is it? --- **Saturday 8th September 2007**
 Where is it? --- **Bishops Stortford Methodist Church**
 What time? --- **8.00pm (doors open 7.30pm)**
 Entrance is free!

Who should come?

Anyone who enjoys listening to music or singing and remembers their favourite hymns and songs from yesterday, last week or even years ago; church congregations, groups and organisations, in the Methodist Church and from local Churches Together and people who live and work in this community; recent arrivals who have yet to visit our churches, could just drop in and have a great evening singing along.

What a way to discover the quality of our singing, to join in if you wish or just enjoy music to stir the heart.

Can you come? You'll be welcome! Diary it now!

Enquiries to John Simkins on 01279 504964

At our meeting of 2nd July we welcomed Lt Col Alan Hart, a Salvation Army officer for 37 years who, after serving in a number of the elements of the Army's work, in different parts of the country, retired to Bishop's Stortford two years ago to minister to the local church. He began with a personal testimony, describing his journey to faith, and the discovery of 'coming home' to the Salvation Army together with his wife Valerie, each finding that this was where they were being called to serve their Lord.

This was followed by a brief early history of the movement started by William Booth in 1860, setting out to bring succour to the homeless and helpless of London's East End. He could hardly have imagined what his initiative would increasingly provide through the 20th and now 21st centuries. The provision of shelter for the homeless is still an essential element of the work greatly extended from its origins in London, with the crowded and even overflowing dormitories of the past, often in poor buildings, being replaced by single units with 'mod cons'. Training in life skills is now provided to enable the people concerned to be settled in homes of their own. Then there are facilities for adults with learning difficulties, and units caring for Alzheimers sufferers. These are just some of the welfare services provided.

We heard of the Army's presence in countries around the world, in China, in Eastern Europe, Muslim countries (where usually Christian organisations are not always welcomed), some parts of South America, and Africa with its HIV and Aids epidemics. Emergencies and disasters such as earthquakes, the tsunami and the 7/7 terrorist attacks in London find their members on duty, providing practical help with food and drink and other comforts, offering loving care and counselling where necessary.

Alan involved us in an interesting and informative evening with a picture of an organisation with a full and continuing mission, but above all, of a man who cares, working with and through his faith, Jesus being his guide and inspiration.

Harry Goreing

We shall not be meeting during August; however, all members of Shalom are invited to join Catherine Dean at 5.00pm on Monday 13th August for a walk starting and ending at the Rose and Crown. Catherine is fundraising for environmental causes during her year as Chair of Uttlesford District Council by sponsored walks around the district. If you would like to sponsor Catherine please call her on 01279 813579.



BRADWELL PILGRIMAGE



The day dawned brightly for us on Saturday 7th July - a promise of a lovely day. We were not disappointed by the weather, nor by the wonderful atmosphere that greeted us when we arrived after the walk up to St Peter's Chapel, which is on the edge of the foreshore at Bradwell-on-Sea. History buffs may be interested to know that St Peter's is technically the oldest cathedral in England. It was founded by St Cedd in 654, but it was nearly demolished by the RAF, when they were going to use it for target practice. Fortunately a chance encounter with the vicar put them off!

We were welcomed by the Bishop of Bradwell, Rt Rev'd Dr Laurie Green, who was joined on the platform by the Rev'ds Margaret and Laurence Whitford and Bishop Thomas McMahon. We were addressed by Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor on the subject of Spiritual Ecumenism.



A confluence of clerics

The Cardinal opened in his usual gentle way (familiar if you have heard him before) with a couple of 'holy' jokes with hard hitting punch-lines. One went like this: "There were three tailors who advertised their wares. The first boasted he was the best tailor in Poland, the second that he was the best tailor in the world and the third that he was the best tailor down his street". The Cardinal stressed that although it was important what happened ecumenically elsewhere, the most important place is on your own home ground. We know this can be hard, but it was great to be encouraged not only by the Cardinal, but by all the leading church men and women present, and indeed all the local clerics who accompanied their flocks to Bradwell. The worship included lovely hymns and meaningful prayers together with a beautiful musical reflection by Annie Mawson, who sang and played the harp.

After a visit to the Othona Community (who organise retreats etc) a short distance away through the woods, we gathered again outside the chapel for an inspirational farewell service in which we were encouraged to explore and thank God for the elements of North, South, East, West, Earth and Sky, with a short prayer of thanks after each. We all felt spiritually uplifted and this, together with rousing hymns and choruses and a final visit down to the shell-strewn shore, made the perfect end to a perfect day.



A few of the Stansted pilgrims

The following prayer was used during the service, and it encapsulates the ethos of a memorable day.

May God, who gives patience and encouragement, give us a spirit of unity to live in harmony as we follow Jesus Christ, so that with one voice we may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mary Warnett
Frances Roberts

FRIENDS OF ESSEX CHURCHES

Sponsored Ride and Stride

Saturday 8th September 2007

This nationwide annual event invites cyclists and walkers to find sponsors who will pay an agreed sum for each church or chapel visited on the above date. (It is always the second Saturday in September.) Most churches are open between 10.00am and 6.00pm and will offer refreshments. The money each participant raises will be shared equally between The Friends of Essex Churches and the church or chapel nominated by the participant. As the event is nationwide, churches in Hertfordshire will also be open and these can be added to the list. Last year over £100,000 was raised. It would be splendid if we could manage to better this. If your church does not have the necessary sponsorship forms or you would like to take part in this worthwhile cause please contact me.

John Jaques
Tel: 656645

SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF JOAN MERCER

I and the family would like to thank everyone for the support we received and are receiving, and also for the donations made to Save the Children Fund at Joan's funeral. The Royston branch of SCF wish also to add their thanks - they have received over £700.

Francis Mercer, Liz, Vincent, and Julia

St Mary's CE Foundation Primary School



Caring, sharing, preparing for life

All the events of the summer term have finally been ticked off – reports written and sent out; the Strawberry Tea to thank all those who have helped the school this year; visits by the new children for Foundation Stage; Year 6 Review; and the Leavers' Service. We have also said farewell to dear 'Mrs A' who has moved on to work in pastoral care in a secondary school. Despite the weather not being all we might have hoped for in the summer term, we have been able to take part in plenty of sporting activities. Rounders Club has been run by Mrs Carter for Key Stage 2 and they have taken part in several tournaments. The season was rounded off with a very enjoyable friendly against Bentfield Primary School. Each school fielded three teams; there was fruit punch, strawberry and cream scones and home-made cakes - and a very enjoyable time was had by all! Sessions of cricket each Tuesday have also been very successful. We aim to continue with cricket into the autumn term. Many thanks to David Brown, Nigel Holland and the Stansted Hall Cricket Club for supporting us. The school teams also performed well in the District Sports held at Saffron Walden County High School.

The main authors of this newsletter are the Year 6 pupils, who are moving on to secondary school in the autumn term. They have been a super group – not only have they produced excellent results academically, they have been great team players. They have taken on well the responsibilities of Year 6 and are fine young people ready now to go and make their mark in the world! We wish them all the very best. Good luck!

Christine Tonkins
Headteacher

Memories from Oak Class 2007

The year in Oak has been very busy, filled with hard work, visits, trips, plays, SATs, laughter and lots of fun. We have been thinking about all we have achieved in school and all the memories we can take away with us.

Stephanie has fond memories of Reception Class, where she would play with toy cars on the mat, and in Year 6 growing in confidence leading a group in Team Talk. Kristin also remembers being in Reception Class when Mrs Blurton brought in a cuckoo clock and it went off every hour! Salma said she will always smile when she remembers the first time she spoke out in assembly.

Jack, Elle, Daniel, Kyle, Zara, Sean, Luke, Calum, Michael and Zak all liked it when all of Oak went to Aylmerton in Norfolk for a week; everyone had such a great time, all the great activities and adventures. Jack didn't want to come home! Daniel loved pirates day and defusing the bomb! Zara remembers climbing the high ropes and overcoming her fear. Calum loved going on the boat and seeing the seals. Michael and Kyle loved the monster trail when they were jumped on and soaked with super soakers!

Chloe loves to think about Father Rhys when he came to do assemblies; he would have a spoon and a bowl and would catch a story out of thin air. Samuel remembers Mrs Scott telling stories about her cat Tabby.

A trip to the sea life centre and having lunch on the beach, Danielle recalls. Laura remembers winning a netball match and it being such a great game, she scored the last goal and so the team won. Thomas loved going to the Philharmonic Orchestra and Portrait Gallery and doing his best piece of art work. Safwan enjoyed the visit to Katherine Semar for a maths challenge day.

Shaun couldn't wait to get in Year 6 and have the responsibility of the jobs. He says he will always remember how proud he felt being chosen to have a job.

So you can see we have had a great time here at St Mary's and will take away many wonderful memories to treasure.

Oak Class - Year 6 2007
St Mary's CE Primary School



Huw Johnson Club

On Sunday 8th July we were able to say "thank you" to all our drivers and escorts with a lunch in the gardens of The Oaks at Great Easton. Hannah and Chris made everyone welcome aided by their daughter Joanne who is a Club member. The weather was good and everyone enjoyed a pleasant get together. Hannah as usual provided an excellent lunch with her usual display of delicious desserts. Thank you Hannah for making the day a success.

Some of our drivers have transported our members to Club for over 30 years and it is seldom that they let us down, often stepping in at short notice when emergencies occur. Members and Club Leaders join in saying their thanks.

As I write this I am hoping that it will not rain this evening as we are all meeting at Four Winds, Burton End for our Activity Evening. (*It did not rain. Ed.*) We are grateful to the Lenton family for their hospitality.

This month we have had so many "thank you"s to say and we now say thank you to Sandra and Paul for the BBQ, which they provided in June. They have given us this treat for many years and everyone has a good time. On that evening Garry entertained us with his ever popular disco.

Marion G Johnson

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in the 'Link'.



St Mary's Stansted

Church Open
2 - 5 pm
Sun 5th August
Sun 2nd September
Everyone Welcome



Afternoon Tea

Sun 5th August in the
Free Church foyer
3.30 - 5 pm
Come along for tea, cakes & a chat
You will find a very warm welcome
All proceeds go towards water
pumps for the Third World



Stansted Windmill

Open Days
2 - 6 pm
Sun 5th August
Sun 26th August
Mon 27th August
(with Fête)

VILLAGE EVENTS

August

4 Sat / 5 Sun	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
5 Sun	St Mary's Church open	2 - 5 pm
	Windmill open	2 - 6 pm
	Afternoon Tea (after service)	Free Church 3.30 pm
9 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
12 Sun	SSE Polar Bears Picnic	Little Easton Lodge from noon
13 Mon	Shalom Walk	Meet at Rose & Crown 5 pm
18 Sat / 19 Sun	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
26 Sun	Windmill open	2 - 6 pm
27 Mon	Windmill Fête	2 - 5 pm
	Windmill open	2 - 6 pm

September

1 Sat / 2 Sun	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
2 Sun	St Mary's Church open	2 - 5 pm
	Windmill open	2 - 6 pm
	1st Anniversary Tea	Free Church 3.30 pm
5 Wed	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
6 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
8 Sat	Cycle Ride & Stride	10 am - 6 pm
12 Wed	Crossroads Coffee Morning	Day Centre 10 am - noon
13 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
15 Sat / 16 Sun	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
17 Mon	Shalom	7 Blythwood Gdns 8 pm
22 Sat	Music in the Park	Bentfield School 1 - 7 pm
23 Sun	Kingfisher Ensemble (EYO)	St John's Church 7.30 pm



STOP STANSTED EXPANSION Polar Bears Picnic

Sun 12th August
Little Easton Lodge (off B184)
Gardens open 12 noon
Entertainment from 1.30 pm
Judging at 2.30 pm

Entry £4.20, Conc £3.80, Family of 4 £15
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Picnic in the SSE Wood with Terry Waite CBE

Terry Waite CBE was the guest of honour at the SSE picnic in Broxted on Sunday 8th July at the SSE Wood which he inaugurated three years ago in his capacity as Patron of the campaign group. The wood at Broxted Hill near Dunmow was planted in 2004 by SSE members as a symbol of their determination that a second runway will never be built at Stansted. The saplings are already well established and have benefited from the regular care of a volunteer team including farmer Peter Smith on whose land the wood is planted.

In all, 300 people took part in the picnic, blessed by the beautiful weather. Terry Waite spoke passionately about the need to protect not only local communities but also to fight against the proposals, which so threaten the global environment and future generations. Organisers were delighted that he also spent so much time talking to many of those who were present - some from as far afield as Hastings, North Norfolk and even Birmingham.



Councillors Alan and Catherine Dean and John Hudson with Terry Waite

“At one time, it looked like a second runway was a foregone conclusion,” said Mr Waite. “It still has to be fought against, but there is no longer such a clear cut case. We are fighting to get our messages about airport expansion through on two fronts, against the expansion of flights and passenger numbers, and we are fighting because the proposals would affect the whole infrastructure of this part of Essex. People think of Essex as urban, but the vast majority is rural and North West Essex in particular has some of the most wonderful buildings and priceless heritage in our land.”

Terry Waite also raised the problem of climate change: “If development went ahead we would all be affected. The first loss would be our heritage, something which could never be replaced. Then there would be the contribution to environmental pollution, more than a doubling of carbon dioxide emissions from the present five million tonnes annually from airport operations to some 12 million tonnes with a second runway. It is a dreadful thought. You only have to look at recent history to see the effects of climate change. We know that carbon emissions from aviation are a major contributory factor.”

Polar Bears Picnic at the gardens of Easton Lodge

Tickets are now on sale for the Polar Bears Picnic which will be held at the Gardens of Easton Lodge on Sunday 12th August, to which children are invited to bring teddies of all kinds – not just polar bears. The event is a variation on the teddy bears picnic, which has been held at the Gardens since 2005. The change in emphasis reflects the growing awareness that the impacts of an expanded Stansted Airport would have on not only the local community but internationally because of climate change. The impacts of global warming are already being observed in Greenland, for example, the natural habitat of polar bears.

The gardens open at 12 noon and the picnic starts with fun and games, entertainment from Astra Magic and face painting from 1.30pm. Judging of the best dressed teddy and polar bears begins at 2.30pm, with prizes awarded shortly after. The categories will be best campaigning teddy, best loved teddy, best dressed teddy, most cuddly teddy, biggest teddy, smallest teddy, best drawing of a teddy.

Admission to the event on a family ticket (for four people) is £15. Single tickets (adults and children) are £4.20 (£3.80 concessions) – Tel: 01279 870558 or see the website for a booking form www.stopstanstedexpansion.com. Tickets will also be available on the day. Marquee cover in case of rain. Bring a picnic or visit the Gardens Café.

The Gardens of Easton Lodge are in Little Easton (signposted from the B184 - follow the brown heritage signs), tel: 01371 873305.

Carol Barbone
Campaign Director
Tel: 07775 523091
Email: cbarbone@mxco.co.uk



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

STANSTED WINDMILL FETE
BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY
27th AUGUST 2.00pm-5.00pm
MILL OPEN 2.00pm-6.00pm


We will be having our usual traditional stalls and sideshows viz: tombola, raffle, bric-a-brac, books, plants, teas, cakes and bread, etc, plus others especially for children. Donations of items for these will be most welcome but no clothes or electrical goods please. Contact the following for delivery or collection:

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Bridget Gott (cakes)	814440
Linda and Tony Gurr (tombola)	816250

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Stansted Evening Women's Institute

Our July meeting started late so that members who had been to the Ladies Day at the Newmarket Race Course could attend, wearing their outfits and particularly their hats, for us all to admire. Nobody won a fortune, although one admitted to being 60 pence richer at the end of the day, but they all had a wonderful time and enjoyed what was, for most of them, their first time at the races. The weather stayed fine for them which, after all the downpours of the last weeks, was lucky.



Hats Galore!

Our speaker for July was Angela Collins - known as the puppet lady- who came to tell us of her life with her puppets, which has evolved over the last 18 years. She began her working life as a hairdresser and then joined Lee Cooper where she began to sew and create things in the sample room, and with some of this material made her first puppets for a church service. This proved so popular that she was soon creating more and more and developing her talents into shows of all kinds for children and adults. She and her husband have entertained all over the country: at fairs, tourist attractions and private parties. Her puppets are now based on foam shapes rather like the Muppets with wonderful clothes, and include Elvis Presley, Rosie & Jim, Punch & Judy, Father Christmas, Noddy, Diddy Men and many animals. Angela passed around many of the puppets she had brought with her, as well as demonstrating her skill at working them with musical accompaniment. She also holds workshops for making puppets for people of all ages. We had the most entertaining evening and can recommend her for any fund-raising event.

Several events are planned by the County, which is celebrating 90 years of the WI in Essex. In August there is a lunch at the Golf Club in Bishop's Stortford where our speaker will be Sir Alan Haselhurst - another opportunity to dress up! There is a big Variety Show in September at Great Baddow given by Essex members to which some of us will be going -

though not appearing! Our Autumn County Meeting will be held in Clacton this year, when Zena Skinner will be the speaker, and it is hoped to send a delegate and visitors. There is a Service of Thanksgiving at St Mary's Parish Church, Saffron Walden on 12th September to commemorate the formation of the Essex Federation and its achievements

Earlier this year there was a competition to find a shortlist of local books written by local authors and about our county of Essex. These include 'Essex Workhouses' by John Drury, 'In the Blood - A memoir of my Childhood' by Andrew Motion and 'Nettles & Cream' by John Calver - they are all available from local libraries. We are having a bookstall each month where members can bring their old books and buy or borrow others for a small fee.

Our Raffle this month raised £28, which is being sent to the Clare Hospice Friendship Appeal. Next month we welcome Russell Clark to our meeting and he is going to talk on waste disposal - 'Reduce, Re-use and Recycle' is the title of the talk and if you have anything you would like to discuss with him come along and hear what he has to say on 9th August.

Judy Colliver

BUFFY BUS

Thanks to the generous support that we have received from the local communities, Buffy Bus is set to continue into 2008. During the summer holidays we will be supporting the Uttlesford Sports and Arts Programme with the provision of a crèche for children between 2 and 5 years.

We now need to call upon the skills and experience of a professional fund raiser. If you feel that you have the necessary knowledge and would be able to help us secure our future, we would really appreciate hearing from you. For more information please contact Margaret Shaw on 01279 814260, Rosie Juhl on 01799 522130, visit our website: www.buffybus.co.uk

Margaret Shaw



WALKING FOR HEALTH

Every week we organise a Health Walk. It starts at 10.30am from Stansted Library every Friday. It is free to participate and lasts about 40 minutes covering some two miles. Brisk walking for 30 minutes or more is proven to reduce the incidence of heart disease and type 2 diabetes and can aid in weight management.

Steven Prosser
Healthy Eating & Lifestyle Programme Co-ordinator,
Leisure Connection,
Managers of the Leisure Facilities in Uttlesford
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MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB AND NATURE NOTES



This month much of the subject matter is common to both contributors, so exceptionally they are combined. Back to normal next month.

Garden Club

Members welcomed a former resident of Stansted, Mr Mike Rowley, who began his talk on the Wildlife Trust in Essex on the history of the Trust. The Wildlife Trust, established in 1959, is the largest charitable conservation organisation in Essex. There are 90 nature reserves covering almost 8000 acres which includes three farms. Our nearest is 'The Aubrey Buxton' one. There are visitor centres on some of the larger reserves offering goods for sale and the chance to have any questions answered. Mike emphasised the need to look after wildlife in any available outdoor space and he explained how the Trust advised ECC on ways to help conservation.

Have you ever noticed posts with white circular plaques on roadside verges? These are placed there by ECC and are advertising roadside nature reserves. Often the verges have rare plants. Graveyards are very important repositories for wildlife and Mike works closely with church authorities advising them to let the grass and wildflowers grow. A little bit of untidiness works wonders for wildlife and insects.

Mike showed some beautiful slides, many of his own garden. He recommended plants to grow, types of bird feeders to use and positioning of bird boxes. Nature loves untidy places and Mike said we would be rewarded with lots of wildlife if we left an untidy log pile, a mound of stones or an unmown area. What a good excuse not to have to cut the grass!

The last group of slides showed us many wild flowers (in fashion at the moment) which have reached our garden, including thrift, bugle, scabious and borage. Apparently the Chelsea Flower Show has something to do with this trend! All in all an informative and pictorial feast of an evening.

Christine Hope

September reminders

Our September meeting is on Wednesday 5th September, 7.30pm for 8.00pm, when Mr and Mrs Greenway will be giving a talk on clematis at Prior's Wood.

Our Autumn Show is on Saturday 8th September at the Free Church Hall. Look out for our posters.

Nature Notes

Our wildlife population is constantly changing. One of this year's reductions in numbers has been the

swift, a bird featured by Rosina in these columns some three years ago. The reasons could be numerous, but insect decline (in itself a mystery to most) or degradation in southern Europe or Africa could be included among them. Let us hope it is temporary. Happily many other garden birds are with us in good numbers; the four kinds of tit, chaffinches and greenfinches have thrived. The insect world is a largely closed book to most of us; this year, spiders are plentiful but hoverflies seem to be fewer, possibly a result of a wet mid-summer. Ladybirds also appear to be less numerous, but I have yet to see the dreaded harlequin species in my garden. It would be helpful to learn of other readers' observations. I suspect that low numbers of butterflies and moths would be most people's experience, but that certainly cannot be said of slugs and snails which have been present in battalion strength this year. Removal of rubbish, leaf litter, etc. is a deterrent but a problem arises with ground cover plants and hedge bottoms which are hosts to so many species other than the unwanted gastropods. Indiscriminate use of metaldehyde slug-killers is not the answer.

Derek Honour



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MEMORIES OF LOWER STREET IN WARTIME II

As mentioned in my previous article, shortages of leather coupled with the high cost of new shoes meant that there was plenty of work for cobblers in the village, but many families also did their own shoe and boot repairs.

In Station Road there was Mr Roast and Mr Gray and in Silver Street, E W Player (nicknamed Nipper because of his small stature). Customers sometimes had to cross the road to find him in the Windmill public house. I always thought he was quite an astute business man because he never finished repairing anyone's shoes until they turned up with the cash. My grandfather, like many older men, had a metal foot that was used to hold the boot or shoe while tiny nails were hammered home. We often found we had a stray nail sticking up inside our footwear! People also used Phillips stick-on soles, which may still be available. I couldn't remember the name of the other cobbler in Lower Street but my brother Paul did: it was a Mr Thurgood.

Lots of women would be wearing scarves on their heads during the day. This was because they were often hiding rollers or curlers in their hair. Women helped each other with various setting lotions and the scarves would come off in the evenings or weekends. Men and boys often had their hair cut by their wives or mums. It was easy to spot the 'not so skilled' by their uneven 'short back and sides' or the use of a pudding basin. A famous barber in Silver Street was Mr Ramsey (known as Sweeney Todd) and on Chapel Hill it was Ernie Wenn. Ernie was a man of few words and he never took his cigarette out of his mouth all day. When he finished you got a free dollop of Brylcreem smeared over your head. Tom Dewberry appeared in Lower Street just after the war. Tom had strong views on any subject and was famous for telling small boys "Be a jockey, boy – be a jockey".

Children played outside for as much of the year as possible and only came indoors for meals. Behind the cottages situated between the Dog and Duck and the old church school at Gall End there was a disused sand pit where we children spent many happy hours building camps out of old bits of corrugated iron, old tin baths, bricks and rubble. There were practically no toys to play with except skipping ropes, tops with whips and old bike tyres which we used as hoops. We made our own bows and arrows with our penknives, cutting wood from the hedgerows. All we needed was a piece of string to make the bow taut. The cowboys had cap guns and the Indians headdresses made from pheasant or pigeon feathers. Even in the depths of winter we would play outside wearing balaclavas and wellies and taking our home-made toboggans up Grove Hill and on to the Castle Hills. We had a super family sledge and the run from the top of Castle Hills (now Mountfitchet Castle) to the edge of the railway line was hair raising. Sometimes there would be 30 or 40 children enjoying this activity even if they only had an old tin tray to slide down the steep slope.

There was an old bakery in Lower Street which was run by Mr Hudgell. He would be there very early in the morning, about 4.00am, and when we were up we could smell the wonderful hot bread. By 11.00am Mr Hudgell would commence his deliveries along the street with a small three wheeler push cart, returning at regular intervals to collect more loaves and delicious huffers which, when eaten hot with any kind of filling, were enough to keep a hungry man going for most of the day.

Next door to the bakery lived Mr Albert Griggs with his elderly mother. They had no electricity or gas, no cooker either – everything was cooked on their open coal fire. Albert was known as 'Ditcher' because his job for life was to take his scythe and keep all the ditches clear to avoid flooding. Some newcomers to Lower Street didn't know this and called him Mr Ditcher. Ditcher wore the same old coat for all the years I can remember – it had no buttons so he tied it around his rotund figure with string. String was also used to tie around his trousers so they didn't get wet in the ditches. When he was approaching our shop my father would start putting his groceries ready because he always bought the same things every day: ½oz of Old Holborn, pkt of green papers, ¾lb strong cheese, six candles and box of matches - and on Saturdays a tin of sardines or salmon as a treat.

Our fire brigade was kept busy, particularly after air raids in the area, but also with chimney fires because most of us relied on open coal fires for heating and chimneys were not being swept as often. There was a very bad fire at Bentfield Place in 1940. This large building was in use at the time as a 'British Restaurant'. These were so called because they were subsidised by the Government to give the public a hot meal each day for very little money. I think about one shilling and three pence (6½p) got you a main course, generally powdered potato, stew and greens and a sweet and a cup of tea. We were marched up to this establishment for school meals. When the building caught alight a large number of people watched our fire brigade tackle the huge flames from the pavement in front of Greens Stores (now fronting several shops including estate agents and the chemist). During the worst of the Blitz we could see the red glow of London burning 30 miles away and fire brigades from all around were being called into London to help the overtired and exhausted London crews.

At school we had to do our bit for the war effort. Every boy over the age of 8 had an allotment. The school allotments were situated on what is now St Mary's School football pitch (known then as Alley Fields). I grew potatoes, cabbage, carrots, etc and our Headmaster had two glass frames for his cucumbers. One day when Dick Wren had been caned for being late for school he accidentally(?) dropped some stones on these and smashed them to pieces – nobody told the Head who it was. Dick Wren was a likeable character who came to school on a cycle that had no brakes but Dick was very skilled at coming down Chapel Hill into the Barley Mow yard (opposite the school) and coming up the hill between the school and the United Reformed Church. He very sadly lost his life in an

accident while serving in the RAF as a National Serviceman.

In the early part of the war, before my father was called up, we had an old 1934 Ford 8 car which had spoked wheels with a carrier and spare wheel on the back. On one occasion it had been in Mr Clarke's garage on Cambridge Road (now the Co-op) for a repair. I went with father to collect it and on the way home, coming down High Lane, dad put the brakes on and one of the front wheels came off and ran on in front of us. This was scary for both of us but dad managed to pull up, recover the wheel, jack the car up and put the wheel on. Only problem was we could only find two wheel nuts. Father must have obtained two more from somewhere because the old Ford was still in use after the war and it got us to Westcliffe-on-Sea for a holiday. The beaches were mined and covered in barbed wire.

Talking of holidays, I recently found a receipt for my parents' honeymoon in Bournemouth for £4.10 shillings – five days at 9/- each, dated 9th October 1933 – Mrs Cole, 'Netherton' Board Residence, 2 Dean Park Road, Bournemouth. The receipt is signed by E Mary Cole over 2 x 1 penny stamps.

Keith Turner

EYO 50

The Essex Youth Orchestra is celebrating its 50th year this summer with a series of concerts throughout Essex.

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On Sunday 23rd September the Kingfisher Ensemble (all former members of the EYO) - led by Beth Spendlove, former leader of the EYO - will be playing Mendelssohn's glorious string octet and other light classical music at St John's Church at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 and can be obtained, along with other information, from Sonia Levy Tel: 815282.



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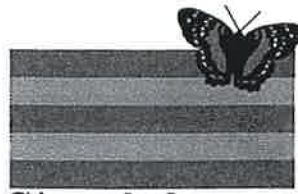
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DEVOTED CARING

As I'm writing this our open day is still two days away, so I'll have to let you know how it all goes next month! What I can tell you is that we've had some wonderful entries for our art competition, including some beautiful pieces from Birchanger Primary School. The talent of the children is truly amazing.

On a different note, I was talking to a friend last week who had just come back from a holiday in Spain. She was telling me about a celebration they had witnessed in a local town. A group of horses was herded into the town square and local people then threw themselves on top of the horses from first floor windows and cut off pieces of the horse's manes and tails. The horses didn't seem to be harmed in any other way but were pretty terrified. It was reported on the local television station, with pictures of the injuries that the participants sustained mainly from being kicked by the terrified animals. The focus seemed to be on the bravery and daring of the participants. Of course, every country has its own customs and traditions but it got us talking about the different attitudes to animals that people in different countries have. I was telling her that I was often humbled by the devotion that some clients have to their pets.

One case I remember in particular was a cat that was involved in a road accident and suffered spinal injuries. It wasn't certain whether the cat would ever walk again. We had him in at our Saffron Walden surgery for a week, where he received intensive therapy for his injuries including round the clock care by our nurses, one of whom is always on the premises overnight. He was unable to walk or pass urine or faeces on his own. After a week we had to tell the owner that we thought the outlook was pretty poor. She asked us to continue but also asked if she could visit the cat every day and spend some time with him. Of course we agreed. Every day the following week the owner came to visit after work. She brought some of the cat's favourite food and sat and talked to him for a couple of

hours, hand feeding him bits of tuna and chicken. She saw the nurses and vets carrying out physiotherapy and expressing the cat's bladder on a regular basis and after a few days asked if she could learn to do it too. I must admit I was a little doubtful at first as some techniques are not easy to learn; however, we decided to give it a go. After another few days she had mastered the techniques quite well and the cat seemed a little happier with all the attention and stimulation it was receiving. At the end of the second week, we thought that there might be a little movement in one of the cat's hind legs.

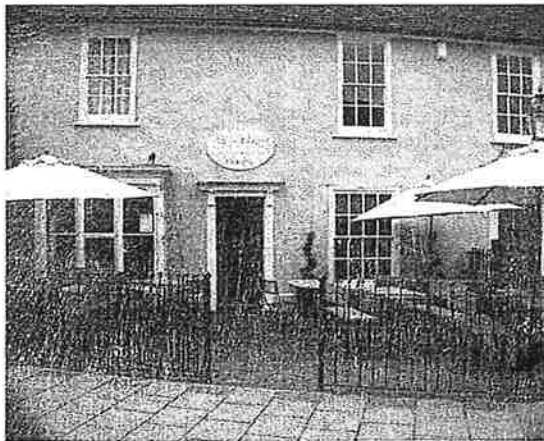
At the owner's request, as well as conventional medicine, we also tried homeopathy, acupuncture and herbal supplements. In fact, if there was anything that might be the slightest use we tried it! I think the owner must have spent another couple of hours on the internet every night researching spinal injuries and treatments. After a third week there did seem to be more improvement and we agreed to let the owner take the cat home and carry on the treatment regime at home.

The good news is that the cat went on to recover enough to be able to walk short distances and he regained bladder and bowel control. I visited the cat at home several times and it was a joy to see him walk out to his favourite bush in the garden and enjoy the sunshine. I think the owner learnt a lot about the treatment of spinal injuries; and I also learnt some valuable lessons from the cat and his owner - in particular, never to underestimate the perseverance and ability of some owners and never to underestimate the sheer will to live in some animals.

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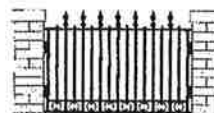
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LOATES PASTURE AND LONGCROFT STREET PARTY AND BARBECUE

Photographs: Ian Seavers

Every so often, when new families have moved in, a street party is organised so that we can get to know each other and renew old acquaintances. Such an event was held on 30th June, in spite of expected rain. The weather was mostly dry, luckily, and when it rained for a while in the evening the marquees provided adequate shelter for everybody, including the hard working BBQ chefs. The theme was 'The Mad Hatter's Tea Party' and fancy dress was encouraged. Most of the children dressed up and those adults who did were very inventive.

Music was laid on and BBQ food, wine, beer and soft drinks were provided from the ticket proceeds. The bring and share salads and puddings were delicious and everyone tucked into everything. A treasure hunt, pass the parcel, hook a duck and match the photo were among the games which kept children and adults amused. The only regret was the cancelling of the tug o' war because of muddy conditions. It has always been the highlight for everybody! The party, which started at 4.00pm, finally came to an end when the last revellers went home at about midnight.

The Party Organisers



Stansted Tennis Club



Clower Secondary Singles Tournament

Eleven boys aged between 11 and 15 took part in this event on 17th June. The round-robin stage involved the boys being split into two groups. Each boy played 5 games against each other boy in the group. The older group was very close at the top, but the winner with 16 points was Ross Armorgie (15), followed by Charlie Kirby (15) with 14 points. The younger age group was even closer at the top, with Tim Berry (14) and Joe Hollis (12) drawing with 18 points. Joe took top spot as he had more wins than Tim. The boys were then seeded according to their round-robin results. The knockout stage followed where the best of seven games was played. In the first semi-final Ross Armorgie beat Philip Bitten (14), 4-1. Charlie Kirby defeated Ben Taplin (15) by the same score in the other semi-final. The final was a real cliff-hanger all the way, with it going to the very last game with the score locked at 3-3. Charlie took the last game to beat Ross 4-3. Pat Clower presented the trophy to the winner.

Coaching

There are still a couple of places left for any keen ladies who would like to join in our coaching and match practice session at 2.00pm on Friday afternoons. You may be a complete beginner or may have not played for several years, but are keen to start up again. You may just want to socialise and have some exercise. If any of these apply to you, then please give Chris Hollis a call on 01279 319155 to find out more.

You don't have to be a member of the club to join in. The junior coaching and match practice sessions are now well under way for ages 6-15. If you would like to find out more and get your name on the waiting list, please call Chris on the above number. Martyn Taplin, (01279 816386) continues to coach adults on Saturday afternoons at the club.

Used Tennis Balls

These are available for sale at the reasonable price of £1 per tin of four balls. Please contact Jan Hollis on 01279 812073 or call at 105 Cambridge Road.

Club Playing Sessions

Members are encouraged to attend these open sessions at the following times:

Wednesday mornings from 9.30am

Wednesday evenings from 5pm

Friday mornings from 9.30am

Sunday mornings from 10am

Contacts

If you would like further information, please contact Richard Mott (Secretary) 466348, Janet Hollis (Chairman) 812073 or Daphne Lunnon (Membership secretary) 817574.

Chris Hollis



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BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

School News

The school year end is with us once again and it is time to say farewell to our Year 6. This year they are moving on to seven different schools, and they take with them all our best wishes for their future. They enjoyed a wonderful fun filled day at Wicksteed Park followed by a Leavers' Ball the next evening and as always we had our emotional Leavers' Assembly on their final morning which usually leaves someone in tears – mothers being the main offenders!

Our Years 5 and 6 end of term production was the magnificently zany 'Uncle Crumble's Mad Machine', taking the audience on a wonderful time adventure back to the swinging 'sixties, to Roman times and a hundred years into the future with everyone arriving back to the present and being happier for it! This was a real treat for all who came to see it, well done to all involved.

Our older children's residential visit to the Isle of Wight was a great success with all the children having a wonderful week. As well as the beach they enjoyed visits to Fishbourne Roman Villa, the Mary Rose, Carisbrooke Castle and the always popular Robin Hill Park. Here is what one of them had to say "We had room inspection at 8.50am, followed by going to Robin Hill Adventure Park. I went on mazes, Splash Attack, bet you know why it's called Splash Attack – I got drowned, Duck Down, Rabbit Warren and T.I.M.E machine. THE DAY WAS FUN, FUN, FUN". Everyone arrived home tired and happy.

At Bentfield we welcome visits from parents and children who might be thinking of coming to the school. If you are interested in either a Reception or Nursery place, and would like to make a visit to the school, please give us a ring and we would be very pleased to arrange one for you.

For younger children we run our very successful Messy Play. This is great fun, and runs in the Nursery on Mondays from 1.45pm to 3.00pm during term time. It is open to children age 18 months upwards. If you would like to come, contact the school or just turn up! Sessions cost £1.00 and children should be accompanied!

PTA News

MUSIC IN THE PARK 2007 SATURDAY 22nd SEPTEMBER

We are very sorry that, due to a technical difficulty with our entertainment licence, we have had to re-schedule *Music in the Park* to Saturday 22nd September 2007. We have arranged the same fantastic bands, entertainment and refreshments for the September date and do hope you will be able to join us then. We will publicise more details nearer the time. Tickets cost £7.50 in advance/£8.50 on the day and will be available from the school office or by calling me.

Note that this is a non-smoking event.

We are delighted that Rebecca Carter has offered to host another *Music Quiz* for us. This is always a hugely entertaining evening where you are guaranteed great company, good food, and the hostess with the mostest! Watch out for more details next term. Tickets will cost £7.50 including supper and will be available nearer the time from me and other PTA members.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported our fundraising activities during the past year – either through sponsorship, volunteering or turning up at our events. Thank you! We would achieve nothing without your continued support – we hope to see many of you in September. We are, of course, all now looking forward to a glorious Indian Summer! Happy holidays!

Alison Thompson,
Co-Chairman Bentfield PTA
Tel: 816188

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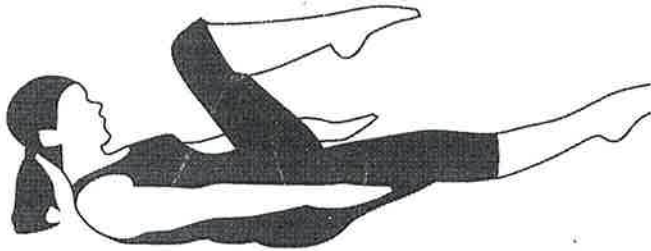
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494 AN INTRODUCTION ...



Who are we?

494 (Stansted Airport) Squadron is part of the **Air Training Corps**, a voluntary military youth organisation supported and sponsored by the Royal Air Force. There are around 41,000 cadets aged between 13 and 20 in the ATC. Each Squadron forms part of a Wing, in our case Essex Wing, and they in turn are grouped into six regions. The Cadets are supported by over 10,000 volunteer staff and 5,000 Civilian Committee members.

494 (Stansted Airport) Squadron started life as a Detached Flight of 1096 (Bishop's Stortford) Squadron in 1992 and after a lot of hard work and dedication was finally granted Squadron status.

In April 2006 our present OC, ex-cadet and reservist officer, Flight Lieutenant Rob Hall took command of the Squadron. He and his team of staff have put many hours of hard work into the unit and this has seen cadet numbers soar. The last intake of 11 recruits has taken us to around 35 cadets. It is hoped that the next new intake will raise the Squadron strength to 45+.

What are our aims?

The aims of the Air Training Corps are-

- To promote and encourage among young people a practical interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force
- To provide training which will be useful in the Services and civilian life.
- To foster the spirit of adventure and develop qualities of leadership and good citizenship.

However we are not a recruiting organisation for the Royal Air Force and cadets are under no obligation to join any of the Services. Many cadets do go on to have careers in the Royal Air Force and the other Services both military and civilian, currently some 34% of all RAF aircrew and 20% of Officers are ex-cadets. The most important thing to remember is that we aim for our cadets to enjoy their time with the unit and to take away new skills and happy memories when they leave.

What do we do?

Squadron activities are wide ranging and include field craft and military skills, camping, flying, gliding, shooting, orienteering, adventure training, first aid, communications, drill, aircraft recognition, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, sports and foreign trips. There are many exercises and camps held throughout the year. There are opportunities to gain qualifications and progress through the rank structure. The cadets learn many life skills, including good citizenship, leadership and team building.

The unit has a growing reputation in the area of field craft, with cadets taking part in regular exercises such as 'Black Panther I' held in March where the Squadron organised a weekend of activities based at the Bramley Training Area in

Hampshire. It was attended by over 90 cadets and 20 staff from seven other squadrons from the Essex and Surrey Wings. Other recent events include Battlefields Tour of Belgium and Northern France, the Falklands Trophy Competition held at Carver Barracks, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Weekend and Wing Athletics at Chelmsford.

When do we do it?

The unit parades twice a week on Mondays and Fridays, from 19:20 hrs to 21:30 hrs. Not many weekends go by without some form of Squadron activity, sometimes this may involve the whole squadron; others just a few cadets.

Where do we do it?

The Squadron parades at its Headquarters, Building 150, First Avenue, Stansted Business Park, Stansted, Essex CM24 1RY. However, our travels can take us to all parts of the UK on camps, expeditions and visits. There are also more foreign trips planned for the future with another Battlefields Tour in the pipeline for autumn 2007.

Do you want to know more about us?

Visit our website

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**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Next season we shall as usual be meeting in the Day Centre at 8.00pm on the first Thursday in the month. In September, it will be 6th, when Audrey Collins will be introducing us to 'Sex, Lies and Registration' - an intriguing title, which has us guessing at the moment. I hope you will be able to join us.

Meanwhile, have a good summer! See you soon!

Ian Seavers



**STANSTED & DISTRICT
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

We have decided to move away from our monthly ploughman's lunches, and will now be holding these once a quarter with additional lunches on occasions. There will, therefore, be no ploughman's lunches in August and September. The first of our quarterly lunches will now take place in October - details to follow next month.

Our next social event will be a discussion evening with a sausage and mash supper on Saturday 29th September in the Stansted Day Centre. For further details ring 814222 or 813432.

Ruth Rawlinson

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1st STANSTED CUBS

Re-creating the march from old home to new

In 1963 the cubs left their then dilapidated home in the old windmill, which they had occupied since the war, and marched with the St George's flag in front to their new home in Water Lane. Forty years later the flag has been eaten by moths, the hall roof has so many holes in it it leaks like a sieve; not to mention the horrible kitchen and the toilets, so nasty that only the enormous spiders would go in there! The groups that use the hall have spent years fund raising and now in their 100th year they finally have a new hut.

Recently the cubs were very kindly allowed back to the windmill for one more evening meeting to recreate the experiences of more than 40 years ago. Having been shown around the very top of the windmill, the cubs came down to where the scouts had originally met in the lower rooms. They heard stories of the activities the cubs did and the tricks they played! Finally the First Stansted Cub Scouts re-formed for their march back to the hut. It turned out to be 44 years to the day since the original march!



Carrying the new St George's flag was Stansted's very first girl cub scout Daisy. Daisy's nanny (Joan Baldwin) hand stitched the new flag to be exactly the same as the old one from all those years ago!

The cubs thought that having girls in the pack would change the things they do, but far from it; if anything it has made us more adventurous. Whilst pot-holing recently on camp all the boys turned back when they got to the first 'squeeze' (a very narrow gap between the rocks where they have to crawl through flat on their tummy). They sent Daisy and Megan down the hole first and the boys had to follow! What the boys didn't realise was the girls were so much smaller than them, which made it look easy, which it wasn't!!

Akela from the 1st Stansted pack commented "It is fantastic that in the centenary year of scouting not only do we have a new hut, a new flag, more cubs and scouts than in the last 20 years, but we also have our first girls as well." He went on to add that the pack is thriving and has a long waiting list. Another four leaders, as committed and enthusiastic as the current ones, are needed to enable Stansted to enlist more girls and boys into the fun of scouting.

For more information about scouting or to be a volunteer leader in the village please contact Roger Musgrove on 01279 816172 or email: addicted_to_cubs99@hotmail.com.



THE STANSTED SCOUT HEADQUARTERS

The wooden building which the Scouts have used since 1963 started its life in the early 1900s as the social room for the then thriving Rochfords nursery. It served in this capacity until the '50s when it was used as an auxiliary school room. In 1962 it was given to the 1st Stansted Scout Group for their headquarters and re-erected in Water Lane the following year. Over 40 years of strenuous use took their toll, particularly of the roof and window frames. The cost of repair was known to be high and the estimates continually climbed ahead of available funds. In 2006 Ray Franklin from Elsenham, the foster parent of one of the Tortoise Troop boys, grasped the nettle and set about raising money from a number of sources. From a base of about £4,000 Ray brought it to a total of £50,000 in less than a year – a truly remarkable achievement. Work began in February and was completed in May 2007 including refurbishment of the kitchen and toilets. Much of the finishing off was done by Mark Gerber, Scout Leader of Tortoises and the 1st Stansted Scouters. It is a tribute to the late Mr Cawkell that the main timbers of the building were found to be as sound as when they were first made – a testimony to the high quality materials and workmanship of a century ago.

On 7th July the County Commissioner, Rob Lyons, and Malcolm Treacher, the Scout Leader when the building was first moved, attended the re-opening ceremony. Members and Scouters past and present from both the Stansted and Tortoise Scout Groups (the latter being co-users since 1976) supported the event in good numbers and there was a display of the headquarters' history and of the activities held there. The contractor was Mr Philip Catton and the project was completed within budget. Another great centenary event for Scouting and one which sets the two Groups up for another 40 years.

Derek Honour
Chairman,
Tortoise Scout Group



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Marion Williams

Now in Place

The hand and weathervane at St Mary's Church. This featured in Audrey Rodgers' article on the church in the June issue of 'Link'.



SNIPPETS

We are sorry to record the death, in July, of Marina Bird of Recreation Ground. Marina was a long-standing resident and a regular helper at the Windmill Fete.

On a happier note, we announce the birth, in June, of a daughter to Julia (nee Phillips of Bentfield Gardens) and Martin Craig. Julia was formerly a member of St John's Church.

Update on the 'new' Link

In our February issue, you will have read that from November, the Link will become a free publication (incorporating the Parish Council's 'Network') which will be delivered to all houses and businesses in Stansted. In order to prepare for this change, we have set up some new arrangements for contacting us.

As detailed on page 1, copy can still be delivered to 58 Chapel Hill, but where possible, we would prefer it to be sent by email to: editor@stanstedlink.org.uk

For advertising enquiries, please email adverts@stanstedlink.org.uk or telephone Mike & Marion Dyer on 814059. From November, there will be both full colour and black & white advertisement opportunities. We are now approaching both new and existing advertisers.

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