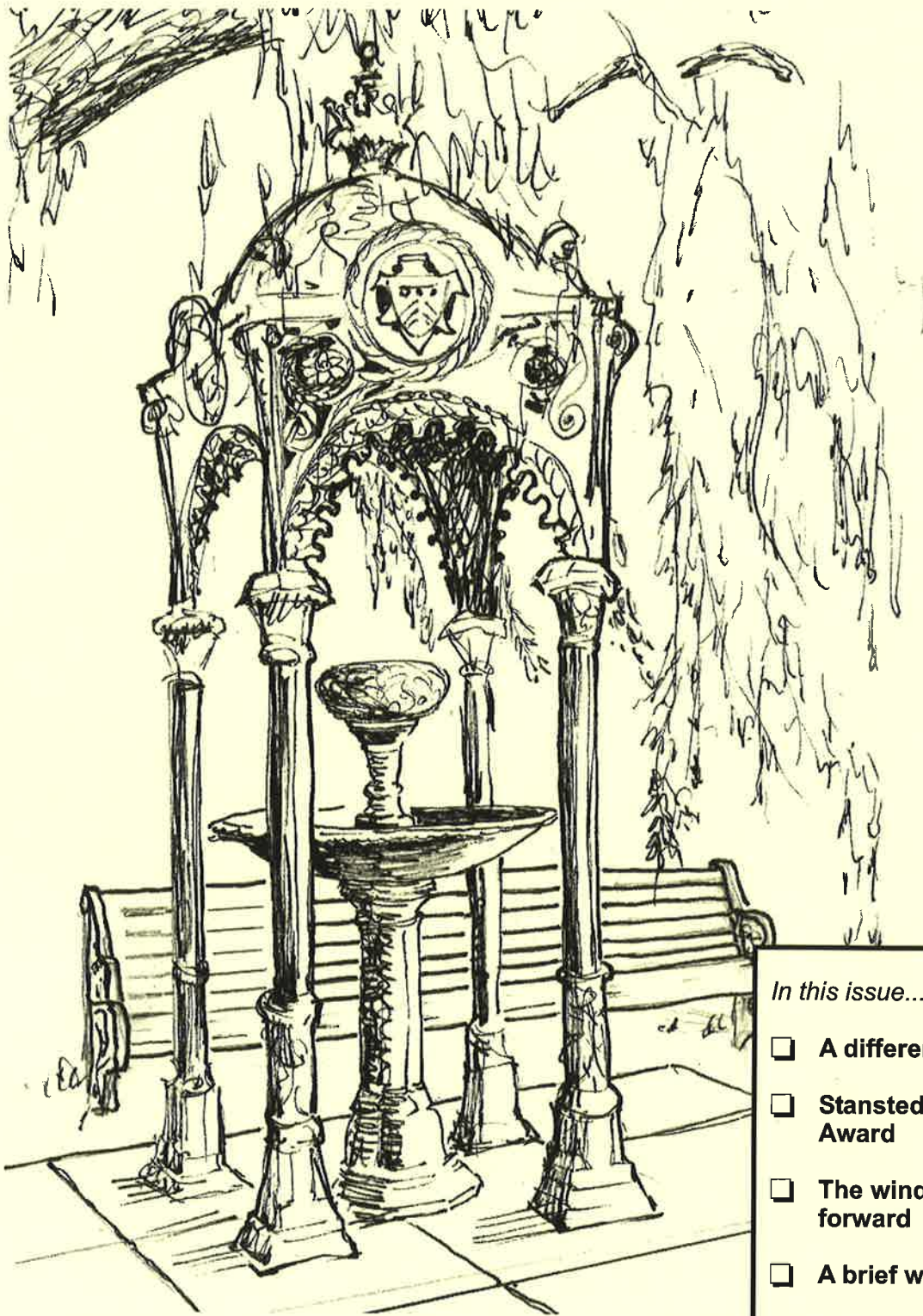


Stansted Mountfitchet

# The Link



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## My Sabbatical

An object of fascination for me for many years has been the understanding of scripture as written. This was the focus of my sabbatical last summer. Where could I start? Of course I already knew of a number of books and contacts, but this is a specialised area of study.

Very early on, I went to Ely for a fascinating seminar lead by archaeologist Garth Gilmore. Some modern theologians ('The Copenhagen School') claim that there was no 'Israel' before the exile – no prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah or Amos, nor Kings: David or Solomon. All were 'myths' made up after the return from exile – akin to our King Arthur and Robin Hood! Garth showed us considerable archaeological evidence for Israel – its prophets and kings before the exile. Speaking to Garth after the seminar, he gave me a number of leads, including Richard Harvey at All Nations College, Ware! Richard is a Jewish believer of Jesus; a very friendly man, passionately concerned with his work – basically the same field as I was researching! He took a sabbatical to write a book which he asked me to proof read!

Richard offered me a number of other leads including Daniel Nessim, who is the UK representative for Chosen People Ministries - a worldwide organisation concerned with the evangelisation of the Jews, and, equally important, for non-Jews to gain a Hebrew perspective of scripture. Daniel is a quiet man, with a gracious disposition, and a great academic and practical knowledge of the Jewish faith and how to be a believer of Yeshua (Jesus) from a Jewish perspective. He invited me to a Chosen People meeting in Manchester – expenses paid by the world organisation. Daniel will be leading worship at Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church on Maundy Thursday, 5th April.

At Manchester I met many new friends – and there was an offer to visit the headquarters of Chosen People Ministries in New York! Why not? So, in August, Fran and I set off to 'The Big Apple', a few days late due to the airline scare. We stayed in Brooklyn, a low-rise area of great charm and diversity, frequently travelling to Manhattan on the subway. Ros joined us and we took the opportunity to visit the 'sights' – Statue of Liberty, Central Park, etc, etc. On Sunday we worshipped at the Manhattan Methodist Church (Greek Orthodox style architecture!). We made many new friends. The headquarters is a hive of activity. We visited their Resource Centre. I preached at their Wednesday service.

My sabbatical is long over. I now realise that I could have profitably spent three years study of my chosen subject! Fran and I are even learning Hebrew (but don't test me on any of it yet!). Was it worthwhile? You bet. Many books have been digested, and beg re-reading. Others are on my shelf, and more to buy. It was good to be away, and it's good to be back. Knowledge for its own sake is fine – but Jesus was only offered a short time on the mountain top. It's time to put that knowledge to work!

Rev'd Keith Page

*To learn more about Keith's sabbatical, come to Shalom on 12th March in the church hall - you will be very welcome!*

## Fond Farewell

Our URC minister, Rev'd David Simpson, retires at the end of March. We shall all be very sad to see him go, but wish him and Sylvia many stress-free years ahead in their new home in Princes Risborough! David's last service with us will be on 18th March, a communion service that he and Keith will lead together. We are now putting together our 'profile' of the minister we would like to welcome in David's place. As we share our minister with Bishop's Stortford URC, we shall be working with them to find someone who will meet the needs of our two quite different churches.

Marion Dyer (Deacon)

### Preachers for Sundays in March

4th	10.30 am	Setting Free <i>All age Worship</i>
	2.30 pm	Rev'd David Simpson
11th	10.30 am	Mike Render
18th	10.30 am	Rev'ds Keith Page & David Simpson
		Holy communion
25th	10.30 am	Doug Coulton

### Other Activities

Mon 5th	6.00pm	Pilots in the Hall
Mon 12th	8.00pm	Shalom in the Hall
Mon 19th	2.30 pm	Monday Club
Mon 19th	6.00pm	Pilots in the Hall
Mon 26th	8.00pm	Shalom at 7 Blythwood Gardens

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## Who is my Brother?

This year, 2007, will mark the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire of that time. This anniversary is very much associated with William Wilberforce and covered the most basic of human rights, 'To be treated as a human being'. Two hundred years have passed, but today we still have people enslaved, with human trafficking, children sold into slavery to enable their parents to buy food or pay off a debt, child brides and so the list goes on, the year 2007.

Without care, even ordinary people can become slaves in today's modern life. It is so easy to take the easy way out, without thinking. Christian teaching tells us that we should be prudent in all our actions, and to consider the effect it will have on others. Our action may enslave others less fortunate than ourselves; at such times, we should consider turning to prayer and seek guidance in the written words of the life of Christ or the saints. One of the most famous and highly regarded commonplace book of prayers is that by Launcelot Andrews (1555-1626), and is usually referred to as his Private Prayers. The particular feature of this collection of prayers is that it stays as close as it can to scriptural text, while at the same time making something new of it.

The Celtic Church of Aidan, Cuthbert and Hilda also had a very basic prayer life, using very simple prayers to help them through their everyday lives. Today, perhaps we should adopt this simple prayer life to help us to free ourselves from today's modern slavery; simple prayers, such as:

*Dear Lord, thank you for my legs and my hands,  
As I make the pilgrimage of life,  
Guide them on the path you have chosen for me.*

One of the modern day attitudes that enslave many of us is not accepting that we all have a gift from God, a simple greeting such as 'God Bless' with a smile to another can and does bring relief to our inner soul.

I should like to close with the following prayer taken from the Pocket Celtic Prayers compiled by Rev Martin Wallace:

*Peace between neighbours,  
Peace between kindred,  
Peace between lovers  
In love with the King of Life.*

*Peace between person and person,  
Peace between husband and wife,  
Peace between women and children,  
The Peace of Christ above all Peace.*

*Bless O Christ my face,  
Let my face bless everything.  
Bless Christ, mine eyes  
Let mine eyes bless all it sees.*

Francis Mercer

# SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

**Meeting** Sunday, 10.30am

A few weeks ago we had a most interesting talk about a Quaker Meeting near Nimes. Its history was unusual to say the least, and its message inspiring. I think all denominations worry about declining numbers; maybe our thinking is too short-term, and we need to be patient and the Light may come in unexpected ways.

During the American War of Independence, the French naturally enough sided with the colonists, so the British monarchy gave free rein to British ships to attack French vessels. One British Quaker co-owned three merchant ships, and discovered to his horror that his two colleagues were pirating French ships and enriching themselves considerably. He immediately sent his son to Paris to offer compensation to all who had suffered loss, and to write an article in the Gazette de France apologising and detailing the faith and practice of Quakers.

Among the many responses he received he had one from the village of Congénies near Nimes (historically a Protestant area) saying they did not want any booty but would like to know more about Quakers. Various visits were made in both directions and in 1788 a Quaker Meeting was established, and flourished for about 60 years. Decline then set in and during 1907 the Meeting was 'laid down' and the Meeting House sold. Many years later, after the Second World War it was bought by an English Quaker couple as their retirement home. Other Quaker owners followed and at the beginning of the present century it was re-established as a Quaker Meeting House by France Yearly Meeting. Initially Meetings were held monthly, and Friends travelled considerable distances; they now meet fortnightly and soon it will be every week. The Meeting flourishes and accommodation is available and due to be expanded. They hope it will become an international meeting place for Friends.

For our small Meeting it was an encouraging and up-beat talk, and made us realise that renewal may come at any time and from any source. We will be on the look-out for pirates!

Katharine Hurford



# Slavery and freedom

On March 25 1807, an Act to abolish trading in slaves in areas under British control was eventually passed in Parliament. It had been drawn up by William Wilberforce MP, and this month sees the bicentenary celebrations of that victory. We are seeing a number of reflections of this – books and art reminding us both of slavery as it was, and also of contemporary forms of slavery, which is more shocking. Apparently 27 million people are currently estimated to be living in slavery. Modern forms of slavery include people trafficking, child soldiering and forced labour. Most of the slaves in the world today are women and children. The UK Government has estimated that 4,000 victims of trafficking for prostitution are living in the UK at any one time. Each year at Lent, the Church of England has a special fund raising appeal – and this year it focuses upon modern forms of slavery, supporting four projects in Africa and India that seek to relieve the suffering of young people sold into prostitution, of communities locked into poverty and of those without access to basic forms of medical care.

Closer to hand there are other forms of bondage. Many are trapped by crippling debts. Illness or disability can leave people housebound. And reports suggest that even the apparently rich and successful men and women who work in the City of London are often trapped by a lifestyle that demands longer and longer hours and creates a competitive and dehumanised culture. Probably 'slavery' is too strong a word to use for these situations, but I do wonder how many of us really see ourselves as 'free', and wake up each morning (or even once a week?) glad of that fact.

Many years ago, I was introduced to two ideas about freedom which have stayed with me. One is the distinction between 'freedom from' and

'freedom to'. Often we see freedom as being released from something that binds us, as slavery did and still does. But once released there is then freedom to commit our lives to something. This is the positive side of freedom – not just releasing the chains, but asking what we will use this freedom for. The second idea that has been important for me is the title of a book: 'Fear of Freedom'. This suggested that we are actually rather afraid of being free, for freedom brings responsibility to choose. I think we see this fear all around us – it is very tempting to grumble about what we can't do rather than decide what we actually want to do. How many of us like to point to all that holds us back as an excuse for not moving forward? Stepping out towards a vision or making a change is risky – for individuals and for groups. Of course, many constraints we experience are very real, and they may indeed be beyond our control to change. But sometimes we focus on the constraints rather than using our other freedoms to make aspirations into reality.

Lent is a time that many people associate with 'giving something up' and this can be a useful discipline although not an end in itself. But maybe as well as this, this bi-centenary of the abolition of slavery is a good time to reflect on what it is that binds us, and to think about what we might do about it. Are these things that are in our power to change? Perhaps most importantly, do we want to be really free of them? Do we have a vision to move towards? The early reformers such as Wilberforce were driven by faith to press for change for the benefit of others, and we need to follow their example in our own day. But it doesn't end there. Our faith also has a lot to offer all who feel trapped by other burdens, and it points us to a deeper freedom that can help us to throw off the more subtle chains that bind us all. CC

## contact us

all enquiries

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### Director of Music

Lorraine Everett  
church.music@stansted.net

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www.stansted.net/stjohns

## 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

### January

#### Funerals

- 4th Kathleen Mary Reed, age 86  
at Parndon Wood
- 4th Joyce Amelia Sharp, age 81  
at Parndon Wood
- 11th Marjorie Sault, age 84  
at Parndon Wood
- 31st Denis Patrick Perry, age 74  
at St John's

### Lent Groups

This year's Lent Series is a DVD-based course featuring the Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann. The Course started on 27th February and will run every Tuesday at 8.00pm until 27th March.

Bill and Christine Stiles have kindly offered to host these meetings at their home, Old Lane House, Church Road, Stansted Tel: 8131721.

Everyone is welcome, but if you can't make Tuesdays, you may like to join the CTS Lent Group - see details in the column opposite.

### A date for your diary

Saturday 24th March - Bishop's Stortford Musical Theatre's 'The Entertainers'. More details on page 7 - 'What's On'.

## GOOD FRIDAY PROJECT

6th April 2007

We are very pleased that the Good Friday Project will take place in St John's Church this year. School-age children are warmly invited to join in the fun throughout the day. Activities will include music, drama, art and crafts, Easter gardens - something for everyone.

We are hoping lots of children will enjoy this very special day, so we will need lots of adults to help.

For further details or offers of help on the day please ring Margaret Hill Tel 814359.

Please put this date in your diary NOW!



# SHALOM

### Shalom Retreat

By the time you read this, a number of the group will have taken part in our Annual Retreat. This year it was led by Father Michael McGreevy and was at St Francis' House in Hemingford Grey. Look out for a report on the weekend in next month's 'Link'.

### Future Meetings

On 12th March, Rev'd Keith Page will be talking about his sabbatical, which he spent exploring his Jewish roots. This promises to be a fascinating evening, and will be held in the hall at Stansted Free Church. Then on 26th March, one of our own members, William Frogley, will be leading a bible study. This will be at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

Meetings start at 8.00pm and everyone is most welcome - please join us.

Catherine Dean  
Tel: 813579



### Lent Groups

This year we will be following the York Course based on tapes and discussion entitled 'Can We Build A Better World'. It is related to the bi-centenary of the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, focusing on William Wilberforce. There are five sessions (dates and times below):

Slavery Then & Now.  
Friendship & Prayer Then & Now  
Change & Struggle Then & Now  
The Bible Then & Now  
Redemption & Restitution Then & Now.

Tape speakers include Leslie Griffiths, Archbishop John Sentamu and members of the Poor Clare Community Arundel as seen on the recent BBC Production, 'The Convent'.

There will be two opportunities for you to share in the programme. Please note that the first session will have already taken place by the time you read this, so the following dates refer to sessions 2-5.

**Tuesday afternoons 2.00pm**, at the home of Catherine Dean, 49 Recreation Ground Tel: 813579  
6th, 13th, 20th and 27th March.

**Evening sessions 8.00pm** at Stansted Free Church

Fri 9th March  
Wed 14th March  
Mon 19th March  
Wed 28th March

Please feel free to mix and match if convenient. The courses will conclude with a joint Agape at 6.30pm on Sunday 1st April - Bring & Share at the Stansted Free Church Hall.

All are very welcome and we look forward to seeing you. If, however, these dates are not convenient, you may care to join the St John's Lent Group meeting on Tuesday evenings. For details, see the column opposite.

David Morson,  
Chair  
Tel: 850209

### HOLY WRIT?

stanstedlink@aol.com  
johndivine@patmos.org

Noticed new branch office at Stansted Silverstreet. Are there any Revelations? If so regret too late for publication. Keep looking.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

*In reply to the letter written by Mrs Pauline Mantle to the Editor in the February edition of the 'Link', I would like to explain why a decision was made not to have a Christmas tree decorated with lights in the area of Crafton Green during the Christmas period of 2006.*

No, Stansted has not lost its Christmas spirit, but in recent years has continually lost its Christmas lights, due to the mindless vandalism of a section of the community who are in the minority. Until we are provided with a stronger police presence within the village, we are concerned that this kind of behaviour will probably continue.

There are other issues concerning the whole area where the Christmas tree and lights would have been, one being a health and safety factor. In order to erect a tree of the right size and place the lights at a high level in order to keep them 'safe', it would have needed more equipment than we had at the time, and such equipment would have been quite costly. We therefore thought it prudent not to risk infringing the Health and Safety regulations in place at the time.

We have, however, plans in place to consider the planting of various shrubs etc and whether or not to incorporate a permanent Christmas tree at the location in question. The Parish Council fully intends to have Christmas decorations in Crafton Green in the future and hopefully this part of the village will be very much enhanced.

Valerie Trundle  
Chairman of Open Spaces Committee  
Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council



**Huw Johnson  
Club**

It seems very strange after over 30 years of holding Club every Thursday evening throughout the winter months to find myself unoccupied. We decided not to hold Club through January and February because last year so many evenings were cancelled due to bad weather. Thursday 8th February when snow fell justified this decision. We shall, however, extend the number of summer meetings to that we can take advantage of the lighter evenings.

This year, in place of our usual New Year Party, we took our members to The Chequers at Ugley for a three course Christmas dinner. Crackers were provided and party hats were soon brightening up the room while everyone laughed at the corny jokes and riddles they found in the crackers. The staff were most helpful and friendly. We cannot thank them and the landlord enough for making us so welcome. Three hearty cheers expressed everyone's satisfaction at such a happy evening and delicious meal.

Marion Johnson



**Stansted  
Evening  
Women's Institute**

Thursday 8th February, our meeting night, was the day the country shut down because it snowed. Children played happily in the streets and fields and people struggled or not to get to work. Our booked speaker for the evening was to have travelled from Abridge to talk on Essex churches but we forgave him when a message was received that he could probably get here but wasn't too sure about getting home again. He has promised to come to us in December this year instead. The WI doesn't cancel meetings and as we had quite a lot of things to talk about and tickets to issue, 25 stalwart members gathered as usual in St John's Hall. We put on the tea urn first, gathered close together and started off the meeting with our usual verse of Jerusalem - even if the land wasn't so 'green and pleasant' ! A recent report in our County magazine says that fewer and fewer WIs start their meetings in this way over the country. Here in Essex 55% sing it at every meeting and of those 70% sing unaccompanied as do we. It has always been sung in our WI and members still like to start the meeting this way and it is still a good experience to hear it sung by hundreds at larger meetings.

Numbers were taken for the Group Meeting to be held in Berden this April, when the Speaker is Barbara Erskine, author. The competition for this event is a handmade book-mark, with an accompanying book, and members were asked to bring entries in March for our monthly competition. February's competition was for a photograph of an Essex church which was won by Pearl Wellings with a beautiful black and white photo of Arkesden Church taken in the 1950s. Notice was given of the exhibition in Chelmsford Cathedral to take place in June, called 'Roses, roses all the way'. This promises to be something special as it celebrates the Federation's 90th anniversary. It is hoped that some of our members will take part in the various classes. An invitation was received from Manuden to their March meeting when the daughter-in-law of Lucy Boston, children's author, will speak about her and the family home at Hemingford Grey, near Huntingdon. Built circa 1130 this is reputed to be the oldest continuously inhabited house in England.

A letter from Carole Morris of Great Hallingbury WI was read out. Carole was one of the intrepid cyclists who took part in the Cycle Cuba Challenge to raise money for our Denman College in Oxford. This took the form of a 328km ride over rough and hilly countryside and Carole was one of the oldest taking part. She said most of the others were what she would call 'professional cyclists'. There were a few accidents and mishaps - like getting mugged and having passports and money stolen, but all in all a wonderful and unforgettable experience from which she personally raised nearly £3,000.

We enjoyed our coffee break with a very plentiful supply of cakes to go with it and after that Brenda Ryan presented a light-hearted quiz to end the evening early. Next month we have 'Flower-arranging in the Spring', so do come along if the fancy takes you!

Judy Colliver



Mountfitchet  
Garden Club



## QUIZ EVENING

Free Church Hall  
7 for 7.30 pm - Sat 10 Mar

£5 incl supper  
from Maralyn 07919 478144  
BYO drinks & glass ~ Tables of 6-8



London  
Concertante  
Chamber Ensemble

7.30 pm Sat 17th March  
St John's Church

An evening of Strauss and Beethoven

Tickets £10 adults, £3 children  
from Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford;  
Stansted Carpets; Sonia Levy 815282,  
or at the door

## WINGBEATS

A Concert by  
Saffron Walden Choral Society  
and local schoolchildren  
4 pm & 7.30 pm Sat 17th March  
St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden

Tickets £12 Adults, £10 Concessions  
£1 Accompanied under 18s  
Tel 01223 560315

Part of RSPB's Bird Friendly Schools Project

## VILLAGE EVENTS

### March

- |    |     |  |
|----|-----|--|
| 1  | Thu | Local History Society  |
| 2  | Fri | World Day of Prayer<br>Conservatives Social Evening          |
| 3  | Sat | Skips  |
| 4  | Sun | Afternoon Tea (after service)                                |
| 7  | Wed | Mountfitchet Garden Club                                     |
| 8  | Thu | WI   |
| 10 | Sat | Lib Dem Ploughman's<br>Garden Club Quiz                      |
| 12 | Mon | Shalom Group   |
| 13 | Tue | Millers' AGM   |
| 17 | Sat | Skips<br>Ugley Farmers' Market<br>Village Music Club Concert |
| 21 | Wed | Annual Parish Meeting  |
| 23 | Fri | Race Night   |
| 24 | Sat | NCT Sale<br>The Entertainers                                 |
| 26 | Mon | Shalom Group   |
| 31 | Sat | Skips<br>Garden Club Spring Show                             |

### April

- |   |         |                               |
|---|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Sun     | Afternoon Tea (after service) |
| 4 | Wed     | Mountfitchet Garden Club      |
| 5 | Thu     | Local History Society         |
| 7 | Sat     | St Mary's Church open         |
| 8 | Sun & 9 | Mon Windmill open             |

- |                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Day Centre 8 pm                 |
| St John's Church 2 pm           |
| Rose & Crown 8 pm               |
| Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm   |
| Free Church 3.30 pm             |
| Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm        |
| St John's Hall 7.45 pm          |
| Day Centre noon - 2 pm          |
| Free Church Hall 7 for 7.30 pm  |
| Free Church Hall 8 pm           |
| Day Centre 7.30 for 7.45 pm     |
| Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm   |
| Ugley Village Hall 10 am - noon |
| St. John's Church 7.30 pm       |
| Free Church Hall 8 pm           |
| Bentfield School 7.30 pm        |
| St. John's Hall 2.30 - 4 pm     |
| St. John's Church 7.30 pm       |
| 7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm        |
| Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm   |
| Free Church Hall 2 - 4 pm       |

- |                          |
|--------------------------|
| Free Church 3.30 pm      |
| Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm |
| Day Centre 8 pm          |
| 2 - 5 pm                 |
| 2 - 6 pm                 |



Bentfield School PTA

## RACE NIGHT

Bar



7.30 pm Fri 23rd March

Tickets £3 incl light supper  
Please call 816188



## STANSTED MILLERS

Annual General Meeting  
followed by a presentation from  
The Ashdon Windmill team

7.30 for 7.45 pm Tue 13th Mar  
Day Centre

Refreshments ~ All welcome

St John's, Stansted  
The Entertainers

7.30 pm Sat 24th March

Music from Strauss to  
Sondheim

Tickets £8  
(incl interval drinks & refreshments)  
from the Benefice Office or tel 815551

Proceeds to Bishop of Chelmsford's Lent Appeal



Stansted  
& District  
NCT

## Nearly New Sale

Clothes ~ Equipment ~ Books  
Toys ~ Videos ~ Maternity Wear

2.30 - 4 pm Sat 24th March

St John's Church Hall

For info tel Hilary 816964

Annual Parish  
Meeting



8 pm Wed 21st March

Stansted Free Church

Come, listen & speak!  
All welcome



St Mary's  
Church Open

2 - 5 pm

Saturday 7th April  
(Easter Weekend)

Everyone Welcome

## Manuden Singers

7.30 pm Sat 31st March  
St Mary's Church, Manuden

Music for Passiontide  
Handel 'Brockes Passion'  
Finzi 'Lo the Full Final Sacrifice'

Tickets £8 adults, £5 conc  
Tel Fiona 812157 or at the door

Proceeds to Motor Neurone Disease Assoc

Mountfitchet  
Garden Club



## SPRING SHOW

2 - 4 pm Sat 31st March  
Stansted Free Church Hall

Entry 20 p  
Sale of flowers & produce  
after the show

Christmas is  
a time of giving



I have just received a report from Samaritans Purse on the 2006 shoe box appeal. A staggering 1.24 million boxes were sent from the United Kingdom to 12 counties in Eastern Europe and Africa. Our 260 odd boxes seems very small in the big scheme but they are important and thank you to everyone who helped in any way.



One of the distributions took place at a rubbish dump in Serbia; the mother of one of the families scavenging for food told the team she had nothing to feed her family but raw potatoes for breakfast. The family lived under a bridge and were not used to kindness. When her daughter opened her box and found clean toys for her she was dumbfounded. The mother told the team she could not understand why anyone from the UK would care to bother with them.



In Belarus, Vanya, three, arrived at the Borisov Babes' Home two years ago when his mother was jailed. Good humoured and very mature for his age, Vanya was delighted with his shoe box, and busily investigated the contents. It was the only present he had this year; his mother is now out of prison but she has sadly turned to alcohol and a new boyfriend so Vanya has no-one and nowhere else to go. Sadly, toddlers must leave the home when they turn four years old, so Vanya's future is uncertain.

There are more heart wrenching stories like this and pictures of the children receiving the boxes on the website [www.samaritanspurse.uk.com](http://www.samaritanspurse.uk.com) and it's worth a look.

As you go round the shops in the next few months watch out for bargain items suitable for the boxes for this year and if you want to do something, **start knitting hats, gloves and scarves etc** - it all helps when November comes. When you buy new shoes please take the box and these can be left at 58 Chapel Hill any time. Thank you all once again for your support.

Janet Townsend  
Tel: 812593

## ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING WEST ESSEX

### Saturday Specials! Why not try something different?



Essex County Council

Art Watercolours	10 am - 3 pm	Saturday 3rd March
Alexander Technique	10 am - 1 pm	Saturday 3rd March
French Property Language	10 am - 3 pm	Saturday 3rd March

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Word Desktop Publishing	Mon 12.30 - 2.30 pm	12 weeks starting 12th March
Databases	Tue 12.30 - 2.30 pm	12 weeks starting 13th March
Managing Windows	Tue 9.30 - 11.30 am	12 weeks starting 13th March
Digital Imaging	Wed 7.30 - 9.30 pm	12 weeks starting 14th March

Call us on 01279 813319 to enrol or for more details

The Adult Community College, Peter Kirk, St Johns Road, Stansted CM24 8JP  
Email: [lifelong.learningwest@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:lifelong.learningwest@essexcc.gov.uk) Website: [www.essexcc.gov.uk/acf](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk/acf)

## Mountfitchet Garden Club



Despite the plummeting temperatures and the threat of snow, the February meeting, the first of the new year, was well attended. Members were given an introduction to organic gardening by Mr Patrick Hughes, and told how to deal with pests and diseases. For many years Mr Hughes worked for the Henry Doubleday Institute which specialises in organic gardening.

Mr Hughes explained that with organic gardening you must have a broader outlook and treat the soil and plant as one. If you have a pest and you use an insecticide, as well as killing the pest you also kill the predators who would have eaten the initial pest and poisoned the soil around the plant, leaving the plant vulnerable for attack by a different pest/disease; a balance was needed. However gaining this balance was not a 'quick option' - it could take a few years, with the disease/pests dying out/being controlled as the 'friendly bacteria in the soil and friendly predators' increase. You will never get rid of pests and diseases entirely but once the balance is achieved the problem is not so overwhelming. For example, every year, aphids will appear in your garden but having ladybirds, hoverflies, the small golden wasps as well as their hungry larvae on your side will help to keep the problem under control.

Maintaining a good compost heap and working this home-made compost back into the ground was one method of achieving the right balance for your garden. Members were shown a series of slides and Mr Hughes explained the various problems experienced by the grower and how they were overcome. A lively question and answer session followed.

Our next meeting is on 7th March and the topic is 'Gardening Then and Now'. Our meetings are held at the Day Centre (7.30pm for an 8.00pm start) and visitors are welcome to all of our meetings. Our programme covers all aspects of gardening and we have some trips arranged for the summer too!

Also in March, on Saturday 10th, 7.00pm for 7.30pm, the Club is holding its first Quiz Evening at the Stansted Free Church Hall in Chapel Hill. It is a General Knowledge Quiz - so if you fancy putting your 'little grey cells' to work why not come along and have an enjoyable evening? Tables are 6-8 persons - but we have some tables where we are making up the numbers with singles/couples/triples - a fun way to make new acquaintances from the village. Tickets are £5 each and can be obtained from Maralyn Harris (07919 478144) or any Committee Member. The ticket includes supper, but please bring your own drink and glass!

The Club's Spring Show will be on Saturday 31st March, once again at the Stansted Free Church Hall. The hall and exhibits will be open to the public from 2.00pm-4.00pm with many of the exhibits being sold at the end. So book this date in your diary/on your calendar and come along and enjoy the fine displays of spring flowers and other produce.

Maralyn Harris



The National Childbirth Trust  
Education for Parenthood  
Stansted & District

### NEARLY NEW SALE Saturday 24th March 2.30pm-4.00 pm

Our Spring NNS will again be held at St John's Church Hall. If you have nearly new children's clothes, toys and equipment (up to 11 years) in good condition which you are looking to recycle why not contact **Hilary on 01279 816964**. A pack containing 60 labels costs £5 and as a seller all you have to do is price your goods using the labels provided (clothes should be washed and ironed). Then just bring them along on Saturday 24th March and we will do all the hard work for you. The Stansted Branch of the NCT earns 25% commission on everything sold and if you collect your unsold items at the end of the sale, you will be entitled to a £2 refund on the cost of your pack.

So not only will you be helping your local NCT continue to offer support in pregnancy, childhood and early parenthood, but you will be clearing out your cupboards/garage and making some money in the process!!!

On the other hand if you have children, grandchildren or friends with children, then you will know how expensive clothes and toys can be so why not come along and grab some really fabulous bargains.

Hilary Waite  
Tel: 816964

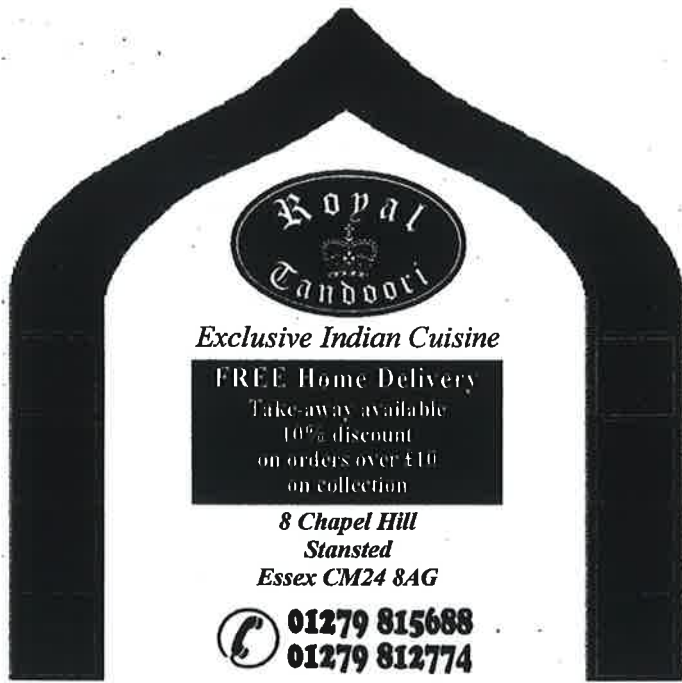
### TRY WALKING IN 2007!

Walking is the most natural and simple form of movement and an excellent all round mode of exercise. Yet as a nation we are walking less and less. Walking can help you to improve your general health, get fit and stay fit, control your weight, and live longer! Walking helps protect the body from many illnesses and conditions: heart disease and stroke, high blood pressure, osteoarthritis, obesity, depression, some types of diabetes and colon cancer.

Health experts agree that 30 minutes brisk walking on most days of the week is sufficient to improve fitness. That might seem a lot at first but walking can be incorporated into your everyday life more easily than any other activity. You don't need any special gear and you can do it wherever you are. It raises your energy levels, works off calories and doesn't cost a bean!

Where to start? Try looking at [www.walkinginessex.co.uk](http://www.walkinginessex.co.uk). This website gives you all the information you need to know to start walking. It lists guided walks taking place, leaflets and books of walks, and contact details for dozens of walk groups. Go on, check the site now - you know you will enjoy a good walk!

John Harris  
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[www.walkinginessex.co.uk](http://www.walkinginessex.co.uk)



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## BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

### School News

As the Spring term continues, with very varied weather, so our classes continue to have varied activities! Classes One and Two have been looking at buildings and building materials this term. Both classes have been for a walk around the village looking at the very varied styles and ages of local buildings. They have also visited Saffron Walden Museum for a very enjoyable all day session on the same subject led by the museum's excellent Education Officer.

Classes Five and Six had a visit from Legion XIII who gave an all day presentation on The Greeks. The children were able to experience, hands-on, how the Greeks lived, including being dressed in Greek costume and seeing how they fought in battle. This was a lively day and most informative.

As mentioned last time, our School Council had a fascinating trip to Westminster. Here are some of their comments;

#### Things we thought were good

- We liked the tour.
- We liked listening to Lembit Opik and think he has a cheeky grin!!.
- We liked the tour and going under Big Ben.
- It was good to see the other schools' presentations and to bring back ideas from them.

#### Things that were not good

- Too much talking.
- Too much sitting down.
- Not enough air conditioning!

It was a lovely experience for them and certainly gave plenty of food for thought.

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 visit 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. It is open to children 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

Our calendar of fundraising events is filling up rapidly! On Friday 23rd March we'll be under starter's orders for a night out at the races – or, to be more accurate, a fun-filled evening in the school hall at our very own Bentfield Race Night! Tickets are only £3 and include a light supper – there will also be a licensed bar where you can toast your successes on the track. Add to the fun and suspense by becoming an owner, even if you cannot come along to the event.

For our younger friends, in addition to the Spring Disco held on 23rd February, we are planning another *Easter Egg Trail* on Friday 30th March. There will be an egg-citing (sorry!) treasure hunt around the school grounds to celebrate the start

of the Easter holidays, followed by hot cross buns and games including a football shootout and bat-the-poor-old-rat in the playground. (We did consider having a bat-the-egg game this time but thought we may live to r-egg-ret it!) We will also be inviting the children to let their imaginations and artistic talents loose by taking part in our egg decorating competition. What a lovely way to end the term!

Looking ahead to next term, we are busy organising this year's *May Fair*, which takes place on Saturday 12th May and last, but by no means least, we are looking forward to the sixth annual *Music In The Park*, which will be staged against the stunning backdrop of Hargrave House on Saturday 14th July. We do hope that you will join us again for these lovely family events.

If you would like to know more about any of our activities, please keep an eye on the parish notice boards around the village or call me on 816188.

Alison Thompson,  
Co-Chairman, Bentfield PTA



[www.villagemusicclub.co.uk](http://www.villagemusicclub.co.uk)

The Club's final concert of our 11th Season will take place on Saturday 17th March when the **London Concertante Chamber Ensemble** will be performing in St John's Church, Stansted at 7.30pm. Currently celebrating its 15th Anniversary Season, the London Concertante rightfully claims its position at the forefront of classical performers in the UK with an enviable array of critical acclaim, a wide spectrum of recordings, and performances throughout the UK and Europe.

The programme will be Strauss' arrangement of his famous tone poem 'Till Eulenspiegel', Francaix's jazzy suite for octet 'A Huit', and Beethoven's immensely popular Septet. Tickets £10 adult and £3 children, are available from Stansted Carpets, Nockolds Solicitors, Bishop's Stortford, Sonia Levy, 31 Chapel Hill (Tel: 815282) or at the door.

#### A future date for your diary

On Bastille Day, Saturday 14th July, the Club will once again be holding a 'Summer Soirée'. This event has proved very popular in the past and comprises a concert in St John's featuring young musicians from the area, with an extended interval when supper is served in the church gardens. Full details and tickets will be available closer to the soirée, but please make a note of the date now as a 'not to be missed village event'.

Alan Corbishley

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## UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

After a week without the 333 bus service from Maitland Road, an alternative was due to start from 12th February. It is the 7A. It will not be as good a service as the 333 as it will not start until 9.00am and the last bus back will arrive before 3.00pm. The 7A will go to the Herts & Essex Hospital and then on to the Bishop's Stortford Interchange near the railway station, where buses can be picked up to Harlow and Epping, there no longer being a through service from Stansted Mountfitchet but only from the airport. I imagine there will be complaints about the reduction in service and I will be happy to receive these and pass them on to Essex County Council, which has agreed to support the 7A on a six months' trial. So please use it if you want to keep it and improve it.

I was pleased when the post box in the Lower Street area was replaced outside the post office. I understand that this will take over from the one at the top of Chapel Hill for the Sunday morning collection.

On the subject of travel, Catherine and I have visited Venice by train, escaping as the snows arrived on 8th February. We did our bit for global warming by not flying just as we had a demonstration that snow is not totally a thing of the past.

Councillor Alan Dean

Tel: 813579

Email: [cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk)

### Stansted Airport Second Runway

British Airports Authority's announcement of its preferred option for a second runway has met with outright opposition from the Council. BAA's plans would see the airport double in size and eat up a further 486 hectares (1200 acres) of countryside. It would see 73 homes and 18 listed buildings destroyed or moved.

The Council will continue to do all it can to protect the district. We believe the proposal would be an environmental disaster. It would have an unacceptable impact, both on the local community and the wider environment. We will continue to work closely with colleagues at Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils and East Hertfordshire District Council to oppose BAA's plans. We expect BAA to submit a planning application by September 2007. Detailed information on their proposals can be accessed on [www.stanstedairport.com/future](http://www.stanstedairport.com/future).

### Community Achievement Awards

Congratulations to Andrew Arnold, Dick Pollard and Phyllis Saban who will be presented with awards at a ceremony on 22nd February. They will receive a framed certificate from the Chairman of the Council Cllr Alan Row. Stansted owes a lot to those who devote years of voluntary service and it is only right that they receive some small recognition.

### Conservation Area Appraisal

The District Council has been conducting an appraisal of Stansted. It considers that this is a particularly relevant moment to appraise the qualities of our best historic and architectural areas and put forward proposals to protect and enhance them for both the present and future generations. Uttlesford has the responsibility in law to designate conservation areas and once designated to review them from time

to time. Within conservation areas there are additional planning controls. John Bosworth who has written the appraisal has come up with a very detailed report, which makes for fascinating reading. Did you know that Stansted has 140 individually listed buildings of which 52 are in the existing conservation area?

Stansted's population at various census points was:

1801	675
1901	2200
1951	3400
1971	4700
2001	5500

The Parish Council and I would like to see the following areas added to the existing conservation area.

The whole of Bentfield Causeway and Bentfield Lower and Upper Greens.  
The red brick Victorian houses at the beginning of St. John's Road  
Croft House and Cottage, High Lane  
Gall End Lane down to North End House

Residents will have had the opportunity to give their views at the public meeting in February, but still have until 7th March to submit responses to Barbara Bosworth at Uttlesford District Council, London Road, Saffron Walden CB11 4ER (tel: 01799 510462) or online at [www.uttlesford.gov.uk](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk).

Councillor Geoffrey Sell

Tel: 815925

Email: [cllrsell@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:cllrsell@uttlesford.gov.uk)

## NEWS FROM THE DAY CENTRE

We are very sorry that Veronica, our cook, is having to leave us through circumstances beyond her control. However, the good news is that she would like to be a relief volunteer and also a relief cook when she is able. We are fortunate that we still have Bridget on a Thursday.

We are now looking for a cook for two mornings a week, possibly increasing to three mornings, if we can open on Wednesdays. We are also looking for a Manager for three mornings, possibly increasing to four. The Manager would need to be computer literate and be capable of taking over the bookkeeping. This is a new, paid appointment. If anyone is interested, or knows someone who might be, please ring me on 813080. There is more information on our web site: [www.Stansteddaycentre.org.uk](http://www.Stansteddaycentre.org.uk).

Brenda Scarr



## Conservatives

### Forthcoming Event:

Friday 2nd March at 8.00pm. Pub Evening at the Rose and Crown, Bentfield Green. A drink, a chat and a relaxing evening

Come and join us!

Tony Barrett-Jolley

Tel: 814300



*Ferrovial's plan for Stansted  
'Belligerent and Irresponsible'*

Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) has described Ferrovial's latest expansion plans for Stansted as 'belligerent and irresponsible' and has accused the Spanish infrastructure company which acquired BAA last year of being concerned only with profit regardless of the devastating environmental impact which its plans would have both locally and globally. Aviation is the fastest growing contributor to global climate change and last year Stansted was responsible for the equivalent of some five million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. With a second runway this figure could rise to some 12 million tonnes a year. Locally also, the environmental impact would be devastating. It would result in the destruction of communities that have developed over centuries as well as vast swathes of unspoilt countryside and ancient woodlands. At the last Stansted Public Inquiry, Inspector Graham Eyre concluded as follows:

*"I would not be debasing the currency if I express my judgement that the development of an airport at Stansted, with a capacity in excess of 25mppa and requiring the construction and operation of a second runway and all the structural and operational paraphernalia of a modern international airport as we know the animal in 1984, would constitute nothing less than a catastrophe in environmental terms."*

At that time (1984) Graham Eyre's reference to an 'environmental catastrophe' was entirely based on the local impacts. Had he known what we now know about the damage caused by aircraft emissions to the global environment, and of the urgent need to dramatically reduce emissions of carbon dioxide if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change, there can be little doubt that he would have taken an even stronger line against the expansion of Stansted.

Ferrovial has chosen to pay only lip service to the environmental consequences of its expansion plans for Stansted and wants another runway by 2015. It goes without saying that this will be fiercely opposed by the local community. In addition, all of the key local authorities are totally opposed to a second Stansted runway including Essex, Herts and Suffolk county councils, Uttlesford and East Herts district councils and the East of England Regional Assembly.

Ferrovial is still trying to play yesterday's game with the imperative of capitalising on the growth in cheap leisure flights. However, today's imperative for the rest of us is to combat climate change. This does not yet seem to have dawned on BAA's new owner who wants to go on making the problem worse regardless of the environmental impacts. This is the unacceptable face of capitalism complete with sombrero. It is all very well putting a plan on paper but the hurdles that lie ahead will render this a pointless exercise. Not only will this plan continue to be fiercely opposed at local level but also, it will become a much wider battle. It will become a key test as to whether – in the full knowledge of the environmental damage that it would cause – we as a society attach greater importance to protecting tomorrow's

environment or to meeting today's insatiable demand for ever more cheap flights. Today's announcement also demonstrates a staggering degree of belligerence and irresponsibility on the part of Ferrovial. This project should have been given up long before now and it will be opposed tooth and nail until such time as it is abandoned.

**Think Global - Act Local!**

'Think global – act local' was the theme of SSE's 2007 Community Conference on Sunday 4th February attended by more than 200 delegates.

Among the many points that were made, SSE Executive Committee member Peter Riding put into context the carbon emissions that would arise if full use of Stansted's single runway were to be permitted following the imminent Public Inquiry. He pointed out that the equivalent of the seven million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> that would be produced by Stansted would eliminate all the savings from switching 350 million conventional light bulbs to low energy lighting, taking 2.3 million cars off the road, or turning off the power to 1.4 Million family homes. This corresponds to all the homes in Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk.

Councillor Peter Martin, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council congratulated SSE on the professionalism of the conference and commended Uttlesford District Council (UDC) for its decision to refuse BAA's application for unlimited expansion on the current runway. He said that Essex County Council would stand shoulder to shoulder with UDC in defending the decision at Public Inquiry and felt sure that he was also speaking for Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts District Council. He gave an assurance that all the local councils would co-ordinate resources to support UDC in opposing BAA's plans at the Public Inquiry.

Saffron Walden MP and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons Sir Alan Haselhurst made a stirring closing address lambasting BAA for its spin and deception, saying: "BAA's propaganda would have us believe in some Utopia where Boeings and butterflies could joyously co-exist."

Carol Barbone, Campaign Director  
Tel: 07775 523091  
Email: cbarbone@mxc.co.uk  
Peter Sanders, Chairman  
Tel: 01799 520411





## SOUTH WEST AREA PANEL

The Area Panels were introduced to Uttlesford at the beginning of 2006 to give an opportunity for issues to be discussed at a local level. The district has been divided into three areas, North, East and South West. Parishes involved in the South West are: Berden, Birchanger, Chickney, Clavering, Elsenham, Farnham, Great and Little Hallingbury, Hatfield Heath, Hatfield Broad Oak, Henham, Little and Great Canfield, Manuden, Stansted, Takeley, Ugley and Wicken Bonhunt.

Elected District Councillors from the above areas make up the Panel, with Geoffrey Sell, Stansted North, Chairing the meeting and Richard Harris, Takeley, taking on the role as Vice-Chair. Meetings move around the south west area, with parish councils and residents invited to attend and voice their opinions. The meetings start at 7.00pm, with half an hour allocated for questions from the floor. Only District Councillor Members have voting powers at these meetings.

Last year saw presentations made by partner organisations on hot topics from One-Railway, Essex Police, Primary Care Trust, Essex County Council's Highways Department, along with a standing item on all Agendas on Stansted Airport. At a meeting in Clavering residents of Stansted attended en masse to make a representation to Essex Police on the increasing level of crime in their area. This brought about an increase in visible policing, multi disciplinary agency meetings (which is looking at a possible drinking ban on the Recreation Ground), as well as a number of arrests following information received.

The last meeting in Elsenham was attended by over 50 residents, and the main item for discussion was Affordable Housing and Services for Young People. Ten young people from Elsenham also attended to listen to the presentations from Takeley Scouting Group and the Youth Service and voice their opinions to the meeting.

Hatfield Broad Oak Village Hall hosts the next meeting on 1st March with the local development framework core strategy – policy choices and options for growth being discussed. Everyone is welcome to attend and be involved in the process of what you envisage Uttlesford should look like in the future. If you would like further details or information on the South West Area Panel please contact me, shayden@uttlesford.gov.uk or access the area panel website from the main page on [www.uttlesford.gov.uk](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk).

Sue Hayden,  
South West Area Champion  
Tel: 01799 510563



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# St Mary's C E Foundation Primary School



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## School News

The school has enjoyed further opportunities to show off our talent in the Creative Arts department this half term! We made music the theme of one of our Friday celebration assemblies, when pupils who are learning a musical instrument performed for the school and parents. We heard guitars, piano, singing, a trumpet and a drum kit. We also heard Year 6 perform a clapping piece of 15 different rhythms simultaneously! It was a lovely celebration of music and as not all our instrumentalists performed, we are to hold another music assembly in the summer term.

The children have also enjoyed a visit by the SPLATS Entertainment Company. The school divided into four groups, and while Lisa, from SPLATS, worked with each group in turn to learn their parts, the rest of the children were making scenery, masks and rehearsing. In just one day, the school put together and performed *'The Wind in the Willows'* in four scenes to an audience of families. We had a super day; as well as being an opportunity to develop the children's confidence in performing to an audience, it was another chance to include the parents in school events. The day was also a masterpiece of organisation - the children and staff showed just how well they are able to work as a team to produce a play in just one day!

Year 3 took part in Education Sunday on 4th February at St John's church. Based on the epistles of St Paul and the teachings of Jesus, they presented to the congregation a short piece on the theme of letters and the messages we would like to send to others which follow the message Jesus gave. The children also led the congregation in the prayers, and our school choir joined the church choir for the singing of some of the school's favourite hymns. Then Year 3 received their Bibles from the Reverend Cilla Hawkes. We had lots of visitors to the school for coffee and cookies after the service, too, at what was a very enjoyable community occasion.

## Mid-day Assistant

We have found our new midday assistant - we welcome to the staff Emma Teather, whose son Lewis is in the Foundation Stage class with Miss Innes.

## Future Events

The PTFA have a Chinese Auction planned for Friday 27th April. If you have any non-food items you could donate for sale, we will be happy to receive them in the school office.

Christine Tonkins,  
Headteacher



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

This year's season opens on Tuesday 13th March with the Stansted Millers' AGM. It starts at the Day Centre at 7.30pm with the usual cheese and wine followed by the official business at 7.45pm. After this we shall hear a talk and presentation on the progress made by the Ashdon Windmill team. We hope that everyone with our own mill's future at heart will come along. The mill's opening season will then begin at Easter when we shall be open from 2.00pm to 6.00pm on Sunday and Monday 8th and 9th April.

We have received the most comprehensive report on the mill for many years from Michael Hoyle, the County Millwright. Michael takes a holistic view and sees the mill as a living structure. His report takes in not just the present condition of its many parts but how the cap can be restored to 360° turning and the regular maintenance which we should do. It makes both daunting and inspirational reading. It has now been sent to our architects and English Heritage. If, as we hope, the latter will appreciate the merits of making a 'proper job' of restoration there will have to be more money raised by grants and our own efforts but at the very least we know that many of the important moving parts are deemed worthy of renewal.

Alan Williams, our Treasurer, who has less years under his belt than some of us, has seized opportunities to have the sails turning when the wind has been favourable. Thank you Alan, your efforts are seen by many. We should of course be thankful that we came through the Great Wind of 18th January without damage.

We would be grateful for any offers of help with stewarding on open days. This is more pressing this year as our stalwart rosta organiser, Rosemary Minshall, is unable to assist for health reasons. We all wish Rosemary a steady recovery.

Peggy and Derek Honour  
Tel: 647213



## STANSTED & DISTRICT LIBERAL DEMOCRATS.

Our next ploughman's lunches will be on Saturday 10th March and Saturday 14th April, 12 noon to 2.00pm, at the Stansted Day Centre. All are welcome.

We will be holding our annual Supper Club on Friday 16th March at the Stansted Day Centre, 7.30 for 8.00pm. The speaker will be James Hardy, a BBC political correspondent. Tickets, to include supper, are £10 and there will also be a raffle and a bar. For further information and tickets please ring 813432 or 814222.

Ruth Rawlinson

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## STANSTED LUNCH CLUB

### Lunches in 2007

We continue the year's programme with The Bishop's Stortford High School hosting the March lunch at the School in Bishop's Stortford. To avoid disappointment be sure to diarise the occasion and other dates now:

### Wednesdays

28th March	The Bishop's Stortford High School
23rd May	The St James's Place Partnership
July	Daniel Robinson & Sons
September	Hewitsons
November	G E Sworder & Sons

### January Lunch

Our host and sponsor was Barry Root of Essex Bloodstock, the Thaxted-based bloodstock agency, who generously provided the drinks for some 55 members, including nine new members, attending the lunch. Pippa Cuckson, from Great Leighs Racecourse, opened the presentation with an interesting outline of the proposed new racecourse being developed at Great Leighs near Braintree and some of the planning problems that had and still beset the project. Barry then explained his role as Racing Manager to the new Essex Racing Club, which provides opportunities for the public to be involved with the ownership of three racehorses in training, and therefore to enjoy all the benefits associated with racehorse ownership, without the high level of costs associated with individual ownership. Members receive a share of all prize money won and various other benefits including stable visits, badges for days at the races and members' luncheons.

With around 9,500 flat racing horses in training, the new racecourse was badly needed and would be a major sporting feature for Essex at which Barry looked forward to having facilities for the use by the Club's members. Anyone present at the Lunch Club in January who joins the Essex Racing Club will be offered a special prize of Tickets for A Day at Newmarket including The National Stud Tour. Applications for membership, which costs £295 for the year **fully inclusive**, should be made to Barry Root as quickly as possible on 01371 831769.

It was also good to see Jo Mullis, Head of Mountfitchet Mathematics and Computing College, after her success in leading the College to the status of most improved school in Britain.

### Succession Planning

I can report that Rhonda Wills of the Reynolds Johns Partnership has been engaged in strategic planning for the next generation of Lunch Club members, giving birth to young Oliver on 27th October 2006 and laying down foundations for membership in a quarter of a century's time. Rhonda returns to work towards the end of March; I hope in time to join us on 28th March.

Alastair Richardson  
Tel: (07850) 295109  
Email: Alastair@abr-ltd.com



## THAT FINAL GOODBYE

It's an amazing life being a vet. Most of the day is spent doing the same old things, vaccinating dogs, lancing cat abscesses, clipping rabbits' nails to name a few; but there's always a few cases that make you think, that get your brain working, or maybe make you laugh or even cry. It's wonderful to see the puppies and kittens come in for their first health checks and vaccinations. All of the staff love to have a cuddle and it can resemble 'pass the puppy' at times! Still it's all good socialisation.

It can also be hard to say goodbye, especially if it is a pet you've known since they were young and an owner that you've seen regularly over the years. I feel that the owners and their pet have become friends of the practice. I said goodbye to such a friend this week. I'd known him since he was a puppy, stitched him up after several cuts sustained on long muddy walks, mended his broken leg after an unfortunate encounter with a tractor and watched him get slower and greyer in the last couple of years. Finally, this week the anti-inflammatories for his arthritis were no longer sufficient to keep away his pain and his owner decided she could no longer watch him suffer. We put him to sleep in his bed at home with the owners and their children around him. He passed away quickly and painlessly and I'm afraid we all ended up in tears. We've arranged a private cremation for him and the owners have requested that his ashes be returned in an urn so they can scatter them in a special place where he was happiest. I think we did the best we could for him during his life and we made his passing as quick and as comfortable as we could.

At Stansted we have a book of remembrance in the waiting room and people bring in photos or write poems about their pets so we can still remember them. I look at it sometimes and it nearly always brings a tear to my eye but it's lovely to see old friends and remember them how they were, and I feel privileged to have known so many wonderful animals over the years.

Ilse Pedler, Partner,  
Mercer and Hughes,  
Veterinary Surgeons



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# Stansted Tennis Club



## Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Monday 12th March at 8.00pm at 105 Cambridge Road, Stansted. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend to make their voices heard.

## Tournaments

The tournament season will be upon us very soon, so members are encouraged to look on the clubhouse noticeboard for details.

## Coaching

Are there any ladies out there in the local area (members or non-members) who are keen to join in with a current ladies' coaching group? 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 319155 to find out more.

Chris will be starting up coaching sessions for juniors (ages 6-15) in early spring, so again if you would like to find out more, please give Chris a call. Martyn Taplin (816386) continues to coach adults on Saturday afternoons at the club.

## Club Playing Sessions

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

Wednesday mornings from 9.30am

Wednesday evenings from 5.00pm

Friday mornings from 9.30am

Sunday mornings from 10.00am

## Contacts

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

Chris Hollis

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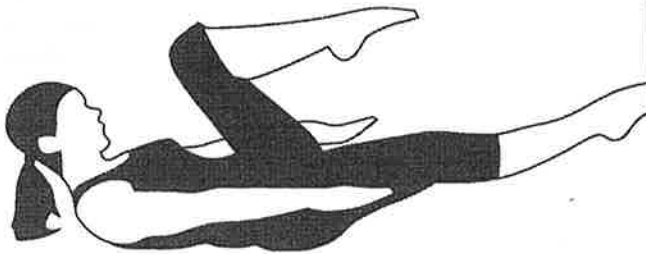
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## Nature Notes

It was on 8th February that I opened the curtains in the morning to see the world white with the promised inch or two of snow. There was a surge of excitement reminiscent of childhood days as one thinks of snowball fights and tobogganing. There is also a smug satisfaction that, on this day at least, our lawn looks just as good as the others. For a few moments the realities of traffic disruption, power lines down, icy pavements and raw cold are forgotten.

After a hasty breakfast suitable for the occasion one grabs the broom to go and sweep it all up. The snow, however, has got a bit heavier than it used to be, so instead of clearing every inch of the paths and drive, even the bits no-one ever uses, one sweeps a strip just wide enough to walk along and then creeps back indoors.

After another hot drink one's enthusiasm returns. Go for a walk in the snow and be the first to tread in the deserted white wasteland! After donning too many layers of suitable clothing I set off to do lone battle with the elements, only to find that almost the whole world has got there before me. People, young and old, were everywhere having fun in the snow. Some must have started at the crack of dawn to build some of those enormous snowmen and roll huge snowballs. Apparently many schools were closed and others could not get to work so lots of folk came out to enjoy what is nowadays something of a rarity. Anyhow, it was good to see.

I had to tramp nearly two miles across the fields before I came upon a path that had not been walked that morning and was thankful that the covering of snow and the frozen ground meant that my boots were not clogged with our notorious Essex mud. There was not much sign of wildlife and not many tracks because most nocturnal animals had returned to base before the snow started to fall around dawn. A fox had obviously returned home late following one of its regular cross-field routes. It's well-trodden path was hidden by the snow and one wonders if it still followed it exactly. Flocks of fieldfares which are like large thrushes come from Scandinavia to spend the winter here and they showed up in the white fields, as also did four hares, which were having a right old time in the snow. They are always there but usually difficult to spot in the brown fields.

As I write this, it has started to rain, so that may well be the end of winter for another year!



Felix



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

There was a lot of local interest at our last meeting, when David Devine of Harlow Museum, came to tell us something of the town's history. We tend to think of it as a New Town and were surprised when he started his story with the pre-historic settlement which was established on the site of what is now Old Harlow. Several archaeological digs have been carried out over recent years and it is understood the first residents lived in round huts in wild and boggy surroundings.

The first period that can be recorded was during the Roman occupation. Much evidence has been found of quite a large town and David showed us slides of some of the artefacts which have been discovered, from coins, jewellery and tools, to votive offerings. Remains of a Roman temple were found and we have a very good idea of what it looked like and how it was used. Its location is still indicated in that part of Harlow known as Temple Fields. The next residents we know of were the Saxons and they have left us a legacy of the Parishes and their names. Also, they left us a chapel - the oldest building in the town today - and Latton Priory (now incorporated in Epping), which eventually became a working farm.

David showed us extracts of an estate map made in the Tudor period which indicates the road pattern in Old Harlow has not been changed since those times. Mark Hall was visited three times by Queen Elizabeth and her Court - it was fortunate that the owner was a very rich man. The Bush Fair was established as a trading and hiring fair but over the years, it became more of a pleasure fair and somewhat rowdy, until the owner of the land on which it was held stopped it in Victorian times! In the Georgian period, the roads and the stagecoaches had become established, so that many of London's successful business men began to acquire estates in the area. The River Stort was canalised and in the 19th century, the railways came, so that the town became more industrialised. Several of the more successful business owners became benefactors to the town as a whole. David told us of the short life of the village of Burnt Mill - built to house the workers of an engineering works - later demolished to make way for the new Harlow Railway Station, the existing station becoming known as Harlow Mill.

The 20th century brought the development of the New Town, as we know, but it also saw the burning down of Mark Hall, believed to be the result of a Land Girl's cigarette! However, the stable block of the old hall is still being put to good use, containing the new Museum, developed from (and incorporating) the old Cycle Museum. David finished by inviting us to visit the Museum and after his most interesting talk, I think many of us will be going. We were very grateful to him for his presentation and now look forward to an even more local talk on 1st March, on Clavering Castle, given by Jacqueline Cooper. The meeting starts at 8.00pm and is held in the Day Centre. Hope to see you there.

Ian Seavers

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Rainbow has had a busy few weeks as the children have been enjoying the festivals and customs which come around at this time of year. In the first week after half-term the children had lots of fun making and eating their own pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. This was followed by pancake races, which were a real hit with them all. Chinese New Year was also a great event where the children were able to try eating noodles, prawn crackers and sweet and sour dishes with chopsticks. Best of all they loved waking up the Chinese dragon with their music and dancing round the room with him.

Children at Rainbow continued to develop the theme of shapes with a number of activities including matching pair games, drawing, stencilling and stamping as well as a trip to St Theresa's where Father Joe kindly let them have a look round the church in their hunt for more shapes.

They will continue to get out and about this month and the play leaders plan to make a number of trips to the library with smaller groups of children so they can all enjoy the experience of picking their own book to look through and bringing it back to pre-school. They will also be thinking about the concept of growing this term and learning more about how the children have progressed from being a baby to an adept child, highlighting all the things they are able to do now. One way of looking at this progression will be by showing them a 'live' baby who will be bathed in the classroom.

The Rainbow Committee would like to thank all local businesses, which donated prizes for our Golden Ticket event held at the quiz night on 24th February. More details of that will appear in our article next month.

Isabelle Page

## SAFFRON WALDEN CHORAL SOCIETY

### WINGBEATS

Children in the Saffron Walden area are having a very exciting term as eight town and village primary schools prepare for 'Wingbeats'. Saffron Walden Choral Society (SWCS) are collaborating with the RSPB and local schools in a wide-ranging school-based educational programme encompassing the RSPB's Bird Friendly Schools project and Save the Albatross campaign. Various connected children's activities are taking place including in-school art projects, weekend model and mask-making workshops, movement rehearsals and an intensive term of singing.

The project culminates in joint concerts in St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden on 17th March. The children join forces with Saffron Walden Choral Society and a line-up of professional musicians including ethnic percussion, sax and keyboard players and jazz soprano Bethany Halliday. The programme, with a range of modern musical styles, includes

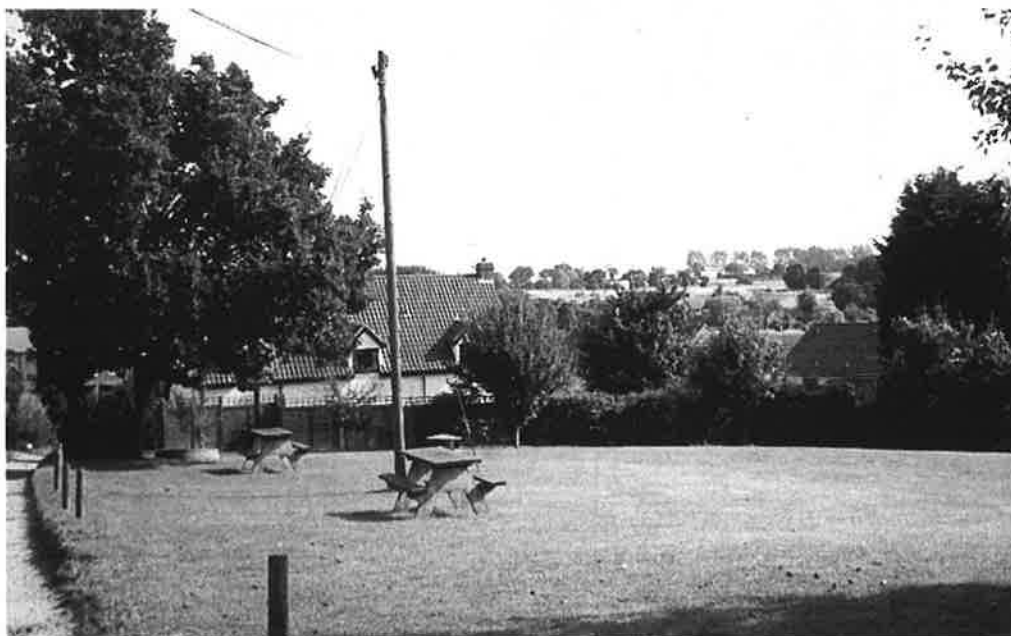
'A Parliament of Owls' by Karl Jenkins (of *Adiemus* fame) and 'I share creation' by Bob Chilcott, plus the première of a specially composed cantata 'On the Breath of the Sky'. With music by Janet Wheeler and words by well-



known writer Nick Warburton this charts a year in the life of an albatross.

These family-friendly concerts are at 4.00pm and 7.30pm on Saturday 17th March at St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden. Tickets £12 (£10 concessions) and £1 for accompanied under 18s are available from Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre or the SWCS Box Office on 01223 560315.

Sue Sylvester-Bradley,  
SWCS Publicity  
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This semi-historical view of Windmill Field shows how times change. In the past decade a parking bay has appeared and the Rochford glasshouses disappeared. Older residents will remember the Field when it was a gravel pit. In another year the horizon will have changed again.

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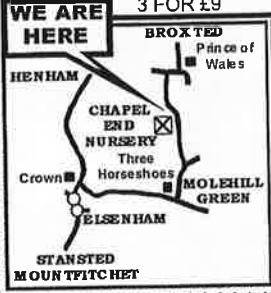
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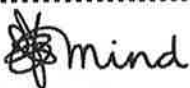
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