

Stansted Mountfitchet

The Link



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VOLUME 28
Issue 1
November 2007

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

The Link

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The Link is delivered free to 2500 homes and businesses in Stansted Mountfitchet. Further copies may be purchased for 50p each or £5.00 for the year.

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by 11 November
for publication on
25th November
(NB Dec/Jan is combined issue)

by 11 January
for publication on
25th January

The Link is an independent publication supported by local churches, businesses and the parish council



House of Commons London SW1

Dear Reader

It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to endorse the new era on which the Stansted Link Magazine is embarking after more than a quarter of a century of publication.

Lack of communication is one of the most often cited complaints in modern society. It can therefore only be beneficial for every household in a community the size of Stansted to have access to a magazine compiled in a comprehensive and professional manner. I am sure that there are many residents, no matter how long they have lived in the village, who can be surprised to learn through this medium, the availability of the range of activities and services within their midst. This can only help to bring people together.

A great deal of effort is necessary to create a quality publication. I congratulate everyone involved in this enterprise and I hope that the revamped magazine will help to strengthen further Stansted's pride in its quality of life.

Sir Alan Haselhurst

Welcome to the new-look Link!

To our former subscription-paying readers this issue will appear as a blend of the new and the familiar. Your past support has brought us to where we are today. Thank you!

To our new readers we hope that The Link will serve as a commentary on Stansted life, which can with your help become more comprehensive. We aim to achieve a comfortable balance - news, forthcoming events, reports, features, nostalgia and glimpses of what makes a community tick. We hope, of course, that you will not only want to read it as it comes month by month (except January), but also feel moved to contribute. We now include centre pages from the three tiers of local authorities and must thank the Parish Council for helping us to meet our first year costs. The Link team is greatly cheered by our MP's message above, and with your encouragement we will strive to live up to it.

Editor and Team

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DISCLAIMER

Opinions expressed in this magazine are given freely and do not necessarily represent those of the editorial committee



New beginnings

Congratulations to the 'Link' on its new beginning. With its colour cover and wider distribution the 'Link' magazine, which has for many years been a valued part of the life of Stansted Mountfitchet, will be able to continue to grow in influence and in service to the community. A village magazine has an important role in building up the community and in strengthening the bond we have with one another living in this place.

There is something timely about this new beginning too, because our community is about to see substantial growth in the coming year. Each time I drive up Forest Hall Road the building works seem to have moved on quickly and with the work at Pesterford Bridge beginning to look as though it is complete it will not be long before we see new homes rising and, very soon after that, new families moving in. It's an exciting and challenging time to be beginning new ministry in this place and I know that both I (who have only been in post for three months) and David Mullins, the new Methodist minister at Stansted Free Church, are looking forward to meeting that challenge together.

You might think that November seems an odd time to be looking at new beginnings. For Christians, November is often seen as a month to look back, to remember. November begins with the celebration of All Saints, a time to look back in thankfulness at the holy ones of the past and to take inspiration from their lives of witness, service and devotion. The celebration of All Saints is often linked to that of All Souls as a time to remember those whom we have known, and loved but who have gone

before us through the gate of death. At St John's we will be keeping All Saints Sunday on Sunday 4th November with our services at 8.00am and 9.30am, and then at 6.30pm will be holding a service of prayer and thanksgiving for those whom we have known and loved that have died. During that 6.30pm service the names of those whom we recall will be read aloud. All are welcome at that service and if there are names of loved ones that you would like to be read out pass them on via the Church Office (01279 815243) and they will be added to the list.

The theme of Remembrance continues the next Sunday with our Remembrance Sunday service. The service will begin shortly before 11.00am at the War Memorial, where the two minutes silence will be held, and will then continue in St John's Church. I would encourage everyone who can to come to that service, but if you can't, you can still keep the two minutes silence with us. Pray for those who gave their lives in the terrible wars of the past, pray for those caught up in the conflicts of today, and pray for peace soon.

Yes, it may seem an odd time to speak of new beginnings, but I think it is not. A wise man once said that those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it. In November we look back in gratitude for the example and the love we see in the past, we look back in penitence and grief at the losses of the past; and inspired and educated by what we have seen we look forward to new beginnings and a new future.

May God bless you all,

Paul Wilkin

contact us

all enquiries

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St John's Diary

Sunday

8.00am Said Holy
Communion

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

September

Baptisms

16th Jakob Reardon Byrne
Ruby Louise Crane
Skie Anthea Crane
Jasmin Teagan Dye
Liam Lewis Dye
Eliza Margaret Sedgbeer

Funerals

3rd Yvonne Mollison, age 71 - at
Parndon Wood

All Souls Service For details, please see the Rector's letter on the previous page. There is also a list at the back of St John's if you wish to add names to be remembered.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS MARKET

Date: Friday 23rd November 2007
Time: 3.00pm-5.00pm
and 6.00pm-8.00pm
Venue: St John's Church

This year we will be open for two sessions which we hope will accommodate everyone's needs, whether it be parents and children following pick up from school and those wishing to avoid going out on a dark winter's evening or dropping in on the way home from work or following after school activities. There will be all the normal well-laden stalls – gifts, crafts, toiletries, candles, cakes, toys and games, books, etc., as well as numerous raffles, together with tempting refreshments to enjoy whilst savouring the festive ambience.

Hope to see **EVERYONE** there!

Francine Cope



STANSTED FREE CHURCH

Methodist / URC

Chapel Hill

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Minister Rev'd David Mullins
Tel: 654475
Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

URC Interim Moderator
Rev'd Janet Tollington

Lettings Janet Townsend
58 Chapel Hill
Stansted CM24 8AQ
Tel: 812593
Email: lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Preachers for November

4th 10.30am All Age Worship

2.30pm Rev'd David Mullins

11th 10.50am United Remembrance Service at St John's
Rev'd David Mullins

18th 10.30am Rev'd Janet Tollington - Holy Communion
25th 10.30am Gordon Doyle

Other Activities

Sun 4th 3.30pm Outreach tea in the foyer
Mon 5th 8.00pm Shalom – 7 Blythwood Gardens
War Graves Commission video
Mon 12th 6.00pm Pilots
Mon 19th 2.30pm Monday Club
Mon 26th 6.00pm Pilots in the hall

From our new minister

I am very pleased to make this brief contribution to the 'Link', being new to the church and to Stansted. I have come with my family from North London where we have been for the past 12 years and I'm very glad to say we are settling well into our new home and to the Bishop's Stortford Methodist Circuit.

The Church at Stansted is a united church following the coming together of the United Reformed Church and Methodist congregations a year ago. There have been changes of both the Methodist and URC ministers since then, and currently we are waiting for the appointment of a URC minister who I look forward to working with very much. Since arriving here I have got to know Stansted a little and it has been particularly good to meet the other Christian clergy and leaders in the village.

As Stansted Free Church we are keen to work alongside others and to contribute to the life of the community. Be assured of a warm welcome when you visit Stansted Free Church.

David Mullins

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Therese of Lisieux
High Lane

Priest Father Joe White
The Presbytery
St Therese of Lisieux
High Lane
Stansted
Tel: 814349

Masses Saturday 6.00pm
Sunday 9.00am and 10.30am
Holy Days of Obligation 8.00am and 8.00pm
Tuesday-Saturday 9.30am

Confessions
Saturday 10.00am
and by appointment

Baptisms By appointment

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill



SHALOM

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

Meeting Sunday, 10.30am

On 5th November, we meet at 7 Blythwood Gardens, when Richard and Shirley Lavender will be leading our evening. We will be watching and discussing a video entitled 'A Debt of Honour' which is about the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. This promises to be a very interesting evening, so please do come along.

There is no meeting on 19th November; the next meeting is on 3rd December, also at 7 Blythwood Gardens, when Margaret Silvester will be showing her slides of Istanbul.

All meetings start at 8.00pm, and are open to all. Please join us – you will be warmly welcomed!

Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059

Christmas is
a time of giving



Operation Christmas Child

Everyone is invited to the Free Church hall on 13th November from 7.00pm, have a cup of coffee and help pack shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Christmas 2006 saw a record number of completed boxes leave the United Kingdom - 1.24 million in fact, bound for destinations across Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. Worldwide more than 7.5 million were distributed to nearly 100 nations to children who speak more than 70 languages. The gifts are given regardless of nationality, political background or religious beliefs, to children, requiring nothing from them, their families or their communities in return. For some children, it is the first Christmas present they have ever received and it can also mean that children like six year old Mehi, a gypsy from Northern Romania, can go to school because they have their own pens, pencils and notepads.

The boxes from our area are going to Belarus this year and Sue Bree, the local organiser, visited the country in August and knows first hand the problems there. Please start collecting items for the shoe boxes (if you haven't already) but don't forget NO chocolate, crisps, biscuits, liquids, glass or books with a lot of words. For leaflets and more details ring Janet on 812593 or visit the Samaritans Purse website at www.samaritanspurse.uk.com where you can also find a pattern for a hand puppet which can be used as a mitten or a 'friend'. Completed boxes, items to be included and empty shoe boxes (please not boot boxes) can be left at 58 Chapel Hill at any time.

Please come along on 13th November and join in the fun and help to put a smile on a child's face this Christmas.



Janet Townsend
Tel: 812593



Now that the majority of our children have settled into the new term we have been moving on with our topics and activities to include a focus on baking and a look at different cultural festivals.

We will be celebrating Diwali, the festival of lights, by enjoying some Hindu music and by making related arts and crafts masterpieces. The children also had their own harvest festival at St John's Church with Rev. Paul.

This month we are also going to be making Christmas cakes so they have plenty of time to mature. After such a successful fundraising initiative last year the Rainbow committee will be selling delicious Christmas puddings again. This year, for those who are not so keen on traditional Christmas pudding, we will also be selling triple ginger, orange and lemon and chocolate puddings made by the same award-winning company. To order your pudding please contact a member of the committee or come along to the St Mary's Primary School Christmas evening on 21st November where you will have the opportunity to taste the puddings.

Our story this month is 'The Little Red Hen' which will echo our theme of bread and baking. The children will be looking at how bread is made, starting with the wheat and where it comes from all the way to the finished article they can find at the baker's shop.

The older children have started going to the library and the playleaders hope to continue to do this on a regular basis. Following recent government initiatives Rainbow has been encouraging children to 'eat and stay healthy'.

If you are interested in a place at Rainbow Tots (age 18 months to two and a half years) please contact Tina South on 814371. If you are interested in a place at the pre-school please contact Gill Pursglove on 814701 for further information.

Isabelle Page
Rainbow Committee

**Bentfield School PTA
SPARKLER PARTY**

Fri 2nd Nov 6.30 – 8pm

Donut Munching ~ Apple Bobbing ~ Dare Boxes
Bat the Rat ~ Glow Sticks ~ Soft Drinks
Sweets ~ Hot Dogs ~ Soup ~ Mulled Wine

**CHILDREN WILL NOT BE ADMITTED
WITHOUT A RESPONSIBLE ADULT**

**CHILDREN MUST WEAR GLOVES
TO HOLD SPARKLERS**

Admission for children: £2.50 inc. sparklers



**Village Fireworks
& Bonfire**

Elms Farm - entry by Archway Cottage
(park in Lower Street car park)

Sat 3rd November

- 6.30 pm Gates open
- 7.00 pm Bonfire lit
- 7.30 pm Fireworks

Wear wellies if wet!

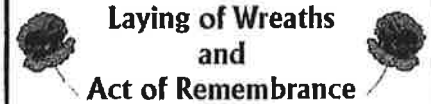
Adults £3, Children £1 - pay on gate

Refreshments Available



REMEMBRANCE DAY

10.45 am Sun 11th Nov
War Memorial, Chapel Hill



**Laying of Wreaths
and
Act of Remembrance**

Followed by service in
St John's Church

VILLAGE EVENTS

November

- 1 Thu Local History Society
- 2 Fri Sparkler Party
- 3 Sat Village Fireworks
- 4 Sun Outreach Tea (after service)
- 5 Mon Open Morning
Shalom
- 7 Wed Stansted Lunch Club
Mountfitchet Garden Club
- 8 Thu WI
- 10 Sat / 11 Sun Skips
- 10 Sat Lib Dem AGM & Ploughman's
- 11 Sun Remembrance Day
- 13 Tue Shoebox Evening
- 17 Sat WEA talk 'A Christmas Carol'
- 21 Wed Christmas Shopping Evening
- 23 Fri Christmas Market
Liberal Democrats Dinner
Pamper Evening
- 24 Sat / 25 Sun Skips
- 25 Sun Manuden Singers

- Day Centre 8 pm
- Bentfield School 6.30 – 8 pm
- Elms Farm from 6.30 pm
- Free Church 3.30 pm
- St Mary's School 9.30 – 11 am
- 7 Blythwood Gdns 8 pm
- Bury Lodge 1.30 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- St John's Hall 7.45 pm
- Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
- Day Centre 10.30 am – 2 pm
- War Memorial 10.45 am
- Free Church Hall 7 pm
- Day Centre 10 am – 1 pm
- St Mary's School 7 – 9 pm
- St John's Ch 3 – 5 pm & 6 - 8 pm
- St Mark's College 7 pm
- M M & C College 7.30 pm
- Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
- St Mary's Church 7.30 pm

December

- 2 Sun Outreach Tea (after service)
- 3 Mon Shalom
- 5 Wed Garden Club Party
- 6 Thu Local History Society
- 8 Sat Christmas Fair
- 8 Sat / 9 Sun Skips
- 9 Sun Village Music Club
- 13 Thu WI
- 14 Fri Huw Johnson Concert

- Free Church 3.30 pm
- 7 Blythwood Gdns 8 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Day Centre 8 pm
- Bentfield School 2 – 4.30 pm
- Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
- St John's Church 3 pm
- St John's Hall 7.45 pm
- St Mary's School 8 pm



A Christmas Carol

a talk by Gwyn Bailey

**Stansted
Branch**

10 am - 1 pm Sat 17th Nov Stansted Day Centre

Tickets £8 (cheques payable to WEA Stansted) in advance from
David Palmer, 26 Brewery Lane Stansted CM24 8LB

Manuden Singers

Autumn Concert

Programme to include

Handel Chandos Anthem no 9

7.30 pm Sun 25th Nov

St Mary's Church, Manuden

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Proceeds to Church Renovation

The M M & C College PTA

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7.30 pm Fri 16th Nov
St John's Church Hall

**TABLES OF 6 TO 8
BUT INDIVIDUALS ALSO WELCOME**

Raffle ~ Licensed Bar

Tickets £10 incl hot supper & pud
Liz 01279 814931 liz@thekadirs.co.uk

Vanessa 01371 831193
vanessa@sfax.co.uk

St Mary's School PTFA

XMAS SHOPPING EVENING

7 - 9 pm Wed 21st Nov
in the School Hall

Beat the queues & buy early for Christmas
Come and browse - or just treat yourself

A wide range of gifts
including plants, jewellery,
chocolates, beauty products,
books etc etc



**St John's Church
Christmas Market**

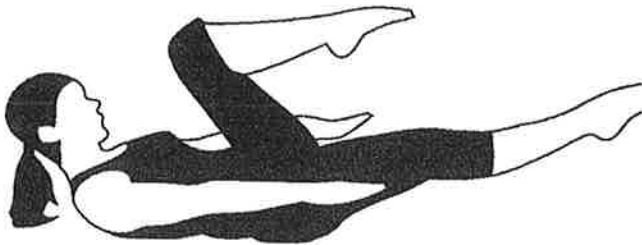
3 - 5pm and 6 - 8 pm
Friday 23 November

Gifts ~ Tombolas ~ Toiletries
Toys ~ Bulbs ~ Cakes ~ Books
Crafts ~ Candles ~ Raffle

Admission Free

Back to Basics Pilates Class

with Hazel Williams Registered Osteopath



Mondays 8 - 9 pm & Saturdays 9 - 10 am

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Please wear loose clothing and bring an exercise mat.

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www.SaffronWalden-DayNursery.co.uk

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Hazel Williams is one of the few practitioners who specialises in both structural and cranial osteopathy to treat a wide range of patients from babies to the elderly, from the immobile to athletes. Using highly effective techniques she can improve the muscular, skeletal, neurological and circulatory systems of the body. Combined with her advice on how to manage your problem through exercise, posture and diet, her aim is simple... **to give you continual relief from pain wherever possible.**

To claim your **free assessment consultation***
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Hazel Williams Registered Osteopath. 61 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted. osteopathy@hazel-williams.co.uk

*Please note the free 20 minute assessment is by appointment only. Only one free assessment per patient. You have no further obligation to return for follow up treatment or advice. Hazel Williams reserves the right to remove or change this offer at any time without prior notification.



**Stansted
Evening
Women's Institute**

We invited Ilse Pedler to speak at our October meeting; known to many of you through these pages as well as through your visits to the surgery, I expect. She decided to tell us of her work with animals using homeopathic remedies, she being one of only 50 qualified homeopathic veterinary surgeons in the country. She joined the Mercer Hughes practice 18 years ago and she was lucky that they agreed to fund her training in this particular field, even though Mr Mercer didn't really believe in its effectiveness.

Things have come a long way since then and it is gradually being accepted as being of great use in conjunction with ordinary medicine, both with humans and the animal world. Homeopathy treats the individual rather than just the disease and with careful questioning it is possible to prescribe different remedies for the same disease in different cases. Of course, with animals it is difficult to have a conversation but their owners can be asked to give accounts of their pets' reactions and symptoms. Homeopathic remedies can be particularly useful in the treatment of the fear of fireworks, which are now on the horizon again and these days last much longer than one night. The remedies are safe and easy to use and do not sedate the animal or make it sleepy as conventional remedies do. If one remedy doesn't work then there are several others to try. Homeopathy can also be used on larger animals such as horses with great effect. Ilse brought along many informative leaflets and was able to talk to lots of pet-owners in the coffee break. She also brought her little dog 'Broccoli' who spent most of the meeting quietly under the table before being placed on top for us all to admire!

We are planning to set up water-colour painting classes early next year, and we are able to accept any non-WI members who wish to come along. We will keep you informed of the time and place when it has been arranged.

Several members are off on another theatre trip next week to see 'Fiddler on the Roof' and also in November to see 'Crazy for You' at the Harlow Playhouse, where the Bishop's Stortford Musical Theatre Company is again performing. A booking to see 'Gone with the Wind' next May is also being made. We get really good seats for these London shows at a much reduced price through the WI organisation.

November is our AGM when we look back over the year and elect a new committee. This year three members are retiring and two new people have come forward and we hope for another busy year ahead. In December we will be welcoming Peter Lawrence, who will be talking about medieval Essex churches and doubtless showing us some of his wonderful slides. Visitors are very welcome to this meeting and new members are always welcome to join. Our new year starts with a January party and we are having a talk from Mrs Chris Clarke - a theatrical make-up artist, she will be demonstrating on anyone willing to volunteer! Now that the 'Link' will be more widely circulated we hope to attract some more of you - meetings are on the 2nd Thursday of the month, in St John's Hall at 7.45pm. If you come alone you won't be alone for long!

Judy Colliver
Tel: 812470



www.villagemusicclub.co.uk

The Guildhall Strings, directed by Robert Salter, will be performing a pre-Christmas concert on Sunday 9th December at 3.00pm in St John's Church. Returning to the Village Music Club for the third time, the programme for this popular string ensemble will include:

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Dvorak: Two Waltzes Op 54
Janacek: Suite for String Orchestra
Strauss: String Sextet from Cappriccio
Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings in C Op 48

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Saturday 6th March at 7.30pm Thomas Barber - oboe

Alan Corbishley



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BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Autumn term is now well under way. We welcome all the children (and parents) who are new to us this year in both our Reception and Nursery classes, and in classes further up the school.

Classes 5 and 6 have been studying rivers and erosion. They have been to see the River Stort, catching the train to Bishop's Stortford and back. They walked down to see the locks and made observations on the river as they went. The next week they went to see a larger river taking a trip down to the River Thames at Shadwell Basin - this was a very enjoyable and informative visit and a great day out. The whole school took part in Genes for Jeans Day and raised a superb £180.00 by paying to wear denim for the day instead of school uniform. On the same day we had our Harvest Festival and it is a tribute to our parents' generosity that we had a mountain of goods to be taken down to the Whitechapel Mission, a charity for the homeless in London which we support every year at this time.

At Bentfield we welcome visits from parents and children who might be thinking of coming to our school. We can give you an individual tour of the school together with a chance to speak with the Head teacher and the Nursery or Reception teacher. The Special Needs co-ordinator is usually available as well. 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 will be very pleased to arrange one for you. We are also able to offer both a Breakfast Club (from 7.45am), and an After School Kids' Club (until 6.00pm). Both clubs are available to children who attend the school.

Do you feel like being MESSY?!! Our Messy Play is great fun, and runs in the Nursery on Mondays from 1.45pm to 3.00pm during term time. 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 must be accompanied!

PTA NEWS

Already since 'Music in the Park', in what is turning into one of our busiest terms ever, we have enjoyed a hilarious Music Quiz à la Carter, hosted our Cheese and Wine Evening/AGM and the school discos - not forgetting additional fundraising efforts which have been going on through the sale of plants and bulbs and the distribution of Yellow Moon catalogues!

Our Sparkler Party takes place on Friday 2nd November from 6.30pm-8.00pm. There will be sparklers for the children, along with many seasonal favourites including Apple Bobbing, Donut Munching, Bat the Rat, Glow Sticks and Dare Boxes. To help keep out the cold we will be selling hot dogs, Olly's delicious homemade soup and mulled wine.

The last date to put in your diary for this term is our Christmas Fair, which will take place on Saturday 8th December. We look forward to seeing you at one of our events soon!

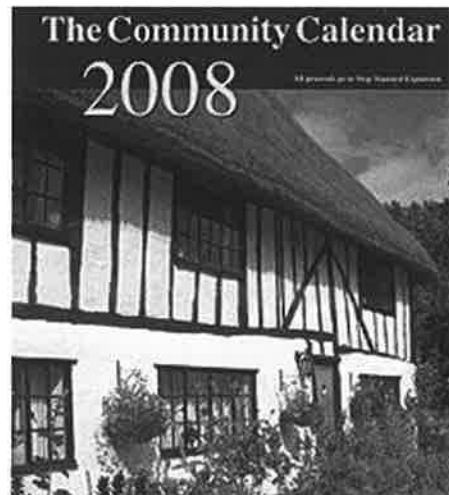
Alison Thompson
Bentfield PTA Co-Chairman



2008 Community Calendar Launched

The 2008 Community Calendar was launched in Broxted at the home of the Cousins family whose early 16th century timber framed thatched cottage *Oakmeads* is featured on the cover of this year's edition. With its reputation now well established, the calendar provides a powerful daily reminder of the communities, countryside and heritage threatened by expansion plans for the airport. It is also a vital part of SSE's fundraising programme. Sales last year raised a total of £27,000 for the campaign fighting fund.

The pages of the 13-month calendar feature seven Essex and Hertfordshire villages that have not previously appeared, bringing to 55 the number of places highlighted since the original 2003 edition. Once again, photos have been donated by amateur photographers, all of whom are active members of SSE. Priced at just £6, the calendar is being sold by 32 shops across Herts and Essex and by a 60-strong volunteer team, as well as through SSE's website.



Sarah and Andrew Cousins, who have restored *Oakmeads* from dereliction over the last 14 years, live less than two miles from the north east end of Stansted's runway. Their decision to move to Broxted 14 years ago, despite being so close to the airport, was strongly influenced by the unequivocal acceptance by the Government after the 1981-83 public inquiry that Stansted would not expand beyond 25 million passengers a year!

The calendars can also be ordered for UK and overseas mailing at a small extra charge to cover postage and packing. For further information or to order a calendar, call the Campaign Office on 870558 or see: www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/calendar.html.

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

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BENTFIELD SCHOOL MUSIC IN THE PARK 2007



Saturday 22nd September was a glorious autumn day and we had a fantastic turnout of around 550 - around the field people of all ages were soaking up the sun and the atmosphere with their families and friends. We are extremely grateful to all those who helped to make this such a successful event - whether by sponsoring us, by working behind the scenes or by coming along and supporting us on the day. We are delighted to have raised about £3300 for the school!

We were pleased to see many familiar faces and a good number of new ones - some of them there to see the **Music in the Park** debut of *Enquire Within* - a young band made up of four guys from Stansted who write their own songs (with mainly Rock and Indie influences) and already have a good local fan base. With Steven Watts singing and playing lead guitar and bass, Joe Jones on lead/rhythm guitar and backing vocals, Pete Atkinson on keyboard and Josh Wesley on drums they got a fantastic response from the crowd. This is an extremely talented group of young musicians. Look out for them again at MITP and elsewhere!

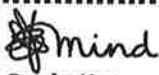


Our very special thanks go to all the bands; *Dewdrop Trio*, *Bamboo Loud*, *All of a Sudden*, *Enquire Within*, *Reload* and *Slow Time Mondays* for their massive contribution to the success of the day. The variety of musical styles which they encompassed ensured that a wide range of tastes was catered for; from the mellow, relaxed sounds of *Dewdrop Trio* with Rachel Croucher ('Miss Croucher' to the children in Reception!) in wonderful voice, through the pounding rock pace of *Bamboo Loud* to the popular cover songs performed by *All of a Sudden*, *Reload* and *Slow Time Mondays* - who had all chosen great set lists designed to get everyone up on their feet ready to dance the night away! Nobody wanted the music to end, but after two or three encores by *Slow Time Mondays* it really was time to go home and hang up the dancing shoes - until next time!

PS During the day some of our lovely neighbours popped round from Hargrave House to get a bit closer to the action. Their visit happened to coincide with the appearance of *Bamboo Loud* whose name hints at the decibel level of their performance. When asked by MC Dick Pollard whether they found the music too noisy, one of our guests replied; "Oh no! The louder the better!"

Alison Thompson
Bentfield PTA Co-Chairman





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STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

We were very pleased to welcome once again Robert Barltrop, who has been a regular speaker at our meetings for some years. This was his fifth visit and his subject was 'The Fancy on the Marshes' - a title which had many of our members guessing. In fact, the *fancy* referred to prize fighting, and Robert, who had been a boxer himself in his younger days, told us of its history and how it had developed into the style of boxing we see now.

There had been men who had fought each other for sport all through the ages, and there were literary references dating back to Greek and Roman times. Bare knuckle fighting had never been legal in this country but in many solitary spots round London, particularly the marshes of Essex and Kent, a purse would be put up and two men would willingly compete for it. Thousands of people would turn up to witness the fight and many bets would be placed on the outcome. The rounds were determined not by time but by a knockdown; and there was no concern for the comparative weights of the contenders - and certainly not a great deal of expertise, only strength and endurance. Robert gave us potted histories of several men and their careers, the first declared Champion being James Figg in 1719. Newspaper reports exist from the 18th and early 19th centuries but before a fight, many strategies were used to mislead the police!

With the development of horse racing, aristocratic and moneyed interest turned away from fighting, and bare knuckle bouts died out in the mid 19th century. Without aristocratic support, the police were more successful and a large part of the public had always been firmly against it. However, boxing with gloves became more accepted, particularly with the introduction of the Queensberry Rules. In fact, the development of amateur boxing was considered a great forward step, compared with the professional game. Boxers still saw the sport as a means of improving their lot in life, which had always been the attraction for them, particularly when workers were poorly paid and life expectation was short. Robert also explained the background to many expressions we now use and which had their roots in the old bare knuckle days. The feelings some of the old fighters engendered were exemplified by the case of Tom Cribb. After he died, a memorial was put up by public subscription in Woolwich church to his memory. We were very entertained by the stories Robert had to tell - our only concern is whether he has any more to tell us in the future!

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 1st November, when we will be hearing from Stephen Ruff about 'The Buntingford-St Margarets Railway and Local History (Part One)'. It sounds interesting, especially for all our train buffs! See you there!

Ian Seavers

GREAT LEIGHS RACECOURSE

Great Leighs racecourse continues to make good progress in the prolonged dry spell, and still intends to hand the track to the British Horseracing Authority for sign-off at the end of October, with a view to racing by the end of the year. Owner and promoter, John Holmes said at the end of September - "After the wet winter and spring, followed by a very wet summer, I don't think anyone thought we could be racing this autumn and we deferred that start date some months ago. Installation of the champagne-flutes style floodlights is under way and continues to be on target. With BHA sanction, Great Leighs could race on Thursday night, 27th December, then on the afternoon of 29th December before launching into a full programme of 77 fixtures throughout 2008."

The Chelmsford, Essex, track is Britain's first brand new racecourse since 1927 and one of only three in the UK that can host the new raft of floodlit winter fixtures. Access issues arising from a bypass severing the site forced John Holmes to return to the drawing board in summer 2006. Grandstand, weighing-room complex and parade ring all had to be re-sited on the in-field, and the stables were moved to his adjacent farm. This revised scheme was then further delayed by incessant rain. Facilities not affected by flooding were completed months ago, even down to the cosmetic detail. An oak-panelled owners and trainers bar has a glazed balcony and panoramic views around the track. The jockeys' changing room has bespoke, solid oak benches and the showers and saunas are Italian-tiled throughout.



In contrast, progress on the sodden, outer reaches of the site fell behind, but thanks to the drier autumn, Polytrack installation has accelerated and the penultimate tarmac layer is under way. The shell of the Phase One grandstand is near complete and the bases for 74 floodlighting stanchions are in place. Horse, vehicle and pedestrian underpasses have been installed under both home and back straights, to avoid surface-crossings onto the in-field. The all-weather oval is a little over 8f, with chute starts for races of 8f and 7f, and exceeds the HRA's 135m minimum bend radius requirement. This generous configuration has enabled a turf track to be profiled inside the Polytrack, providing a venue capable of staging authentic trials for the full range of Breeders Cup races.

John also said "We have had many soul-destroying frustrations, but the finishing post is finally in sight. It's important to get up and running, so our futuristic, permanent grandstand will now be the second phase of development. For start-up, I opted for the 'chocolate box' approach. I am pleased with the way it has turned out, and hope visitors will find it worth the wait." Further information is available from me.

Pippa Cuckson,
Great Leighs Racing
Tel: 01245 362412

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UPDATES FROM YOUR

NEW LOOK!

We hope that you will enjoy this new look magazine which is being distributed free of charge all around the village. As always, your comments will be welcome!

ENLARGED AND IMPROVED SKATEPARK

Phase Two construction works are due to be completed by the end of November. The skatepark will be out of bounds during this month – please be patient! We would like to thank everyone – youngsters, local fund raisers and others – for their support for this facility which we hope will be well used. Happy Skating!

DOG FOULING – OWNERS PLEASE BE RESPONSIBLE

Although these words may well be a waste of space and time, the Council again makes a plea to all dog walkers. Please pick up excrement and deposit it in a suitable receptacle. If you believe that more bins would help, please tell the Parish Clerk by identifying appropriate locations. Owners who ignore this problem are being irresponsible and show a lack of thought for their neighbours. Please note, the Council does not regard it as part of Gerard's responsibility to clear up such mess.

HELP US PLAN THE FUTURE OF YOUR GROWING VILLAGE

Why do we need a Parish Plan? It is now eighteen years since the last plan was drafted and the village and the district around us have already seen many changes. However, with the building of 700 houses on Rochford Nurseries, the scale of the Parish is set to show significant growth. Consideration also needs to be given to the possible additional consequences if the Inspector recommends

network

LOCAL COUNCILS

in favour of full use of the existing runway and to the threat of a second runway should this become a reality. Finally, the possibility of a new community of about the same size as the enlarged Stansted Mountfitchet cannot be ignored given its proximity only three or four miles away.

Against this background the Parish Council must consider how to maintain a vibrant community by determining priorities and drawing up a plan of action which encompasses near and long term targets.

How can you help? The greater the number of people prepared to respond or to play an active role, the more likely it is that the plan will reflect the wishes of the broader community. This plan cannot be, and should not be, the work of fifteen councillors. Following the establishments of a Steering Group, it is intended to set up Working Parties to cover a wide range of issues and policies. These will then be brought together to form the basis of a draft plan.

The proposed initial list of Working Groups is shown below but more may be added over time:

- Strategic Planning Issues
- Economic Activity
- Retailing and Services
- Traffic and Road Safety
- Public Transport
- Leisure and Cultural Provision
- Open Space
- Housing
- Health
- Policing and Security
- Social Services
- Council Services
- Environment – Built and Natural
- Role of Parish Council
- Communication with Parishioners
- Relationship with Stansted Airport

If you have an interest or expertise in working on any of these topics, please let

the Parish Clerk know (telephone 813214 or email parishcouncil@stansted.net). The quicker these working parties are established and begin, the sooner the plan can be brought to fruition.

Even if you do not want to play a role in this regard, your involvement is still critical as you will receive a questionnaire. The greater the response, the more likely is the plan to reflect the views of the whole community.

PLEASE HELP AND PLEASE RESPOND NOW

FROM YOUR UTTLESFORD COUNCILLORS

Last month's hot topic – what has now been titled 'ElsHenham' new town – has continued to dominate public debate. The largest ever attendance at a council meeting was the south west area panel meeting at the start of October, when dozens of people had to be turned away from an overcrowded village hall in Elsenham. Apart from alarm from residents of the two directly affected villages, those of us in Stansted and Ugley are concerned at the impact of extra traffic on Grove Hill through to Silver Street and on other narrow lanes.

This really was public opinion and pressure on local politicians at work. It resulted in the leader of the council agreeing that the council's four 'options for growth' would be reconsidered by the council meeting on October 9th. That then fell through. Cllr Ketteridge had suggested that rather than 'ElsHenham' remaining the council's preferred option from the four suggested options, that all four options would become 'preferred'. Not surprisingly, the government's regional office said that wasn't on; you can't have four first preferences. So all formal public debate has been put off until 30th October, when the council's environment committee will meet again to deal with a call to rescind and review its original September decision.

Of course, the issue is not going to go away. UDC still has to decide whether the extra 4,200 homes should be spread around the district's towns and larger villages – including Stansted - or whether there should

be concentrated growth in a new settlement. This need not be at Elsenham. Places like Takeley and The Canfields or Stebbing, both with good access to the A120 and, with better bus services, to the railway at the airport, need to be evaluated. I have been pressing for months for a public debate informed with evidence about the pros and cons of the different approaches. Now, I hope that will at last take place.

Cllr Alan Dean
Tel: 01279 813579/ 07710 105824
Email: cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

Local Development Framework -Update

Like all Stansted's district councillors I have been very involved in the controversy over where to site the additional housing required by the Government should be sited. I think there are lessons to be learnt.

Firstly any decision should try to get the agreement of all or most of the 44 councillors. It should not be a party political football. Fortunately, in Stansted all four district councillors are united in opposing option 4 which would site 3,000 houses in Elsenham and have such negative consequences for our infrastructure.

Secondly, people's views do count. We live in a democracy and residents can make their voice heard. I talked to a gentleman in Ugley recently who told me that nothing could be done to prevent Option 4. The events of the past few weeks have fortunately proved that apathy was manifestly the loser. Over 250 people attended the extraordinary Area Panel meeting at Elsenham which was called by myself and colleagues. The Leader of the Council was forced to defend his actions and put his case. This is as it should be. Likewise the Scrutiny Committee was also very well attended. Unfortunately, the Committee did not support the call in of the Environment Committees decision to make Option 4 their preferred option.

Because there was no call in Full Council the following week was unable to debate the issue. However, seven residents took advantage of public participation to state

their opposition to a new settlement at Elsenham.

There must be transparency and openness in the decision making process. The decision where to site the additional housing will be unpopular with some residents whatever the Council chooses to do. Because the decision is so important we must resist the temptation to go for the easy option. We should not be developer led.

Although naturally attention has been focussed on Option 4, we should be aware that Option 1 is not good news for Stansted either. This would, if adopted, site 700 houses to the north of the village bordering Ugley.

Finally, the last lesson that has been learnt is how interdependent the surrounding villages are. What happens in Elsenham has a direct affect on us here in Stansted. We have to work together with the surrounding parishes and unite against over development.

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

As one of your more recently elected members for Stansted, I am not in full support regarding the development of Elsenham and Henham. All four sites should be investigated fully with all infrastructures being shown and accepted by the majority. Wherever the houses go, the infrastructure must be in place before any building starts. I think we all accept some houses will have to be built somewhere, but the roads in the surrounding areas cannot cope.

Councillor John Salmon, Stansted North
Tel: 01279 814789 Email:
cllrsalmon@uttlesford.gov.uk

FROM ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

The recent news of the various options for the construction of up to four thousand houses which may be built in a number of locations around the district has caused alarm and consternation within the area and whatever final locations are decided upon this is likely to have a serious effect on Stansted. The trouble is that these are the houses that nobody wants. It seems that it

is the Government through their regional development agencies who are hell bent on imposing development of this scale and there is little that local administrations can do to combat these impositions.

At Essex County Council work has been ongoing for the last few years to limit the extent of the expansion and whether the total number for the region is 550,000 homes, the 438,000 which Essex succeeded in reducing that to, or the newly growing numbers which are now being planned, new areas such as the Thames Gateway, Harlow North, Haven Gateway and the M11 Corridor are targets for this unprecedented level of development. Taken in this context Uttlesford has not faired badly, however, given the rural nature of the area, the impact will be disproportionately high.

We ask ourselves who needs this level of housing growth and whilst it is generally acknowledged that some development is necessary to replace the existing housing stock and make decent and affordable homes within the area we must question the overall viability. Indeed, at a recent debate at the County Council a Councillor, not from Uttlesford, who supported the Government's thesis, stated that 60% of the new homes planned for construction within Essex would be for current occupants of Essex.

I am reminded of the quotation when Disraeli said in Parliament that, "50% of the members on the opposite side of the House are asses". When asked by the Speaker to withdraw he replied "Certainly, 50% of the members on the opposite side of the House are not asses". By extension, even if the figures offered by the government defender are correct, 40% of the occupants of the new houses will not be natives of Essex and that could amount to half a million people, or a population growth of one third in this county.

Essex County Council are not the planning authority responsible for deciding the best location for the imposition of these houses and Uttlesford certainly have an unenviable task in deciding between the options which are available. However, whatever the final decision, for the current residents of this area there is no acceptable location for such a proposal.

Ray Gooding

NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Plenty is written elsewhere about the new housing allocations for the District. At a Council Meeting held in October, the Council voted to support Elsenham and Henham Parish Councils in opposing large scale development without any supporting infrastructure.

BENTFIELD POND

We are delighted to report that the first phase of a three-year project to improve the look of Bentfield Pond took place in the middle of October. Volunteers from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers spent the day with four members of the Council and a few local residents clearing weed growth and cutting back overgrown trees. There has been an immediate transformation, although further work, perhaps to include de-silting with a digger, is planned.



WINDMILL

Presently the Parish Council is locked in debate with English Heritage (EH) over the funds they are prepared to give towards the project. These debates have been protracted and very slow in decision hence the long delays since the first Appeals were sent out.

Readers will be pleased to know now that EH have agreed to fund the fees for the Millwright and Architect and have asked for submission of updated and more detailed costings for work, with a view to them making a decision on a grant over the next few months. If the decisions are favourable,

we hope that work will commence early in 2008.

This does not preclude fund raising work and donations continuing and all readers are asked to take note. They can help by sending a cheque to the Parish Clerk (marked Windmill Appeal) or supporting the Millers in their valiant efforts to raise funds through their various activities.

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

Catherine Dean	813579	
Peter Deeks	813806	
Gaye Ellington	813933	
Jo Freeman	812524	
Bridget Gott	814440	
John Hudson	814489	
Peter Jones	813252	
Janice Loughlin	812346	
Anne Marchant	813422	
Ruth Rawlinson	814222	**
Jonathan Rich	813112	
John Salmon	814789	
Geoffrey Sell	815925	*
Valerie Trundle	813433	
Richard Wallace	812588	

* Chairman
** Vice Chairman

LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

Lots of new children's books have arrived at the Library recently, so it is well worth a visit!

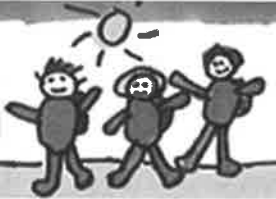
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Wed	2.00pm	-	5.00pm
Thurs	2.00pm	-	6.00pm
Sat	9.30am	-	5.00pm

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DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

November 7	-	Full Council
November 14	-	Open Spaces
November 28	-	Full Council
December 12	-	Finance and General Purposes

Let's trek for
children



To raise funds to help
disadvantaged and sick children

As many readers of the 'Link' will know, I decided to take part in this September's Trek for Children in Peru. It was a challenge both to raise the funds necessary to enable me to do the Trek and also to be fit enough to complete the Inca Trail. I was very apprehensive as I stood outside Heathrow airport but made myself walk in. I met a group of people that were wearing canary yellow T-shirts that matched mine. A group of 25 people aged 20 to 58 we were all off on a challenge of a lifetime. I hadn't thought about how far away Peru was but we had three flights to get there with one being 11 hours long. We had two days to acclimatize to the altitude. It made some people feel very sick but I was lucky and just had some light headedness and a headache. We had to walk very slowly everywhere so our bodies could compensate for the lack of oxygen.

Our two days passed very quickly and our challenge began after passport control, with a very wobbly suspension bridge high over the Rio Urubamba. We had a trek for a couple of hours before stopping for lunch. We had some fantastic porters who put up tents for us at every stop as well as carrying our bags, tents, chairs, cooking equipment and cooking us a meal at every stop. The climb began in earnest with a steep two hour ascent to our first campsite at Huayllabamba. The porters brought us a bowl of warm water for our feet - which was bliss.



The next day was the hardest of all with a six hour climb to the highest part of the Inca Trail 4200m above sea level. The air was very thin and some people needed oxygen at the top. The views from the top were stunning but after a quick rest we had a steep and tiring descent to our next camp near the river Pacamayo at 3600m. The following day was very long, with a steep ascent to the second mountain pass at 3800m followed by another climb to the Runku Raccay Pass which was at 4000m. From then on it was downhill for the rest of the day but that was easier said than done. The Incas had built steps but they didn't believe in uniform treads. They were very uneven and some people

found this just as challenging as going up. I found I liked going down - it did help that I could breathe!

A very early start on our last day of trekking - up at 4.00am - meant that we started walking before the sun was up. We walked through jungle on undulating paths with some very steep steps at the end before we reached the sun gate (Intipunku). It was our first view of Machu Picchu and it was spectacular. After lots of photos (anyone who knows me will know I mean lots!), we made our way down to reach the site but this was no gentle walk either. It was a very steep 45 minute trek with very narrow ledges that caused some people a lot of anguish. I held one lady's hand the whole way down because she was so scared and I didn't mind being on the outside. On reaching the Inca ruins we were presented with medals and had a group photo - in our canary yellow T shirts again! We had all made it! Our experiences through the ten days we were together meant that our group became very close and it was extremely difficult to say goodbye at the airport. There were many tears.

I will never forget the experience and must say a big thank you to everyone who sponsored and supported me. The challenge raised over £35,000 for the charities Barnardo's, Dreams Come True, Kith and Kids and MedEquip4Kids. This will make an incredible difference to hundreds of children which is what the whole challenge was about. Thank you once again.

Mandy Honour

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THERE ARE ONLY TWO CERTAINTIES IN LIFE ...

Most tax is viewed with resigned acceptance. It is deducted on our payslips, VAT is added to bills, the bank deducts a fifth of our interest and we put up with it. Inheritance tax is different. We work hard, buy a house, save some money and often the family have to share their inheritance with the Government. This seems unfair; you have already paid tax on the money when you earned it, why should your family have to pay tax on it again?

The Conservatives recently announced they will raise the threshold at which inheritance tax becomes payable to £1m. This depends upon two uncertainties: the Conservatives winning the next election and then not changing their minds ... meanwhile the threshold is £300,000, with many houses in Stansted exceeding this already. On any part of your estate worth more than this, 40% will have to be handed over to the Government on death. It is possible, however, to avoid or mitigate this liability.

I recently met a client in her sixties. Her divorced father was, in her own words, 'tight-fisted', never spending anything on himself or his family if he could help it. He had recently had a change of heart at 94 having attended his 96-year-old brother's funeral, belatedly realising that "you can't take it with you". He sold his house and moved in with one of his daughters, planning to give away his newly liquidated assets of £500,000 to his family. My advice was that although he has left it pretty late in the day, he should immediately give away enough to reduce his estate to below £300,000. If he dies as things stand, inheritance tax will be £80,000. If he makes the gift now and lives three years, the tax payable will reduce by a fifth (£16,000), and a further £16,000 each subsequent year. If he is lucky enough to live seven years and there are no further linked gifts, no inheritance tax will be payable at all. Clearly, therefore, elderly family members with surplus savings should consider 'gifting' some of their funds at the earliest opportunity if they think their estate will generate a tax liability.

There are various other options to consider, including the modest annual tax-free gift limits, gifts from disposable income and trusts. The Chancellor has also stolen some of the Conservatives' thunder by announcing that widowed spouses can 'inherit' their partner's unused threshold, which will help enormously where it is applicable.

This area needs to be handled with care and sensitivity, with proper respect for the needs and concerns of elderly relatives. Also, before taking any steps you must carefully consider all of the rules. For example, investments such as property and shares have capital gains tax implications if given away to the family. If there is any uncertainty, advice should be taken from a tax specialist. This article provides general guidance and should not be taken to give a complete picture of the complicated rules of inheritance tax or as advice upon which to make a decision.

Mark Williams FCCA ACIS
Mansell & Co LLP,
Chartered Certified Accountants
Tel: 658499

ELSENHAM MEETING RE PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Following the meeting in Elsenham Village Hall on Friday 28th September I have compiled a list of email addresses. The purpose of the list will be to alert interested folk in and around Elsenham of future developments, meetings etc. I will send to the members on the list via a 'blind' copy so be assured I won't circulate your email address to all and sundry. I had difficulty reading some of the handwriting on the signing-in sheet so if you were expecting an email and haven't received one OR if you would like to be added to the mailing list please contact me at Elsenham@btinternet.com with 'Elsenham Meeting' in the 'Subject' and I will add you to the list. For those of you already on the list please add Elsenham@btinternet.com to your lists of acceptable emails.

Margaret Shaw



Huw Johnson Club

We all had a lovely time cruising along the River Cam on the 'Georgina'. The crew were so helpful and friendly, that boarding even for the wheelchair passengers went smoothly. Soon everyone was seated and enjoying a coke or shandy, and enjoying the view as we set sail. We were supposed to have lunch on board, and several of us wondered where this would be prepared; however, as lunchtime approached, the Georgina pulled into the shore and a car driver was waiting on the bank to put our lunch on board. It was a very good meal of fish and chips - still too hot to eat! For a while there was peace as everyone tucked in. There was great excitement going through the locks, and a lot of laughter watching the antics of the ducks and swans. It is certainly a trip we would take again in the future.

We are now planning our bowling trip to Bishop's Stortford. Please make a note of our Christmas Concert which is on 14th December at St Mary's school. Look out for the posters.

Marion Johnson

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OPEN DAY SUCCESS

Well, the open day was a great success. All the staff had worked extremely hard, the nurses had done beautiful displays, the drug reps came with lots of prizes and were a great source of information, the children all enjoyed the games and quizzes (retrieving sweets from the pretend dog with the endoscope was particularly popular) and the demonstrations of chiropractic and animal healing were amazing. Everyone who came said they had had a great time and I hope went away having learnt something new and having a better understanding of what we do and what goes on behind the scenes. I suspect people also went away a few pounds heavier after eating the delicious cakes the receptionists had baked! Best of all the rain held off until the very end. So a big thank you to everyone who came and also to all the staff who made it such a great success. We are already talking about the next one!

I hope you all managed to have a good summer despite the awful weather. Interestingly it has also changed the pattern of some of the conditions we have seen in the last few months. There is a lot of media interest in myxomatosis at the moment, as there seems to have been an increase in cases in some parts of the country. Myxomatosis is a viral condition of rabbits that is invariably fatal. The virus is spread by the rabbit flea and results in swollen eyelids, a thick white discharge from the eyes and then neurological signs and eventually death. Apparently due to the wet, mild weather there has been an increase in the number of mosquitos this summer and they can transmit the virus to rabbits as well. The good news is that there is a vaccine for the disease and we would strongly advise all rabbit owners to get their rabbits vaccinated as soon as possible. Just ring Angela at the surgery and book an appointment

Another problem that has been on the increase due to the wet weather is ragwort poisoning in horses. More fields have been left uncut this year due to the wet weather and ragwort has flourished. The plant is poisonous to horses, donkeys and other livestock and causes liver damage if eaten. Symptoms can include loss of condition, depression, poor appetite and eventually aimless unco-ordinated movement and death. Horses can be ill for as short a time as a week or for several months. Good pasture management is essential for horse owners and ragwort should be removed whenever it is seen; in fact, it is one of five weeds covered by the Weeds Act 1959 which allows the Secretary of State to serve an enforcement notice on the occupier of the land requiring him or her to remove the plant. Individuals can also be prosecuted if they disregard the need to control ragwort, so it really is a plant to be taken seriously. Opposite is a picture if you're not sure what ragwort looks like. On a slightly more optimistic note, I don't think we have seen so many cases of harvest mites this year, and I don't think there have been so many thunderbugs around so maybe the wet weather did have a few benefits!

Ilse Pedler,
Partner
Mercer and Hughes,
Veterinary Surgeons



Nature Notes

You will all have seen the big conkers this autumn, but the sweet chestnuts are also looking good. Generally the wild ones are not worth gathering unless conditions have been favourable and they have grown to a good size. The sweet chestnut trees are rather thinly scattered in our area and have probably mostly been planted for ornamental reasons. There used to be an ancient bole, or pollarded trunk, of one struggling to survive by the drive leading from Church Road to Stansted Hall and it could still be there. A fine, big specimen is hidden in Coney Acre Wood at Rickling Green. In Hatfield Forest, a grove of sweet chestnuts was planted by the road to the Shell House near London Bridge about 60 years ago. These now produce a good crop of nuts but the cattle like them too, so you have to be quick when they start to fall.

It has been a bumper year for many fruit bearing trees and other plants, including our local atropa bella-donna, or deadly nightshade, which has a very impressive crop of shiny, black berries, some of which are as big as cherries. As its name implies it is deadly poisonous, particularly the berries. The drug atropine comes from this plant, as well as bella-donna, which was used as a cosmetic, applied externally, of course.

The yellow ragwort thrives where it is not controlled. This is another poisonous plant, but to horses this time. In spite of this it is often seen growing in paddocks where the animals will avoid eating it. The danger comes when the plant is broken off and a few leaves are left hidden in the grass. Sometimes one comes across a very stunted ragwort plant a little away from the rest. If one looks closely, the chances are that a batch of cinnabar moth caterpillars are devouring it. These gregarious caterpillars are distinctive with black and orange bands, a signal to the birds that they are not good to eat. They exude cyanide if disturbed. Poisonous caterpillars on a poisonous plant.



Common ragwort
Senecio jacobaea



Recently I predicted a good crop of blackberries. Well, there were masses of them, but a lot remained red and never ripened, and many of the ripe ones were a bit sour. However, they freeze well and are just the ticket for blackberry and apple pudding!

Felix

ada

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MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

The Garden Club has for many years written a report in the 'Link' magazine, but with the new format 'Link'/Parish News, which is being delivered to every household in the village, I am taking this opportunity to tell our 'new readers' a little about the club and invite you to come along to our meetings. Everyone is welcome and you don't need a garden to enjoy gardening ... come along and hear the monthly speakers; join in the trips to various gardens and take part in our social events – we have a very varied programme. We meet at the Day Centre (adjacent to the library) on the first Wednesday of each month (with the exception of January). Doors open at 7.30pm for coffee/tea, and gives you the opportunity to read notices, buy raffle tickets etc before our guest speaker for the evening takes the floor at 8.00pm. Don't worry if you are on your own ... we challenge ourselves to 'spot the visitor' so it won't be long till you are joining in the conversations!

October Meeting

We welcomed as our guest speakers Adam Woolcott and Jonathan Smith of AW Gardening Services of Bishop's Stortford (Gold Medal winners at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2006 and 2007). The title of their talk was 'The Trials and Tribulations of Designing a Show Garden for Chelsea'.

Adam explained that it was a chance meeting with a neighbour that kindled their interest in garden design. But being accepted for Chelsea is not easy - for several years AWG entered designs but regularly received 'On the Waiting List' letters. Then in 2006 whilst holidaying in India, Adam received a call from the RHS asking if they could fill a space as someone had dropped out.

Adam said that he made good use of his mobile to start 'the ball a-rolling' and before returning to the UK had organised a sponsor – a good friend who was willing to underwrite the costs so that they could go ahead and build the garden. The countdown was now on to source all the plants, building materials (most of which AWG wanted to be recyclable), props etc and a landscape contractor to build their vision. A local company, Conway Landscapes of Great Hallingbury, under the expertise of Cormac Conway, was chosen and worked alongside AWG to meet the design criteria and timescale. Due to the late start, most of the specialist nurseries were unable to supply the flowers and plants needed; however, many of AWG's clients helped by supplying plants, shrubs, moss and even weeds – most of which were lovingly nurtured in Cormac's garden until taken to the site to be planted.

During the build-up to the show, letters arrived daily requesting risk assessments and method statements for everything ... plus a demand for 15,000 leaflets. The name of the 2006 garden was Sanctuary – it was awarded Gold and was also chosen to receive The People's BBC/RHS award. This was

presented by Alan Titchmarsh at the end of the event and was seen on TV.

November Meeting

The club will be welcoming Mrs M Nimmo-Smith, and the topic for the evening is 'Hardy Ferns'. The members' competition is *Stem of Berried Shrub*.

Future Meetings

5th December – Christmas Bring and Share Party
January – no meeting

We look forward to welcoming you to our meetings.

Maralyn Harris



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

STANSTED MILLERS

We will not be having a Christmas stall this year but are you looking for an easy-to-send present? Our favourite line is **Windmill Tea Towels £2.50**. We also have small items for 'stocking fillers', eg **models to make, pens, pencils, notebooks, badges**, all popular with children, **key rings, cross stitch kits**. All proceeds towards the upkeep of the Mill, so please give me a ring.

Peggy Honour
Tel: 647213

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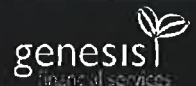
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Saffron Walden & District Hospital Cup

The annual 2007 Hospital Cup Finals were held this year at The Grove Tennis Club, Saffron Walden on Saturday 22nd September. Tennis Clubs in the local area have been competing in this knock-out event since the draw went up in May. Participating clubs include The Grove and Castle Hill in Saffron Walden, Henham, Elsenham, Clavering and Stansted. All money raised by tournament entry fees and monies for teas and a raffle on Finals Day go to the Saffron Walden and District Charitable Welfare Association. The Association provides wheelchairs, commodes, bath aids and other appliances to local people. This year a cheque for £400 was presented to Kate Barwood for the Association. The cheque was presented by Angela Wilby, a resident of Saffron Walden, and a winner of the Ladies' Doubles trophy in 1959 and 1965.

The day started at 11.00am with the two singles finals being played on adjacent courts. The Ladies' Singles was a 2 hour 30 minute marathon. This year's winner was Monica Sutherland (Henham), who defeated Nikki Penderis (Stansted) 6-4 4-6 6-2. On the other court, 17 year old George Luther added to his win in the Men's Singles at Stansted with the Hospital Cup trophy. He defeated Adrian Brown (The Grove) 7-5 6-1. The Mens' and Ladies' Doubles finals were then played concurrently. The final event of the day was an all Stansted encounter. Last year's winners Martyn Taplin and Daphne Lunnon were out to regain their title against Sandra Ayres and George Luther. Martyn and Daphne were able to keep control to win 6-3. Kate Barwood presented the trophies to the winners and The Grove Tennis Club were thanked for hosting the day, by Hospital Cup chairman Janet Hollis.

Clower Girls' Singles

Ruby Hollis won this trophy for the third year in succession. She beat Robyn Green 4-0 in the final.

Clower Secondary Doubles Tournament

Eight juniors entered this event. All played in the round-robin event and then were paired off for the knock-out section. In a closely fought final, Tim Berry and Charlie Kirby defeated Philip Bitten and Ben Taplin 6-3.

Coaching

The adult coaching session on a Friday between 2.00pm and 2.45pm is now full. If you would like to go on the waiting list, please call Chris Hollis on 01279 319155. You don't have to be a member of the club to join in. The junior coaching and match practice sessions for ages 6-15 are in full flow. 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.

Contacts

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

Tim Hollis

Thank you to those people who visited the school on the Open Morning. If there are any parents of children who started school in September and who were unable to visit last time, we are repeating the programme on Monday 5th November from 9.30am-11.00am. Please look out for the posters in the village.

The Key Stage 2 classes are all working on a study of Coasts for their Geography topic this term. In Oak class, the Year 6 has used a lot of the work from their residential visit for this. Meanwhile the Years 3, 4 and 5 made a visit to Dunwich to investigate the features of erosion and the effects of the sea on the coastline. The work that has resulted proves the visit was very successful even though it was a rather chilly and windy day! The children have had opportunities to research and write as well as using the theme for art and technology.

FARM-Africa, an organisation that aims to reduce poverty in eastern and South Africa, is the cause we took up for harvest this year. They work with farmers and herders, helping them to manage their farms and forests and build sustainable livelihoods. Each class collected loose change in a welly, to be donated as part of our harvest service in church. The work in class that week all related to wellies - you may be surprised how many ideas we came up with to involve wellies in maths, English, art, design ... all the subjects! We also had a 'Welly Day' on the Friday before the service. The children all donated £1 to wear their wellies and to take part in a variety of fun welly-related activities. At the time of writing we did not know the total, but we had a lot of fun raising money for a good cause, so thank you to all who contributed.

Christine Tonkins,
Headteacher



**STANSTED & DISTRICT
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

The Branch AGM will be held on Saturday 10th November at the Stansted Day Centre. The meeting will start at 10.30am with the business part of the agenda, followed by coffee. From 11.30am there will be a speaker and discussion on local health issues, and the meeting will end with a Ploughman's Lunch at 12.30pm.

The Annual Constituency Dinner will be held on Friday 23rd November, 7.00pm for 8.00pm, at the College of St Mark, Audley End, and the speaker will be David Howarth, MP for Cambridge. For tickets (£22) and further information, please ring Mike and Hilary on 01799 525205.

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STANSTED LUNCH CLUB

September Lunch

Some 60 members attended our 60th lunch, generously sponsored by Hewitsons, and their Mike Kelly gave us an interesting and entertaining talk on the planning laws in the context of development of the M11 corridor. It was good to see the return of Shane Rhodes, an early 1990s member of the Lunch Club, after a long absence. Since we saw him last, he has set up Shane Rhodes Chauffeur Services (07989 211738), a luxury car service, and he would be delighted to provide his services for Club members.

Future Lunches

Our next Lunch will be held at Sworders Auction Rooms, Cambridge Road, Stansted, on 7th November at the kind invitation of Guy Schooling, one of the original November 1997 founding members of the Lunch Club. The vagaries of the Internet mean that occasionally you may not receive your invitation so please diarise future lunches now!!

30th January 2008 – Nockolds

26th March 2008 – Copyzone Archiving

Sponsor a Lunch in 2008

I am delighted that almost all lunches in 2008 are now being sponsored; only May (see below) and September remain available. In May I am looking for a number of sponsors for The Lords Taverners Charity of which Barry Root is an East Anglia Region Committee member. As most will be aware, the Taverners do an enormous amount of good work by: providing incentives to play cricket in schools and clubs; enabling young people with special needs to participate in sporting activities; supplying minibuses to special needs organisations; creating recreational facilities in conjunction with the National Playing Fields' Association. Barry is anxious to help the Taverners to raise their profile and to improve public awareness of their work in the region by enabling the Taverners to address groups like the Lunch Club.

The cost of sponsoring this particular lunch is in the order of £500. We are therefore proposing that five members of the Lunch Club each contribute £100 to enable the Taverners to address the Club in May. Please let me know by no later than 7th November if you would like to participate.

A Day at the Races

Insufficient numbers meant that this has been postponed until Friday 2nd November, the last meeting of the season at Newmarket. The arrangements will be the same as before, namely, that we will begin at about 10.30am with a visit to some stables, followed by lunch at noon, after which we will move on to the course for the start of racing at 1.30pm. Barry and Joan Root will host the day and guide us through the conventions of racing and the interpretation of bookies'/ Tote betting and odds. The cost will be between £50 and £60 a head assuming that you make your own way to Newmarket.

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

THE CRAFTON ROOM, STANSTED DAY CENTRE

Greetings from the Crafton Room at the Stansted Day Centre. I would like to introduce myself. I am James Ramselle, the newly appointed manager at the Crafton Room. Yes we've renamed our venue ('Times they are a changing!'). The centre is open for lunch on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and we hope to extend this to include Wednesdays as well in the future. Our lunch is a set two course meal for £4. Our cooks create a wholesome home-cooked main course followed by a tasty dessert. We use local produce whenever possible, and buy from the village butcher and greengrocer. Lunch is served at 12.30pm and prior booking is essential. The centre is also open from 10.00am for drinks, homemade scones, fresh fruit and snacks.

We have a lively complement of local people using the centre, some of whom engage in various activities after lunch. From time to time outings are arranged by Kath Wall. We would be delighted to welcome new faces, and transport can be arranged. Anyone over 55 can attend, and we aim to entertain those who have free time during the day, with the opportunity of making new friends. Access is easy as we have a car park next door. Feel free to pop in – a warm welcome awaits you.

We are always on the look out for new volunteers to help us. So if you have two hours free in the morning or afternoon, once every two weeks, we would be delighted to hear from you.

The centre is also available for local organisations to hire in the evenings. Please contact Jane Sell on 812408.

James Ramselle,
Manager
Tel: 815091



UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Something of a bird-charmer himself, Robert Gardiner charmed WI listeners with his portrayal of the British bird scene; how to recognise all our favourites by sight and sound – not stuffed birds but life-like 'soft-toy' models chirped cheerfully to his light touch. I was once given an avocet in this series ('You too can 'ave an avocet' is my free advertisement for the RSPB, who market these life-like sounding avians, 'A Robin for Christmas?').

The following month, we learned from Daniel Johnson all about the training and work of a fireman, who, like policemen (?), always go in pairs. This often humorous and exhaustive talk was easily propelled into extra time by the absorbed interest of his audience, for everyone seemed to learn something new about fire risks, rescue, and prevention. His more lurid reports were regularly prefaced by a cheery little "Good ending this one". Nothing like a sense of humour to cope with fires. Good ending!

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LASTING POWERS OF ATTORNEY

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 has implemented changes in respect of Enduring Powers of Attorney. As from 1st October 2007, it will no longer be possible to prepare these (although existing EPAs will continue to be valid). Instead, Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) may be prepared. There are two types of LPA; one in relation to property and affairs and one in relation to personal welfare.

If you prepare a property and affairs LPA, the attorneys you appoint can deal with things such as:

- Buying or selling your property;
- Operating your bank accounts;
- Dealing with your pension payments and other benefits.

Your attorneys can also deal with the following under a personal welfare LPA:

- Deciding on certain types of treatment;
- Whether you receive care in your own home or move into residential housing;
- Whether or not you receive life-sustaining treatment (although you can specify whether or not you would wish your attorneys to make this decision for you).

In order for both the property and affairs LPA and the personal welfare LPA to be used by your attorneys, the documents must be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian. Once the property and affairs LPA has been registered, your attorneys can start acting for you, so you may wish to include a restriction within the document to state that it is only to be registered in the event that you lack mental capacity. A personal welfare LPA will only allow your attorneys to act for you when you lack the capacity to make such decisions yourself. The rules surrounding preparation of LPAs are more complex than the old regime relating to Enduring Powers of Attorney. It is important that the LPAs are prepared in the correct manner to reflect your wishes.

Further advice on these matters is available from us.

Gill Harper
Pellys LLP Solicitors

TAILPIECE

Well, you have almost reached the end of the first issue of our new 'Link' magazine. Naturally, we hope that you like it and can forgive any teething peccadilloes.

What we particularly want in the future are the little things such as personalia, local experiences and random observations which give life and substance to any community. Nowadays it's easy to dash off a line or two by email, so if you have something you would like to say or perhaps have seen, then please send it to editor@stanstedlink.org.uk. Obviously, we can't promise to print everything we receive, but we are most anxious to know what you want and what we may be missing.

Please note that the next issue covers both December and January. Apart from January, the 'Link' is published every month and the closing date for copy is the 11th of the preceding month.

Hoping to hear from you.

Derek Honour
Editor

SAFFRON WALDEN CHORAL SOCIETY

www.swchoral.org.uk

Saffron Walden Choral Society is looking forward to a sparkling 125th birthday season starting with Beethoven's wonderful Missa Solemnis, which they will perform with the Chameleon Arts Orchestra and superb team of professional soloists on 10th November.

The Missa Solemnis is an awe-inspiring work of great beauty and Beethoven himself described it to his publishers as his greatest work.

Tickets at £15 and £12 (£10 concessions, side aisles only) and accompanied under 18s £1, will be available shortly from Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre, SWCS Ticket Secretary telephone 01223 560315 or email tickets @swchoral.org.uk, SWCS members or at the door.

The birthday season will continue with the hugely popular Spirit of Christmas concerts on 8th December, and then on 2nd February there will be another chance for singers or would-be singers to join SWCS at its singing day with James Davey. James grew up in Saffron Walden and was head chorister at St Mary's Church. In 2006 his choir Chantage was the overall winner of the BBC Choir of the Year competition.

For details of the whole of SWCS's celebratory season contact a choir member or pick up a brochure from the Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre.

Sue Sylvester-Bradley
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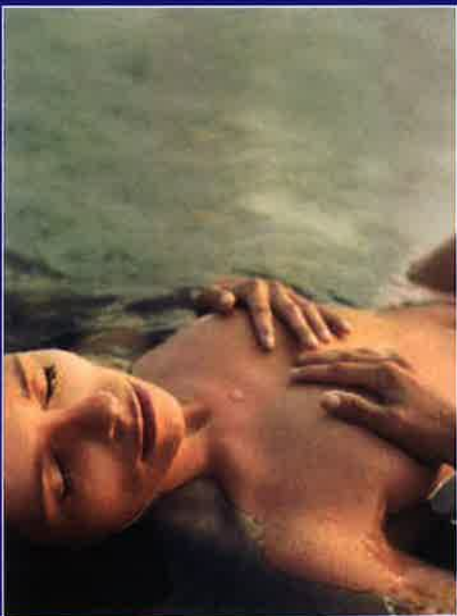
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