

Stansted Mountfitchet

# The Link



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Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

# The Link

www.stanstedlink.org.uk

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## EDITORIAL

In our previous issue, Janet Hollis referred to several unnamed people who had rallied round the late Vera Levey. In doing so, she focused our thoughts on the quiet and unsung service which many in our community daily undertake for the elderly, unwell or damaged folk in Stansted. It is a many-faceted role - it eases the burden of the medical and social professions, it ensures that homes do not deteriorate and, above all, provides essential sustenance, comfort and cheer for folks who otherwise would have little to brighten their lives. These people are the cement which binds our society and without them Stansted would be a hollow place in which to live. So next time you raise a glass, or perhaps offer a prayer, propose a toast to these anonymous ones.

This raises, or should raise, an important consideration for our Planners. We in the smaller communities are fortunate in that our residents are recognised people, and not, as in many larger places, just unknown ever-changing faces. Our size has been in our favour; may that benefit not be lost.

**CIRCULATION:**

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.

**CONTRIBUTIONS:**

by email (*preferred*) to:  
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or by hand to:  
 58 Chapel Hill, Stansted

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**DISCLAIMER**

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

# Thought for the Month

As I sit down to write this letter for the 'Link' there is a frenzy in the media over a lecture given by the Archbishop of Canterbury in which he thoughtfully explored the possibility that the English legal system might be able to find a place to give a limited role for Moslem sharia law in settling disputes within the Islamic community. There was, in the Archbishop's remarks, absolutely no suggestion that Moslem law should in any way be seen as binding upon non-Muslims or that it should take anything other than a subsidiary role in relation to the law of the land. He makes it quite clear that nothing should be done to prevent a Muslim who was dissatisfied with a judgement made by the sharia system from appealing that judgement in the courts of the British legal system and having the case heard and judged in the same way as any other case. In one sense there is nothing new or radical in what has been said here. It is simply that the Archbishop tentatively set out to explore extending to the Muslim community an understanding of their community life which is already given to other groups such as the Orthodox Jewish community and the different mainstream Christian churches.

What is deeply disturbing is the response that his remarks have generated. Firstly, they have revealed a deep ignorance about and deep distrust of the Islamic community in Britain. Moslems are being spoken of as though they were other than part of British society – a danger to our way of life. Roman Catholics will recognise that this is the way they were regarded two centuries ago, and with as little justification. Certainly there is a tiny minority within the Muslim community which, since the events of 11th September 2001, have felt under attack and have responded by seeking to attack back, but the vast majority of Muslims simply wish to live as peaceful citizens within our land. The kind of prejudice exhibited in recent days only undermines this peaceful majority and feeds the paranoia of the tiny minority who see violence as a way of expressing the discontent.

This is disturbing, but what disturbs me most is that the media's response to the Archbishop's comments makes it clear that today people are unwilling to listen to complex and nuanced discussions. In my copy, the Archbishop's speech is 15 pages long. It was a scholarly speech delivered before a scholarly audience and cannot be reduced to a sound-bite without utterly distorting it. Do we really believe that complex issues can be understood in 15 second quotes without taking time to reflect carefully on all sides of an argument? If we do, we will never really listen to one another and our already fragmented society is doomed.

This month Christians celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The gospels tell us how, at his trial, false witnesses distorted his words and he was condemned by those who sought to use his death for their own ends rather than listen to what God might be saying through him. Am I the only one to see a parallel with recent events? Yet this parallel gives us hope too, for Easter is about the triumph of truth and life over the forces which would seek to destroy it. Christ is Risen and in his resurrection we find life and hope and new beginnings for ourselves and our world.

Paul Wilkin  
Rector, St John's Church,  
Stansted




The next meeting of the CTS Forum is planned for 14th April in St John's Church at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

### Lent Meetings

This year, for four weeks leading up to Easter, we are joining together at each of the churches in Stansted for a short act of worship in the tradition of the host church and a discussion on a Lenten theme. Details are in the box below.

CTS Lent Meetings at 7.30pm	
Thursday	28th February at Stansted Free Church
Wednesday	5th March at Friends' Meeting House
Stations of the Cross and Lent Meeting at 7.00pm	
Friday	14th March at St Theresa's Church
Agape Supper at 6.30pm	
Sunday	16th March at Friends' Meeting House
<i>All welcome – please join us</i>	

**WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER** 

2 pm Friday 7th March  
Stansted Free Church  
led by Brenda Veitch

**'God's Wisdom provides New Understanding'**  
by the women of Guyana

All welcome - Men & Women



**WALK OF WITNESS**  
Good Friday, 21st March at 4.15pm  
starting at St Teresa's



All welcome

# THE FACTOR

## Good Friday Project St John's Church, Stansted

*A great, activity-filled day for your school-aged children*

This is a village activity, which has been running for many years now. The day is broken up into groups of around 10 children, who prepare to perform a play on the subject of the Easter story. This year, it has been entitled the Cross Factor, based on the X Factor idea.



During the morning the children will learn the music to sing or play, create the scenery, make their own costumes, and learn their parts, and have great fun!



After a full morning, we all have packed lunches together, then rehearse our play. At 3.15pm the parents are invited to watch the children perform the play, and see the results of their morning's work.



A fantastic way to spend Good Friday!  
Run by CRB-checked adults.



If you have any questions about the event, please speak with either your school office, or contact the church office (tel 815243). Children at St Mary's or Bentfield School will receive a booking form in their book bag, as well as a letter giving more details.



Registration at 10am in St John's Church.  
All are really welcome!





**STANSTED FREE CHURCH**  
 Methodist / URC  
 Chapel Hill  
[www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](http://www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

**Minister** Rev'd David Mullins  
 Tel: 654475  
[minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

**URC Interim Moderator**  
 Rev'd Janet Tollington

**Lettings** Janet Townsend  
 58 Chapel Hill  
 Stansted CM24 8AQ  
 Tel: 812593  
[lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

**Preachers for March**

2nd 10.30am All Age Worship  
 2.30pm Faith Paulding  
 9th 10.30am Maureen Kendall  
 16th 10.30am Rev'd Stuart Veitch  
 21st 10.30am Rev'd David Mullins  
 Good Friday service  
 23rd 10.30am Rev'd Janet Tollington  
 Easter Day Communion  
 30th 10.30am Rev'd David Thompson

**Other Activities in March**

Sun 2nd 3.30pm Outreach tea in the foyer  
 Mon 3rd 6.00pm Pilots  
 Wed 5th 7.30pm CTS Lent discussion and worship  
 Quaker Meeting House  
 Mon 10th 8.00pm Shalom at 7 Blythwood Gardens  
 Fri 14th 7.00pm Stations of the Cross at St Teresa's  
 followed by CTS discussion  
 Sun 16th 6.30pm CTS Lent bring and share Agape  
 Quaker Meeting House  
 Mon 17th 2.30pm Monday Club in the hall  
 6.00pm Pilots  
 Wed 19th 8.00pm Riding Lights - Redemption Song  
 Charis Centre, Bishop's Stortford

**SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

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

**Meeting** Sunday, 10.30am

**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

**Holy Week and Easter Services**

**Palm Sunday** 16th March 9.00am and 10.30am  
 Mass with palms blessed and distributed

**Tuesday** 18th March 8.00pm Penitential Service

**Maundy Thursday** 20th March 8.00pm  
 Mass of the Lord's Last Supper and watching before the blessed sacrament until 11.00pm

**Good Friday** 21st March 1.00am Children's Service  
 3.00pm Passion of our Lord  
 4.15pm Walk of Witness from St Theresa's

**Holy Saturday** 22nd March 8.00pm Easter Vigil Mass

**Easter Sunday** 23rd March 9.00am Mass  
 & 10.30am



**STANSTED WAR MEMORIAL**

From Easter to Remembrance Sunday, volunteers provide flowers for the two vases on the War Memorial in the Memorial Gardens on Chapel Hill.

We have a large rota of people but we are always pleased to hear from new people who may like to help. It would mean a commitment of just one week a year.





**All enquiries:** The Church Office, St John's Hall,  
St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP  
Tel: 815243  
Email: st.johns.church@btinternet.com  
Office hours: 9.00am-12 noon, Monday,  
Wednesday, Friday  
Administrator: Mrs Elizabeth Jennings  
Website: www.stansted.net/stjohns

**Rector:** Rev'd Paul Wilkin  
Tel: 812203  
Email: paulwilkin@iname.com

**Assistant Curate:** Rev'd Dr Caroline Currer  
Tel: 815243  
Email: curate@stansted.net

**Director of Music:** Lorraine Everett  
Email: church.music@stansted.net

### St John's Diary

#### Sunday

8.00am	Said Holy Communion	Junior Church meets each Sunday at 9.30am. (Children return to church halfway through the service.)
9.30am	Choral Eucharist	
11.00am	Open Door Service (all age worship) 3rd Sunday	The Lazer youth group meets on Sunday evenings at 7.30pm.
9.45pm	Night Prayer	

#### Monday-Wednesday

8.30am Morning Prayer  
5.00pm Evening Prayer

#### Wednesday

10.30am Holy Communion

#### Thursday

8.30am Morning Prayer

#### Saturday

9.00am Morning Prayer

### Holy Week and Easter services

**Palm Sunday** 16th March 9.20am Procession with palms followed by Parish Communion

**Monday-Wednesday** 17th-18th March 7.30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy Communion

**Maundy Thursday** 20th March 8.00pm Choral Holy Communion and Maundy Vigil

**Good Friday** 21st March 3.15pm Good Friday Service

Birchanger Church will be open for quiet prayer from 12 noon on Good Friday and there will be a Benefice service - 'The Last Hour' - from 2.00pm-3.00pm

**Holy Saturday** 22nd March 6.30pm Easter Vigil

**Easter Day** 23rd March 8.00am Holy Communion (said)  
9.30am Parish Communion

### From the Registers January

#### Baptism

20th Imogen Dora Hattee

#### Funerals

15th Barbara Boulton, age 65 - at Cambridge Crematorium  
16th Phyllis Johnson, age 86 - at Parndon Wood  
22nd Ruby Louise Crane, age 11 months - at St Mary's



### Huw Johnson Club

#### Our New Year Party

On 18th January the members of the Huw Johnson Club enjoyed their New Year Dinner at the Chequers in Ugley. The food was delicious and everyone had a really good time. The landlord, Dave Smith, his manager and staff went out of their way to make the evening a success. They were all so patient with our members and we cannot thank them enough for their hospitality. Every member received a present during the evening but they were kept in suspense until they got home before opening their gift.

We return to Club on 21st February after our winter break when we will celebrate Joanne's birthday with a disco by Garry. No doubt we will hear then if they enjoyed their belated Christmas presents.

#### A Tribute to Tracey Lynne Grover

We were so happy that Tracey was with us at the Chequers on 19th January and although she did not feel on top of the world she still had her lovely smile to greet us all. Midge and Veronica, Tracey's parents, came early to take her home so she did not receive her present. On Saturday morning I took Tracey her present and she was sitting up in bed looking very chirpy. She opened her parcel which was a pink wash bag. "Oh lovely" she said "my favourite colour". That afternoon Tracey became very ill and in the early hours of Sunday 20th January she died in Addenbrookes hospital. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Veronica, Midge and brother Wayne who devoted such loving care to their daughter all through her life. Tracey would have celebrated her 24th birthday on 30th January.

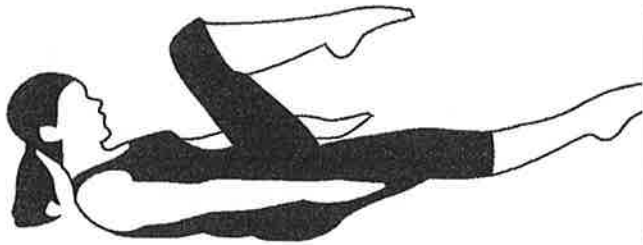


A Memorial Service for Tracey took place at St John's Church on 29th January and many of the people there wore something pink - Tracey's favourite colour. Although we only knew Tracey for a short time we all admired her wonderful courage and everyone at Club loved her. We will never forget how well Tracey played Mary in our Nativity play and the wife in our Golden Wedding play. We will miss you, Tracey, and your lovely smile, but I am sure everyone will agree that our lives have been enriched by knowing you.

Marion Johnson

## Back to Basics Pilates Class

with Hazel Williams Registered Osteopath



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\*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.

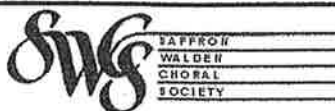




## QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 for 8 pm Sat 1st Mar  
St John's Hall

£6.50 (incl jacket potato supper)  
Tickets from Sarah 817210  
Bring your own drink & glass



with the Chamelon Arts Orchestra  
7.30 pm Sat 8th March  
St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden  
Bruckner Mass in E minor  
Stravinsky Mass  
Mozart Serenade for Wind Ensemble  
£12 (£10 Conc) Tel 01279 812849



Thomas Barber Oboe  
James Southall Piano

7.30 pm Sat 8th March  
St John's Church

includes music by Bach, Poulenc,  
Rubbra, Finzi and Southall

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

## VILLAGE EVENTS

### March

1 Sat	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
	Children's Centre Open day	Lower Street 10 am - 1 pm
	Rainbow Pre-school Quiz	St John's Church 7.30 for 8 pm
2 Sun	Outreach Tea (after service)	Free Church 3.30 pm
4 Tue	Toddler Rhyming Time	Stansted Library 11 - 11.30 am
5 Wed	Children's Centre Open day	Lower Street 10 am - 1 pm
	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
6 Thu	Bookstart	Library 2.15 - 2.45 pm
	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
7 Fri	Women's World Day of Prayer	Free Church 2 pm
8 Sat	Village Music Club	St John's Church 7.30 pm
	Music Quiz	St Mary's School 7.30 for 8 pm
	Quiz Night	M M & C College 7.30 for 8 pm
	S Walden Choral Concert	St Mary's Church, S W 7.30 pm
10 Mon	Shalom	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
11 Tue	Stansted Millers AGM	Day Centre 7.45 pm
13 Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
15 Sat	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
	Chinese Auction & Dance	Bentfield School 7.30 pm
19 Wed	Annual Parish Meeting	Free Church 8 pm
21 Fri	Good Friday Project	St John's Church 10 am
23 Sun	St Mary's Church Open	2 - 5 pm
23 Sun / 24 Mon	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm
26 Wed	Lunch Club	Bury Lodge Hotel 1 pm
28 Fri	Pete Baker's Crusty Jazzers	St John's Church 8 - 11 pm
29 Sat	Skips	Lower St Car Park 9 am - 3 pm
	Liberal Democrat Supper Club	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
30 Sun	Manuden Singers' Concert	St Mary's Ch, Manuden 7.30 pm

### April

1 Tue	Toddler Rhyming Time	Stansted Library 11 - 11.30 am
3 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
5 Sat	Dinosaur week begins	Stansted Library
	WI Table Top Sale	St John's Hall 2 pm
	Garden Club Spring Show	Free Church Hall 2.30 - 4 pm
6 Sun	Outreach Tea (after service)	Free Church 3.30 pm
	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm

## St Mary's School PTFA

### MUSIC QUIZ

7.30 for 8 pm  
Sat 8th Mar

Bring your own drinks  
Tickets from the school office -  
price includes ploughman's

The Mountfitchet  
Maths & Computing  
College PTA



### QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 FOR 8 PM  
SAT 8TH MARCH

£8 (incl fish & chip or curry supper)  
Tel Sue 504537 or Sally 321941  
Bring your own drinks

## Bentfield School PTA

CHINESE AUCTION  
& DANCE



7.30 pm

Sat 15th March

Tickets £3 incl hot supper  
Licensed Bar  
Janet 815765 or Ali 816188

## Manuden Singers

### Easter Concert

Programme to include

*Fauré Requiem & Chopin Polonaise*

7.30 pm Sun 30th March  
St Mary's Church, Manuden

Tickets £8 (£5 con) from Fiona 812157,  
choir members, or on the door

Proceeds to The Lewy Body Society



## PETE BAKER'S CRUSTY JAZZERS

JAZZ at ST JOHN'S  
8 - 11 pm Fri 28th Mar  
St John's Church  
Tickets £11 incl tasty supper  
Tel 814865 or 815518  
Bar ~ Raffle  
In aid of Church Hall Fund

## Annual Parish Meeting



8 pm Wed 19th March

Stansted Free Church

Come, listen & speak!  
All welcome

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or are in need of  
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STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

I believe that there are many people like myself who have thought heraldry was a collection of pretty pictures without much meaning. I was shown at our last meeting how wrong I could be! Chloe Cockerill, onetime Reference Librarian at Colchester Public Library, gave us a fascinating talk, explaining that heraldry had its root in the early Norman kings' need to provide their followers with an easy means of identification in the heat of battle, which they did by decorating their shields. Later, these decorations became more ceremonial and were formalised in the 15th century, when Richard III set up the College of Arms. This exists today and Chloe said that heraldry was still as popular throughout Europe, the ex-Colonies and to some extent, the USA.

Chloe began by explaining the details of the Royal Arms with which we all had some acquaintance - it is published in many papers, appears on our passports, let alone on the sign of the King's Arms Public House. (Incidentally, our village pub shows examples of both the Stuart and Victorian Royal Arms!) The various sections of the Arms were explained and we were shown how they differed in detail over the years. They were made to reflect the politics of the time; for example, it was many years before they ceased to show the Arms of France, when Kings of England no longer also claimed the throne of that country. The three lions representing Richard I and England can still be seen on the shirts of our international sportsmen and women, while Arms representing later kings can be seen in many of the Colleges in both Cambridge and Oxford. Members of the Royal Family all have individual Arms but these contain devices and details to prevent confusion with those of the Sovereign - Prince William's has a 'label' which includes the Spencer family's cockleshell in memory of his mother.

Churches have also displayed the Royal Arms, except during the time of Cromwell. In Furneux Pelham, they were replaced on the accession of Charles II but an alteration had been made in the design of the supporting lion and unicorn, resulting in the church's beasts each having two heads. Churches also showed another type of heraldry, especially towards the end of the 17th and during the 18th centuries; the hatchment. This was painted when a person with heraldic arms died - at first they were put up on the person's house and subsequently placed in the local church. We understand there is a very fine one in our St Mary's Church vestry. The Arms on these hatchments have a language of their own, which Chloe told us about, together with much else. Having heard her talk, we were not surprised that she and her husband had acquired a Coat of Arms themselves! We were very grateful to her for a fascinating evening.

On 6th March, we will be hearing from David Short about 'What People had in their House', which could be a most interesting talk. See you then.

Ian Seavers

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## SKYWATCH

A monthly look at an aspect of the night sky

This month, we will look at the largest of the planets - Jupiter. Jupiter is a little under 89,000 miles in diameter and orbits the Sun once every 12 years at a sun/planet distance of around 400 million miles. This means that Jupiter comes into our skies just over a month later each year as we chase it in the orbital inside lane. You can see Jupiter now in the low south-east from about two hours before sunrise, and this will get later over the following months.

Jupiter is a gas planet; it has no proper solidity, as the Earth with its air has. However, towards the centre of the planet, whatever is there must take on a solid form as the 'surface' pressure will be measured in tons per square inch. Even on Earth the air pressure at sea level is about 15 pounds psq. Jupiter is an extremely active planet. Like all planets, the activity of the planet is fundamentally powered by the Sun: but Jupiter actually gives off more energy than it receives. If a manned spacecraft were ever to approach Jupiter, it would require several inches of solid lead to protect the astronauts. However, several unmanned craft have passed the planet in the last 35 years and have all sent back vast amounts of information including truly awe inspiring pictures. It has to be said that, like many unmanned craft, the information delivered presages years of research and which often means having to see favourite theories put out to grass.

Jupiter's size leads to a lot of gravity and this has a practical value. We sometimes hear of a worry about an asteroid hitting the Earth. The risk, however, is considerably lower because Jupiter and the other gas planets Hoover up any passing lump that may threaten us. Even through a telescope purchased at a well known chain store\* you will see that Jupiter has different coloured horizontal bands of gas and you may see the 'Great Red Spot' - a storm on that is separate from the surrounding gas and has been active since at least the 18th century when it was discovered. It is elliptical and the long axis is around 25,000 miles wide. You will also see, as tiny dots, up to four of Jupiter's many moons. Finally, if you are really enthusiastic, as Jupiter spins around every 10 hours, you can watch a whole day go by in one night.

\*or gas anag.

Martin West  
Tel: 813514

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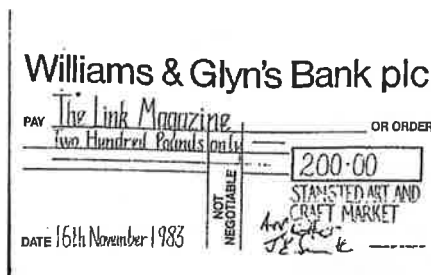
Stansted  
Art & Craft Market

Part 1

In the mid 1970s several of the 'young people' in Stansted were keen to organise a village event to interest the community. The opportunity came in 1979 following the death of our MP, Peter Kirk, when the Stansted Conservative Association was asked to raise money for his Memorial Fund. A meeting was called at which it was decided to hold an Arts Show, and a team led by Martin Cowan, supported by Alan Corbishley and Stuart Ayres, initiated enquiries about a suitable venue. The Adult and Youth Centre in Lower Street was chosen, and with the co-operation of successive wardens, Harry Webster and Nigel Varnon, the first Show took place later that year. Some £500 was raised for the Peter Kirk Memorial Fund to the acclaim of the new MP Alan Haselhurst and Rita Humphreys, chair of the Parish Council. Stuart Ayres, then Greg and Bonnie Snow organised the craft stalls, Geoff Wright was Secretary and Edmund Wilkinson the Treasurer, while Sylvia Osborne took care of the catering.

In the early formative years a number of changes and improvements were made and introduced. The Annexe in the playground was taken over as was the old school house with more stalls being included; non-framed pictures were made available; the picture screens were obtained and refurbished; and lighting over all pictures was introduced.

In 1981, the third year of the event, the proceeds were given to the local branch of Riding for the Disabled. It became clear that it was such a well established event that it was now necessary to redefine the purpose of the occasion having achieved its desired village event standard. It was accordingly agreed that it should be defined as 'Non Political, Non Religious and Non For/Against the Development of the Airport'. At the same time it was agreed that the proceeds should be directed towards local charities and good causes with the emphasis on the 'local' since all the effort was put in by local people. This persisted until the end of the market. By the mid-1980s it had attracted over 800 paintings and 36 craft stalls with queues of up to 70 people awaiting the openings. During the time that the Art and Craft Market ran, over £30,000 was distributed to many organisations, and it is known that they were all grateful for these donations.



One of the many recipients was the 'Link'

The market continued unabated with a number of changes in personnel but always with the same enthusiasm and willing help from numerous volunteers.

... to be concluded



*Caring, sharing, preparing for life*

There has been much speculation over a long period of time about the future of St Mary's in connection with the Forest Hall development. We have had discussions with Mr Neil Keylock of Essex County Council Planning and Organisation Department, and can confirm quite categorically that there is no plan to close St Mary's School. The school has been in the village since 1835, and we will be here for a long time yet! St Mary's catchment area is to be altered to include Forest Hall, and as children arrive in the area we are planning for growth. Indeed, our number on roll is already greater than in September, and we welcome all our new pupils.

This has been an eventful half term with visits to the British Museum, and also visitors to the school – the RSPB, a historian from Epping Museum and also Theatre Active. Year 6 children from local schools came together at St Mary's to see the performances by this group of actors who raise awareness of cultural diversity. They encourage the children to discuss issues around differences in nationality and ability of people around them. I know our Year 6 enjoyed the performance and discussion, and we felt the activity was very valuable in supporting our pastoral programme.

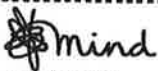
We have all had our spirits raised by our brand new hall curtains! The old curtains had been there so long no one could quite recall when they had first appeared, and they were definitely looking past their best. We now have a very smart hall, bright, fresh and cheerful.

Our Environment Project is progressing well. As a result of the energy monitoring the pupils have carried out, everyone is becoming much more conscientious about turning off lights in empty rooms, preserving projector bulbs, conserving heat and so on. I think it is the danger of being found out by Maple Class for forgetting these essential things that is motivating us! I hope to see some real savings in our energy bills too. In addition to our other recycling activities, we have now taken delivery of a 'Berty Bin', as arranged by the School Council. This is for collecting clothes, shoes and textiles for recycling, and the Stansted community is welcome to add to our collection. Please make sure the items are clean, in small bags and any shoes are fastened together in pairs. The bin is large and purple! You will find it at the front of the school.

This year's PTFA Music Quiz is to be held in the school hall, Saturday 8th March, 7.30pm for and 8.00pm. Bex Carter is the Quizmaster so it's bound to be good! Tickets from the school office. Price includes a ploughman's supper. Do gather your team and join in the fun and support at the same time.

Finally, congratulations to our sports teams: the football team which is having a successful season so far, and the athletics squad, who have been taking part in coaching at MMCC on Mondays after school and were victorious in the events that rounded off the course. Well done to all and keep up the good work!

Christine Tonkins,  
Headteacher



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**PTA News**

**Spend! Spend! Spend!**

We started the year with the happy task of deciding how to spend the money we had raised over the last 12 months. I am delighted to say that we were able to provide everything on the school wish list and believe that we have bought items which will benefit every child in school. In summary they are:

- an interactive white board for reception – now every class has one;
- a projector facility for showing programmes and films in the hall;
- flat screens for ICT to create more desk room;
- sand for the reception sand pit;
- two visualisers to project work onto interactive whiteboards; some toys for Class 1;
- a double CD player and recorder to record literacy and music work onto CD;
- music books and CDs;
- picture and story books for Class 2; new disco equipment; replacement netball kit;
- folding football posts;
- science equipment and nature study equipment.

Once again we would like to thank everyone who has made these purchases possible by supporting our fundraising activities throughout the year.

**Forthcoming Events**

**Chinese Auction & Dance 7.30pm Saturday 15th March**

Please come along to this evening event for grown-ups.

Entry is only £3 including a hot supper – and we will be running a licensed bar. We shall be using the same format, which many people have previously enjoyed at Rainbow Chinese auctions. The lots will be disguised so that you are bidding blind! Bids are 20p and as your bid (raised hand) is acknowledged you drop your 20p into a pot on your table. The winner is the person who places the last bid before the bell is rung (for the sake of impartiality by someone hidden from the bidders.) Olly Pocknell is providing the food and we'll round off the evening with some dancing! Tickets are available from Janet on 815765 or Alison on 816188 or from the school office.

Other events planned for this term include the **Children's Disco** on Friday 7th March and the **Easter Egg Hunt** to be held straight after school on Thursday 20th March. Looking further ahead to next term, preparations are well under way for our **Carnival Summer Fair** on Saturday 7th June and **Music in the Park** on Saturday 12th July.

I look forward to seeing you soon at one of our events!

Alison Thompson,  
Co-Chairman  
Bentfield School PTA

**A NOTICE TO ALL 'LINK' CONTRIBUTORS**

Due to Easter, our production schedule for next month's edition of the 'Link' is extremely tight. Please note that articles submitted by email need to arrive by noon on Tuesday 11th March. Articles which are handwritten or need to be scanned should be submitted to 58 Chapel Hill by 9th March in order to allow time for computer processing. Your co-operation on this is much appreciated.

The 'Link' Team



Our February meeting was on 14th so there was a Valentine theme about it, with our competition being a homemade Valentine card and the raffle with varied items in red.

In March some members are going to Southend to attend the County AGM. This is a large meeting of all the WIs in Essex, so that any speaker brave enough to come along is always faced with an audience of hundreds of women. Luckily they do come and we are able hear some very good speakers first hand. This year we have Baroness Scott talking on 'Life in the House of Lords' and Dickie Arbiter on 'The Palace and the Press'. We are pleased that several new members will be going to this event this year; it is a very good way of learning about our movement as a whole.

Our next venture is the Table Top Sale on 5th April in St John's Hall. We are hoping that lots of you will come along and support all the organisations in the village as well as us, who have booked a variety of stalls already. Please contact us if you wish to take part - there is still time. We will be serving tea and cakes. Talking of tea and cakes, our picture below shows some of us celebrating our President's birthday at the beginning of February; it seemed like a good excuse for an afternoon tea.



Next month's speaker is Francis Harper who will be telling us about 'Wholefood Cookery'. If anyone is interested in this subject please come along - visitors are always welcome as well as new members.

Judy Colliver  
Tel: 812470



**Stansted Evening WI**

**Table Top Sale**

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## NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

\*\*\*\*\*

### VILLAGE PLAN UPDATE

Sincere thanks to all of you who came along to the Open Day we held at the Day Centre on 23 February – your input into the future of this village is vital. If you were unable to attend, or wish to make further comments, please do so by writing to or e-mailing the Clerk, and your comments will be taken into consideration. Our next step is to hold a meeting for all those who have offered to join the Steering Group – this is likely to be held in April, after which a questionnaire will be drawn up for circulation to all households and businesses.

### DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

March 19	-	Annual Parish Meeting
March 26	-	Full Council
April 2	-	Open Spaces

Members of the public are welcome to attend all Parish Council meetings, and may address the Council on any relevant issue at the start of Full Council meetings. These comments are noted but no discussion is entered into. Meetings are held in Crafton Green House at 7.45pm unless otherwise stated on the agenda. Agendas are posted on the Parish Council's website [www.stansted.net](http://www.stansted.net) under Publications.

### LOCAL POLICE

Sgt Gilchrist has advised us that the Essex Police now use a central switchboard for ALL police stations which is operated from Police Headquarters. He knows that there are teething problems, and one of the most regular complaints is that people are having their calls transferred to the Airport instead of the village police station. Sgt Gilchrist's advice is that if you have to phone the police, use the mobile number which is carried by our local officer PC Jo Jeggo (07801 461666) or alternatively e-

mail [jo.jeggo@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:jo.jeggo@essex.pnn.police.uk). Calls to the mobile should be responded to within 24 hours. Continue to ring 999 for emergencies. If you do have to go through the switchboard, stress that you want to be transferred to Stansted Village and NOT the Airport.

PCSO Anne Clark is now holding Beat Surgeries on a monthly basis. The venue is the Youth Centre in Lower Street and you can call in to see Anne between 10am and 12 noon on 6th March, 3rd April, or 1st May to raise any issues or concerns.

### LIBRARY NEWS

Bookstart Baby and Toddler – every Tuesday from 11-11.30 am. Come and meet other parents and carers and have fun with story and rhymetime.

### HIGHWAYS UPDATE

At a recent meeting with an officer from County Highways a wide range of issues was discussed. Hopefully, action will be implemented on the following requests:

- A new pedestrian crossing by the Mountfitchet Maths & Computing College (MMCC)
- Releasing funds to permit the replacement and renewal of bus shelters
- Bollards to prevent cars mounting the pavement by the crossing in Cambridge Road
- Implementation of new waiting restrictions in Cambridge Road, Crossdaile Road and Lower Street

Other requests met with a favourable response but may take longer:



- A footway from the Rochfords estate to the MMCC and leisure centre
- A parking lay-by by the MMCC
- Widening the footway along Church Road
- Turning the pedestrian crossing at the top of Chapel Hill into a puffin crossing (ie with traffic lights)

Hopefully Essex Highways will undertake a survey of traffic along High Lane, Lower Street, Chapel Hill and Church Road (both total and heavy vehicles). If this is completed, then actions to reduce unnecessary traffic movements and additional safety measures will be considered.

### **CHECK OUT THE YOUTH CENTRE**

Stansted Youth Centre, in Lower Street, opens on Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7-9.30pm and hopefully, before long, on Fridays. It offers social and informal education for 13-19 year olds and recreational opportunities. The Centre is run by a fully qualified and CRB checked ECC youth team. Membership at present is around 50 and the majority of the members are aged 13-15 years old.

The Centre has pool tables, bar football, a Sports Hall for ball games, a coffee bar and PS2, games, television, DVDs and laptops with internet connection. There are projects covering Arts and Crafts and Healthy Eating and Cooking as well as informal education around smoking, drug awareness and sexual health. There are opportunities for residential stays and excursions (bowling and ice-skating) and these might incur a small charge.

The Centre is a safe, relaxing place for teenagers to be themselves but to be occupied. **IT COSTS NOTHING – JUST FILL IN AND SIGN A MEMBERSHIP FORM.** Further information from Linda Barnes on 07920 466923.

### **NEWS FROM UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

#### **Community Achievement Awards**

I am pleased to report that the Parish Council's nominations for these awards were accepted. The late Rosemary Minshull, Ray Ball, Ted Pretty and Richard Wallace are all worthy recipients. The award ceremony, held at Uttlesford's Council Offices, will have been held by the time you read this article. We owe a debt to all those who give up their time in helping the community.

### **THANK YOU TO ANNE MARCHANT AND RICHARD WALLACE**

Anne, having recently remarried, has moved to Ruislip in Middlesex and we would like to wish her and her husband every happiness, and to thank Anne for her four years' service on the District and Parish Councils.

Richard has been a stalwart on the Parish Council since he was first elected in 1991. In addition, he represented the Stansted Division on Essex County Council for eight years between 1997 and 2005. Apart from his particular contributions in relation to the Windmill and the Civil Emergency Committee, Richard's longstanding knowledge of the area and his humour mean that his departure will very much be a loss. We wish Ann and Richard much happiness in their new home in Westfield, East Sussex, an area they know well. No doubt the community will soon know Richard!

### **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	
Ruth Rawlinson	814222	**
Jonathan Rich	813112	
John Salmon	814789	
Geoffrey Sell	815925	*
Valerie Trundle	813433	
* Chairman		
** Vice Chairman		

## Council Tax 2008/09

Full council on 19<sup>th</sup> February will have considered a council tax increase of 4.979% over 2007/08. This assumes a Council Tax increase for 2008/09 from £130.14 to £136.62 on a Band D property for the Uttlesford part of the Council Tax. Given the financial difficulties of the council, I feel that this increase was inevitable. Readers will be aware that Council Tax only finances part of a councils expenditure. We are also heavily reliant on a settlement from Central Government. The increase for Uttlesford for 2008/09 is just 1%. This is below the rate of inflation.

## Multi Use Facility Mountfitchet Green

The local pub referred to in my last article whose customers contributed £1000 towards this facility was the Kings Arms Hotel in Station Road. Thank you for your generosity.

*Councillor Geoffrey Sell*  
*Tel: 01279 815925*

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

## From Cllr Alan Dean

Uttlesford Council has entered very uncertain times, the consequences of which are difficult to predict. In addition to the likely loss of people who have over several years been supporting community improvements for local people, we have been witnessing the loss of most of the senior management from the organisation. Whilst the popular view is that the people who empty our wheelie bins each week are some of the Council staff most of us experience directly and appreciate most, no organisation can perform well for long without a firm hand from the top on the tiller. At the time of writing in early February there are no plans in place to replace the Chief Executive, who is about to leave us, and three other senior colleagues, who have recently departed.

All of this comes at a time when Uttlesford's consultation on housing and other proposals that took place over Christmas has been severely criticised by the County Council and the Government's regional office as being unfit for purpose; lacking evidence to justify the Council's proposals from last September such as the Elsenham/Henham new town. This almost certainly means that the recent consultation exercise will have to be rerun and that the future development proposals for the district will now be submitted to the Government and its planning experts around the end of the year rather than in the spring. This will, of course, mean much more expenditure to do the job thoroughly next time.

Meanwhile, an external senior council officer, whose experience includes sorting out the mess that Lady Shirley Porter caused at Westminster City Council many years ago, is trying to sort out what is so wrong with Uttlesford's financial management systems that the budget was able to go so adrift in the past year. I suspect we will find out that the Council has never had professional enough finance systems and tools and the right people to use them, but that this was hidden when Uttlesford had lots of 'loose change' (more money than was needed) in its budgets. We may find out that the system cracked and failed to report accurately the financial effect as the demands on the Council became more ambitious, including the expectations of central Government for a modern council. Of course, I may be proved wrong. There will undoubtedly be many separate reasons. What is clear is that the request I made in April last year for accurate monthly financial reports to both officers and councillors still hasn't been carried out satisfactorily.

*Tel: 01279 813579 / 07710 105824*

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

## COUNTY COUNCIL NEWS

A review of the educational levels of the workforce (that is, all people between the ages of 16 and 65) within Essex has recently indicated that in some areas, as little as 31% are educated to a standard that is commensurate with a Level 2 NVQ. On the surface that appears to be an extremely distressing statistic and I am not convinced that it is entirely correct. Many people have lived happy and productive lives that have contributed to the good of society, earned themselves a living and brought up a family even though they do not score highly on some newly founded educational point scoring system. Indeed, it is a sobering thought that a "Traditional Apprenticeship" and a lifetime of experience appear to score less educational credit than many new short-term vocational courses - that really is ridiculous.

Having said that, it is important that the educational system which is offered in this county provides for all young people and gives them an equal opportunity to achieve success whatever their individual abilities and in this part of Essex we do rather better than those terrible figures suggest. When we look at 14 to 19 year old educational statistics Uttlesford does very well in the proportions of young people who continue on to University, we also have some of the lowest levels of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) but the difficulty is that this neglects the 50% or more of young people who do not fall within either of those extremes.

We have heard a great deal in recent years about "Modern Apprenticeships", vocational training and a myriad of schemes which have sought to address this problem but the whole approach has been fragmented and, at best, inconsistent and with this as the background Essex are looking into better ways of ensuring that all young people get the best education to enable them to progress to a worthwhile career.

I recently looked at a pilot scheme which is being implemented in another part of the County and was most impressed that young people in year nine were being allowed to follow courses which really interested them and which held promise of employment at the end. Indeed, one young man who was spending two days a week learning the practical skills required to be a motor mechanic, one day learning the theory of the same and the last two days at school completing the core subjects of the national curriculum, openly admitted that, had he not had this opportunity he would probably have dropped out of school altogether. The enthusiasm of this young man made me realise that whilst the various facets of education are supposed to train us, give us an insight into the world and make us more complete people, allowing this person to study motor mechanics had easily fulfilled all of those roles and was certainly making him a more complete person.

Whilst it is a fact that there are people who have no culture of education or employment and that is passed from generation to generation, it is important that, if we are to have a workforce that is suitable for the future, education of 14 to 19 year olds in Essex must continue to find innovative ways of bringing out the best in everyone and most importantly recognising their achievements and value to society.

*Ray Gooding - County Councillor Stansted Division*  
01279 813103 e-mail: [cllr.ray.gooding@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.ray.gooding@essexcc.gov.uk)

Stansted Parish Council – Council Offices, Crafton Green House, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted, Essex CM24 8AQ.

Tel/Fax 01279 813214. E-mail: [parishcouncil@stansted.net](mailto:parishcouncil@stansted.net)

Member of Parliament – The Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA



## Happy Days Part 2

On the entertainment side we had some really good shows over the years. There was (and probably still is) a wealth of local talent. The Scouts regularly put on a Gang Show in the Central Hall. We were certainly 'riding along on the crest of a wave'. Dear Nina Adams used to play the piano. I can see her now at the piano with a cigarette hanging from her lips. What would she have done now with all the smoking regulations.

We had carnival shows, old tyme music halls, church shows, etc. We had a lot of fun putting them on and usually played to full houses. My great friend Keith (Pert) Patmore and I did many sketches together, on one memorable occasion literally stopping the show. We never did things by half and did a sketch involving a washing machine which we borrowed from B & R Electricals. After rehearsals we asked Nicholas James (the Vicar's son) to put the machine away ready for the performance.

He put the lead in the drum which had a lot of water in it. Frantic efforts to dry the lead with a towel ensued and it was handed to Bill Kidger to plug in on the front of the stage. There was a terrific blue flash and every light went out plunging the hall in total darkness. It was some time before normal service was resumed.

I can recall a meeting in the council offices in Lower Street which I believe discussed the Carnival (see photograph). Someone suggested we hold a dance in the Arthur Findlay College. I piped up that it was a good idea and we could serve spirits. I recall some very disapproving looks being directed at me (amid the titters of laughter).



Stansted Rangers 'Miss World' float at Stansted Carnival

The Church was, as now, very much a part of village life. I attended the Congregational Church from a very early age. In Sunday School we used to gaily trip round the Black Boys which were wooden cutouts of two little boys holding a bowl into which we lobbed our pennies as we sang "hear our pennies dropping, listen as they fall, they are meant for Jesus, he will have them all". I am not too sure it would be politically correct in today's world. It was all to do with collecting for the missionary ship The John Williams.

Looking back, they were good times. I remember getting a right ticking off from the Reverend Walter Mason when, as an attendant behind King Herod's chair (throne) in one of our performances, I pulled the chair away just as he was about to sit down causing King Herod (played by Derek Diamond I recall) to collapse in a big heap on the floor. I think the ticking off was fully justified.

I have been lent some Parish magazines by Miss Evelyn Tame and they make very interesting reading. The February issue marks the leaving of Rev'd John James who was taking up a position in Clacton after nine years in Stansted. I have very fond memories of the Rev'd James and his lovely family. We were the last couple he married in St Mary's Church.

A short while ago, whilst waiting for my takeaway Indian meal, I was chatting to a chap who has lived in Stansted for a couple of years. He said that he loved the village and felt really at home here. I reflected on this. Yes, Stansted is a pretty good place to live. I remember thinking when I used to come home on leave from my National Service days that there were plenty of worse places around!

Dick Pollard



## UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

In the excitement of New Year fun and games, we won't forget the end of year visit from Mr Quintus Benziger, music teacher and organist, who gave a most fascinating talk on musical instruments. Among his intriguing insights (and sound bites) it was good to learn how the 'soft - loud' piano forte got its name.

Gladys Dix, Vice President, chaired the first meeting of 2008 for which Frances Spalding had prepared a really enjoyable Quiz and games day - with musical accompaniment - all much appreciated; and the good number present suggested an equally good turn out for the New Year lunch at The Chequers.

At our next meeting, Ron Marks will give 'The Confessions of a Carpet Fitter' - I can't wait.

Phyllis Harrison

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- French for Holidays 29<sup>th</sup> April for 5 weeks
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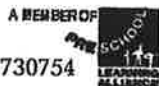
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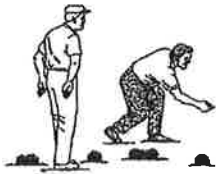
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## STANSTED BOWLING CLUB

The new outdoor season is approaching and as I write this the weather is wonderful so let us all hope it stays that way. Our season starts on Saturday 19th April with the green being officially opened by the President Ro Turner and the first game played between a President's team and a Captain's team. This first game is always a challenge with people having not played on grass since last September finding it difficult to reach the other end of the green so you can imagine the comments and barracking that goes on until everyone settles into it (great fun!).

As mentioned in the last edition of the 'Link,' we are once again hoping to get new members and are therefore holding a 'bowls for beginners' session on Sunday 27th April between 10.00am and 3.00pm. All we ask is that you bring a flat soled pair of shoes/trainers to wear on the green and if possible ring one of the numbers below to let us know that you will be there. Everything else is supplied and it costs you nothing except the price of a drink if you fancy one.

There will be an opportunity to receive basic training from our coaches and a chance to meet some of the members who come along to assist the coaches and make people welcome. We know that just having one go at the game cannot always be enough for you to decide whether you like it or not so we are offering to give further coaching during the evenings following Sunday 27th for one week starting at 6.30pm. Further to this we can give extra training for those who would like it at a time and date to suit. We would suggest getting into the basics as soon as you can, so that you can start playing in the club friendly games at weekends.

If you do like the game it is not a great expense to start as there are always second hand sets of bowls for sale. Please mention the beginners' sessions to your friends and bring them along if you are a bit shy. For more details and to let us know if you will be there on 27th April or the next week evenings please contact Roy Barnes 813500 or myself 817388 or email stanstedbc@tiscali.co.uk or pop in the club on any Friday evening after 8.00pm. We really look forward to seeing you.

Rex Turner  
Hon Secretary

## BENTFIELD GREEN POND

I would like, as a long-established resident of Bentfield End, to express my appreciation and thanks to the Parish Council and to Mrs Clifford for taking on board my concerns about the condition of the pond last summer. The action they have taken has resulted in the pond now looking absolutely marvellous. It has been cleared and is sparkling clean again – now we only have to wait for the ducks to notice it and return to complete the picture!

Again, thanks to all involved.

Betty Waterman

## Wellbeing

*Exploring the connections  
between mind, body and spirit  
with Isobel Bradshaw*



Hello – last month I introduced myself as a singing and yoga teacher and a wellbeing practitioner. I eagerly awaited the arrival of my students, because I knew that there would be something I could share with you on the subject of wellbeing. They brought with them colds, bad knees and a lot of rain!!!!

My singing pupils always get a shock when I smile and sit up as they announce they're ill! I explain singing with a cold is a bit like driving on the M11 when the heavens open and you are squashed between two big lorries. You can't stop driving but you have to drive better. This requires more skill, concentration and energy. An experienced driver also mentally changes gear. By staying calm and focused the difficult conditions can actually become an interesting test of your abilities. As you realise a new sense of control, a level of confidence is gained. In singing terms this means standing taller, breathing deeper and even more generosity of spirit in order to perform the song.

How does this relate to the understanding of human wellbeing? I think we all appreciate the joy of our lives when the sun is shining. The trick however, is to have a practice for when the dark clouds blow in. Fr Ronald Rolheiser defines Spirituality as the force that enables people to strive to reach their potential (in the good times) and that which holds them together when times are tough. We may have to slow down but the journey continues. Health professionals of the medical and spiritual varieties encourage us to read the warning signs to relax, to slow down, rather than getting ill. Slowing down is often what we are planning for next week, but have you noticed how next week never materialises?

The old Mars bar advert brings everything back into the day. It may be the clue to our understanding of wellbeing. How did it go? 'A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play.' Maybe during the month of March you could observe your daily life and keep asking yourself – what is it that is helpful to me in order to work, rest and play?

On a final note, did you notice the ratios in the Mars advert – two to one in favour of rest and play to work? Working out the ratio for wellbeing may feel like one more thing to do, but it's well worth trying. You may just find that you are motivated to increase your rest and play time. Now that might be something that you don't want to put off until next week – it may be something that you want to start today. Take care for now.

isobel@stanstedlink.org.uk

### 2ND STANSTED BROWNIES now have vacancies

We meet on a Tuesday evening from  
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If you are aged between 7-11 and would like any further information or wish to come along to see what we do please contact

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## Stansted Tennis Club



### John Eyre

Very sadly, John Eyre has decided to retire as our treasurer and as a player. We thank him for his many wonderful years of devoted service to the club. To play tennis, to a high standard, including tournaments, for so many years, up to the age of 85, is a goal to which we should all aspire. John is already an Honorary Life Member and the committee has presented him with an engraved tankard and two framed pictures of Club members.

Janet Hollis  
Chairman

### 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 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 have now restarted after the Christmas break. 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 (816386) continues to coach adults on Saturday afternoons at the club.

### Stansted Tennis Club Annual General Meeting

This will take place on Monday 10th March at 8.00pm at 105 Cambridge Road. All members are welcome and indeed encouraged to attend. It is the members' opportunity to air their views about the club. If you are keen to serve on the Committee for 2008/2009, or would like to find out more, please contact Richard Mott.

### Used tennis balls

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

### Club Playing Sessions

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

Wednesday mornings from 10.00am  
Wednesday evenings from 6.00pm  
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

## SHREDDERS AND CHOCOLATE - I HOPE NOT!

We hear of a lot of pretty nasty things in our job as you can imagine, but I read a report in one of our veterinary journals a couple of weeks ago that made me wince, but I felt I had to pass it on. Maybe those of you with delicate constitutions should read no further!

There have been the first few reports of dogs being injured by home shredders - you know the small units you use for shredding old bank statements etc. Apparently if you leave them on standby and an inquisitive dog happens to lick the top it's enough to set the machine going, the dog's tongue can get

sucked into the machine and ... well, need I go further? This apparently resulted in the death of one Jack Russell and the amputation of the tongue in a Labrador. I must admit I was horrified by the report and certainly make sure I always turn my shredder off at the plug now.

While we're talking about fairly innocuous things ending in disaster, I feel I must mention Easter eggs and chocolate poisoning seeing as it's that time of year once again. Although chocolate is a truly wonderful thing and according to several scientific reports it is good for you (those are the sort of reports I like to read), chocolate is **not** good for dogs. It contains a substance called theobromine, which is poisonous to dogs. The darker the chocolate, the more theobromine it contains. In truth a dog does have to eat quite a large quantity of chocolate for it to do any harm, but it is a good idea to avoid giving it to your dog just in case. Symptoms of chocolate poisoning include: vomiting, thirst, unsteadiness, hyper excitability, salivation and in severe cases, convulsions. The usual calls we get are when a dog has pinched a whole box of chocolates and eaten the lot! We have had several cases over the years, some where we have been able to make the dog sick before the chocolate has been absorbed, and others where they have ended up on a drip for a few days. If you are worried over Easter, remember there is a vet on duty all over the holiday period; in fact it's me on Easter Sunday. You can be sure I'll be on the other end of the phone if you're worried, and probably tucking into my Easter egg!

Ilse Pedler,  
Partner  
Mercer and Hughes,  
Veterinary Surgeons



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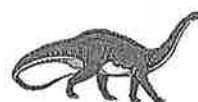
A reminder that Saturday 8th March is the date, 7.30pm the time, and St John's Church the venue of the fourth and final concert of our 2007/8 season featuring oboist, Thomas Barber and pianist, James Southall. Details of the duo appeared in last month's edition of the 'Link'. The programme includes sonatas by Bach and Poulenc, work by the early 20th century English composer, Edmund Rubbra, and *Interlude* by his contemporary, Gerald Finzi. An additional item will be False Lights, a composition by James Southall himself. To complete the evening's programme, James will be playing piano solos by Mozart and Schubert.

Tickets are Adults £10, children £3 available from Stansted Carpets; Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford; Sonia Levy, 31 Chapel Hill (01279 815282) or at the door.

Alan Corbishley

## STANSTED LIBRARY

**Advance Notice:** there is to be a Dinosaur Week during Library hours from 4th to 10th April. This will include Quizzes, Story Time and Wordsearches. Further details in the next issue. Sounds fun - come along!



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## STANSTED'S AVIATION PIONEER

We are indebted to Rose Turner of Ugley Green for information on **Bentfield Huck** who was born in Bentfield End in 1884 where Bentfield (or Benny) Huck's father was a consulting engineer.



He found his father's occupation too dull to follow so he entered the embryo motor business where he became a skilful driver. His enthusiasm earned him a £50 fine for fast driving, which effectively ended his motoring career. Aviation seemed to be the only other activity which suited his adventurous nature so he joined Claude Graham-White, a well-known aviation pioneer. He featured in the London to Manchester flights and the Blackpool, Bournemouth and Wolverhampton flying meetings. Then in 1910 Bentfield accompanied Graham White to America where the latter won some big prizes including the Gordon Bennet Cup. On his return to England he was engaged to test the experimental Blackburn Monoplane at Filey. It was there that he obtained his pilot's certificate from the Royal Aero Club. On one of the qualifying flights, the propeller of the monoplane flew off, bringing the aeroplane down with a crash. The monoplane was severely damaged but apart from a few scratches Bentfield Huck was uninjured and was flying it again following the repairs. Those were the days!

Another contemporary, H Barlow, persuaded Bentfield to go on the 1912 Daily Mail Aerial Tours and bought the latter's Bleriot XI-2, The Firefly, and flew it over from France. In 1913 it was augmented by the 80hp Bleriot Tornado. Later that year at Buc in France, Bentfield performed the first loop by an Englishman. When war broke out in the following year both machines were impressed into the Royal Flying corps and Bentfield became a 2nd Lieutenant in the RFC Special Reserve.



*The Blackburn Monoplane*

There is a somewhat bizarre account of him searching for a supposed Zeppelin base in the Lake District before joining the BEF as a ferry pilot in No 4 Squadron. He was invalided out of the RFC with pleurisy early in 1915 with the rank of Captain but became a test and ferry pilot for GW (Moranes) and for Ruston and Proctor who made both traction engines and the BE2 fighter aeroplane. He undertook almost all the test flying of the de Havilland DH5 with the Aircraft Manufacturing Company before being seconded to the Westland Co for the DH9A development programme.

In 1918 Bentfield contracted the dreaded Spanish 'flu which swept Europe and caused more deaths than the war. He died four days before the end of the war aged 35 and was buried at Highgate Cemetery as one of the many Commonwealth War Dead. Hopefully the Local History Society will look further into the short but colourful life of our local hero. If any reader can fill any of the gaps the 'Link' would be pleased to hear from you.

Editor

A recent and prominent obituary notice in the national press for Anthony Sumption, DSC, stated that he lived in Stansted in the '20s and '30s. After serving as a submarine commander he became a distinguished lawyer and author. It appears likely that his parents were buried in St Mary's Churchyard in 1964 and 1981. Does any reader remember him?

Editor



## STANSTED FUN RUN

www.stansted10k.org.uk  
info@stansted10k.org.uk

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June at 11.00am**

Plans for this year's event are well under way. We will be supporting three charities:

**Moreton Romanian Orphans Fund** arranges holidays for children from the orphanages with UK families

**Diabetes UK**

**Hearing Help Uttlesford** helps people with hearing disabilities in our local (Uttlesford) area.

The money we raise will be shared equally between the three charities. Entry fees will be adults £8 advance (plus £1.50 if on-line entry), £10 on the day; children £4 advance and also £4 on the day (plus £1.50 for on-line advance entry). Entry forms will be available after Easter.

### **CAN YOU HELP?**

The Fun Run is a very large-scale event and we are dependent on our many volunteer helpers. We need more volunteers this year to help with the following:

#### **Stewards**

To be positioned along the route to give encouragement and summon help in case of emergency

#### **General Helpers**

- at the water points
- on the green before and after the run
- for the barbecue

If you can help for even for short while, we would be very pleased to hear from you. Thank you!

Marion Dyer  
Tel: 814059

### **UGLEY FARMERS' MARKET**

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### More 'ifs and buts' on Stansted new runway plans

In a further sign that BAA cannot make up its mind on the viability of a second runway at Stansted, the airport operator has warned its economic regulator, the CAA, of the need for a price settlement, which delivers investment in new runway capacity. The clear implication is that BAA won't build a new runway at Stansted unless the CAA allows a dramatic increase in the prices BAA is allowed to charge airlines and passengers. In 2006 BAA told the CAA that a second Stansted runway was not commercially viable because it would not generate a sufficient rate of return even to cover its cost of capital. Since then BAA had been pinning its hopes on having Stansted removed from the regulatory framework so that it could raise airport charges to justify the cost of a second runway. However, Transport Secretary Ruth Kelly vetoed that proposal in February.

SSE's Economics Adviser Brian Ross has commented that from our point of view there is nothing new or surprising in this latest statement from BAA but it completely contradicts the message coming from BAA management at Stansted, namely that "BAA is absolutely committed to the G2 project." Either BAA is trying to bluff the CAA or it is not 'absolutely committed' to a second runway. It is not only the CAA who are receiving this ambivalent message from BAA. The airport operator has also been assuring its lenders that its investment plans represent "an option to build, not a commitment to build." BAA has a debt mountain of over £12 billion, and its Spanish parent company, Ferrovial, has net debt of £23.4 billion. Ferrovial's share price has halved over the past nine months and its debt is now a staggering 5.2 times the market value of the business. This latest statement from BAA is the clearest evidence yet that its resolve to build a second runway at Stansted is faltering and, given all the circumstances, we do not find that at all surprising. BAA is expected to submit its much-delayed planning application for a second runway at Stansted in March. SSE views this as a speculative exercise rather than a genuine signal of BAA's intent.

Carol Barbone,  
Campaign Director  
Tel: 0777 5523091  
Email: cbarbone@mx.com

### *Cheap flights 'squeezing life out of British tourism' says major UK hotel company*

One of the UK's major hotel companies has told MPs that short haul airlines are the single biggest cause of decline in traditional tourism resorts and has urged the Government to end the tax breaks, which provide budget airlines with an unfair grip on holidaymakers that is squeezing the life out of British tourism. Giving evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee Inquiry on 29th January, Travelodge told MPs that unfair tax breaks to short haul airlines are slowly bringing the curtain down on regional tourism. Travelodge submitted research evidence to the Inquiry showing that inward tourism spend was declining whilst outward spend was rapidly increasing, creating a balance of trade deficit of £18bn.

Calling for a level playing field and for VAT to be applied to air travel, Travelodge Director of Communications, Greg Dawson, stated that VAT exemption on flights immediately puts domestic tourism on the back foot. It is an inbuilt cost incentive to holiday abroad rather than stay at British resorts and attractions. He claimed that a 10 percent reduction in overseas flights by British tourists would create 31,250 jobs. The evidence put forward by Travelodge provides strong endorsement of the economic analysis which SSE has carried out since 2003 showing a direct link between the growth in cheap air travel and the deterioration in the UK trade deficit on travel and tourism. However, it is the first time that a major UK hotel company has pointed out that cheap flights are having a direct impact on the UK tourism industry, costing thousands of jobs.

Brian Ross,  
Economics Adviser  
Tel: 814961  
Email: brian.ross@lineone.net

## STANSTED DAY CENTRE

### News from the Crafton Room at the Day Centre

Well hi there,

It's me, the 'Crafton Room'. I don't think I've seen you yet. I thought you might have paid a visit by now, especially since my two ladies, Bridget and Susan, are cooking delicious, fresh, home cooked meals. We serve lunch three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. As soon as I can persuade a few more volunteers to join us we can then open on Wednesday as well. What do you think? Interested? I need a couple of volunteer drivers also to help. It amounts to just a few hours each month.

Have a look at what the girls have put on the menu for the coming month. For the main course we have: shepherds pie, chicken paprika, goulash, roast pork, etc and for dessert we have delights such as fruit crumble, apple pie, trifle, lemon sponge, Bakewell tart and many more tasty treats. A two course lunch costs a mere £4.50. I know, you're saying "what a bargain". Well there you have it. What more can I say except to invite you to try our fare and pay us a visit? Give us a call if you fancy booking for lunch, on 815091; we would appreciate two days notice if possible. We can even help with transport if necessary. Must go now, time to open my doors. It's 10.00am, the coffee is ready and I fancy a freshly baked scone.

Bye for now.

James Ramselle

## MOUNTFITCHET SENIORS

### We are looking for help!

We would like to hear from anyone or a group who could come along to one of our Wednesday meetings for approximately one hour to either entertain us with music or as a guest speaker. We meet on the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Day Centre and would make you very welcome. If you require any details please give me a phone call and I will be only too pleased to give you any details that you may require. Also we are looking for new members to come and join us on our afternoons.

John Robinson, Chair  
Tel: 812755

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## 494 (Stansted Airport) Squadron Air Training Corps

In February we held a Presentation Evening at St John's Hall where we enrolled eleven new cadets and presented awards and trophies to mark the cadets' achievements over the last year. The next intake of eight probationer cadets has already started their training, as the Squadron goes from strength to strength.



This month we are featuring an article written by one of our Cadet Media Team to present a cadet's-eye view of life in the ATC. All cadets have the opportunity to take part in Air Experience Flights (AEF) and here 14 year old Cadet Sophie Stacey tells of her first flight:

"On Sunday 2nd December 2007 a coach picked myself and nine other cadets up (three girls and seven boys) just after 7.00am from the Squadron HQ at Stansted Airport and went round collecting other squadrons. It wasn't looking hopeful as it was pouring with rain. We were heading for RAF Wyton in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, a station used as a training school as well as running AEFs for Cadets.

At Wyton we assembled in a briefing room and watched a safety film. After that the first five cadets were called, all 494: Wyld, Stacey, Batey, Webb and Bird. We walked to a small building where we put on a coverall. Then we put on parachutes, helmets, gloves and were given cushions for the seats. Batey went first for a weather check. Given clearance that the weather was OK Bird, myself, Wyld and Webb went in the air one by one. The Grob Tutor is spacious considering that it's a two seater aircraft. Jack plugs were connected so that I could hear and communicate with the pilot.

The pilot showed me the basic controls before taking off. We taxied to the runway and waited for a radio clearance to take off. As we got into the air, it was a little bumpy due to the weather. I kept the aircraft level, and when told to I turned so that we did a circle around the surrounding area, with a very nice view of the countryside (and motorway). It was fun taking off, with little bumps and it was a good feeling having control of the plane, which way it moved. It was a shame we had to land because it was such a good experience! We watched films while we waited for the others and on the bus home some people managed to get some sleep. Well worth getting up at 5.30am!!!"

So if you are interested in taking part in activities such as flying, gliding, shooting, adventurous training and sports, are aged 13 to 18 and fancy a challenge visit our website- [www.stanstedaircadets.org.uk](http://www.stanstedaircadets.org.uk).

Simon Stacey

The next big event to take place at Rainbow will be our *Quiz Night* on **Saturday 1st March**. The evening promises to be a fun one with Russell once again at the helm as quiz master and the price of the ticket (£6.50) will include a jacket potato supper, BYOB. Tickets must be bought in advance and can be obtained from Sarah on 817210. Please do come along, all are welcome.



We have had an Ofsted inspection recently and we are awaiting their report although initial feedback was that the pre-school did well in all six areas.

Last month the children were kept busy making a large dragon to celebrate Chinese New Year, which included sponge painting and making the head out of a decorated box. The children then helped make the dragon dance for the festivities. The older group enjoyed a trip to Bishop's Stortford in order to purchase feeders etc to make a bird garden in the play area. The garden is now set up and all the children have greatly enjoyed watching the birds come and go.

We have once again been dipping into the funds to purchase a new printer, which has come in very handy to print photos for the children's folders and wall display. Funds raised previously have also helped buy an outdoor easel to encourage the children in their creative activities. Thanks to our last Tesco voucher collection scheme we recently took delivery of a new scooter, which has proved a popular toy outside. We also received some scarves for dancing from the scheme. Sainsburys has just launched another voucher scheme and we will be collecting those, so please do hand in any spare vouchers.

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



## MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

Members and visitors turned out in force for our first meeting of 2008. Maralyn Harris welcomed our speaker, Mr K Akers, whose talk was on sink, trough and container gardening.

Mr Akers showed many beautiful slides focusing on the development of his own garden. In the '70s this was a blank canvas ripe for development. Mr Akers has designed his garden with flair and an eye for detail, changing and relocating plants when needed.

He showed us how to cover old butler sinks with a concrete mixture and we were able to see how well they weathered over the years. He offered sound advice on alpine plants and other suitable plants to grow in containers and gave us good ideas on shape/form using small conifers and tufa (lightweight rock). A most enjoyable evening with lots of questions from members.

Some dates for your diary:

**5th March.** We welcome Prof J S Parker who will be speaking on Cambridge University Botanical Gardens.

**5th April** Spring Show - Lecture Hall, Stansted Free Church. Open to the public 2.30pm -4.00pm. Raffle, splendid displays. Sale of goods

Visitors are most welcome to attend meetings. The cost is £1.50. After visiting you may consider joining. All meetings held at the Day Centre, Crafton Green.

Christine Hope



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## Nature Notes

Holly, which is widespread in and around Stansted, is one of our very few wild evergreen broadleaved trees. It prefers free-draining soils and although frequently found as a large shrub, it can grow up to 65 feet and reach a great age. The leaves lower down the tree are prickly, but higher up they are oval, narrower and smooth edged. Individual holly trees are either male or female. They both have significant white flowers in June. It is the female trees that bear the red berries, although in days past the holly was regarded as a male tree. There seems to have been a shortage of berries this winter. Any trees that did have some were quickly stripped by birds, particularly thrushes.



Indi- male or small insignificant May or that bear the past the

Some holly trees form clumps, either by sending up suckers or by rooting into the ground from low-lying whippy branches. In this way they can form dense holly woods. They are also often seen in field hedges and boundaries and, because they are so conspicuous with their dark leaves, were used as marker trees by farmers. There seems to have been a belief that cutting down a holly tree would bring bad luck so that over the centuries people have been loath to fell this tree. On the other hand, since pagan times branches of holly have been cut down and brought into houses and barns during Yuletide. William Winstanley, who owned a house in Quendon in the 17th century, would take his guests on Christmas Eve into Quendon Wood to gather holly and they would then decorate the house with it. On Twelfth Night all the greenery had to be burnt on the fire before midnight otherwise bad luck would follow.

The wood of the holly is very pale and hard and is used for inlay work in furniture, for turning and for woodcuts. Its flexibility made it a popular wood for horsewhips and driving whips for carriages and traps. Holly leaves are nutritious and have a high calorific content. They can be fed to animals (particularly sheep) during the winter and until the 18th century this practice was quite common. The diarist John Evelyn, writing in the 17th century, said of his own hedge: "Is there under heaven a more glorious and refreshing object of the kind than an impregnable hedge about 400 feet in length, nine feet high, and five in diameter, ... glittering with its armed and varnished leaves".

Rosina Kirkwood

## STANSTED LUNCH CLUB

### January Lunch

Just under 70 of us enjoyed an excellent lunch at Bury Lodge Hotel on 30th January courtesy of Nockolds of Bishop's Stortford, the sponsors. Over 70 members sent their apologies which encourages me to believe that the Club is still fun, not to be missed lightly! Darren Hayward, the Nockolds employment partner, gave an interesting and entertaining talk on recent employment law in which he swept away some of the more lurid employment law myths. Darren stressed that the law was inherently workable and sought to protect the

interest of all parties. In particular, employers had no need to fear the law provided that they put in place appropriate procedures and then followed them scrupulously.

### March Lunch

The next lunch is to be sponsored by Copyzone and will be held at Bury Lodge Hotel on 26th March 1.00pm for 1.30pm.

### The Lord's Taverners 21st May 2008

I am delighted that a number of local businesses have joined together to sponsor The Stansted Lunch Club in May 2008 to promote The Lord's Taverners, who are anxious to raise their profile and to improve public awareness of their work in the region. As most will be aware, the Lords Taverners, of which Lunch Club member Barry Root is an East Anglia Region Committee member, do an enormous amount of good work throughout the county and the country: 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.

For this generosity I am greatly indebted to: Angie and Peter Ruggiero of Bada Bing, Stansted; David Brown and Nigel Holland of The Stansted Hall Cricket Club; David Norris of Auditel, Bishop's Stortford; Frank Gillen of East Anglian Debt Management, Buntingford; Simon Dowell of Lloyds TSB Bishop's Stortford.

All are welcome. Membership of The Stansted Lunch Club is easily secured by sending me contact details, including email address, and undertaking to behave no worse than the Club Chairman. Invitations to the Club's bi-monthly lunches then flow until such time as a member has not been heard of for a year or an insensitive spam filter has been installed.

Alastair Richardson

Tel: 07850 295109

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[www.abr-ltd.com](http://www.abr-ltd.com)



**STANSTED & DISTRICT  
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

We will be holding our Annual Supper Club on Friday 28th March, 7.30pm for 8.00pm at the Stansted Day Centre. The speaker will be Toni Coles from the PCT, who will be speaking about local health provision. The cost of £10 includes supper, and there will be a bar. For tickets and further information please ring 813432 or 814222.

Ruth Rawlinson



**MOUNTFITCHET  
GARDEN CLUB**

## SPRING SHOW

2.30 - 4 pm Sat 5th April

Stansted Free Church Hall

Entry free - refreshments available with sale of exhibits after the show

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## BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES or SPECIAL OCCASIONS

If you would like to mark any occasion that is special to you or someone you know, by announcing it in the Link, please email a short message together with your name address and telephone number to: [announcements@stanstedlink.org.uk](mailto:announcements@stanstedlink.org.uk) or send the form below to 58 Chapel Hill, Stansted CM24 8AQ. Details must be submitted by the 11th of the month for publication the following month.

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