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by **noon** on 11th March for the April issue

by **noon** on 11th April for the May issue

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EDITORIAL



The recent exhibition displaying the proposed design of our new Health Centre, at its prospective site, provided an opportunity for everyone to study the plans and comment on them. As Lower Street is a conservation area, the bold modern structure portrayed was bound to cause some criticism. Surrounded by older buildings, typical examples of the era in which they were built - perhaps the brand new edifice should reflect present times, and not attempt to imitate any of its neighbours. Whatever the final choice of design and location, let's hope that the appropriate decisions are made quickly and work starts on the actual construction of our Health Centre very soon!

The traffic chaos along the Cambridge Road by the pedestrian crossing appears to have spread beyond the road. Vehicles have been spotted parked three abreast across the pavement, making it impossible for both wheelchair users and pedestrians with pushchairs to access the crossing. With the prospect of a takeaway food outlet opening close by, and presumably yet more cars looking to park, a solution to the parking problem has to be found quickly - before there is an accident. (See page 17 for the latest on this topic.) Finally, the new flashing 30 mph sign situated on the Cambridge Road opposite the Three Colts is a welcome addition. Hopefully, it will slow down passing traffic at that end of the village, making crossing the road to buy the morning papers a little less hazardous!

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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

The year 2011 is the four hundredth anniversary of the publication of the best known and most influential book ever published in the English language: the King James Bible. Published in 1611 the 'Authorised Version' (as it is sometimes called) was for most people - up until recent times - the only version of the Bible they knew. Its influence on the English language has been profound. Many of the words and phrases we use in everyday language took on their present form within the King James Version of the Bible. Did you know, for instance, that the word 'talent' was originally a measure of weight (about 130 pounds or 60 kilograms)? It only took on its modern meaning because of a story Jesus tells in the Bible. The great achievement of the King James Bible was that for many years most people in this land had at least some knowledge of the Bible and its contents. Today that is sadly not true, and because of that, it is not just in the religious sphere that people miss out. Since the culture of the western world has been so deeply shaped by the influence of Christianity, a great deal of our best art and literature needs at least a working knowledge of the Bible to be understood. And it's not just great art and literature: I recently correctly identified 'whodunnit' in a TV mystery because I recognised that it was the retelling in modern form of a Bible story.

The Bible is worth knowing, and the only way to know it is to read it. Don't start at the beginning because you'll get bogged down very soon. Look in the Table of Contents and find a section ('book') called Luke and read that. When you've finished that try one called 'The Acts of the Apostles', which is really Luke part 2. When you've read those parts you'll have made a good start and there are plenty of helps to take you further. Why not make 2011 your 'Year of the Bible'?



Paul Wilkin
Rector of St. John's

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Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk
Rev'd David Keeble
Tel: 01799 522037
Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Lettings Marion and Mike Dyer
Tel: 814059
Email: lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Preachers for March

6th 10.30am Jerry Heyhoe – New Directions
13th 10.30am Rev'd David Keeble - Communion
20th 10.30am Rev'd Allen Morton
27th 10.30am Faith Paulding

We are sad to report the death of Gladys Dix who was a very loyal and hard working member of our church for many years. She will be very much missed.



Count your blessings in Lent

As in previous years, Christian Aid has produced a 'Make Lent Meaningful' sheet encouraging us all to reflect on the good things in our life, and to give a daily gift for those living in poverty around the world. For example on 18th March we are told that 95% of homes in Britain have central heating, and are invited to give 50p for every degree above 20 on our thermostat. There is a caveat that the daily giving amounts are suggestions only! Last year Christian Aid raised £250,000 from this Lent giving. There are a small number of leaflets available in the churches or from me, or a form can be downloaded from www.christianaid.org.uk/lent. There is also a children's version online.

Catherine Dean
Tel: 813579

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 10.00am
Holy Days of Obligation 8.00am and 8.00pm
Tuesday-Saturday 9.30am

Confessions
Saturday 10.00am
and by appointment

Baptisms By appointment



A reminder of Anna Seifert's talk on Ecumenical Accompaniment at 7.30pm on 7th March in St John's (see last month's Thought for the The Month for details), and the Lent Groups (see Village Events on page 5 for details).



All enquiries: The Church Office, St John's Hall,
St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP
Tel: 815243
Email: st.johns.church@btinternet.com
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Wednesday, Friday
Administrator: Mrs Elizabeth Jennings
Website: www.stanstedstjohns.btck.com

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

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Giles Tulk is away on placement for three months

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

Church Hall Bookings: Rachel Pocknell
Tel or text: 07972 373994
Email: stjohs.hallbookings@gmail.com

St John's Diary

Sunday

8.00am Said Holy Communion
9.30am Worship 4 All (1st Sunday)
9.30am Choral Eucharist (2nd - 4th Sundays)

Monday-Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

8.30am Morning Prayer 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.

Tuesday
9.00am St John's Tots

Wednesday
9.00am Morning Prayer
10.00am Holy Communion

Monday-Thursday and Saturday

5.00pm Evening Prayer

From the Registers January

Funeral

20th Arthur Walter Clark, age 77 - at Parndon Wood

ST JOHN'S CHURCH SPRING QUIZ

? Saturday 26th March in St John's Church Hall - 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Ploughman's supper. Bring your own drink and glasses. Price £9. Proceeds to go to The Children's Society. Tickets from Katy Dockerill tel 812997.



ST MARY'S CHURCH



2.00 –5.00 pm Sunday 13th March

March 2011 marks the centenary of the first publication of *The Ringing World*. This is a weekly publication devoted to those interested in bell-ringing. It also records peals rung in preceding weeks. In the first publication some 40 church towers in the UK had peals recorded, Stansted being one of them, a copy of which is shown below.

STANSTED, ESSEX

THE ESSEX ASSOCIATION

On Friday, March 17, 1911, in Two Hours and Fifty-nine Minutes

At the Church of St. Mary the Virgin.

A PEAL OF NEW CAMBRIDGE SURPRISE MAJOR,
5066 CHANGES

Tenor 13 cwt.

WILLIAM T. PRIOR..... <i>Treble</i>	JOHN LUCKEY.....5
GEORGE P. BURTON.....2	THOMAS JORDAN.....6
GEORGE JORDAN.....3	THOMAS J. WATTS7
WALTER PRIOR.....4	WILLIAM WATTS..... <i>Tenor</i>

Composed by GABRIEL LINDOFF and
Conducted by WILLIAM WATTS.

Arranged for Mr. G. P Burton, of Norwich

The centenary will be celebrated with as many of the 40 churches featured, by repeating the peal and method composition. Unfortunately not all the churches are extant due to war bombing and demolition, but the majority are, including of course Stansted. At 2.00pm on Sunday 13th March it is the intention to ring a repeat peal of New Cambridge Surprise Major which will last for almost three hours. The eight ringers will be members of The Essex Association of Change Ringers (founded 1879) under the direction of Fred Bone of Sawbridgeworth. This will be the 231st peal on the bells at Stansted.

Edmund Wilkinson

St. Mary's will be open to visitors on this afternoon. In addition to the bell-ringing archives from Essex County Records Office, we will have a presentation video from the Central Council of Bell Ringers. Stansted will be only one of many churches in the UK to be taking part in this special celebration. Also on display will be a collection of bound copies of our Stansted Parish Magazines, kindly given to us for safe-keeping by Tom and Marion Johnson. The first publication dates from 1901 and others more recently from 1920s up to 1940s. They make very interesting reading, not only of parish events and the wealth of advertisements, but the lists of baptisms, marriages and even burials, all making a great record of Stansted's social history. We hope you will join us on this afternoon. Refreshments will be available.

Audrey Rodgers



ST CLARE HOSPICE

Last month St Clare Hospice welcomed the Macmillan Nurses team who will be working for the Hospice to deliver Hospice in the Home. It is an extremely exciting time in the development of our services in the local community.



The Stansted Friends of St Clare Hospice are holding their Quiz Night at 7.00pm for 7.30pm Saturday 19th March in St John's Hall. Tickets are £8 including Ploughman's and can be obtained from me. The Stansted Friends are also holding a St Clare Hospice Jumble Sale in Clavering Hall on Saturday 2nd April at 2.00pm. Entry 20p including tea and biscuits. Lots of bric-à-brac to browse through and

any donations, including small items of furniture, will be most welcome. Come along to this twice a year event which Marina Lawrence, a Clavering resident, started over 14 years ago. On Sunday 3rd April, St Clare Hospice is holding its annual 10k Fun Run which starts and finishes at the Hospice in Hastingwood. Whether you are a seasoned runner looking for a new PB or looking for a challenge to get you in shape, this run is open to everyone. Entry £12 or £10 for club runners. Call 01279 773750 for a registration form or sign up online at our website www.stclarehospice.org.uk.

On Tuesday 1st March we are launching our massive Midnight Walk event and we want YOU to paint the town pink with us. The Midnight Walk is on Saturday 18th June and is a sponsored walk round the town of Harlow, mostly on cycle tracks, starting at 10.30pm from the Water Gardens. It's a great fun girly pink night out! Although men are also becoming more and more involved with the event to support the Hospice cause. Entry usually costs £15 but during the month of March, if you sign up with a friend, entry only costs £20 for two people. So grab a friend and make sure you log onto our website during March and sign up at the reduced rate, or call 773750 for a registration form.

Our service delivery, free to our patients and their families, is heavily dependent on the funds raised from our big events so if you are able to support an event or sponsor someone who is participating in one St Clare Hospice would greatly appreciate your practical help. Would you like to hold an event in aid of the Hospice? The funds raised can be as great or as little, every little helps. For example, £30 pays for 12 smoothies for patients with poor appetites, £100 pays for one nurse's shift in our In-patient Unit, £150 pays for several weeks of therapy for a child coping with the loss of a loved one.

Caroline Bore
Community Fundraiser
Tel: 773751

Email: caroline.bore@stclarehospice.org.uk



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 15th-21st MAY

Volunteers are needed to deliver and collect envelopes.

An opportunity to exercise in the fresh air and all in a good cause!

Contact Catherine Dean on 813579.

PARKINSON'S UK UTTLESFORD SUPPORT GROUP

I would like to thank Churches Together in Stansted for nominating our charity to benefit from money raised at Christmas. We were delighted to receive a cheque for £375 for our local group, and our thanks go to everyone who gave so generously at the Celebration of Christmas concert and the village carol singing. The Uttlesford Support Group of Parkinson's UK (formerly the Parkinson's Disease Society) has been established for two years. We aim to bring people with Parkinson's together, to offer them and their families help and support, and to ensure that no-one has to face Parkinson's alone. If you know anyone who has Parkinson's who lives in Uttlesford, please encourage them to make contact with me, and I will be pleased to let them have further details. They will also find lots of useful information on the website Parkinsons.org.uk.

Kathy West
Hon. Secretary
Tel 816293
kewest@btinternet.com

STANSTED DAY CENTRE

We are now offering 1-1 IT lessons for any Day Centre attendees that would like to learn some new skills. For anyone interested in learning how to type a letter/email or do their shopping and pay bills on the internet, we are offering half hour beginner lessons. No computer needed as we will provide. We will also be providing future internet access for anyone who requires regular use. To find out more, give us a ring or pop in and see us. The toenail cutters will be at the Day Centre again on 22nd March. Please telephone 01245 346106 to make an appointment. On Friday 18th March 7.00pm-9.00pm and Saturday 19th March 10.30am-3.30pm we will be displaying an exhibition of art by local resident Ana Verastegui. Ana produces a range of art to suit all tastes. It promises to be a fantastic display and we will be serving snacks and drinks. Please come along and have a look, everybody welcome.

Kat Lupton
Manager
Tel: 815091/812144



FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

28th Feb - 13th Mar

BIG BREW

£ SALE OF FAIRTRADE GOODS

10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Wed 2nd Mar

Free Church Foyer

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



2 pm Friday 4th March

St John's Church

led by Rev Lesley Goldsmith

'How many loaves have you?'
written by the women of Chile

Followed by Refreshments
All welcome - Men & Women

St Mary's School PTFA Mystery & Mayhem Auction

7.30 pm Sat 5th March

A fun-packed evening of crazy
50p bidding!

Tickets £3 (incl nibbles) from school
Bring your own drinks

VILLAGE EVENTS

March

2	Wed	Big Brew Coffee & Fairtrade Mountfitchet Club Mountfitchet Garden Club	Free Church 10.30 am – 12.30 pm Day Centre 2 – 4 pm Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
3	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
4	Fri	Women's World Day of Prayer	St John's Church 2 pm
5	Sat	Skips Mystery & Mayhem Auction	Lower St Car Park 9 am – 3 pm St Mary's School 7.30 pm
8	Tue	Rotary Dinner for Grove Cot	Stansted Centre Takeley 7.30 pm
9	Wed	Millers' AGM	Day Centre 7.45 for 8 pm
10	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
11	Fri	Link copy due in today	before 12 noon
12	Sat	St Clare Bungee Jump music@stansted Quiz Night	The Old Bell 10 am – 2 pm St John's Church 7.30 pm Bentfield School 7.30 pm
13	Sun	Bell Peal and Church Open	St Mary's Church 2 – 5 pm
14	Mon	Shalom tape and discussion	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
17	Thu	U3A Open Meeting	St John's Hall 1.30 pm
18	Fri	Spring Art Exhibition	Day Centre 7 – 9 pm
19	Sat	Skips Spring Art Exhibition St Clare Quiz S Walden Choral Society	Lower St Car Park 9 am – 3 pm Day Centre 10.30 am – 3.30 pm St John's Hall 7 pm St Mary's Church, S W 7.30 pm
23	Wed	Millers' Coffee Morning Annual Parish Meeting	Day Centre 10 am Free Church 8 pm
26	Sat	St John's Spring Quiz	St John's Hall 7 for 7.30 pm
27	Sun	NCT Nearly New Sale	Hilton Hotel 2.30 – 4.00 pm
28	Mon	Shalom 'At Home'	62 St John's Road 8 pm



3...2...1...BUNGEE!

Bungee Jump for St Clare's
10 am - 2 pm Sat 12th March
The Old Bell Hotel

Advance registration essential
£20 registration fee
£100 sponsorship pledge
Please call Tracy on 773750



Catrin Finch Harp

Royal Harpist to Prince of Wales 2000 - 2004

7.30 pm Sat 12th March
St John's Church

*Tickets £12 adults, £1 children
from Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford;
Stansted Carpets; Sonia Levy 815282,
or at the door*



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Nearly New Sale

Clothes ~ Equipment ~ Books
Toys ~ DVDs ~ Maternity Wear

2.30 - 4 pm Sun 27th March

Hilton Hotel, Stansted



Entry £1 in aid of NCT
Tel Corrina 0844 2436281



Stansted Millers AGM at the Day Centre

7.45 pm Wed 9th Mar

* * * * *

Coffee Morning

10 am Wed 23rd Mar
Day Centre

Bentfield School PTA

Quiz Night

Sat 12th Mar 7.30 pm

Tickets £8 ~ tables of 8
incl hot supper
Bring your own drinks & nibbles
Please tel 815496



ST CLARE
HOSPICE

QUIZ NIGHT

7 pm Sat 19th March
St John's Hall

Tickets £8 incl Ploughman's
from Caroline on 773751

Quiz includes questions on local
knowledge of the area!



LENT GROUPS

Exploring the
Word of God in Scripture

Meet from 8 - 9 pm:

Wed 16 Mar Quaker Meeting Hse

Tue 22 Mar Free Church Hall

Wed 30 Mar St John's Church

All welcome ~ come when you can!



St Mary's Church Bell Peal

Sun 13th March 2 - 5 pm

Listen to the peal of

New Cambridge Surprise Major

Church open for visitors to view:

Bell Ringing Archives

Video Presentation

Parish Magazines 1901 - 1940

All Welcome

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with Hazel Williams Registered Osteopath



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THOUGHTS FROM NIGERIA

I was very fortunate recently to be able to visit Nigeria to stay with my daughter, Lucy, who is a teacher with Voluntary Service Overseas. She is attached to the college of Education in Akwanga, a small town about two hours by road from Abuja, the federal capital, so I was right in the middle of Nigeria where the predominantly Muslim north and the Christian south meet. What a wonderful opportunity it was! My first impressions were of a noisy, chaotic country full of friendly, happy people, very welcoming to me – my visit had been awaited and I was called “mummy” by everyone. The adults wanted to talk about England, especially the very cold weather we had experienced (they could not imagine such temperatures), the boys wanted to know about our football teams and which one I supported – Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea were the favourites – (I didn’t have much to add to their vast knowledge!) and the children, who were adorable, all queued up for pencils and books that I had taken out. They have no toys at all, but spend their time playing in the dirt yard and, of course, helping with household chores from a very early age.

A highlight was a visit to Nunku, a village in the bush, where Lucy is teaching the ladies (who had formed a development forum) to learn English. This village is entirely Hausa speaking, apart from one man who spoke English and was able to translate. The village elders greeted us warmly and presented me with several gifts made by the villagers. It was truly



amazing to see the ladies appearing from their mud huts resplendent in their wonderfully colourful native dress and headscarves. At the start of the class (Lucy was using the phonetics method of teaching) there were 20 ladies and, as the word spread around, at the end there were 60 present, with children looking in the windows. Everywhere people were anxious to learn.

I came back with memories of a country of contrasts – unreliable electricity supply (motto of the National Power Supply is ‘Never expect power always’), no running water even in the better houses in town, unbelievably potholed roads, crazy driving (near misses are the order of the day), but also of happy friendly people, with deep religious beliefs, willing to share what little they have, and always with time to sit and



chat. It was a visit I was so glad I had made, and one that made me determined to appreciate the things we take for granted here.

Christine Stiles



The National Childbirth Trust
Supporting you to be the parent
you want to be

I must start this month by giving all members and helpers at the Nearly New Sales in 2010 a big hearty pat on the back. We have recently received a letter of congratulations from the Chief Executive of the NCT, Belinda Phipps, for our 'outstanding fundraising achievements last year'. Well Done Everyone! March sees our first Nearly New Sale of 2011 – our biggest biannual fund raising event (details below). If you haven't been to a sale before, make this your first. You will be amazed at the bargains on offer from clothes, books and toys through to nursery furniture. We are always inundated with goods so please do not think that you have to be there early to bag a bargain, no matter what time you get through the doors there are always bargains galore! For example, the last sale saw Gro-Bags being sold for £5.00 and a Bugaboo pushchair with all accessories for £150. We still have a couple of spaces left for advertisers who wish to have their leaflets distributed in the bags given out at the event, if you are interested please let me know.

Fancy a friendly chat and some new playmates? Why not pop along to one of our coffee mornings, which are informal gatherings held in members' homes. We would love to meet you and it is a great way of making new friends. Contact me for details of our weekly events.

March Events

Friday 4th March 10.00am-11.30am Tea and Toys at Henham Church Hall for all Pre-schoolers and Pregnant Mums. £2 per family.

Saturday 19th March 9.00am Bishops Stortford Cinema Trip for all ages (meet at the entrance)

Sunday 27th March 2.30pm start (2.15pm for members) Nearly New Sale at The Hilton Hotel

Tuesday 29th March 11.00am Hatfield Forest Walk (meet at main entrance car park)

Anna Sedgbeer
Tel: 812257

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LUNCH TIMES

We owe much of our January success to Great Hadham Hall Golf and Country Club which, without any fuss whatsoever, stepped into the gap left when Pearse House went into voluntary liquidation. Gary Smith of Nockolds, our generous host, made an informative, interesting and entertaining presentation on outsourcing of legal services, extending the line of excellent Nockolds' speakers who have graced our gatherings. The occasion was not without some nostalgia and sadness at the demise of Pearse House, which had become as close to the Club's 'home' as anywhere, and a corporate tear was shed when I conveyed Danny Doyle's thanks for support and friendship over his years as Manager of Pearse House. The next Lunch is on 30th March - Stansted Hall and Elsenham Cricket Club, whose sponsorship is being funded by members and supporters of the Club. If you wish to contribute £15 to £25 towards that funding and have not heard from David Brown, the Club Chairman, please contact me as soon as possible. The names and businesses contributing will all be given prominence in all literature produced in connection with the lunch.



Alastair Richardson
Email: amg.richardson@gmail.com



MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk

Due to illness, our speaker for the February meeting was unable to attend, and at such short notice it was not possible to arrange another speaker on the same subject. However members were not disappointed as Pat, our speakers' secretary, ably helped by Sheila, our treasurer, gave us 'A Tour in The Alps - Flowers and Views'. Pat explained that she loves alpine flowers and on her wish list is an Alpine House of her own in which to grow the small but very colourful flowers. It then occurred to her that she had never actually visited The Alps - so a walking holiday was planned to see the plants growing in their natural habitat. Members were then shown slides of her walks around the mountains, alpine villages and towns. She explained that the Swiss have a very good, well-signposted, network of footpaths and routes, and they would go by boat/train/chair lifts/cable cars to a different location each day and then walk. The difference between the flora of the lower slopes and the high mountain areas was very noticeable. In the hay meadows and along the roadside verges, flowers grew prolifically and were a mass of colours, whereas higher up in the mountains, alongside the narrow footpaths, and on the scree slopes, individual plants hugged the ground and grew out of the cracks and crevices where soil had collected. The views along the green valleys or across the glacier, with the mountains in the background, were breathtaking but the summit of the Matterhorn, the mountain which dominates that part of Switzerland, was cloaked in clouds. So, before the holiday was over a trip was planned, which they hoped would take them above cloud level thus enabling them to see the mountain peak. The photographs of the clear blue sky and the peak itself, covered in snow, drew gasps from everyone - and as Pat said, "this view was worth waiting for". Pat has visited even higher mountains - the Himalayas - and has promised to give us a talk on her holiday there in the near future.

Next Month's Meeting

On Wednesday 2nd March we will be welcoming Mr Rodney Tibbs back to the Club. His talk will be on 'Restoring a Cottage Garden'. There is also a members' competition - a pot of spring bulbs. The doors open at 7.30pm with the meeting starting at 8.00pm prompt - visitors are always welcome to our meetings (entry £2).

Maralyn Harris

STANSTED & DISTRICT OIL BUYING GROUP

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Successful oil buying groups have been set up in various parts of Essex and a new group has just been launched for Stansted and surrounding villages. The website is: www.stanstedobg.com.

The orders for each group are negotiated centrally to give maximum leverage and they have been able to negotiate very competitive prices - the last order placed by them at the beginning of January was 57p per litre. Altogether the group is now negotiating over one million litres. Registration is free and carries no obligation to buy anything and there are no hidden charges or costs. When a buying date is announced, you have the option to place an order or not and there is no obstacle to your placing orders elsewhere or continuing with your current supplier. However, the more people who place an order through the Group mean a better price. The website is self explanatory and there is an FAQ section and Helpline. The first order for this area can be negotiated when we have around 100 households registered so we need to get as many people as possible to sign up. In order to maximise savings and reduce administration to a minimum, there are currently no facilities for manual ordering and everything must be done via the website. Please sign up and also spread the word to as many friends around the area as possible.

Peter Heap

Email: willowbeech82@btinternet.com

ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the winners of the January draws, who were:

£100:	No. 78 - Ruby Hollis
£ 50	No. 100 - Christopher Bone
£ 25	No. 168 - Kaye Jones

The draws for February will be held in The Rose & Crown at 7.30pm on Monday 28th February, followed by the March draws at the Social Club, Lower Street at 7.30pm on Wednesday 30 March, where membership requirements have kindly been waived for anyone wishing to come along to hear the results. Hope to see you there.

Francine Cope

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STANSTED
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STANSTED MILLERS

Since the refurbishment was completed last April, the mill has had the technical misfortune of a failure with the paint-work. The millwrights are having laboratory tests carried out to determine the cause, which will be followed by removal of the defective material and its replacement. The cost will not be borne by the Millers or Parish Council but, sympathetic as we are to the millwrights, we are pressing them to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Apart from this the restoration is enabling the sails to be activated and the cap is constantly kept in the eye of the wind.

We shall be re-opening as usual at Easter and subsequently on the first Sunday of the month, bank holiday weekend Sundays and Mondays and National Mills Sunday 15th May. Refreshments will be available on most occasions, and the season will end with the October opening. The times are 1.30pm to 5.30pm. The Millers AGM will be held at 7.45pm for 8.00pm at the Day Centre on Tuesday 8th March, at which the excellent photographic diary of the refurbishment taken by Tudor Owen will be shown and hopefully a short talk by a committee member. Please support our Coffee Morning at 10.00am on Wednesday 23rd March in the Day Centre.

Our energetic Secretary and Treasurer, Marion and Alan Williams, have just moved to Kent although Alan is remaining as Treasurer and will be returning at frequent intervals. Both stalwarts have promised to help with the annual Fête for which we are grateful. They have been as much a tower of strength as the mill itself and inevitably will be missed. Thank you so much, Marion and Alan. We are anxious to appoint a successor secretary as soon as possible. Alan has organised the sponsored fitting of 16 more shades or shutters to enable the wind catchment to be improved. Most of them have been taken up but some remain. We would be pleased if these can be dedicated before the summer season.

Derek Honour
Tel 647213

Oops sorry – wrong telephone number for the Millers on page 21 of the February 'Link'. Apologies for inconvenience.
Editor

OF CHRISTMAS AND A WILLOW

Some news travels slowly, but is welcome none the less. Mark Gerber of Manor Road, Leader in recent years of Stansted's Tortoise Scout Troop, together with Malcolm Treacher (a name well known to older residents), provided the Christmas Day Dinner organised through Chelmsford Cathedral for people living on their own. They hope to do so again this year. Well done, both of you! Arising from the previous issue, the ever-observant Malcolm reminds us that a photograph in Paul Embleton's postcard book illustrates a young willow tree at the Fountain with a probable date of the 1940s. An age of 70+ years is quite respectable for a willow.

Derek Honour



494 (Stansted Airport) Squadron Air Training Corps

This month we have started our Falklands training for the Annual Falklands competition which takes place in April. It takes place at our Wing (Essex) Head Quarters; Carver Barracks airfield, Debden. There are roughly 30 teams of six competing in an intense physically and mentally demanding weekend. Our squadron has had a good track record recently; for the last three years we have come in the top three who have gone through to the next round to represent Essex Air Cadets against the Army and Navy Cadets. We hope to keep this going and win a place in the next round, Tri services this year as well. Consequently we have started to do more fitness training in many different areas. Each month we hire out Birchwood Sports hall for a night to vary the fitness regime. We also do things at the squadron like running through basic obstacle courses carrying a large log; jumping through big tyres, weaving through cones and under benches. Last Sunday some of our cadets had the opportunity to shoot on an indoor air rifle range at Carver Barracks. Two of our cadets gained their Squadron marksman award; which involves getting four groupings of five rounds touching a ¼" circle!

On top of physical training we do first aid training and simulations, and the cadets can even gain a basic first aid qualification. Navigation is a large part of the Falklands given that one of the two days is spent completing a 20 kilometre navigational exercise, where exact navigation is very necessary! These skills all contribute to the cadets' Duke of Edinburgh Award as well.



If you are aged between 13 and 16 and interested in joining us, contact us for more information: tel 681559 Mondays and Fridays 1915–2130 hrs (24 hr Answerphone) or email 494@aircadets.org.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Alice Brooks
494 Sqn ATC



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Our fourth and final concert this season will be at 7.30pm on Saturday 12th March in St John's Church, when the former Royal Harpist, Catrin Finch, will be making a return visit. When Prince Charles revived the post of Royal Harpist in the year 2000, Catrin was his first choice despite still being a student at the Royal Academy of Music. Today she is a Visiting Professor at the Royal Academy, as well as at the Royal Welsh College of Music, and is an international performing and recording star. As one American critic put it, she "has such a mastery of her instrument, combined with deep musical insight, that others pale in comparison". Another said: "Finch can do almost anything on the harp, and then some ..."



Catrin has done more than anybody to popularise the harp around the world, and carries out extensive educational work, especially in Wales. Glyndwr University in Wrexham has named its new conference and performance centre in her honour, and she has established her own specialist recording and concert venue outside Cardiff. She has revolutionised people's view of what the harp can do, working with everyone from John Rutter to brass band. Her programme will include music by Bach (Italian Concerto), Debussy (Two Arabesques), Fauré (Impromptu), Godefrid (Carnaval de Venise), as well as other pieces by Paul Hindemith, Franz Liszt, Grandjany, Pierne and Guridi. Catrin played to a full house on her last visit several years ago, attracting fans from a very wide area. We believe her popularity has increased since then and we are expecting a large audience again. Tickets: adults £12, children £1, from Stansted Carpets, Nockolds, Bishop's Stortford, Sonia Levy tel 815282, or, if any still available, at the door.

2011 is the year for our biennial 'Summer Soiree'. This is always a popular event with music in St John's and supper in the gardens. Please reserve the date, Saturday 25th June, in your diary now. For more information about us, please visit our website – www.musicatstansted.com.

Alan Corbishley

Stansted Tennis Club



Tournament results

The President's Cup was finally competed for on a damp Sunday afternoon at the end of January. The first (and last) time it had taken place was in 2008. Since then, it has had to be cancelled several times, due to bad weather or not enough competitors. A maximum number of 16 players (eight ladies and eight men) took part. Ladies' and Mens' doubles were played in the round robin stage and then players were seeded

into mixed doubles pairings for the knock-out stage. The final was won by Joe Hollis and Sandra Ayres, who defeated Chris Hollis and Fiona Pye 6-1. A fabulous tea was enjoyed by players and spectators.

Essex Small Clubs

Donations of £100 were given to each of the following organisations from the proceeds of all the local tennis clubs who participate in this league: Cancer Research, Oxfam, RNLI and Children in Need.

Dates for your diary:

Hospital Cup AGM 8.00pm Tuesday 8th March at 105 Cambridge Road, Stansted

Ladies' Night Monday 14th March 7.00pm-10.00pm. All are welcome!

Coaching

If you are interested in finding out more about coaching at Stansted Tennis Club, please contact either Chris Hollis (01279 319155) or Martyn Taplin (Monday night adult coaching session) (01279 816386). Since the February half-term, Chris has recommenced the coaching sessions for primary school-aged children. Please do not hesitate to contact Chris if you would like to join in or find out more details. There are currently also a few vacancies for his Monday afternoon girls' match practice session.

Contacts

Richard Mott (Secretary) 466348, Janet Hollis (Chairman) 812073, Daphne Lunnon (Membership Secretary) 817574.

Chris Hollis



SATURDAY 19th MARCH 7.30pm ST MARY'S CHURCH, SAFFRON WALDEN

Accompanied by the Chameleon Arts Orchestra, with soloists Ann-Helen Moen, Doreen Curran, Philip Salmon and Graeme Broadbent, and conducted by Janet Wheeler, the Choral Society begins 2011 with Mozart's much-loved *Requiem* and Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna*. The Mozart is contrasted with a modern American work by Morten Lauridsen. The luscious harmonies and choral textures of Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna* make for a truly luminous opening to the concert. Tickets £15 adults, £12 concessions, £1 accompanied under 18 available from: SWCS members; Sue Johnson tel: 01799 531127; Saffron Walden Tourist Information Centre, Market Square; www.wegotickets.com; email: tickets@swchoral.org.uk; or at the door.

Liz Jennings
Press Officer

Tel: 07720 567922

Email: pressofficer@swchoral.co.uk

IMPERIAL MINTED

A strange characteristic links new money and old money the world over: the need to display its wealth. Subtlety is rarely and option; what's needed is 'bling'. The Russian oligarchs are pumping money into jewellery and objects made for the court before their ancestors killed off the Tsar and his family. Top of the wants list is Fabergé; gold and diamonds set large. One country is making the headlines almost weekly: China. Here, now that the interdicts against private wealth have been lifted, large numbers of Chinese have decided to buy back the heritage pillaged by the British and French in the nineteenth century. The Chinese have the longest continuous civilisation in the world and were making bronzes and porcelain each a thousand years before the West. At present, their overwhelming craving is for the spectacular porcelain pieces made for the Qing emperor Qianlong (1736-1795). The word 'spectacular' was chosen with care – they are spectacles of awesome potting and painting. Taste is a personal matter, and that £43 million vase, sold in a small auction room in Pinner, Middlesex, may have been very clever indeed, but, truthfully, it didn't hang together very well. Top, middle and base could have come from completely different vases. Still, it did have the imperial mark on the bottom. My guess is that the Chinese will, over time, move away from garish and obvious displays of craftsmanship and look backwards to their long history of porcelain making, particularly the mark and period Ming (1368-1644) blue and white, now mostly the hunting ground of the West. The Chinese may take much longer to collect excavated wares such as from the Song to Tang dynasties (618 to 1279) as they have a deeply entrenched aversion to grave goods.

Back to 'that' vase. Ten years ago such a price would have been impossible. Firstly, the Chinese economy and the freedom to buy abroad was not there and, secondly, there was no internet. It might have made £10,000 if a dealer took a punt on it, but it might have been a sleeper and sold for a few hundred. Now, thanks to the internet, every lot and every minor saleroom is beamed the whole world over and the sleepers are awake and screaming "Here I am, take me, take me".



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Sworders' next Oriental sale is to be held on Monday 16th May; entries close on 4th April.



Royal British Legion Stansted & District Branch

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL STANSTED AND DISTRICT

I am saddened that, after my article in the February copy of the 'Link', I have not had any response to my appeal for assistance with this year's collection. My request has been going on for some five years and in March last year I made an urgent appeal for help with the 2010 Poppy Appeal, but to no avail. Our injured and maimed servicemen and women, and the families of those who are losing their lives in Afghanistan now need our support. It is not published, but for every loss of life, nine others are injured very severely! As I have mentioned before, Help for Heroes has instigated capital projects to provide facilities for the rehabilitation for those seriously injured, but The Royal British Legion, via the Poppy Appeal, is providing funds to maintain these facilities in the future. Stansted village has supported the Poppy Appeal since at least 1926. It would be very sad to see this lapse after 85 years for want of one or two volunteers to take over from me after my 25 year stint. Please think of supporting this worthwhile Charity. Don't let the 2010 collection be the last that Stansted sees. Please contact me.

John L. Segar
Honorary Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator
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MEMORIES OF ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Your picture of the old St Mary's Primary School in Lower Street brought back many memories for my wife and I. Though we left Stansted immediately after our marriage some 43 years ago, to live in the West Country, we still have family in the area and the 'Link' is an excellent medium for us to keep abreast of developments in the village. Having amused both our own children and our grandchildren with tales of life 'when we were at school', we will pass on a few in the hope that they stir some memories of fellow pupils we left behind.

Immediately to the left of your picture was the small Headmaster's Office – Mr Hare, a tall, slim, man with spectacles, a clipped 'spiv' moustache and straight black hair slicked back. He was friendly, but woe betide any pupils who tried their teacher's patience too far and got 'sent to the Head', for you had to stand on the steps outside his office in full view of the playground and road until he had time to see you. The large windows in your picture were for the classroom that housed the final school year, and there was also a glazed adjoining door from the Head's office. I can remember one day hearing great guffaws coming from Mr Hare's office, and eventually he emerged to interrupt our class brandishing a copy of 'Three Men in a Boat', which in subsequent days was read to our class. The classroom had a large, round, freestanding coal fire for heating, surrounded by a wire mesh metal guard. During the winter, crates of 1/3rd pint bottles of milk would be stood near the fire to thaw out. If you were lucky you got one with a blob of ice still on the top. The toilets were situated at the back of the school, open to the elements, and the boy's 'wall' (you couldn't call it a urinal) had no roof. There was thus a strong disincentive to try to skip a bit of lessons for a 'visit'.

Our fondest memory is of a teacher who came to the school when the redoubtable Miss Double retired. Ma Brown (as she quickly became affectionately known) burst into the calm of the school with a broad London accent and a character to match. Without meaning to be rude, she was almost as wide around as she was tall, and it caused us boys much amusement when she used to climb out of her Morris Minor, as the car chassis rose a further 12 inches from the ground. Ma Brown had a stentorian voice, well suited to a parade ground and a noisy, boisterous class of village kids. Woe betide anyone who misbehaved as she had her own special means of effective punishment. If it was a girl she would bustle around to their desk, roll back a sleeve and slap their forearm, seemingly with much effort, but I don't ever remember it leaving any marks. Boys got called to the front of the class and were made to bend over whilst she smacked their backsides. Her trick here was to keep you bent over so long that the blood rushed to your head and when you were allowed to stand up straight, although the smacking had not hurt, your face was very red!!! (The ultimate sanction in those days was 'The Cane', and though I can remember seeing this instrument once or twice I don't ever recall anyone doing anything naughty enough for it to be used. The knowledge that it existed was enough to keep us mainly in line.)

But Ma Brown had a heart of gold and was very popular with the pupils. Being only a few years after the end of the Second World War, times were hard for many families, and the school seemingly on a tight budget, so Ma Brown provided a maypole from her own money (she also showed us the first £5 note we had ever seen – very large and mainly white in those days) and also brought her gramophone in to school so that she could teach us country dancing and maypole dancing. The gramophone was an old His Master's Voice type wind-up machine which played 78rpm records. One enduring and amusing memory we have is of one maypole session when the girls went wrong (it was always the girls who made the tangles! I seem to remember that Hilary was particularly bad) and Ma Brown was flustering to try to get everyone back on track with the music, when the gramophone spring began to wind down. The sight of Ma in a tent-like cotton dress trying to run across the playground to rewind the machine handle before the music stopped is embedded in my mind forever. Despite this we were taught quite a number of different maypole patterns, including the dreaded 'spider's web'.

Another innovation introduced by Ma Brown was coconut ice. Initially she made this and brought it in to sell to raise funds for the school. It was a great success, and in subsequent years she used to transport a carload of girls to her house near Haymeads (Bishop's Stortford) to make batches of green 'ice' as well as the usual white and pink. Our overarching memories are of a happy and successful school, which fed boys to Newport Grammar School, girls to the Herts and Essex High School, and both sexes to Saffron Walden Technical High School and Stansted Secondary School; and the education we received has stood us in very good stead throughout our lives.

Keith & Barbara (née Sandford) Eagleton
Weymouth, Dorset

St Mary's CE Foundation Primary School



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While learning about healthy living is always a feature of our curriculum at St Mary's, we made it the main focus of our 'Healthy Week' in February. During the week activities for all classes focused on Talk, Exercise, Food and Creativity. Children, staff and parents took part in early morning aerobics, healthy meals were prepared – and eaten! Many children tasted a fruit, a vegetable or a flavour they had not tried before – many enjoyed it! Visitors included a Road Safety adviser, hair dresser, cook and a sports coach. We held an intra-house dance competition (won by Templars) and a mini Olympics to round off the week.



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STANSTED NETWORK NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

VILLAGE CLEAN UP

ELMS FARM REDEVELOPMENT

PARKING ISSUES

Clerk - Ruth Clifford

Admin Assistant - Anne Court

Email: parishcouncil@stansted.net

Phone/fax: 01279 813214 10am - 1pm

www.stansted.net

Parking Issues - Cambridge Road

We are aware that parking and traffic flows on Cambridge Road have become a particular issue in recent months. Following various discussions a request has been submitted to Essex County Council to revise the waiting restrictions on Cambridge Road., and to UDC to introduce one hour's free parking in the Crafton Green car park. We believe that these proposals, if implemented, will benefit businesses as well as local residents.

1. Junction protection markings for Clarence Road where it meets Cambridge Road, extending on Cambridge Road to the white zig-zag markings of the pedestrian crossing.
2. No waiting at any time restriction on the western side of Cambridge Road from the end of the pedestrian crossing zig-zag markings along to the junction with Croasdaile Road.
3. Reduce the length of the "no waiting at any time" restriction on the eastern side of Cambridge Road at the north end of the section outside the Green's Building.
4. Reduce the length of the bus stops on each side of Cambridge Road to increase available limited waiting areas.
5. Reduce the length of stay within the limited waiting areas from one hour to thirty minutes.
6. White line the limited waiting areas to show individual parking bays.
7. Introduce a Loading Bay restriction outside Tesco Express, 6am-6pm - this would serve both Tesco and the Co-op stores.

These proposals will have to be published by Essex County Council and will follow a statutory period of public consultation.

VILLAGE CLEAN UP

As part of the National Tidy-up Campaign, we are organising litter picks around the village on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th March. All volunteers will be welcome and should meet up at Crafton Green at 10 am, to be issued with gloves, rubbish bags etc.

It would be helpful to know in advance how many people will be coming so please contact the Council if you are willing to take part. email - parishcouncil@stansted.net or Telephone - 01279 813214

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

23rd MARCH 2011

8 pm

***Please join us for
your forum at The
Free Church,
Chapel Hill.***

Along with the Link you should have received the papers for use at the Annual Parish Meeting which describe the work of the Council, a Financial Report and future objectives.

STANSTED IN BLOOM

Last year Stansted in Bloom was once again a great success, thanks to all involved. This is just a reminder to watch this space for information about our competition for 2011. We hope to make it different in several ways. We would be very grateful for any new ideas.

Contacts: Cllr Valerie Trundle - 01279 813433 and Cllr Iris Evans - 01279 812524

TRANSPORT

A note to assure residents that the 7/7a routes are still in operation! As from 13th February 2011, a new company, yet to be named, will be the provider. The routes will be unchanged.

Contacts: Cllr Valerie Trundle - 01279 813433 and Mrs Joy Thomas - 01279 813871

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Details of our next public meeting will be in the April edition of the Link.

There has been a number of burglaries in and around the Stansted area so we would urge residents to take note of all the information that NhW provides and to come to our meetings to find out how you can protect yourselves from being a victim of these very distressing occurrences.

Will area co-ordinators please put their details in the printed panel provided at the bottom of the front page of the Observer leaflet so that residents can contact you if they have any concerns.

Contact: Cllr Valerie Trundle 01279 813433 and Mrs Diane Roberts 01279 813089

HELP AT HAND FOR DRINKERS

Help and advice is now available to target excessive drinking habits in the area.

A dedicated alcohol health service, established at Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow, provides people who are excessively drinking alcohol with advice whilst they are in the A&E department and if the person wishes referral to community-based alcohol services.

A local charity - Open Road - has been delivering drug and alcohol services in Essex for 20 years and this year has expanded its service to west Essex. The service, which is run at Princess Alexandra Hospital, has been commissioned by NHS West Essex and is supported by Safer Harlow Partnership and the Government Office for the East of England.

The long-term aims of the service are to see a reduction in alcohol-related crime in the area and in subsequent attendances to A&E. Data collected as part of the service will assist with the targeting of police and licensing resources to prevent alcohol related crime.

For more details, ring Open Road (West Essex) on 01279 452993.

SIR ALAN HASELHURST MP - SURGERY

The next surgery date is Friday 11th March 2011
In the Parish Council Offices, Crafton Green and 5.45 - 6.30 pm.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

On the weekend of 10th, 11th & 12th June 2011, the RBL will be encouraging individuals/groups to hold a Great Poppy Weekend party in celebration of the Legion's 90th birthday. The party weekend is to support the Legion in all the work over the next 90 years to help those men and women serving our country at home and abroad, many of whom do so through difficult circumstances.

Further details and a registration form are available at www.thegreatpoppypartyweekend.org.uk for anyone interested.

SOUTH UTTLESFORD MULTI-AGENCY FORUM

Come along on Tuesday 1 March 2011 to Helena Romanes School, Parsonage Downs, Great Dunmow, CM5 2AU, 7.30 pm (parking available at the school).

Theme for the evening will be Localism - what does it mean to do - how can you get involved?

Community Safety Survey - what are your priorities for the coming year?

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ON POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT OF ELMS FARM

The Gemmill Family are holding a public exhibition into the potential for residential redevelopment of Elms Farm, Church Road on Saturday 26 February 2011 at the Stansted Day Centre between 9am - 4pm. All members of the public are welcome to attend, community views will be sought and all comments received will be used to inform the planning process. Chris Tivey on 01621 868404/07835 927754 or Chris@ctaplanning.com

NEWS FROM UTTLESFORD D.C.

Policing in Uttlesford

We have been recently informed that Inspector Mick Couldridge will be moving on as the local Inspector covering Dunmow and Stansted. He says that when he arrived in Dunmow just over a year and a half ago, the quote I heard most often was "Welcome, but how long will you be staying? You'll be our fifth new Inspector in five years. His response was that I was "here to stay for as long as Essex Police would let me and for as long as I had your support to remain." The Neighbourhood Policing Inspector for Uttlesford will be Inspector Kevin Wakefield. It is very difficult for local communities and their representatives to establish a working relationship with police officers when they are in post for such a short time.

On a positive note, I was pleased to see on Cambridge Road, Stansted one Saturday morning no less than five police officers. They were carrying out an Automatic Numberplate Recognition exercise. The purpose of which was to detect stolen vehicles, those vehicles without insurance and those drivers not wearing seat belts. I talked to the officers who were all based at Great Dunmow Police Station. They told me they had stopped a car carrying a stolen trailer. Additionally, a motorist who was not wearing a seat belt had been given a fixed penalty notice of £60. This apparently was their fourth such exercise in Stansted. This was news to me.

I also welcome the launch of the new website www.police.uk This give people access to details of crimes on their streets. Greater transparency on crime data must

be good news. For the Stansted North area (which includes Stansted and the surrounding villages) there were 46 crimes and incidents of anti social behaviour recorded for December 2010. This is regarded as average compared with the rest of England and Wales.

We are still awaiting news about when Stansted Police Station is to close and what alternative arrangements will be made. Stansted Parish Council has written to Essex Police Authority seeking more information

Stansted to get a Community Information Centre

Councillors recently considered the Councils draft Corporate Plan for 2011-16. The good news for Stansted residents is that the Council is committing itself to providing a Community Information Centre in the village by December 2012. Part of the savings used by the termination of the "supaloos" contract will be used to fund it. Other communities in Uttlesford such as Great Dunmow and Thaxted already have community Information Centres. At Thaxted it houses not only an information point about the District Council, but also the Citizens Advice Bureau and a Police Surgery.

I have already been in discussion with District Council officers about providing such a facility for Stansted. It is a vision of mine to get a one stop shop for public services housed in Crafton Green. This will be contingent upon the clinic moving out to the new health centre when it is built.

Web-blog:
<http://geoffreysell.mycouncillor.org.uk/>

(Cllr G Sell)

Most of us have been participating in weekly recycling for many years. Not all residents who live in flats have

yet been offered green and brown bins. The council usually has to make contact with the landlord or a management committee to agree what will work at each location. Anyone living in accommodation without recycling bins can let me know so that I can arrange for council officers to visit you.

At the time of writing in early February the council was waiting for a planning application for the proposed redevelopment at the junction of Lower Street and Church Road which would include a health centre, supermarket and flats. Geoffrey Sell and I have raised concerns about the risk of traffic congestion, especially at the bottom of Chapel Hill if a stop junction is introduced.

The 7/7A bus service should be operated by another company by the time 'Link' drops through letter boxes. The county council had to find another operator after the incumbent pulled out of the contract. I hope this is not a sign that local bus services are at risk. There has been a lot of national publicity saying that subsidy cuts are a concern in rural areas. Whenever I have seen the new 300 'Tesco-Tesco' service it has had no passengers. The best way to ensure continued bus services is for people with cars to leave them at home. I find it's far more convenient to catch the bus into Stortford than having to bother to park the car.

There was an encouraging meeting with people from the Co-op and Tesco to plan better parking and no-waiting arrangements on Cambridge Road. The district council will be extending the hours of traffic enforcement people in February – so evenings and weekends will no longer be 'free-for-all' periods!

Catherine and I had solar panels installed at home in January. We

now get electricity and hot water from the sun; at least we will when it starts shining! If you want to cut your fuel bills and your carbon footprint look on my blog or on the council-supported Herts Essex Energy Partnership's website <http://www.heepgrant.org/> or phone them free on 0800 980 6026.

Web-blog: <http://alandean.mycouncillor.org.uk/>

(Cllr Alan Dean)

NEWS FROM OUR LOCAL POLICE

As many people will be aware we have suffered a number of burglaries over the last couple of months at various locations in the village. Items being targeted have been mainly cash and Jewellery. Police have been doing various operations including numerous ANPR operations which involved stopping vehicles travelling through the area and has resulted in several arrests and vehicle seizures. Other activities involve increased uniform and plain clothes patrols, leaflet drops in key areas, advice posters on notice boards and crime prevention visits.

The last couple of weeks has seen a fall in house burglaries but break-in's to sheds and out-buildings seem to be on the increase again. Items targeted have been garden equipment such as hedge trimmers and fuel.

Most burglaries can be avoided by using simple security measures such as properly locking / securing doors and windows and keeping any valuables out of sight.

If you would like any information or advice please do not to hesitate to contact us on the numbers provided, also you can keep yourself updated with what has been happening crime-wise locally by visiting the NHW website which is updated weekly, www.stanstednhw.org.uk. By visiting the Essex Police website and clicking on "your area" you can see what the Police have been doing to combat any local issues as well as times and dates of our meetings. You can also find out about these on the village and shop notice boards.

DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

9 March Full Council
23 March ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
30 March Finance

Uttlesford District Council Members

Alan Dean Tel: 01279 813579

Email:

cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

John Hudson Tel: 01279 814489

Email:

cllrhudson@uttlesford.gov.uk

John Salmon Tel: 01279 814789

Email:

cllrsalmon@uttlesford.gov.uk

Geoffrey Sell Tel: 01279 815925

Email: cllrsell@uttlesford.gov.uk

Essex County Council Member

Ray Gooding

Tel: 01279 813103

Email: cldr.ray.gooding@essexcc.gov.uk

Member of Parliament

The Rt Hon Sir Alan Haselhurst MP

Tel: 0207 219 5214/Fax: 0207 219 5600

Email: haselhursta@parliament.uk

Police

PC Tom Bastendorff Tel: 01279 812211

Non-emergency No. 0300 333 4444

PCSO's (Stuart/Kelly) Tel: 07801 461 666

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

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cllrcmdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

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Jo Freeman 812524

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(Chairman)

Bill Stiles 813172

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Valerie Trundle 813433

Prtvrt@btinternet.com

SKYWATCH

A monthly look at an aspect of the night sky



Our tiny corner of the Universe is always spoken of as the Solar System. The Sun at the centre of the solar system not only gives us heat and light but life itself. Turn the Sun off and the world's financial problems will quickly become as nothing, and so will we and all life on Earth. Like every star, the Sun continually throws out all sorts of radiation, most of it lethal. Luckily, our atmosphere, the air around us, filters out the nasties. 'Radiation' is a bit of a catch-all word for X-rays, light, infra-red and ultra-violet and the thousands of different sub-atomic particles which career through the universe. The Sun's radiation is so powerful that it goes on for, well, until now, we haven't been too sure. We know that at some point the radiation will just fizzle out and that radiation from other stars will become dominant. Astronomers have always been interested as to when the Sun's radiation meets interstellar radiation, partly because it would signal the end of the Solar System, but essentially to investigate the inter-reaction of our radiation with the onslaught of radiation from all points in the Universe. The great thing is that we may well be able to do this within the next five years. On 5th September 1977, a satellite called Voyager 1 was launched to make the first visits to the outer planets, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. Having sent back spectacular pictures, along with vast amounts of information about those planets, Voyager was directed to proceed to discover and report on the edge of the Solar System. After 33 years and nearly 11 thousand million miles, or so, Voyager 1, fuelled by its nuclear power packs, is still taking orders and giving information (which takes 17 hours in each direction to convey) and is detecting a change in the solar radiation and it is expected that in about five years time, Voyager 1 will be in true, inter-stellar space. Watch this, oh dear, space.

Martin West
Mooncraft Productions



The staff are working on the School Development Plan at present. The main focus for improvement over the next 18 months will be using and applying in Maths and reading comprehension, and reading for a purpose in English. We hope to set up shared reading groups between classes, set up reading centres and purchase more short quality texts that are 'boy' friendly. We have asked for volunteers to help us set up the Library and the teaching staff will be spending some time sorting and cataloguing the books. In Maths we hope to ensure that children can transfer their numeracy skills to everyday problem solving. It is hoped that we will be able to run some parent information evenings later in the year. The Nursery has opened its doors to provide an afternoon session for children who are either 'rising three' or 'three' which supplements our morning provision. This is proving to be very popular and the children have all settled into the routines of nursery life very quickly. If you are interested in a Nursery place please do not hesitate to contact the school in the first instance.

Our new school councillors have been elected and the 'retiring' councillors were presented with a 'thank you' certificate during our Friday Assembly. We very much value the contributions that the council makes to school life especially as they had the very important role of interviewing prospective head teacher candidates last January. Projects for the council this year include playtime activities and ensuring that the school becomes more 'Eco' aware. A small group of parents have got together to form our Sensory Garden Project Committee. They are looking to revamp our existing Millennium Garden to be more accessible to all the children in the school. In order to achieve this they are looking for funding sources and are arranging some fundraising events. If anyone from the community in Stansted is able to sponsor or give a donation towards this worthwhile project please do contact the school office in the first instance.

Cathie Bonich

SIGN OF THE TIMES



With Christmas a distant memory and Easter looming, I could put it off no longer. Before I'd even had my early morning cup of tea and biscuit, I took a deep breath and stepped onto the bathroom scales. Thinking my eyes had deceived me I put on my specs to check. But the figures were still the same. My 'super-duper- ultra- modern' digital scales were showing my weight as 8st 14lbs. Now, I know my memory isn't quite what it was, but I was certain there were 14lbs in a stone, so surely it should have read 9 stone, or even better still, 8st 13lbs?

Being the owner of a printer that insists on giving on-screen 'orders' in German (despite the English option having been selected both times it has been installed!) I resigned myself to the fact that the bathroom scales were yet another piece of technology with a mind of its own. However, just days later when reading an article on dieting, I came across the following: "Karen's weight before was 13st 1lb and she now weighs 12st 14lbs. Total weight loss 3lbs."

Bemused by these calculations that made no sense to me (but they were in the paper so they must be right!) I began to wonder if I'd got it wrong. Or could it be that persons unfamiliar with British weights and measures had produced both the scales, and the diet article? Or maybe it's just another sign of inflation?!

Loki

CYRIL'S GARDENING TIPS

Spring is almost upon us and the time has come to check our lawns. The first thing to do is to look for moss; I use lawn sand to kill any that may be there. After a few days the moss will turn black and then it is the time to rake it out. Do not do this when it is green as you will just spread the spores. Re-seed any bare patches. When the patches are established feed with a light nitrogen feed. Set the blades of your mower fairly high for that first cut.

Cyril Stoneham

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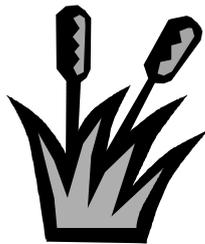
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📞 01279 812008

📞 07786 253610

linda@stansteddogs.co.uk



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THE CHANGING FACE OF PENSIONS

Pensions have existed in the UK for over 340 years, with the first scheme arranged for Royal Navy Officers. In 1908 under the Old Age Pension Act, the first general old age pension was introduced in the UK. Both public and private sector pensions have undergone many legislative changes over time. Further changes have been announced under the Finance Bill 2011, including:

- Removal of compulsory annuitisation at age 75.
- Tax-free cash can now be taken after age 75.
- The total annual amount payable into a pension will be reduced to £50,000.
- The normal maximum fund value allowable without penalty at retirement is to be reduced to £1.5m from April 2012.
- If the total value of pensions is £18,000 or less, the whole fund can be taken as a lump sum, with part of the fund tax-free and the balance taxed at your marginal rate.
- State Basic Pension will increase by national average earnings, consumer price index or 2.5% (whichever is the highest) from April 2011.
- State Pension Age for women will increase to 65 by November 2018, and will increase to 66 for both men and women between 2018 - 2020.
- The Government is also considering the timetable for future increases to the State Pension age from 66-68.
- The Government plans to replace both Income Drawdown (ie Unsecured Pension - USP) or Alternatively Secured Pension (ASP) with Capped Drawdown and Flexible Drawdown from 6th April 2011.

Income Drawdown (or USP) is the name given to the facility to continue to keep your retirement savings invested and take an income each year rather than buy an annuity. This facility can only be continued to age 75. From age 75, you can move into ASP, which is similar, but the income and death benefits are not as attractive.

Capped Drawdown - Income capped at 100% of GAD. GAD stands for Government Actuaries Department, who produce the Income Drawdown tables used to determine the income bands under Income Drawdown. Income is currently capped at 120% of GAD. Review every three years as opposed to five years.

Flexible Drawdown - Once a minimum income requirement of £20,000 pa gross has been secured, there is no restriction on income withdrawals. The following sources could be used in assessing the minimum income requirement: State Pension; Minimum income levels under asset backed annuities; Income from conventional annuities and scheme pensions, including dependant's annuities and scheme pensions; Social Security benefits.

There will be transition rules in place for existing Income Drawdown and Alternatively Secured Pension investors to move across to the new rules.

Kersi Deboo BA (Hons) Dip PFS
Tel: 713390
Email: kersid@teefinancial.com
Website: www.teefinancial.com



UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Tory Sport Minister's greatest fear; Seb Coe's phantom heart attack; My night in Pele's bed.

Just some of the headline grabbing titles of anecdotes shared with us by international sports journalist Sue Mott at a recent meeting. In the course of a very entertaining talk we were introduced to Hugh Robertson the Tory Sports Minister and former soldier with a record for bravery after serving in the Gulf and Sarajevo. His greatest fear was not being fatally injured in combat - but facing unfriendly dogs whilst out canvassing for their owners' votes! We were introduced to Seb Coe with an account of his phantom heart attack. It appears that he has an extraordinarily low heart rate and whilst visiting an army barracks in Germany he collapsed with food poisoning. When the Army medical team found that he had such a low heart rate they decided he was having a heart attack and were about to use the defibrillator on him when he thankfully regained consciousness and managed to stop them in their tracks! Pele was the next sporting legend to be introduced to us. Sue met him in 1982 when he was playing for the New York Cosmos. When the World Cup was held in Spain Sue travelled to Seville to try and cover the event but was unable to book any accommodation. She tried to contact Pele with whom she was on friendly terms but without success. However, as luck would have it, a mutual friend was staying at his hotel and knew that he wouldn't be needing his room that night - and that was how Sue spent the night in Pele's bed!

A cup of tea and a slice of Sue's delicious home made cake brought another very entertaining afternoon to a close. Other treats on the horizon include a talk on pottery in April, a visit from the Canine Partner's charity in July, a talk on medicinal plants in August, a tour of Grandad's garden in September and a visit from the Nazeing hand bell ringers in December to round off what promises to be another entertaining year for our members. If this rings your bell why not come and join us - you'd be most welcome. We meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm in Ugley Village Hall.

Andrea Fitt



Sunnyside Playgroup

We are delighted to announce the start of a new playgroup for children from birth to school age from Monday 7th March. All are welcome to Sunnyside Playgroup from 9.30am to 11.30am on Monday mornings in St John's Church Hall. There will be a range of activities for different age groups, and plenty of space to run around, and a chance to meet up with other parents and carers. Entry is £2 per child, and £1 for subsequent siblings, including tea/coffee for those who wish, and a drink and snack for the children. For more information, email info@sunnysidechildcare.co.uk. We look forward to seeing you there!

Rachel Pocknell
Tel: 816215

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Last month's Nature Notes mentioned pleasing views and this reminded me of an article written in the 'Link' back in 1990. The District Plan at that time stressed the importance of views in Stansted and the afore-mentioned article described a number of favourite views in and around the village. Needless to say most of those views have now changed, or, you might say, been lost. One of the few remaining views from those listed is that from Chapel Hill looking out towards Stansted Park and it now seems likely that this could partly disappear behind a high rise development.

One can see a similarity between our ever changing society with its surging urban growth, and the drama that takes place in nature every year. If you take a walk along Lime Kiln Lane this month you can enjoy the open views across the Stort Valley which have added dimension due to the low angle of the sun and lack of leaves on the trees. Spring is on its way, as is evident from the thousands of snowdrops in bloom along the verges, to be followed in the coming weeks by daffodils and bluebells and other early flowers. However, the green shoots of cow parsley, nettles and goose grass are already coming up and in a few months will have smothered all the pretty displays in their struggle upwards competing for space and light. In a similar manner progress and growth in our community result in our housing becoming denser and taller: new homes now have three storeys and apartment blocks tower over all other buildings. Just like the plants along the lane we grow and compete for space. There is a difference, of course; nature goes back to square one each year and adapts to changing conditions, while we have to live with what we have created for generations.

Back to views. From a footpath near Bentfield Green one can look south across Bishop's Stortford towards London. At dusk the skyline is punctuated with the outlines of buildings spanning more than five centuries, from medieval churches to modern skyscrapers at London Docklands. There have been applications in the past to build here and no doubt there will be again.

Felix



Lime Kiln lane

During January we had two intriguing speakers. A long associate of our Club, Freda Thompson, travelled to China with an intrepid band of Scots for a family wedding in Qingdao, a large modern coastal boom town in the North East of the country. The spectacular and colourful ceremony was very different to the UK but one important part, common the world over, was consuming large amounts of tasty food. The party then enjoyed the tour of a lifetime which included the site of the Xian's Emperor Qin Shihuang's burial with its terracotta warriors, part of the Great Wall of China and the Li River. A river trip took in some of the Chinese countryside and allowed them to meet some of the rural inhabitants. Freda was impressed by the scale and sophistication of the part of China she visited and how it was so different from the impression we had had of China during the Mao period. Sadly, when leaving Pearse House after Freda's talk, we were reminded by the emotional goodbyes from the staff that this was likely to be the last occasion we would assemble there for our weekly meetings. Only the day before we had been notified of the imminent closing of the hotel that was going into voluntary administration.

We next met at the Hadham Golf Club to dine and listen to Tinita Weekes. She is a modern day 'missionary' belonging to an organisation called Youth With a Mission that could be described as having a similar ethos to the Salvation Army. Tinita, a most engaging young woman, is not paid and is even expected to fund her own mission. She was brought up in Old Harlow but now lives and works in the USA as a counsellor to the homeless and gang outreach. She is also trained in basic trauma counselling, a skill she used recently as a team member in Haiti. Tinita will be staying locally for another month and, I am sure, would be happy to talk to anyone that would be interested, and I will willingly put them in touch with her.

Our next big event is our Business Dinner on 8th March 2011 which, for a second year, is in collaboration with our favourite local charity, Grove Cottage, which will be the sole beneficiary of the proceeds. For anyone interested in attending details are in the Grove Cottage article on page 33.

Peter Latham
Tel: 01279 507924 or
Email: Yp.latham@tiscali.com

CAN YOU HELP?

On 30th April 1956 an RAF aircraft crashed at Stansted. My friend, aged 5, was on this plane. Can any of your readers supply me with more information, please? There should be photos of the children which appeared in the newspapers. Maybe a kind soul could visit the library for me? I will refund any printing or postage costs incurred. My contact details are: 1 Valley View, Great Bourton, Oxon OX17 1QJ Tel 01295 750497.

Maggie MacAngus



Mission X 'Train like an Astronaut'

On the Launch Day the students from MMCC, Bentfield, Grove, Henham and Ugley, Birchanger, St Mary's and Elsenham carried out a variety of Science and PE missions to try and improve their fitness and healthy lifestyles. The Science missions included such things as The Hydration Station where the students learnt the importance of drinking water, looking at ways to build healthy bones in the Strong Bone, Healthy Bone mission; and about healthy eating by investigating the 'hidden' fat in food with the Low Gravity Mission. The students had the opportunity to carry out a variety of exciting fitness activities and assess their fitness levels with the specially designed missions including an agility run, a co-ordination test and a team challenge to see how far they could virtually 'cycle' in 20 minutes. Five special guests on the day included Jeremy Curtis from the Space Agency and John London who is a rocket scientist. The whole day was spectacular and each student received their own Mission X T-shirt.



All the students will go on to investigate various aspects of the science behind being healthy and leading a healthy lifestyle in their own schools, working in teams and earning points, 'Steps to the Moon', for the various missions which will be logged on the NASA website. They are also able to add to the Blog and communicate with students in other countries such as France, Brazil, The Netherlands and USA. Students are encouraged to keep a Mission Journal to log any exercise they do and any important facts about how to live a healthier lifestyle. This will be particularly important over the half-term break when parents and carers can get involved too. A 'Moon Walk' is scheduled for 24th March to one of the local primary schools and a sporting mission will be completed. This also coincides with the closing mission ceremony in The Netherlands and a message from ESA Astronaut Paolo Nespoli who is currently aboard the International Space Station. 7th April is the date for the end of Mission X which will be a chance for the students to show their parents and carers the work they have been doing. We are also hoping for some surprise special guests to attend too.

Mrs C Dunham, Head of Science
Mr T Anderson, Head of PE

Year 8 Gifted and Talented Day On Wednesday 2nd February a group of enthusiastic and able Art students had

the opportunity of participating in an all day sketchbook workshop in the Art Department. The theme was 'A Time? A Person? A Place?' Students were encouraged to work independently, choosing their own focus researching ideas and gathering their own imagery. By the end of the day the target was to communicate the chosen theme visually in an artist sketchbook format. It was evident from the way the students worked that they were intrigued and interested in their self-directed topics. The work produced was highly diverse with cross-curricular references, ranging from an investigation into Florence Nightingale and the Crimean War, Adam and Eve, Chaos Theory and The Apocalypse! The day illustrated how curious and inventive MMCC students are and how they are able to make complex connections not only within Art but with other subject areas such as History, Geography and Religion.

Mrs A Allanson
Head of Art

PTA Quiz Night

7.00pm for 7.30pm Saturday 5th March. Tables of up to eight people. Tickets £5, bring your own food and drink. Raffle. To book a table please call Tina on 814371 or Yvonne on 813071.

MMCC PTA BOOT SALES – Please note our March Boot Sale has been changed to Sunday 20th March. Sellers can set up from 10.00am. Pitches £7 cars, £12 vans and lorries. Pay on the day. Buyers from 11.00am-2.00pm. Hot snacks available. For enquiries please phone Tina on 814371 or Yvonne on 813071.



*Stansted
Cricket
Club*

As the weather gradually improves and thoughts turn to the new season, we are running two sets of net sessions each week. Junior nets are at The Bishop's Stortford Boys High School gym from 9.00am-10.00am on Saturday mornings. Please contact Keith Ayres on 814471 for further details. Senior nets are on Wednesday evenings from 9.00pm-10.00pm at the HECC Sport Centre for Cricket, High Wych CM21 0LL. This is a customised venue for cricket, managed by the sponsors of the Herts and Essex Cricket League and Cup. Please contact Ian Parsons on 07540 082003 to reserve your place for each Wednesday session. The club's Annual General Meeting will be held at 8.00pm on Monday 21st March in the club pavilion. All existing and prospective members are encouraged to attend. The annual NatWest Cricket Force Day (a working party at which we get the pavilion and surrounding areas ready for the start of the season) will be held from 10.00am until mid-afternoon on Sunday 27th March. Senior fixtures for the new season are now available and will be published in the next issue of the 'Link'. If anyone wishes to join the club, please contact me. You can find out more about Stansted CC at our website <http://stanstedcc.hitscricket.com/default.aspx>.

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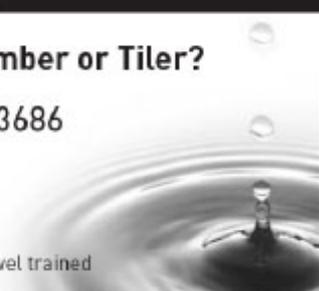
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HOUSE RULES?!

There are so many things to learn as a new dog owner; at times it must seem overwhelming and often clients come in confused because people have given them completely opposite bits of advice. One client whose dog had picked up a tick had been told by her father to burn it off with a cigarette, her mother-in-law told her to dab gin on it and her best friend had told her to cover it with Vaseline. Poor lady didn't know where to go first - the off-licence or the chemist! Luckily she rang us and we were able to show her how to remove the tick with a handy little device known as a tick hook, which was both cheaper and more effective than the other options. Please ring us for advice before dousing your dog with alcohol or setting fire to it! Emma the nurse and our friendly receptionists love talking to you and helping with your various questions, and if your queries are a bit more unusual or in depth, they'll get a vet to ring you back.

As a new dog owner, house rules also have to be decided quite early on. Is the dog allowed in the room when the family is eating, is the dog allowed on the sofa, and often the most difficult one, where does the dog sleep? We all start off with good intentions, but I wonder how long they last! Here is an adaptation of some house rules for dogs I read recently:

1. The dog is not allowed in the house at night, she will sleep outside in the kennel.
2. Well it was very cold last night, so she can come into the kitchen in the winter.
3. She does love her bed in the kitchen and we're quite used to stepping over it now, so she might as well stay there.
4. She's only allowed downstairs though, not in the bedrooms.
5. Okay she can go upstairs, but not on the beds.
6. Perhaps she can go on the bed for one night just to keep our feet warm.
7. Well the feet were a good idea, but she's not to creep up between us.
8. Right, now she stretches out, one of us usually has to sleep in the spare bed.
9. From now on, all people will have to ask the dog for permission to use the bedroom.

At this point I would love to say that vets set good examples to their clients by following their own advice but guess where my dog Broccoli sleeps? On our bed!

Ilse Pedler
Mercer & Hughes
Veterinary Surgeons



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET U3A

At our last committee meeting we had to come to a decision, albeit hopefully a temporary one, to close our membership. The reason for this is that we now have around 320 members, and although our meetings are usually attended by just over a hundred people, we have to take into consideration that, with such a large membership, more people could just turn up – and the fire regulations of St John's Church Hall, our current venue, only allow for 120 seated persons. By the time this comes to print we may begin to have an idea of how many of our current members intend to renew – so if you are currently a member then you need to renew your membership as soon as possible, but no later than 31st March. Membership will automatically lapse for anyone who does not do so. Once we have established numbers for 2011 then we may be able to open membership again – but it will be for residents of Stansted and surrounding Essex villages only. (Please note this will not affect renewal for current members who live outside this area.) Our membership secretary, Vicki will still be taking names of persons interested in becoming a member and they will be placed on a waiting list – so if you would like to put your name down please let her know. The only other option we have is to find larger premises, but to date we have not been able to find anything suitable – so if anyone has any ideas please let me know.

Most of our current Trips and Outings are now fully booked, but we do have a few places left on our Paris trip and for the 'Billy Elliot' musical in London – please check our website for organiser details or contact me if you would like to know more.

The next meeting of our group will be our yearly Open Meeting at 1.30pm Thursday 17th March in St John's Hall, when anyone can come along and see what we do. We will have displays from some of our groups and leaders will be on hand to answer your questions. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be available along with the chance to socialise – so if you are from Stansted, or one of the surrounding villages, why not pop along and see what you think, or maybe have a chat to one of our Committee members - after which you may wish to put your name on our waiting list.

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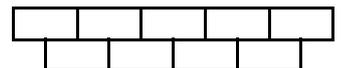
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**Stansted
Evening
Women's Institute**

January's meeting brightened up a damp muggy day and was packed out to hear our speaker for the evening, Simon Gilbert, with his talk 'Another Opening, Another Show.' He came early; set up all his equipment; had a strong cup of tea and then offered to lead the singing of 'Jerusalem' in what turned out to be a rather splendid baritone voice! How good is that for starters? He told us about his varied career beginning as a boy singer at school and his early inroads into the profession. He has sung opposite Joan Sutherland, Luciano Pavarotti and Ginger Rogers on the stage, and his great claim to fame was to be the voice-over for Peter O'Toole in the film version of the 'The Man from La Mancha.' Now in his early 70s he still has a lovely voice and it seems hard that he gave up singing for some time because of disenchantment with the profession. In the late eighties he got together a musical company and toured this country and many others with songs from the shows and wartime memories. He sang several things for us and left us all wanting more; but perhaps that's how it should be - we hope to have him back again. The competition for an old theatre programme brought out two wonderful old examples, one from 1888 printed on silk and one dated 1891, it is always surprising what members have hidden away.

Sadly our post Christmas meal booked for 24th January at Pearse House was one of the victims of the sudden news that it was going into liquidation. This was a great disappointment to the 40 of us that were looking forward to what was to be our first time there. We are sorry for all those who have been affected by this in so many ways.

The majority of members re-joined in January which delighted our treasurer, Sue Holland. I still get younger women saying to me that they are not old enough to join the WI! They may be interested to know that our Denman College has just started to run a WI Body Fit Camp which, from the pictures in the WI Life Magazine, was brimming with younger members. One quote "after 83 sit-ups, I discover muscle groups I never knew existed"! After 83 sit-ups I doubt if I would exist at all, but it's good to know that we are out there with the rest of the keep-fit world.

Judy Jeffrey is coming in March with a talk 'Handbags and Scarves'; most women can never have too many of these so come along and join in - 7.45pm Thursday 10th March in St John's Hall.



Judy Colliver
President



**STANSTED & DISTRICT
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

We are holding our Spring Supper Club 7.30pm for 8.00pm on Friday 25th March at the Day Centre. We will have two speakers, Sue Mott and Jason Barlow, both well known local journalists. Tickets are £12 to include a two course supper. There will also be a Bar and Raffle. For further information and tickets, please ring Ruth Rawlinson on 814222 or Catherine Dean on 813579.

Ruth Rawlinson



**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

At our meeting in February, our speaker was a man who had acquired a hobby - David Barlow had worked on a farm in a neighbouring village for over 30 years and in that time, the plough had turned up many things which had been discarded by previous generations. This had led David to become interested in the many and varied types of glass and china bottles which he had discovered and which he brought to show us. The first known bottles were produced by the early Egyptians in 1500 BC but in this part of the world, wooden casks were used for storage and skins for serving until the 15th century. Then the production of handmade glass bottles began to be introduced, particularly by Dutch immigrants. David described for us the processes involved, including the introduction of chemicals to produce the different colours which became available in succeeding times. With the bottles came the need to provide stoppers, particularly for gaseous drinks, etc, and early examples were sealed with hemp, corks held in with string or wire, glass marbles and eventually at the end of the 19th century, crown corks were introduced. Corkscrews started to appear around 1750. At any one time, many styles of bottles existed and they have become very sophisticated in colour, shape and the wording impressed upon them. They are used for many purposes - the first medicine bottles were introduced by Boots the Chemists from 1880 onwards - and David circulated many of his immense collection to illustrate what he was saying. We were very interested in the fact that boys discovered how to break ginger beer bottles to retrieve the marbles used as a stopper - and still more that manufacturers then made the glass stoppers oval to prevent them! His collection contains a bottle from New York found on a site in Stansted where the US Air Force was stationed during WWII. We were grateful indeed that David had told us so much about his hobby and wished him luck in his future collecting.

We meet again on at 8.00pm in the Day Centre on 3rd March, when our own Ted Pretty will be talking on 'Stansted and other Windmills in East Anglia'. Hope you will be able to be there.

Ian Seavers

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BIRCHANGER WOOD NEW FOOTPATH

Official Opening Saturday 15th January

Over 200 very enthusiastic and happy people were at the opening, by Christine Walkden, to appreciate this woodland improvement. The new path is 1400m long and 2m wide, and is the first access path of further proposed footpaths to circumvent the Wood. It cost £50,000 and was funded by an 80% grant from the Forestry Commission with the balance kindly given from Trust Funds, Local Councils, the BAA and private donations. It was constructed by a local contractor based in Stansted, and will enable all year use of the Wood; is wheelchair friendly, and by keeping wandering feet to the path will enable the under-growing English bluebells and wood anemones to regenerate.

Daphne Wallace-Jarvis
Treasurer Birchanger Wood Trust
www.birchangerwoodtrust.org



Pictured L to R: Andrew Hoppit from the Forestry Commission, Christine Walkden - BBC, Colin Woodward - a Trustee, Elaine Forrest, Daphne Wallace-Jarvis - a Trustee and Treasurer of the Trust

AN ODE TO BIRCHANGER WOOD

Walkers and runners who set a good pace
Find Birchanger Wood a real fabulous place.
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The wild flowers are there to be seen in the Spring
And bright smiles of delight they always do bring.
The wonderful new footpath with such easy access
Has proved to us all a resounding success.

Children in buggies being pushed by their mums
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James Wallace-Jarvis

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On Tuesday 8th March the Rotary Club of Stansted Stort Valley will host a fundraising dinner in aid of Grove Cottage. After a good meal we will enjoy an after dinner speech by Ian Robertson, the BBC's rugby commentator. Tickets are £36 and can be obtained from Roger Brown on 651120. Please come along and support us. We are grateful to the local Rotary Club for helping us for many, many years. A local sixth former has created a wonderful video which captures the spirit of Grove Cottage. It is on YOU TUBE: 'Grove Cottage a happy place'. We hope you enjoy it.

During the February half-term holiday we took 16 children out for a day trip. We are experimenting with holiday outings. This is the seventh day out. The children have a fantastic time (the carers too!) and the parents greatly appreciate a day off to spend with their other children or simply catch up with their housework. The biggest challenge is paying for the coach. We would like a volunteer to arrange our meetings, take minutes and maybe a few other jobs. There are more details on Facebook: Grove Cottage Bishops Stortford Mencap; please email davidscott47@hotmail.com if you would like to help us. We also need a nursery assistant with NVQ Level 3 in childcare, good experience of the Early Years Foundation Stage and an enthusiasm for helping children with special needs. Please send your CV to Sarah Houlston at Grove Cottage, 151 London Road, Bishop's Stortford CM23 2PP or telephone 656085 on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

David Scott



STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

Friday 21st January saw a coach-load of players and supporters leave Stansted for the journey to Bodmin for our clash on the 22nd in the FA Vase. We arrived at our hotel around about 11.00pm after a long and tiring journey so a quick drink and off to bed for the players in readiness for the game on Saturday. At half time we were down by 1-0 but a rallying speech by Terry Spillane to the players and they came out in the second half raring to go – the final score was 1-4. We played Dunston UTS, from Gateshead, at home on 12th Feb in the 5th round of the FA Vase losing 2-0.

The bad weather has decimated our home games and we are now trying to catch up, so there will be a lot of re-scheduled games in March. For all fixtures please log onto www.stanstedfc.intheteam.com or see our notice board outside the club. If you would like to help raise funds for the club you can now do so by logging onto www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stanstedfc - if you shop on the internet, instead of going directly to the retailer's site, click on the above site and access the retailer (of which there are over 2000) from there – the retailer will then donate a percentage of your spend with them direct to the football club. The beauty of this is it won't cost you any more than what you were originally going to spend. I hope that you will help us to raise funds in this way. Our 1st team have certainly raised the profile of Stansted by both good results in the League and in the FA Vase, of which we were the only team from Essex in the last 16. I am sure we would all like to keep this high level of football here at Hargrave Park in Stansted. We would like to thank Bury Lodge for their support of SFC and wish them all the best for the future

Lynne Furber
Treasurer
Stansted Football Club

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STANSTED BOWLING CLUB

With the first signs of Spring, work has commenced on the early preparation of our bowling green. Roy Barnes, our green keeper for many years, decided towards the end of last year that he was unable to continue with his position of Green Keeper, Fixture Secretary and Club President, and I am sure I speak for every member of the club, when I thank Roy for his tireless work and dedication in these most demanding roles within the club, and to wish him well for the future. This year Dave Hunt (who ably assisted Roy for several years) has agreed to undertake the important position of Green Keeper and we are pleased to announce that Philip Maule of Sports Turf Contractors, who specialise in sports turf maintenance and renovation, has been appointed to give the club professional advice and help with the preparation and ongoing upkeep of our green. Dave will, as always, require help from other club members, so please contact him directly for further information of various jobs to be started on this Spring.

At the AGM held in November last, a new club committee was appointed :

John Hollis – Club President

Stephen Hill - Chairman/Seniors' Captain/acting Vice-President

Mike Shewry – Treasurer

Del Sharp - Club Captain

John Scraggs – Vice-Captain

Jim Rodgers – Fixture Secretary

Pat Perry - Catering Supervisor

Doug Stephenson – Bar Steward

Peter Clements – Committee Member

Derek Giffin has agreed to be the club representative for both NW Essex and Eastern Counties Bowling Associations.

New Bowlers Day on 1st May, which will continue each evening that week. Further details in the next edition of 'the Link'. If you would like any further information about joining the club either as a bowling member (even if you have never bowled before) or social member, please do contact me.

Edward Taub

Secretary:

Tel: 816932

E-mail: ebtaub@gmail.com



Since food is never far away from a Beaver's mind, we started the year with a quiz, tasting different foods and trying to guess which country they were from. Also in January, we visited St John's church, where Rev'd Paul Wilkin kindly showed us around and explained what happens in the different parts of the church. We also learnt about the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. More recently, some of our Beavers took part in a district quiz challenge with teams from other colonies, and had a lot of fun with beanbag games, mystery sounds, jigsaw races and crisp tasting ... ah, we're back to food again! If you have a child who would like to become a Beaver, please contact 812825.

Dot Staunton



Huw Johnson Club

As I write this, everyone is looking forward to our belated Christmas at the Chequers. This is always a very enjoyable event when we give each member a Christmas present, this year a pretty mug. We were fortunate to receive an anonymous gift of £100 John Lewis tokens which we used to purchase the mugs and three of us had a lovely time in John Lewis. Many thanks to our donor. The date of our spring concert has been changed. The date will be in the next 'Link'.

Marion Johnson

Tel: 812284

CHILDREN'S RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Try making these pancakes with your children on Shrove Tuesday (8th March).

Lemon & Blueberry Pancakes

Ingredients

6 pancakes (pancake batter: 125g plain flour, pinch salt, 1 egg, ½ pint milk, oil for frying.)

250g cream cheese

Grated zest & juice of ½ lemon

25g melted butter

50g caster sugar (with extra for sprinkling)

150g fresh blueberries



Method

Make pancakes and set aside.

Put the cream cheese, caster sugar, lemon zest and juice into a bowl and mix together.

Place a dessertspoon in the centre of each pancake with a sprinkling of blueberries, roll up and place in a buttered baking dish.

Brush with melted butter and sprinkle over a teaspoon of sugar.

Place under a medium hot grill for 3-4 minutes.

Jane Chate

Kiddy Cook

Tel: 07796 270068

Website: www.kiddycook.co.uk



Recently we celebrated Chinese New Year with some Chinese food – we had noodles and chopsticks, prawn crackers and fortune cookies. The children had a wonderful time doing a dragon dance and turning the role-play corner into a Chinese area. The role-play corner has seen a lot of use lately as we carried out activities tied in with the 'Three Little Pigs' story and even turned it into a construction site! Rainbow received some good news recently as Essex County Council has finally given the go ahead for our new premises. We are very excited about the move but sadly there is not as much money as was hoped to kit out the pre-school so we are busy with several fundraising initiatives to provide the necessary resources. Rainbow takes children from 2.5 years to rising 5. If you're interested in applying for a place for your child please visit our new website for details: www.rainbowpreschool-stansted.co.uk.

Katherine Aiken

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