



BIRCHANGER SCHOOL SET TO GET BIGGER

For a long time now Birchanger School has wanted to make more space and to improve all the facilities for every child in the school. Up to now this has not been possible. It did seem that the school might not be able to accommodate the additional demand from

Birchanger which has experienced a higher birth rate in recent years. Essex County Council has finally recognised the need for additional teaching space at the school and the result is that the school is to have a new re-locatable classroom from September. There is plenty of space in the grounds to accommodate this, as well as plenty of time to arrange things for the new School Year. There will also be a new equipment store so that there will be more space in the school hall.

These days small schools are viewed as not always being economically viable. This small increase in pupil numbers ensures the future of the school for years to come.

THERE ARE NO BADGERS ACROSS SANDY FIELD

I have had a surprising level of reaction to the paragraph in last month's issue relating to earthworks in the farmland north of Birchwood and their possible occupation by Badgers. Initially I received a call from a lady in Harrisons who informed me it was illegal to fill in Badgers Setts.

A few days later I received another call from a gentleman representing the local branch of the Badgers trust who basically told me the same. I responded to both calls by denying knowledge of the source of the report or the location of the earthworks in question. I also pointed out that I have never seen a live Badger in Birchanger or anywhere else.

The next day I took my dog "Millie" for a stroll around Sandy field where there are a series of shallow trench like holes in the footpath towards Stansted I would say they are entirely manmade. On my return two ladies in Birchwood told me they did not believe there were Badgers "across Birchwood".

Then I received the following email from John Napier:-

"Hi the claim in issue 122 that Badgers are causing the holes to appear in the footpath from Birchwood to Stansted is hokum. When the electricity cables were laid the contractors did not back-fill the trench properly and left a void at the trench bottom which has caved in causing the holes some soon after the contractors had left and some much later. Badgers setts have much bigger entrance holes and are not usually in open ground nor I have seen any indication of Badgers anywhere in this area at all."

I do hope our readers realise that it is not always possible to verify the copy I receive, it is taken on trust. And if there are Badgers out there, please just leave them alone!



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Birchanger Lane and Birchwood loop resurfaced at last

After at least 10 years of lobbying, many ineffective patched repairs and innumerable complaints, this small piece of Birchanger Lane which was missed out when the rest of the lane was resurfaced some four years ago now, has finally been repaired.

Anxiety levels rose when another crew arrived the following day and started digging all the new asphalt up, but it turned out that they were dealing with the drains, which were sunk into the new surface and were already a cause of concern. Now the new surface on the lane is breaking up.

It took 11 years to get that done. We had better start asking for it now. Might be in the frame for 2020 then! Meanwhile we are asking if anyone would like more footpaths around the village. A request has been made for one around Churton, which is an incredibly dangerous bend. The problem with some of the other areas is that the lane is not wide enough to take a footpath, and it would be creating a dangerous situation to both pedestrians and motorists alike, and Highways would not consider the proposal.

Be careful as you drive. The pothole situation is terrible everywhere. Many cars have been damaged. Councils will get round to fixing them, but it is going to take time.

Do you want street lights in Birchanger?

If you do, you had better watch out for an individual who is wandering about taking the odd pot shot at them. This wonderful individual must be bored out of his mind and of the type who finds it funny to waste your money as paid by you in the Parish precept.

It costs the Parish Council £50 for every call out, and that is before anything has actually been repaired. We thought it was just a bad run of luck, so many bulbs going at once. We were wrong, it is just another selfish idiot on the scene. The evidence is there in the shattered lights.

There has been a lot of shooting in the village during the past few months, but that is an attempt by the farmers to cull the hundreds of pigeons who are decimating their crops by their sheer numbers. Not even these marksmen could manage to hit lamp posts in Bradley Common, crack shots as they undoubtedly are. The police have been informed, but we need your eyes most of all. If you do see anything suspicious, please

report it straight away. The lights will not come on for a long time otherwise.

Prejudice shows in Birchanger Wood

On the day when the country was shocked at the unprovoked attack on Tottenham Hotspur Fans in Lyons, I was appalled to see swastika signs on trees and fences on the edge of Birchanger Wood where it borders Bishops Stortford. I had thought that such prejudicial behaviour and groups were non-existent in our area. Seems I was wrong.

Prejudice of any sort is to be deplored. We all may dislike something about the people we rub shoulders with on a daily basis, they find us annoying in many ways as well. Normal people just understand that there are differences in belief and outlook and just accept and get on with them. Why can't the people who seem to think they have to put such signs up. Do they not know that this behaviour died with the Second World War and has no place in a modern multicultural society?

Our Primary Care Trust is official now

The documents have been signed, the 119 conditions, with just five to finish, have been met, so from April 1st we shall be part of the West Essex Commissioning Group. This means that all our GP services for those who are registered with doctors in Essex will come through this group of 39 doctors and their partners under the leadership of Rob Gerling and Claire Morris. The West Essex Commissioning Group will be based at St Margaret's Hospital Epping and they will be buying in to the services they believe their patients need.

Hopefully in time our health provision, which should be better suited to our needs, will improve, but this is not necessarily a given. There are bound to be difficulties in any new way of doing things. If you are experiencing problems with your GP wherever you are registered, please tell the trust on 01992 566140 or let me know. This service is vital to the community and it has to work.

Counting the cost of Winter

It seems that winter has gone on for ever this year. What with rain, floods, snow and extremely cold temperatures all alternating with each other our fuel consumption has been high. Even the best insulation in the world struggles in these extremes, and let's face it, we do not as a rule have very good insulation in this country.

It is the elderly and those who work at home who see the greatest fuel costs. Unless they are to freeze all day, they do need to use some heat, whether it is from gas, oil or electricity, coal or wood.

It is important that everyone is aware of any extras allowances which they might be entitled to. For some there may be the possibility that their employers should have a scheme for office use for those who work from home. For many of the older groups there may well be allowances available to them, about which they know nothing. Last month the CAB visited homes in the Birchanger where they thought older people might live, to make sure that they were coping and that they were receiving everything they were entitled to. They offered all sorts of help and advice to particular individuals. They could not access everyone, but they were keen to reach as many people as possible. They are still happy to advise, particularly useful now, as the bills drop through the door. If you would like to discuss this with someone from the CAB, please call 08444 775986.

Day centres do need you

Day Centres in Uttlesford are doing a really good job. They provide a place for the elderly to go, meet and make friends, start a new hobby and be assured of a hot meal at lunch time as well as regular snacks. The only difficulty is that they urgently need more volunteers to help to run them. The centres are distributed throughout the District. Our nearest one is at Stansted with another in Dunmow. Many Birchanger residents have used and are using these centres regularly. Volunteers are needed for as few or as many hours that can be spared and they would be warmly welcomed for whatever they can do in a number of capacities.

To find out more, call 01799510571, explain what you can offer and where you would like to volunteer. If you are interested in the Dunmow Centre, call Wendy on 01371 859803 direct.

Stansted Day Centre. More Like a Member's Club!

If you are over 55 you might like to drop into the centre on a Tuesday, Thursday or Friday. You will receive a warm welcome whatever you would like to do there. Tea, coffee and cakes are always available, along with home cooked meals made with local ingredients as far as possible. Friday is always fish and chips day. Lunches cost £5 for two courses and must be booked by 11am on the day.

The Lunch Club, as many people call it, is open between 10am and 3.30pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, except Good Friday. A special lunch will be served on the Thursday before. Activities are numerous with several outings arranged throughout the year.

Volunteers are needed to serve as their time permits, in a variety of ways. These include gardeners, drivers and committee members, or anyone who can offer their help and support. To find out more, call Julie on 815091.

Have you been eating horse?

It seems that unless you are a vegetarian, you most certainly have without ever knowing it. You might have got by if you can honestly say you have never eaten a burger, pie, pasty, processed meat, the list is endless.

Do you know what country your meat came from? Unless I am buying a particular piece of meat which displays the country of origin, I would not know nor would I have thought to have asked.

I may be wrong in the light of everything which has happened since, but actually establishing where anything came from by the bar code is not that easy. It seems food manufacturers are all into bar codes, now having given up plain English. Far too easy to understand!

I have been given just a few codes, I will try to collect more but for now this is what I have.
690-692 made in China. 00-09 USA or Canada. 30-37 France. 40-44 Germany. 471 Taiwan. 49 Japan. 50 UK. There may be other numbers following these but 50 UK is easy to remember.

Airport Express Parking

Many people have found it is very difficult to arrange for the special airport residents pick up and drop off at the rate of 50p instead of £2.00.

<http://u3asitec.org.uk/sites/b/bishops-stortford/docs/stanstedairportsetdown-pickupdiscount.pdf>

There is an address you can try. It is, Express Set Down Applications, Empark UK Ltd, Mid Stay Car Park, Bassingbourne House, Stansted Airport CM24 1PZ.

You will need to give your name, address, and postcode, along with the registration numbers of any car you are likely to use. It can be more than one.

Still time to get your dog chipped for free

Dog chipping at the Council Offices in Saffron Walden has proved to be in great demand. All the more so as it is compulsory now to have your dog micro chipped.

If you would like to have your dog chipped for free, there is still time, but the supply of free chips is going fast.

To arrange to have Dog Warden Sue Knight carry out the service, please call her on 01799 510442.

Thank you

A big thank you to everyone who called, emailed me or wrote when my computer was hacked into last month. My email address book was very large and while it was seriously hard work trying to do damage limitation and explain to everyone that I had not yet discovered how to make a supersonic flight to Manila, I really did appreciate all your concerns.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

STICKY TOFFEE PUDDING

Serves 6-8 people not on a diet!

175g/6oz unsalted butter, plus extra for greasing
175g/6oz dates, stoned and chopped (medjool, if possible)
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
175g/6oz golden caster sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 eggs, beaten
175g/6oz self-raising flour, sifted
115g/4oz dark muscovado sugar
4 tbsp runny honey or golden syrup
4 tbsp double cream
vanilla ice cream, to serve



Method:

Preheat oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4. Grease and flour 8 x 175ml/6 fl oz dariole moulds and put a circle of parchment paper in the bottom of each one, so that they turn out easily.

Place the dates in a pan with 300ml/½ pint of water and bring to the boil, then simmer for 5 minutes until softened. Remove from the heat and stir in the bicarbonate of soda until the mixture stops foaming. Place 50g/2oz of the butter and the caster sugar in the large bowl of a food processor and cream together until well combined, then beat in the vanilla essence. Gradually add the eggs, beating well after each addition. Fold in the flour with a metal spoon and finally fold in the date mixture. Pour into the greased moulds and place them in a bain-marie (a roasting tin half-filled with boiling water). Bake for 25-30 minutes until well risen and firm to the touch.

To make the toffee sauce, simply place the remaining 115g/4oz of butter, dark muscovado sugar and honey or golden syrup in a pan and heat over a low heat, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Bring to a simmer and cook for 2-3 minutes until thickened. Stir in the cream and allow to bubble down, then remove from the heat.

When the puddings are cooked, remove from the oven and after 5 minutes turn out on to a wire rack to cool completely. To serve, place the puddings on plates. Pour over some of the toffee sauce, then flash under the grill until bubbling, if liked. Add a scoop of ice cream and serve the remainder of the sauce separately, hot or cold.

TIP 1

You can also make this in a single pudding. The mixture will fill a 25cm x 18cm/10in x 7in non-stick baking tin that is at least 2.5cm/1in deep. Don't bother with the bain-marie and bake for 35-40 minutes or until well risen and firm to the touch. Then proceed as above, cutting the pudding into portions once it has cooled. Another alternative would be a greased, loose-bottomed 18cm/7in round cake tin that is 7.5cm/3in deep. If you do not have one deep enough, line the inside with baking parchment to the required depth.

New blood required for the cricket team

Birchanger Cricket Club is on the lookout for new players to boost its playing ranks for the forthcoming season. The club is approaching its 120th year and runs two sides that play in the Herts & Essex Cricket League <http://www.hecl.co.uk/joomla/> on Saturday afternoons. The 1st XI play in Division 2 and the 2nd XI play in Division 6. Anyone who is interested in playing should contact either Elliott Sellears at sellears@btinternet.com (1st XI captain) or Paul Richardson at pnrichardson1@btconnect.com (2nd XI captain).

The club have recently invested in a new high quality outside net, which is available to use throughout the season at no cost. Using this facility the club are planning to arrange regular net sessions (at least once a week) throughout the summer and players of all ages and abilities are welcome to join in with these sessions. The cricket club is particularly interested in encouraging some younger blood to take up the game so will be more than happy to see some youngsters give the new net a try. The club also has the use of the excellent facilities offered by Birchanger Social Club – where many of the club's social events are held during the season. There is also a tour within the UK in the pipeline for latter part of the summer. For more general information please contact Ross Leavers at marshbarnes@gmail.com.

School News

Bad weather means more indoor playtimes

The children love their well equipped playground. There is something there for everyone to use, as well as sporting opportunities. Unfortunately this winter there have been more than usual indoor days due to bad weather.

This means that with not exactly an over large amount of play space, quieter indoor games do come into their own. The problem is that there are simply not enough of them.

So when you go through your cupboards this Spring, please remember the school and give us any unwanted board games instead of throwing them away. The school and the children would find a very good use for them.

What is in your lunch box?

This is a question which the very health conscious School Council are trying to discover in an attempt to promote healthy eating and to put unhealthy foods off limit for everyone in the school.

They plan to monitor lunch box contents, and then to put forward a plan which will make unhealthy food disappear from anywhere in the school.

Obesity is not a particular issue for Birchanger School. The school council wants it to stay that way.

School trip to Norfolk

Perhaps not the best time of the year for this, but Birchanger children are both tough and very keen on their away stays, so it was up to Norfolk for a week at the Aylmerton Centre, despite the two inches or more of snow which had fallen overnight.

With beach walks, seal watching and outdoor pursuits very much on the agenda, it was a matter of packing just about everything warm that was available. The Centre Manager would not take any child out who had less than 5 layers of clothing on, on a really cold day. Outdoor trips can often come to mean wet children and clothes drying as well as keeping warm were a top priority for everyone.

Birchanger Children are not ones to shrink from outdoor pursuits and the weather, always an issue was put at the back of the agenda. It was a tired and happy bus load of children who returned home at the end of the week with lots of photos to show everyone exactly what they did.

Meeting the Authors

So far this term the children have worked with poets, artists and most recently with authors. This meant that every class had an input in a slightly different way throughout the school. For the youngest it was a trip to Bishops Stortford College to meet the author of The Gruffalo, Julia Donaldson.

This is the series which perhaps more than any other, has captured the imagination of children in recent years, both through the books themselves as well as television. Actually meeting the real person who thought up the character in the first place, was a very special event indeed.

A stunning conclusion to book week

Nobody wants to pass up the chance to dress up, especially when it means you can come to school in your own special costume. This happened on the Friday of Book Week when the children all came to school dressed as a fictional character. They made a stunning sight as they arrived at the school in some truly stunning costumes, which included pirates, far too pretty "Ugly" Sisters, rabbits, and much more.

There were prizes for each year group, and selecting the winners was something of a nightmare, as really everyone had tried hard and they all deserved prizes for their efforts.

The day did not just stop with fancy dress. Older children listened to the stories which the younger ones had written, helped with their reading and listened to all they had to say.

Prizes were presented at the Sharing Assembly later in the day. The children were still in costume, although minus some of the accessories which they had arrived wearing in the morning.

School burglaries alert

There has been a big rise in school break ins in recent months. Schools are seen as a good source of computer goodies by the thieving elements in society, and no school anywhere can expect to escape attention.

We can lock things up, hide them away and protective mark them, but sometimes a quick and opportunist act is all that is needed.

We want everyone to try and support each other in the battle against crime, whether it is domestic, school or otherwise. Please help by reporting everything suspicious, no matter how small or trivial it may seem, to the police as quickly as possible. In emergencies it is the usual 999, but you could try the duty officer on 07801 461666.

News from Birchanger Social Club

Bar prices held over the last two years!

We promised at the AGM last year that providing our finances were in good shape at the half- year end on the 31st December 2012 we would continue to absorb Brand owners & supplier increases for beverages. We are pleased to announce that despite the difficult economic situation, the club finances are still in good order and due to excellent negotiations with our suppliers we have managed to prevent any increases even when purchase prices have risen on average by 6-7% during January and February this year. It is amazing how the club has managed to keep bar prices static for almost two years, however, future prices now depend on the budget and we will just have to wait and see what the chancellor does on the 20th March. We have it on good authority that most pubs and clubs are planning to put up their prices by between 15p – 25 pence per pint to cover the cost increase, this club will however make every endeavour to minimise any increase to its members.

Drinks Promotion - while Stocks Last!

Special introductory offer; *Kronenbourg* for only £2.50 a pint

Open the Box or Take the Money?

Well not quite but the club does hope to introduce a brand new prize game in the near future called "*The Treasure Chest Key Game*" which is a little bit like the old "Open the Box" game but even better. Keep an eye on the club notice boards for more information which is coming soon.....

Free snooker, pool and jukebox

On Saturday and Sunday Evening's from 7.00 pm to close, the club offers free Snooker, Pool and jukebox. Yes, absolutely FREE! (Offer excludes entertainment nights)

10p meals for Children!

This offer has been running for almost a year and has proved very popular with our members. When accompanied by an adult ordering a main meal from the menu, children under 12 years old can choose from the special children's menu and eat for only 10p. The offer covers one child per adult.

Waterlogged Pitch Stops Play

Due to the adverse weather conditions and over generous amount of snow and rainfall experienced over the winter months, the football pitch really suffered this season causing around 15 matches to be abandoned! Ross Leavers reports; "we have been fighting a losing battle against the elements trying to keep the pitch playable during the last few months but to no avail. However, the good news is that the recent clement weather has dried out the pitch and with another roll or two the ground should be almost as good as new". Apologies go to the teams and players whose games were cancelled.

Lost and Found

A mobile phone was found near the village sign in Birchanger Lane on Thursday 14th March. If you think it may be yours please call Dave Dartnell on 01279 814311.

Annual Parish Meeting
Wednesday March 27th
7.45 pm in the Church Hall.
All Welcome.

Birchanger Sports and Social Club

April Entertainment

6th Paul Lillie
13th Charity Race Night
20th Tequila

Follow us at www.birchangerclub.com

229 Birchanger Lane 01279 813441

News From St Mary's

Most of you will realise that the internal work in the church has been completed and its now looking at its best - bright, welcoming and clean. We would like to thank all of the people involved, particularly:
 Russell Curtis - builder and carpenter who did all of the interior construction work, hand crafting the lovely oak panels and doors that conceal the toilet and kitchenette.

Birchanger Building Services - who laid the mains water line and drain, the new pathway and organised the internal repairs/re-decoration of the walls.

Paul McGahan - who did some of the repairs to the walls and paintwork.

Mark Lee - who did the water connection.

Dave Debnam - who thoroughly cleaned and polished all of the wood work.

J Day & Son Ltd- who re-sited the font and monuments. The World War 1 and 2 monuments have been refurbished and look splendid on the north wall.

John Lightfoot - who advised and project managed, making the things run so smoothly.

David Ferguson - our architect.

Your efforts are much appreciated by the congregation.

The next project that the PCC intends to tackle is the bells and after that, the refurbishment of the organ. These are exciting times and if you want to get involved, please contact our Rector Paul Wilkins or either of our churchwardens, Peter Odrich or Pam Lee.

Good Friday Service

In addition to our usual Sunday services, the church will be open from 12 noon on Good Friday for a period of quite contemplation followed at 2pm by a special service taken by our Rector, Paul Wilkin. This is a very solemn but dramatic service of Christ's last hours in human form. Come and take part if you can.

Easter Sunday at 11am

Celebrate the risen Christ on the very special day when we also have a baptism.

Calling all "Crafters"!

If you enjoy sewing, knitting or crochet, the Gardens of Easton Lodge Preservation Trust could really do with your help.

We are planning to start selling a range of home-made crafts from the gardens this season to help raise funds for our various projects. We have put together some simple kits that we would like people to sew, knit or crochet for us – we will provide all the materials we just need your expertise and energy.

If your skills are a bit rusty or you're a beginner, don't worry – we'll also be having regular crafting get togethers where there will be a chance to chat, share skills and do quality control on potential cakes for the gardens!

If this sounds like the kind of thing you would like to get involved with then please contact the Trust Administrator, Helen Carter on enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk or leave a message on 01371 871979 and she will get back to you.

Helen Carter 11/2/13

Sudoku

8		7	4		5	1		9
	2	3				6	7	
	9						8	
	8			6			4	
			2	7	4			
	1			9			5	
	5						2	
	4	9				7	1	
1		6	8		2	3		5

Here is a simple sudoku puzzle.

The rules for solving the puzzle are :- each horizontal row and vertical column must have the digits 1 to 9 with no digits repeated.

The grid is also divided into 9, 3 x 3 boxes which must also contain digits 1 to 9 again with no digits repeated.

The solution is on the back page.

Paul Davall
Carpentry & Joinery

Traditional time served carpenter and Joiner

All Carpentry and Joinery
Traditional box and casement sash windows
Door Fitting Service
Kitchen cabinet fitting service
Fitted wardrobes and cabinets



11 Rainsford Road
Stansted Essex CM24 8DU
01279 814058 Mob 07962 963987
pauldavall@btinternet.com



Friendly, Professional & Reliable
Sustainable Garden Services Provider
Gardening, Landscapes & Tree Works

T. 01799 550032 M. 07866 752713

One off Garden Tidies Regular Garden Maintenance
Hard & Soft Landscaping Tree Pruning, Felling
Hedge Cutting & Trimming & Reductions
Advice & Planning Fencing & Timber Structures
Planting and Plant Sourcing Traditional Countryside Crafts
Log Splitter & Operator Hire Leaf & Snow Clearance
Chipper & Operator Hire Soil, Log & Aggregate Delivery

Free No Obligation Quotes
www.gwbhorticulture.co.uk

Village Diary

March/April

March

24th 11.00 am St Mary's

Holy Communion

27th 7.30 pm Church Hall

Annual Parish

Meeting

29th 12 pm St Mary's

Good Friday vigil

31st 11.00 am St Mary's

Easter Sunday

Followed with
Baptism

April

6th 8.00 pm At the Club

Paul Lillie

7th 11.00 am St Mary's

Matins

13th 8.00 pm At the Club

Charity Race Night

14th 11.00 am St Mary's

Holy Communion

20th 8.00 pm At the Club

Tequila

21st 11.00 am St Mary's

Family Service

28th 11.00 am St Mary's

Holy Communion

D Bonney & Sons



Motor Engineers

MOT TESTING, SERVICING
DIAGNOSTIC, MECHANICAL REPAIRS

SELECTION OF NEW AND USED CARS

Yew tree corner Manuden
Ring Malc or Neil on
01279 813315 or 815946

**ALL BUILDING AND LANDSCAPING
WORK UNDERTAKEN**

**FENCING, PAVING, DECKING, DRIVEWAYS, DRAINAGE,
BRICKWORK, EXTENSIONS AND CONSERVATORIES**

For a local service call Sean on
07703 115079 or 01279 813818

State Registered Chiropodist

Home Visiting Practice

Mrs. Julie Golden S.R.Ch.

Est 1994
01279 873492
Dunmow Road
Takeley CM22 6SH

A professional service at a competitive rate



LAUNDRETTE

DO

DO

DUVETS

DIVINELY

AND CLOTHES TOO!

- * Open 7 days a week
- * By Hockerill lights, Bishop's Stortford
- * large car park Tel 866183



Solution

8	6	7	4	2	5	1	3	9
5	2	3	1	8	9	6	7	4
4	9	1	7	3	6	5	8	2
7	8	2	5	6	1	9	4	3
9	3	5	2	7	4	8	6	1
6	1	4	3	9	8	2	5	7
3	5	8	9	1	7	4	2	6
2	4	9	6	5	3	7	1	8
1	7	6	8	4	2	3	9	5



Qualified and experienced freelance hair stylist
offering a full range of services at reasonable prices

To book an appointment please telephone
:- 07840 995848 or 01279 814037

www.beautifulhair4weddings.co.uk

Published on behalf of the people of Birchanger, and distributed free to each household in Birchanger. The views expressed herein do not automatically reflect those of the Editor or any of the organisations or institutions represented. Editorial team: Eddie Gilbey (816171), eddie.gilbey@btinternet.com Elizabeth Godwin, Ken Wheatley. Submissions are welcome but may be edited depending on available space.