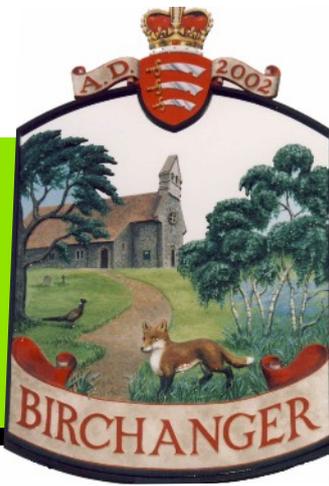


Birchanger

April 2015



Magazine

Issue 148

FIRE AT THE WILLOWS

Fire struck at The Three Willows on Easter Monday, forcing a closure expected to last for several weeks.

The fire started in the kitchen area of the pub at about 18:30 while the pub was closed for the Bank Holiday. It is thought to have been caused by an electrical fault in a fridge. A smoke detector activated and the local fire services attended from both Stansted and Bishops Stortford.



A sad sign. No pub in the village

Prompt action by the fire services ensured the fire was contained within the kitchen. Fortunately the doors to the other parts of the building were closed protecting the other areas of the business and residential parts which remained affected by smoke but otherwise undamaged.

The Three Willows has been an integral part of Birchanger life for over 250 years. The Current owners Dan and John Thompson took over the business in April 2012 continuing the pubs use as a Bar/Restaurant with a strong traditional menu of Fish and Steak.



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Time to say goodbye to my role as District Councillor.

I really do not want to say goodbye at all, but know that I might not be fit enough through the four year term, to do my job properly, and I would hate that. So it is with great regret that I must say goodbye to the District Council.

It is quite likely with the boundary changes, the new councillors will not actually live in Birchanger. I shall help them to the best of my ability, and I shall still be around to help everyone in the village. My interests will be Birchanger focussed and I am happy to be around to help and to perhaps take on some new activities as they arise. So I wish the new District Councillors all the very best in their roles, whatever their political persuasion.

Long haul for Stansted Airport again?

We have been hearing about this for years now. Many companies have tried to start long haul at Stansted Airport for years now. Most have failed to last the year. However the Manchester Airport Group have invested in a new heavy weight managing director Andrew Harrison. Passenger numbers are rising and Mr Harrison is now turning his sights on long haul business, which can only mean more short haul connecting flights as well. Mr Harrison has been very successful in increasing the business at Stansted, as well as doing a massive PR job in the area over the last few months. The chances of long haul starting and then becoming embedded are very high now.

What with more freight flights and increased passenger numbers, noise levels can only go up, so we need to be even more vigilant when the noise is too much, on 0800 243788

Where dogs and owners know how to behave

I do not know how they achieve this, but despite being a city of high rise flats and a large dog population, I never saw any dog fouling whatsoever.

How they get their dogs to behave so well is beyond me. No dog lifts a leg, or squats anywhere. They are in and out of department stores, very confident around strangers, and there is absolute tolerance.

A lot of the dogs are small as in town all the housing is high rise.

Unfortunately you will have a long way to go to see all this in action. I am talking about Vancouver, but if they can do it, why can't we?

We are not rural enough

Seventeen areas in the country are to receive 5p off a litre of petrol, as they are deemed to be truly rural. Presumably this means living miles from the nearest town and no bus service whatsoever.

There are many categories of settlements between town and remote. I think the villages who only have a bus one morning a week will feel more than a little hard done by. However these truly isolated communities are probably paying above the average for their petrol anyway. It is the same with our Broadband, slow, but not slow enough for us to make any claims!

The future of the Fire service in Essex

Apparently we are not having as many fires in Essex as we used to have. In fact, Fire Engine call outs are down by some 50%, so you can probably guess where this is all heading. The Fire Service has to accept 20% cuts in its funding in 2020, so preparations for this must start now.

It is almost inevitable that fire stations will close, as have ambulance stations in the past two years. The sight of fire engines speeding down motorways, as ambulances do now, will become a very familiar sight. Apparently even in the biggest fire, Essex has fire appliances to spare, so it is likely that the surplus will go. Saving money yes, but how about the victims of the fire? Some will inevitably face a slower response time, with possibly drastic consequences.

The Fire Service is hoping that better education of the public will mean that fewer incidents will happen, however we have an ageing population and this increases the potential for a domestic fire overall. Of these fires, most happen in the kitchen, when cooking is distracted for some reason.

The Fire Service is relying a great deal more on education and prevention. They are targeting the 12% of all households who do not have a fire alarm, while in a further 38% the alarm is not working. The Fire Service regularly visit offices, shops, hospitals etc to give fire prevention guidance, but most householders only take on

board fire prevention advice after the fire has been put out. Will the Fire Service ever be able to reach in time the dementia sufferer who forgot they had put the chip pan on, the house where rodents chewed through electric cables in the loft causing an electrical fire, or the iron which was left on?

All the proposed cut backs and paring down of the service will almost certainly lead to clashes with the unions. If this happens and is not resolved, strikes will follow. The Fire Service is hoping for the goodwill of their staff and the public to help cut back their services. Not exactly a reassuring prospect for either group. Can educating us all on Fire Prevention really fill the gap? Wonder what the insurance companies think?

Would you like to track your own crime?

Hopefully you will never ever need to, but should you become a victim of crime, a new soon to be started scheme will help you to keep up to date with what is happening with your crime. You will be able to see if arrests have been made and follow the progress without necessarily leaving your home, or having to badger officers over the phone. The service will start here shortly will be accessed on www.trackmycrime.

In a bit of an anomaly violent crime figures in Essex are down, but this does not apply to domestic violence. Seems a bit of don't bash your neighbour, take it out on someone at home instead. They might not tell.

It has taken a long time, but at last there is to be an act of Parliament banning mobile phones in prison. Thought this had always been the case, but not before time. How else did they get the drugs which are so freely available it seems?

Ever considered building your own home?

A courageous thing to do, but those who have tackled the project all feel it was the best thing they ever did. Their homes are bigger, with more of their own features, than would have been possible any other way. It was a challenge, but most believe it was one of the best things they ever did.

The very prospect is daunting and the first problem is to find the right plot, then the right expertise and the professionals to help you when they are needed. The council has recognised these factors and much more. It

has invited all those who are contemplating such a project to register their interest with them. Doing this will put you, be self builders in touch with others, as well as providing a source of help and advice along the way.

Some of the most successful projects have been when small groups work together and help each other with their various skills. By registering, you are not committed, but it could be helpful in the end.

You can register on

www.uttlesford.gov.uk/selfbuildingregister

Fancy a ski holiday?

If you are thinking of skiing next ski season, why not try Canada?

It may be a long way to go, but the welcome on the other side of the Atlantic is warm and friendly. Nothing is too much trouble for the Canadians, even bad tempered, jet lagged Brits!

Seasoned skiers will appreciate the quiet and courteous lift queues. There are usually three lanes of four skiers who filter in turn. Nobody stands on anybody else's skis.

The lift attendants greet you and make sure you are secure. And they put your skis into the containers in the gondolas as well. There is even a box of tissues for dripping noses as you approach the lift. Not sure where you are going, someone will stop and make sure you know the way. Go too fast in a specially designated family or learner's area, and you risk losing your lift pass.

Runs are well maintained and snow blowers are used most of the day when needed and the temperatures are low enough. The problem comes when the temperature starts to rise and spring came earlier than usual in the area we were in. It was cold in the mountains, runs were maintained down to the village, so we just enjoyed the well maintained pistes.

An added bonus is that there are no rules about no ski boots in the hotels. The luxury of putting your boots on in the comfort of your own room, without the battle of the boot room will take a lot of beating.

We also tried a breakfast ski. Up early in the morning, on the cable car for the biggest breakfast ever, then skiing on powder snow on empty pistes will take a lot of beating.

We stopped for coffee when the lifts opened officially. Apres ski was just as good as Europe and there were plenty of restaurants of all categories to try. We were in Whistler, with the added advantage of Vancouver to

Village Litter Pick

Please Help Us to Keep Birchanger Tidy.

At the Annual Parish Meeting a litter pick was requested. Unfortunately litter picks do not just happen, it takes a lot of hard work by as many people as possible and that does not mean just the Parish Council. We do need you to make it effective and the more people there are the quicker it will all be done.

So please join us outside the Village Hall on SUNDAY APRIL 26th AT 11am, so we can really get rid of the rubbish accumulated over the past few months. Even if you can only help for a short time, you will be very welcome.

What's on at the Church Hall?

REGULAR WEEKLY AS FOLLOWS:

MONDAY

9:30 – 11:30 Birchanger Buddies
Mothers & Toddlers
7:30 – 10:00 Ballroom Dancing

TUESDAY

9:30 -10:30 Adult Ballet
3:45 – 7:45 Junior Ballet

WEDNESDAY

9:30 -11:30 Tai Chi
2:00 – 4:00 Tea Room
7:00 – 8:00 Beginners Belly Dance

THURSDAY

1:00 – 4:00 Line Dancing
8:30 – 9:30 Improvers Belly Dance

In addition there are monthly meetings to be slotted in as follows

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 1st Tuesday of every month

BAGS (Birchanger All Girls Society) 3rd Wednesday of every month.

Trevor Sage

I am very saddened to report the passing of Trevor Sage. He was a life long village resident who I have known all of my life.

Villagers will perhaps remember him best for his time as Steward of the Working Men's Club during the 80s and 90s and more recently as a pot-man at the Willows. Trevor liked a beer or whisky and he was fond of a gamble. He had also recently lost long time partner Christine Waterman. He was 72.

Trevor had been suffering with deteriorating health for many months. He was finally admitted to hospital in March and never returned home. In recent years he had done lots of work in my garden and also the same for Scott Taylor.

He will be missed by his Sister Gloria and her family and all of his many friends.

Ed

BIRCHANGER SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB APRIL 2015

FRESH FOOD FOR ALL:



When the heat gets up, get out of the kitchen! As Birchanger starts to warm up and newspapers up and down the country hail the start of a heat wave, you could be forgiven for getting your thermals out of the cupboards and putting snow tyres back on your car. Just in case the predictions are true and the good weather continues, then the last place you'll want to be is chained to an oven cooking. So why not come down to the club and take advantage of the best quality and value Birchanger has to offer. Fresh fish can be ordered in advance, steaks cooked fresh to order and there are usually a host of specials on offer (unless they've sold out) So whether it's a light bite at lunch, or a solid hot dinner you're looking for we are open for business and welcoming one and all of our members!

POOL MAKES A BIG SPLASH AT CLUB:



As a sports and social club, we are constantly trying to improve our facilities for members both on and off the pitch. One area that we recognised needed improving was our pool table, which is available to all members in the club. We have recently taken delivery of a brand new pool table to up the standard of ball games, and to complement our full-size snooker table. We are now looking to pull together a team who will play on the club in the league, on Monday's throughout the summer. We would welcome interest from all levels of ability, so if you have what it takes to clear a table then let the staff know or put your name down on lists within the club.

BOWLERS BEWARE:



As the sun comes out, what could be more British than a refreshing cold drink, perhaps a cup of tea, with a dainty sandwich, and the bowls team enjoying a match in their best whites. One of the best assets of the club has been it's longstanding bowls club, with outstanding green and facilities. These have been safeguarded with the finalisation of the new bowls pavilion which sits proudly ready to house our prestigious team. If you are interested in being a part of this great club, then do get in touch and let us know – new members are always welcome!



Live Entertainment - Great Food - Excellent Bar - Snooker - Darts - Pool – Football - Cricket - Bowls

SUPERFAST BROADBAND:



Thanks to some tough negotiations and a strong push from the committee we have upgraded the club's broadband. So if you can tear yourself away from the great value food, drink and entertainment then everything the world wide web has available will come to you at unprecedented speed right to your fingertips!

May 9th - Dee Gaynor



Glamorous singer, Dee faithfully recreates hits from across the decades. Easy on the eye, easy on the ear!

ENTERTAINMENT

April 25th – Colin Mc Gregor



Colin is a British performer with a total of 20 years experience within the entertainment industry. Most recently, along with his solo shows, Colin has performed in the UK tours of 'The Buddy Holly Musical', 'The Blues Brothers Musical' as well as many others.

**Treasure Chest –
1st + 15th May**

**Wheel of Fortune –
24th April**

WEEKLY EVENTS



Weekly	Event	When
Saturdays	Meat Draw	1.00pm
Saturdays	Bingo Lottery	Ask bar staff
Mondays	Quiz night	9.00pm
Wednesdays	Steak night	Evenings
Thursdays	Bingo night	08.30pm
Fridays	Tote Draw	Evenings

Birchanger Sports & Social Club, 229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger CM23 5QJ Tel: 01279 813441 email: club@birchanger.com Follow us at: www.birchangerclub.com

Birchanger All Girls Society

Come along and join us on the last Wednesday of every Month
Meeting Room in Village Hall
Doors open at 7.30. for 8 – 10 p.m.

'A Warm Welcome to all Newcomers'

£5.00 for annual membership and £2.00 subs. each month
Come and give us a try £2.00 for the first two meetings before becoming a member

Forthcoming Events

Wed 29th April First Aid Training. Come along and learn basic First Aid, you never know when your skills could be needed in an emergency.

Future events planned include an evening ramble, plus various speakers including the return of 'The Wildlife Man'

Tel. Angie – 817376, Michelle - 814481, Barbara - 813007 Rosemary - 814678

Join us for a blooming lovely weekend

Hatfield Broad Oak Flower Festival
Saturday 23, Sunday 24 and Monday 25 May, 2015, 10am-5pm
St Mary the Virgin Church, Hatfield Broad Oak, Essex CM22 7HD

COME and enjoy a family day out in our picturesque village over the late spring bank holiday weekend, when our 50-year-old flower festival blooms again. There will be fabulous floral displays inside our historic 12th century church and numerous stalls and activities in the churchyard to entertain all the family – including fun for the children. On Saturday, BBC Essex star presenter Sadie Nine will officially open the proceedings, and then you can visit the stalls, watch your teddy bear parachute from the church tower and enjoy refreshments – including a barbecue – and various displays. On Sunday there will be relaxing organ music in the church and a chance to visit the displays, and on Monday you can support the 10km runners as they race through the village and have another chance to enjoy the barbecue and variety of stalls. Free entry, free parking. For details, visit www.facebook.com/StMarysChurchFlowerFestival.

Tea Room At the Church Hall



Every Wednesday

2.00 till 4.00



Everyone welcome

In aid of Hall maintenance funds

SPRING COFFEE MORNING



In aid of Church funds

Tuesday 5th May
10.30 till Noon

Moorswood 330 Birchanger Lane

Everyone welcome



NEWS FROM BIRCHANGER WOOD TRUST

Hello All

Well it has been a very nippy March and April (to date) and this has not been conducive in encouraging our woodland bulbs to flower. Today, 4th April, I was in Birchanger Wood and the wood anemones were out - wall to wall green foliage and with a good spattering of white pristine flowers, but a bit more sun would have seen absolutely masses of them - a wonderful carpet of white and green - come on sun!! The wind has been extremely strong too and this has succeeded in bringing down a lot of dead silver birch trees. The birch is not a long-lived tree and its roots do not go down deeply into the soil, so it is most often the first tree to succumb to strong winds. The dead wood will be used by numerous insects for safety, and as a breeding ground. In turn, birds and spiders will eat the insects. Ultimately, fungi will convert the tree to dust and manure.

I saw no buzzards, but I did see the great spotted woodpecker - well I heard it first, hammering away at the top of an oak tree, and because the leaves were not out, I could spot its silhouette, way up in the tree - this woodpecker doesn't sit on a branch but clings upright to a branch or tree-trunk and hammers with its beak most often against a hollow part of the tree so that the resonance is greater and a prospective mate will more readily recognise its presence.

And so to squirrels. Yes they are in Birchanger Wood, but look out for them elsewhere too. There is a large visible walnut tree in a garden in Stansted which has lost a branch a good way up which has created a very sheltered 'cave' in which a pair of squirrels are squatting and in which they are very likely to build their dray (nest). I do hope you all had a very pleasant Easter.

Daphne Wallace-Jarvis

Heather Brown's Art Classes

Winter has gone and Spring is really on its way. Time to think about trying something different again, or improving your skills as an artist perhaps?

Here is a list of the popular art classes which one of our local artists Heather Brown is running this Spring.

Sat May 9th 10 to 4 pm, bring your own subject for specialist guidance.

Sat May 16th 10 to 4pm, textures and special effects with mixed media.

Thurs May 21st, 10am to 12.30, Sepia ink and Watercolour step by step.

Wed June 3rd 10 to 4 pm, bring your own subject.

Thurs June 11th 10 to 12.30 Gouache on mount card, wildlife step by step

Mon June 29th 10-4pm, Oil or Acrylic on canvas step by step,

Wed July 8th 10-4pm, Bring your own subject

Thurs July 16th 10 to 4 pm, Different effects with watercolour step by step.

To find out more with prices and availability, please contact Heather Brown on 01279 815453, or email her at heather.highview@googlemail.com.

School News

Still time to enter for Birchanger School PTA Fun Run May 10th

This has become a really enjoyable event in Birchanger in the last few years. It brings together, parents, children, Birchanger residents and some of the county's best runners for a morning 10 k run across Birchanger's Footpaths. It is now an event firmly on the village calendar.

There is a part for everyone in this. You can enter the race as a runner, you can volunteer to help as a Marshall, or you can simply spectate, support the runners and enjoy a really good breakfast as well.

It is a Sunday Morning with a difference. The race starts at 10am at the school. You can register to compete beforehand, or you can simply enter on the day if you are undecided. The cost is £10 for preregistration, rising to £12.50 on the day. Children enter on the day for the children's race at a cost of £1.50 each. There are prizes to be won in each race.

Entries can be made on line at
WWW.ENTRYCENTRAL.COM

Further details can be obtained at
birchangerpta@hotmail.co.uk

All the money raised goes to support Birchanger School, which is very much appreciated as the school suffers severe funding cuts, along with everyone else. It all helps to buy equipment which the school would have to wait for, or could not afford and is very much appreciated by all the children, staff and governors in the school.

Swimming to restart for the youngest pupils

Birchanger children are finally having swimming lessons at Grange Paddocks this term. Although swimming has

been on the curriculum, it has always been difficult to find an appropriate available slot at a local pool. It is very unfortunate that in Birchanger there is very little choice of swimming pool, without travelling expensive long distances.

It is hoped that this will be able to continue as a part of the curriculum for the foreseeable future, but it does depend on staff and appropriate supervision, as the children will need help, which the swimming pool as such cannot provide.

A happy end to the Easter term

The last month of the term proved a very busy one for everyone at the school.

In Owls there was a trip to Forest School to learn food technology and basic cooking skills, there was a busy and successful run of netball and football matches and yes, girls do play football and boys netball at Birchanger.

In fact the girls have their own very successful football team who beat Manuden 6 nil.

Over half the school achieved 100% attendance this term, so 60 children were awarded certificates. All this in the darkest, coldest, most bug ridden time of the year as well.

The children celebrated the coming Easter Holiday with an Easter Egg Hunt organised by the PTA, who also arranged a sale of delicious cup cakes to take home at the end of the day.

The final assembly was by Hedgehogs Class, who wearing the T shirts of their own designs, recited animal poems to the great delight of their audience.

Don't forget!

We are still collecting Sainsbury's vouchers for sports equipment and metal buttons at the school. If you do have any, you can drop these in to myself at 330 Birchanger Lane, or to the school directly.

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THE THREE WILLOWS



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Village Diary

April/May

April

26th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

May

2nd 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

9th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

16th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

23rd 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

30th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

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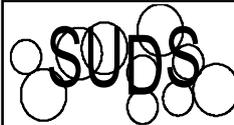
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