

COMMUNITY AWARDS FOR ROSEMARY AND KEN

Popular villagers Rosemary Saward and Ken Sturgeon have won Community Achievement awards. These awards are presented each year at the district council offices in Saffron Walden, as a result of sponsorship by their fellow villagers. This year there were thirty nine recipients. The presentation was made on February 17th.

Rosemary Saward's award was proposed by Joy Wright and Andy Cameron. who said "Rosemary has been giving her time to village institutions such as the Church, the Brownies and Playgroup for many years, the award is well overdue."



Rosemary and Ken with their award Certificates

Rosemary has lived in the village for over thirty eight years. In 1974 she took over the running of the Birchanger Brownies continuing to do so for over twenty years. In the mid seventies she founded the Birchanger Playgroup which she ran for the next fifteen years. In 1980 she became a member of the parochial church council and remains a driving force in the PCC to this day.

Ken Sturgeon was sponsored by Ken Wheatley for his tireless work on behalf of the Social club which he has been a member of since 1965 and his help for the older members of our community. He said. "Ken Sturgeon has served on the Social club committee for most of the forty years he has been a member. It's time this was recognised."

Ken was born in Hammersmith and met his wife Zena after serving in the Royal Navy. They moved to Birchanger in 1961.

Ken's citation recalled how he had been involved in organising entertainment and his current responsibilities as chairman of the building and works sub committee within the club. It went on to describe the many ways he helps the elderly in Birchanger.

We wish to add our congratulations to Rosemary and Ken and to thank them for all they have done and continue to do for the people of Birchanger.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS FROM *Elizabeth Godwin*

Rochford's update.

Last month the developers met with senior planning officers and local members, in an attempt to find a way to avoid an appeal. They were willing to listen to suggestions but they are unlikely to make any radical changes. Members plan to visit other estates that have been built by the developers.

Meanwhile, Forest Hall Road was closed for a Sunday to enable tree felling to take place, before the bridge works start. There is as yet no date for the start of the road through the estate. There was insufficient notice given of the road closure to inform magazine readers but where there are notifications given in time for any road closures this magazine will notify you.

Airport fly parking.

The fly parking season is about to start again, with all its attendant aggravation. Takeley is to be the subject of a fly parking study this year in conjunction with Essex County Council, as the situation there is worse than it is in Birchanger but this does not mean that that we should stop reporting fly parking in Birchanger. In fact should yellow lines and resident's parking happen in Takeley, it is very likely that there will be a great deal more fly parking in Birchanger as a result.

BAA claim to be investigating all fly parking and ways in which they can prevent passengers leaving their cars in residential streets, rather than parking at the airport. One glaringly obvious way would be to reduce car parking charges but BAA rely heavily on the income from these charges and this is not going to happen if BAA can help it! We do need to notify them of every car we see to hammer home the fact that we really do have a problem of their making in Birchanger.

The special hotline freephone number is 0800 731 2385. Please use it, or call me on 812793.

The threat from the east of England plan.

This plan is out for public consultation until March 16th. The East of England Regional Assembly has withdrawn its support for the plan as the government has failed to properly fund the massive infrastructure that such huge numbers of housing would require. Essex County Council finds that the plan proposes more new houses than can reasonably be accommodated in Essex. It also fails to show how more new jobs will be created and shares the Regional Assemblies concerns about the infrastructure. Small historic towns and villages should be protected from unsympathetic development and there are proposed constraints on development except for local needs in rural locations, it is hard to see that this could possibly happen without environmental damage.

Uttlesford would have to accommodate some 8000 new homes, of which over 5000 have existing planning permission. This means that some 2,650 homes will have to find a site somewhere across the district, although the plan proposes that most of them should be in the Dunmow area. There are plans for 10,000 houses to the north of Harlow, as the town is a designated regeneration area. 2000 houses are planned for Bishops Stortford. North Weald is also identified as a strategic opportunity for mixed development. In total a staggering 20,700 homes are proposed for the area around Harlow. The plan envisages that Harlow will become a strong sub region centre, with physical, social and economic regeneration. The plan supports the full use of the existing runway at Stansted and some strategic road and rail improvements, which include the widening of A120 to the north of Bishops Stortford but it does not say how these will be financed.

No new community could possibly be sustainable without massive infrastructure investment and the countryside in Essex can only be irretrievably damaged. It is hard to come to terms with the proposals when there are large areas of the north and east of England where empty homes are bulldozed down, and people are crying out for more investment and jobs. Why cram everyone into the already over crowded South East?

The plan can be viewed on the EERA website on www.essex.gov.uk.

Footpaths and Bridleways.

Some people have forgotten just what our footpaths and bridleways are for. Here is a gentle reminder, footpaths are for use by walkers and dogs, bridleways are for the use of walkers, dogs, horses and cyclists only. If you are unsure which pathway is which, please call our Parish Clerk, Julia Peachey, on 503912.

Digby Wood is privately owned, and horse riders, motorbikers and quadbikers are strictly prohibited. If the quad bikers and motorbikers persist, they will only succeed in closing the wood to everyone.

The quad bike population has increased since Christmas and there are already incidents reported where horses have been frightened and pedestrians have had difficulty in getting out of their way. There is an accident here just waiting to happen. The noise they generate has proved to be unacceptable to those living within earshot.

These vehicles are totally illegal on footpaths and bridleways and can attract a £400 fine. The police will prosecute where these vehicles are used, so you have been warned.

The Future of the Church in Birchanger

There was a good turn out to discuss the future of St Mary's Church, earlier this month. About 60 people heard the Rector Andrew Spurr explain how the numbers of clergy had declined in the last decade and that this was a nationwide problem. The way forward now was that local people would need to develop other leaders for worship from the lay community, as we are already doing in St Mary's, where lay people regularly take the services. We should look at developing this further, and involving more people in Birchanger.

A group is to be set to look at a mission plan for Birchanger, and a home study group for Lent, led by Dr Caroline Currer has started at Rosemary Seward's house. It was very encouraging to see so many people supporting the Church in Birchanger. There is now a need for everyone to work together to ensure the future viability of St Mary's Church in Birchanger.

Skip visits.

The skip will visit the village on 19th February, 7th May, and 6th August, at Wood Lane car park, between 8am and 11.30am only. This year use of the skip will be supervised! We are trying to arrange a visit later in the year as well.



From the Archive

The exercise books of Ruth Clewer

Ruth Clewer or more correctly Edna Ruth Clewer lived at no 5 The Green in Birchanger. She was born in 1924 and attended the village school between 1929 and 1938.

The Archive has two of her exercise books covering 1935 to 1937 when she would have been aged 11 to 13, they give an insight into the curriculum followed by the school and a glimpse into how it was taught to the pupils of the day.

The headmaster at the School at that time was the much respected HE Lightwood and it is probable that the markings in the books are his.



Birchanger School circa 1932, Ruth would have been 8

The exercise books themselves do not cover any particular subject but have been used for compositions in English, History, Current Affairs and Ruth's apparent favourite subject Geography. There are also some straightforward handwriting exercises.

The compositions cover subjects as diverse as a General election, the death of George V, exercise letters to friends or relatives and essays about specific countries.

It was the practise then to write out corrections in subsequent exercises after the work had been marked, so there is an emphasis on correct spelling and no questioning of any conclusions she may have drawn for herself.

It is clear from the language used, that the compositions were not cribbed directly from text books but it is obvious that some of the phrasing is borrowed or at least repeated verbatim from the lesson the essay relates to. I have included some scans of the work itself.

Ed

The Church Hall

October 9th 1935

A new Church Hall has been erected on the piece of ground a little way from the Church. It is very attractive outside as well inside. It was put up by private subscriptions and there is still about £200 owing.

It has a very strong foundation. The roof is made of cedar shingles. We have electric light and gas in it in the form of gas heaters and a gas cooker. The electric light is mainly in the main hall.

Mrs Banks does the sweeping up as well as other odd jobs. Yesterday there was a sale held in the new hall and also a Whist drive was held later on in the evening.

The Water Main has been laid through Birchanger during the last three months.

On it about thirty men have been employed. The men did not dig the trench, this was done by a mechanical digger. This mechanical digger which cost £1200, does the work of one hundred men and earns for its owners £28 10s per week. It moves along by means of caterpillar wheels and I was informed that it did about 200 yards per day.

The men join two pipes on the surface and then lower them into the trench. They wind round the threads, some tow and screw them together and pour on some lead.

The Main goes as far as Duck End Farm. The men say that we shall have water in three months time.

April 17, 1935

The End Of Charles Ist

Cromwell and the Army had now made up their minds that so long as Charles lived there would be no peace. In their opinion he was the cause of all the blood that had been shed. They determined to end matters by the power of the sword. As a first step they decided to expel from the Commons all those members who did not agree with them and who still hoped to make terms with Charles. In December of 1648, Colonel Pride with a force of soldiers went down to the House of Commons and turned out all the members who were not favourable to the Army. This is called Pride's Purge. The remnant of the Long Parliament has been given the derisive name of the "Rump Parliament". Of course the "Rump" was not really a parliament at all, and had no power in law. But it had the very real power of armed force at its back, and law was set aside. It dispensed with the consent of the House of Lords and proceeded to form

Just a part of a historical essay

May 8th 1935

Birchanger Jubilee Celebrations

The celebrations took place on Monday in the school. We all went to church at three o'clock for a short service. After the service we were told to play in the Rec until the bell rang.

When the bell rang we got into our lines and then went into school and sat down at the tables which were readily arranged for tea. Grace was sung and we started eating. There were three men on the stage playing guitars and bones and one of them a mouth-organ. After tea we were each given a ball.

We were sent into the field while master and some boys put the flags up round the course ready for the races. I won two prizes by racing my opponents.

My prizes were a skipping rope and a jam dish, after the prizes came our mugs with sweets in them and then we went home after a joyous afternoon. The old people had tea and a present of half a pound of tea, and the men had tobacco.

Village events are well covered

May 10th 1935

The Abdication and Accession

Dec 14th 1936

On Friday last King Edward VIII abdicated. He did this because he wanted to marry a certain Mrs Simpson. The British people did not approve of this and they told him so.

The Ex-King has gone to Austria to stay with Baron Rothschild.

The Duke of York being the next in succession has been proclaimed King of this mighty Empire.

Very appropriate given our upcoming Royal Wedding!

New Agents in the pink

By Mark Crossley

In keeping with my practise of introducing new supporters of this magazine to the village, I would like to welcome new advertisers *David Lee Estates* to the fold

You may have seen a nifty pink and black Mini zooming about recently, well that is the company transport for this new estate agency based on the Cambridge Road in Stansted (on the left hand side as you travel towards Ugley). David Lee is run by two local lads, David Kirby and Lee O'Brien, who are returning to the area after deciding they wanted to come home and set up their own business after considerable success in estate agency further afield, "We both wanted to strike out on our own, and we know the Birchanger area very well, so it was natural to set up here", said Lee

When asked what sets them apart from the other agencies in the area David Kirby was quick to point out that David Lee Estates are the only truly local agency in the area "All the other agencies in Stansted are branch offices of bigger concerns, whereas David Lee Estates are based in Stansted itself and Lee and I work from the office in Cambridge Road, so clients will get our undivided attention"

David and Lee believe that marketing is king in estate agency so the company also offers other highly desirable services to new clients such as 360 virtual tours and detailed floor plans of all properties, giving prospective buyers the best possible feeling for a new home before they book a visit. David Lee Estates also produce high quality brochures with lots of photos for ALL the properties on their books, a service often only associated with high end agencies

These gentlemen are keen to succeed in the area and are eager to use their wealth of experience to sell houses in the Birchanger area and to that end are registered with (www.rightmove.com), the UK's number one property website to give customers the maximum chance of securing the sale, that and David and Lee's guarantee "to beat any other agencies fees" promises to give any Birchanger resident looking to move the best of deals

To see more of the company visit www.davidleeestates or see the advert on the back page for contact details

Birchanger couple to run in London Marathon

Birchanger villagers Sue and Dave Woods are taking part in the Flora London Marathon 2005. So if you happen to see two suspicious people running through the village one with a torch and one with a black woolly hat. Don't worry they're not on the run from a crime scene, just on the run for that long road ahead. The London Marathon this year is being run on Sunday April 17th.

They say "We are raising money for MERLIN which is a UK-based international humanitarian organisation dedicated in providing emergency health care to people affected by wars, epidemics or natural disasters, such as the Tsunami relief project. We would really welcome your support to help us raise money for our target of £1,250 by donating on-line at the following website address www.justgiving.com/sueanddave , all donations are secure and sent electronically to Merlin." There are also sponsorship forms available at the Club



School News

Happy new year, Chinese style.

The first Funky Friday, a day designed to make learning fun, was certainly just that and the year of the Rooster was celebrated by everyone in the school in some style.

The children were divided into five mixed age groups and toured five different workshops, on Dragons, Chinese Writing, Chinese Culture, Research and Zodiac signs, which all were linked to the five key curriculum areas. Everything to do with China, its geography, history, diet, culture and climate were all incorporated into the workshops. Lunch was served Chinese style, with bamboo shoots, noodles, rice, sweet and sour dishes and bean sprouts on the menu. Prawn crackers and fortune cookies accompanied the meal and everything was eaten or attempted to be eaten with chopsticks. A large number of parent volunteers contributed to the day and the children returned to their classes at the end of the day for a debriefing session. One of the best Funky Fridays so far!

New netball posts.

New netball posts mean a new netball club has been started and a great many children are already signed up for this. There is a full program of matches, which includes a tournament with other local schools.

New life in the school garden.

There are several new items in the wildlife garden, which should mean that there will be plenty going on there this spring. Several different sized nest boxes have been installed to attract a variety of birds. There is also a ladybird box, a hedgehog house and a Bee box for non stinging bees! Later in the term there will be a beehive.

No garden would be complete without a potting shed, and this, along with the greenhouse will be erected this month. Thank you to the PTA who purchased the items for the school. You will be able to visit the garden as part of the Open Gardens on June 18th and 19th.

National Curriculum restricts School visits

One of the ways in which children learn best is by experience and their enjoyment of the experience. This is sometimes hard to arrange, as the National Curriculum and the SATS tests imposed by the government seem to do their best to overwhelm other things, that do not have an official niche. Examples of this include subjects like Domestic Science, Needlework, Geography and Religious Education.

It is easy to accommodate many of these subjects by linking them to elements in the curriculum and through the Funky Fridays. In the case of Religious Education the need is met by daily assemblies, which always have a theme, additionally the school receives regular visitors from the diocese and from representatives who practise other religions and those running special appeals. The Rector visits the school to take the daily assembly on a fortnightly basis.

Some years ago, an incident with a speeding motorist has resulted in visits to the Church by the whole school being limited. Even the route and procedure for going are prescribed when we do so. Small groups still visit the Church to study particular aspects of the Church. The school has not forgotten its status as a voluntary controlled Church School.

Tsunami appeal.

The first non uniform day was in aid of the Tsunami Appeal. Uniforms were abandoned, in lieu of a donation to the appeal, the children made cakes and sold small items in aid of the fund. They managed to raise a staggering £320.

New furniture for Key Stage 1 children has arrived and all the old tables and chairs are also to be donated to the appeal. They are badly needed, as so much school furniture was lost in the disaster.

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Village Diary February/March 2005

February

20th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

27th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

March

6th 11.00 am St Mary's
Mothering Sunday
Matins

13th 11.00 am St Mary's
Family Service

20th 11.00 am St Mary's
Palm Sunday Matins

26th 8.00 pm Social Club
Mathew Winchester

27th 11.00 am St Mary's
Easter Sunday
Holy Communion

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Calling all Mothers and their children
Come to the service at St Mary's Birchanger
On March 6th at 11.00 am
And make Mothering Sunday a special day

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