

THE SHELTER HAS LANDED

The Youth Shelter saga has run and run. Starting nearly three years ago following complaints by the teenagers who were using the Church Lych Gate as a place to hang out, as they had nowhere else to go in Birchanger.

Last year a group of youngsters decided to do something about it. The Parish Council were approached, who explained that while they did not have sufficient funds to provide a shelter, they were not against the idea, and would do all they could do facilitate the enterprise. Paul and Paula ran the first fete at the Three Willows, then there was a litter pick, a second fete at the pub and other fundraising efforts provided some £3500 towards the overall projected cost of £7500 for the shelter. At that point the shelter seemed a long way off.

At this point Jif who brings the youth bus into the village, suggested that he might be able to find a grant. The Parish Council applied to the Lottery Fund. To everyone's amazement both grants succeeded, and there was enough money to fund the shelter which had been the preferred option.

However, things do not always go to plan. The team went to a trade fair and found a better shelter at less cost. A few phone calls later, and the shelter had been purchased, along with two large litter bins to match. The lottery money was there, but the other provider withdrew, as did the Princes Trust. The District Council came forward with another grant, but the problem of installation remained. The shelter was delivered to the pub car park. Again another friend, Charles the Streeter's Farm Manager, managed to find the equipment to move it to the pub garden. We had a shelter, but nobody to install it.

Another phone call, and the District Council came to the rescue again. This time through their environmental services manager Mel Ribbons, who was able to provide the specialist team and the equipment to do the right installation. The shelter was to be lit on a timer with low level lighting and a trench had to be dug to the Church Hall where a coin meter provides the electricity supply. The lighting system was connected by the Parish Council's new lighting contractor.

There has been a great deal of help and support from many people in the whole enterprise. It has been carried out with goodwill. It is hoped that those who use it, which will include everyone who visits the recreation ground, will respect the hard work which has gone into the project. There are large purpose built litter bins for the bottles, sweet wrappers, take away containers, and these must be used.

Enjoy the shelter, use it responsibly. It is for everyone, and properly treated will outlast most of us, although at the time of writing the shelter had already received some additional redecorating!



Installed at last (with a little help from our friends)

November has turned out to be a busy month newswise this year. Last month's issue stirred up some controversy due to the threat of housing development in Birchwood. It seems that people power has won that particular battle for the time being. So thanks are due to Pearl Rogers and Debbie Muscutt who organised a letter of protest along with a petition with near 100% support.

As yet we have received no entries for our writing competition obviously our children have no use for free WH Smith vouchers and I would have thought we had at least one wit who could complete a limerick. There is still time to enter, the competition does not close until Dec 4th.

The Youth shelter is now in place. Congratulations are due to all those who made it happen. It seems however that there are still some who prefer the lych gate. There's no pleasing some people.

In contrast to this, a development in the parking situation in the lower part of Birchanger Lane and the spate of stupid thefts from gardens has left me with bad taste in my mouth.

Another thing that has bothered me is that there will **not** be an evening carol service at St Mary's this year. Apparently this is due to the retirement of the musical director in the benefice. Now I can appreciate that someone has to organise the choir but what most of us enjoy is simply singing the traditional Christmas carols interspersed with the usual readings. So I don't think the choir is so much of a necessity. All that's really needed is an organist, a Priest to officiate and the will from the benefice to come to Birchanger and do it. After all it's the one time in the year that the church fills up with a congregation who want to be there. There will however be a Sunday morning carol service on December the 18th. So I hope you all come out and support it.

Ed Gilbey

Club AGM

Birchanger Social Club made a break with tradition at its AGM on 15th October when Marilyn Hutchins was appointed Club Secretary when she became the first female officer in the Club's 114-year history. Marilyn's appointment, however, was not a complete break with the past. Her father, George Banks, served the Club faithfully for many years as a committeeman; as secretary; and as treasurer and is much missed by the membership.

Marilyn's duties will include routine tasks such as handling post and preparing the minutes of meetings as well as trickier activities such as ensuring that the Club complies with the vast and growing raft of legislation that applies to it.

Club Chairman Ken Wheatley welcomed Marilyn onto the team and also thanked her predecessor, Keith Robins, who had steered the Club through the difficult task of acquiring its club premises certificate under the new licensing act.

Other decisions made at the AGM included an increase of the annual subscription to £10 and a ban on smoking at the bar.



In her father's footsteps,
new club secretary Marilyn

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS FROM *Elizabeth Godwin*

More affordable housing In Birchwood? Not this time

Affordable homes in Uttlesford are in very short supply. There are also many young families in Birchanger who have been forced to leave the village to find housing which they can afford. The District Council in attempt to address the situation looked at garage sites, which are often eyesores and underused throughout the district, including Birchanger.

The proposals are not proving to be popular with residents throughout the district, and that definitely includes Birchanger. A near 100% petition against the proposal, organised by Pearl Rogers, with strong and valid reasons was handed in to the Chairman of The Health and Housing Committee last month. The scheme would be unlikely to provide more than 6 homes, a drop in the ocean of overall need. The loss of parking facilities overall would not be acceptable.

The Parish Council also opposed the proposals. We do need affordable houses in Birchanger within development limits. The question is where? Any ideas?

More Parish councillors needed

Two members of the Parish Council have found themselves forced to give up their roles due to pressures of work or health. There are therefore two vacancies arising on the Parish Council.

Birchanger Parish Council has Quality Parish Council Status. It is very proactive, and is at present at a very interesting stage with the development of the Parish Plan which will lead to the village design statement. If you are interested in joining the Parish Council, please contact Julia Peachey the Parish Clerk, or Elizabeth Godwin for further information. You would be very welcome.

In case of emergency.

Nobody knows when an emergency will happen to them, and they will end up in hospital. Hospital staff will try to contact next of kin, but the victim may be unconscious, and nobody can give information as to medical history or allergies. A new simple idea, supported by Falklands war hero, Simon Weston, uses the fact that an increasingly large number of people carry a mobile phone. The idea is that people store the word ICE on your phone, with the number of the person required to be contacted in this situation entered against it.

The message in a bottle scheme for those who are vulnerable or live alone continues to be successful in the district. For those who are unfamiliar with the scheme, the council will supply a simple plastic bottle, in which all the details of personal, medical, medication and next of kin are kept in the fridge. Emergency services are trained to look for the bottle when they respond to a call, and it is accepted as good practice. It can save lives.

If you would like a bottle, please call the Community Safety Officer at Uttlesford District Council on 01799 510585.

The Primary Care Trust in Uttlesford

The Primary Care Trust is under threat in Uttlesford. It has to save £200,000 somehow, as Primary Care Trust spending across the country has to save over £250,000,000. An impossible task for any trust in its current form. Accordingly there are two options under consideration for Essex, either a single PCT for Essex, or a division into two PCTs, one in the north, and one in the south of the county. Neither solution is acceptable to Uttlesford.

The District Council would like to preserve Uttlesford Primary Care Trust in its current form, with perhaps more joint working taken on by the council, with a sharing of resources. This option may not be acceptable to the powers that be. What is not acceptable to the District is the loss of valuable resources to Harlow, which notoriously eats money, and is known to have debts.

Uttlesford PCT has 77,299 patients registered to its GPs. It has shown a decrease in accidents, deaths from respiratory disease are down, services are improving, and there is a big uptake in vaccinations. The PCT is a young trust, and only recently beginning to find its feet. It promises better things, and it seems that it may not now have the opportunity to show what it can do.

At the same time there are consultations around which will mean that Uttlesford patients will have to travel to Southend, Colchester, or Ipswich for certain specialised cancer services, while all but the simplest throat and neck surgery will move to Broomfield. This gives Uttlesford residents huge transport problems, at a time when they are at their most vulnerable, and is simply not acceptable. The government is against cross county boundary splits in the main, but it does make sense for Uttlesford residents to make use of Addenbrookes Hospital where we can, except that as a Foundation Hospital, they can set their own boundaries, and Birchanger is not included. What chance will the village have when their own PCT is under threat as well?

Vanishing roundabout

The roundabout in the recreation ground has remained a very popular piece of equipment for several generations of Birchanger children. It has been vandalised several times, and has lost the cover to the ball bearings. this winter it will be removed for general refurbishment. It will be back, but it is a big job, and it could take some time.

Elsenham water is the best

Did you know that the best water is actually produced from an artesian well in Elsenham, near the jam factory site. It comes from a source some 300ft into the chalk substrata, and is produced and bottled at the source, by a small team.

The building which houses the enterprise is brand new, and constructed using a great deal of specially treated glass. The glass keeps the building warm in winter, and cool in summer, and for those who work there, the experience is almost like working outdoors.

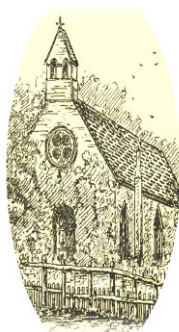
The factory is equipped with a tea shop, and you can buy the water there. You can also watch the water as it is pumped from the source, and is then immediately bottled. The bottles themselves are unique, and recently won an international glass bottle award in Dubai. They would grace any table, long after the original contents have been consumed.

The water is not aimed for the mass market. It sells for £4 per bottle, and is exported to a few selected clients world wide. It is retailed by Harvey Nicholls, and if you are fortunate enough to visit exclusive restaurants, you may find it there. The factory welcomes visitors, and it will be a visit with a difference.

Christmas Coffee Morning

On behalf of the friends of St Mary's
At Moorswood 330 Birchanger Lane

Saturday 13th December
At 10.30 till 12.00



School News

Where were you?

Invitations went out, but only two of those invited to sample a school dinner at Birchanger School managed to make it. Mrs June Brown and Mr Porter were very welcome, and sampled a healthy school dinner of Shepherd's Pie, a choice of fresh vegetables, fresh fruit salad or yoghurt all for £1.50. They were able to talk to the children, and thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. It will be repeated, don't miss it next time.

Another winning team

Birchanger School Football Club, under the direction of coach Culpin have enjoyed an unbeaten first half of the term in cup and league games. Although one of the smaller schools in the league the team continues to produce results. Congratulations, and good luck for the rest of the season.

Dates for your diary

The School Christmas Fair is to be on Sunday December 11th this year, starting at 2pm. This is to avoid a clash with the children's party which is to be held at the club on December 10th.

The children are now busily practising for the Christmas Play. This is to take place on Wednesday December 14th in the afternoon.

Christmas Coffee Morning For The Church will take place on November 26th between 10.30 am and 12 noon.

Christmas Coffee Morning at Moorswood in aid of the Friends of St Mary's will be on Tuesday December 13th at 330 Birchanger Lane from 10.30 am to noon.

It looks like a busy Christmas. Enjoy.



Birchanger Primary School

Presents its

Annual Christmas Bazaar

On Sunday 11th December at 1pm-4pm

Come along with all the family and enjoy all the usual festive fun and games including Santa's Grotto, Craft Stall, adult's and children's Raffle and, of course, plenty of refreshments.



Pick a pizza for Pudsey!

Laura to become Britain's youngest TOGG?

This year's Children in Need campaign is all the tastier for the efforts of 12 year old Birchanger resident Laura Devine as she claimed the top prize in a national competition to design a pizza.

The competition was run by The Sunday Times in conjunction with Bella Italia across the UK and asked prospective Pizzerias to come up with original recipes using whatever ingredients they liked. Laura's triumphant pie was made up of meatballs and marscapone with peppers, mushrooms and onions and is now on sale in Bella Italia restaurants all over the country, with all proceeds going to Children in Need.

As part of her prize Laura, who is in year 8 at Birchwood, was invited with friends including Rebecca Davey to Bella Italia's Harlow establishment to cook her creation in a real pizzeria. The day was rounded off by the appearance of Pudsey bear who told Laura that she was to be invited to the screening of this year's BBC event and that she may even get a mention on the Terry Wogan breakfast radio show!

Laura attributes her cooking skills to the influence of mum Jayne and dad Ken but she has not set her heart on a career in the kitchen.

We at the Village Magazine think Laura should also be applauded for finally coming up with a pizza that is good for people!

TOGG = Terry's Old Guys & Gals



Laura, Rebecca and friends

Parking in the Lane

The parking problem in the lower part of Birchanger Lane has taken a rather unpleasant turn as I have a report that one of the residents has received a threatening letter about the matter. Apparently it is not enough that this resident has already had criminal damage done to a vehicle on numerous occasions. This latest development marks a new low for the village and I hope our readers agree this behaviour is completely unacceptable.

However the letter has been passed on to the police and although it was typed the envelope it arrived in was handwritten. They believe there is a good chance that the author's DNA may be recoverable. We hope this turns out to be the case and that justice takes its course.

Thefts from gardens

I have a report that there has been some theft of ornaments from a garden in Birchwood. It seems someone with no regard for the feelings of the victim thinks it's a jolly good wheeze to steal property from old people's gardens. I'm in no doubt as to what most of us think of such people.

Birchanger boy plays at Saracens

Local lad Daniel Crossley hit the big time last month when he played rugby in front of nearly 12,000 people during the Heineken European Championship match between Saracens and Biarritz at Vicarage Road, Watford.

Okay, so Daniel is only seven (nearly eight) and, okay he was playing tag rugby and, okay it was at half time during the match proper, BUT it WAS in front of over 11,000 people, and to play sport in front of that sort of crowd is something that most adults (most men anyway) have only dreamt of and would gladly give any number of eyeteeth to achieve.



Daniel with some teammates

The event was part of the England Rugby in the Community Initiative. In this, local junior clubs get affiliated to their nearest Premiership club and at Bishop's Stortford RFC we have been tied with Saracens (this cuts a WASPS man to the quick but what can I do?). The scheme sees players and coaches visiting the feeder clubs and promoting the game of Rugby Union into the locality and the clubs are also invited to take part in match day activities. So on 23rd October Bishop's Stortford under 8s found themselves running out against other Herts teams as part of the half time entertainment!

The young players loved every minute in the limelight and I'm sure that several will be inspired to play the 'big game' for real after the experience. The Saracens v Biarritz game was the equivalent of Manchester United v Real Madrid and there were many French supporters in the record crowd watching Bishop's Stortford record a famous victory on the day but the simple act of running out on to a field of sport, knowing you have to perform, not drop the ball, make the tackles is sobering enough without the knowledge that there will be people, lots and lots of people watching you, hoping to be entertained by you!



Play underway in front of a decent crowd

All of the boys that took part deserve a round of applause and free drinks in the bar!

Oh by the way Saracens also won 22-10

If you thought this was a good story and have one of your own about any village child. Give us a call and we will write it up for you!

Another Cautionary Tale

It had been a trying day, and the baby who had been running a high fever all day was finally asleep. The parents did not anticipate a good night. In the morning they were surprised to find that they had all slept soundly.

The mother took the baby to find a drink in the kitchen in the basement. While he was playing, she slipped upstairs to find her work diary in her handbag in the front room. She was surprised that she could not find it at all. She returned to the kitchen, and her husband came down. She searched the house for her bag. She discovered she could not find her camera case although the video camera was lying on the desk. A bag containing brand new binoculars for the family holiday the following week was also missing, nothing else appeared to be touched, although the thieves had also made off with the car keys. There was no sign of forced access, although the door had been locked, but not bolted, or the snib put on. Nothing had been disturbed.

The police were called. They demonstrated how easy it was to gain access with the flattened top of a coca cola bottle. They said there had been a spate of this sort of crime on the other side of town. They gave all the usual advice. Banks were notified, credit cards stopped, replacement locks and keys fitted. The family left for a week's holiday.

On their return they found a letter from their friendly bank manger, obliging giving them an overdraft on their surprisingly overdrawn bank account, along with a letter deducting £38 for an unauthorised overdraft. They were surprised as the bank had been notified of the theft, and the account had not been used by them. It had by the thieves who had run up an overdraft of £2300 pounds by purchasing items on 23 cheques of just under £100 a piece. All this on cheques and credit cards which had been stopped immediately the crime had been discovered. The bank is supposed to be picking up the bill, but it is amazing how, for at least a week after the crime was reported, the thieves were enjoying themselves in Oasis, Next, and the like. Now they are also using the mobile phone, and have started to apply for store cards on the wife's identity.

It could happen to anyone anywhere. It would not have happened if a bolt or chain had been used. For the couple the misery goes on.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Here are some useful telephone numbers. If there are any organisations who would like to be included in this list please forward then to the editor. Other suggestions from readers will also be considered.

Birchanger Church of England Primary School
Head Teacher Mrs. Denise Howell 812362

Birchanger Nursery Unit 07773730754
Admissions enquiries : Mrs Tina Crossley 814037

Birchanger Open Gardens Committee
Enquiries to: Miss Sheila Devereux 813843

Birchanger Social Club 812810

Birchanger Village Magazine
Editor Mr. Eddie Gilbey 816171

Brownies
Mrs Jenny Jameson 815396

Church in Birchanger
The Benefice office 815243.
Rector Rev'd. Andrew Spurr 812203
Church Warden Mrs. Joy Wright 813893

Church Hall Mrs. Ann Smith 813457

District Councillor
Mrs. Elizabeth Godwin 812793

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
Mrs Ann Kent 813204

Parish Council
Chairman Mrs. Elizabeth Godwin 812793

Clerk to the Council
Mrs. Julia Peachey 503912

Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow 444455

Cubs and Scouts
Trevor Stone 812994

P.T.A. Mrs. Maria Davey 816490

Saturday Football Club
Mr. A. Lucas 813441

Sunday Football Club
Mr. Neil Gilbey 816039

County Council news from Ray Gooding

Those of us who live, work and travel to and fro in the Stansted area will be all too aware of the impact which the Airport is having on our lives, not just because of the noise and air pollution which is ever present, but also because of the increased traffic on our roads which generally hampers our journeys.

It is well known that Stansted has a greater number of parking spaces per passenger than any other airport in the world and in their displays and the interim forecasts which BAA have recently presented they appear to have paid little heed to the Surface Access requirements which their current and proposed growth in passenger throughput will require. Indeed, recent surveys have shown that the percentage of passengers and employees who use public transport to travel to the airport is woefully small and it is hardly surprising. The low cost airlines have attracted people from all over the country and unless you travel via central London it is almost impossible to reach the airport by train. Couple this with the fact that the Stansted Express shares the general, unreliable commuter services to the City and it leaves the car as the only feasible means of reaching the Airport for the majority of passengers.

We in Essex are all aware that the Airport is here to stay but when added to the impact of the housing development in the area, the 2012 Olympics, not to mention the Thames Gateway Development and the growth in road transport which passes through the County on the Motorway network, we have a daunting prospect.

In order to address this, Essex County Council are exploring new measures to manage the airport's transport impact and this includes such things as demand management for airport trips through some form of toll on users together with new freight management systems and innovative ways of financing and delivering the necessary infrastructure programme which is essential if the nature of this area is to be maintained.

Local News

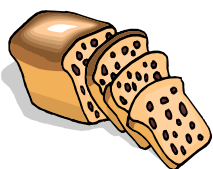
Many of you have written to me regarding the dreadful record of accidents which have taken place this year at the junction of Birchanger Lane and the B1383. I can report that the Highways Department are aware of this and are checking the criteria and a full investigation leading to any necessary remedial works to the junction will follow.



Christmas Coffee Morning

On behalf of St Mary's Church
At the Church Hall

Saturday 26th November
At 10.30 till 12.00



Entry £1 to include a cup of coffee or tea
and either a mince pie or shortbread





Festive writing Competition

Once again we are running a writing competition for our younger readers for printing in the December issue. This year we are looking for Stories, Poems or Limericks constructed from one of the following first lines.

- 1 A long long time ago in far off galaxy named Birchanger.
- 2 The candles in the church burned brightly.
- 3 As the clock struck midnight the snow began to fall.

And for the limericks something along the lines of

- 1 There was a young man from Duck End.
- 2 (and for balance) There was a young lady from Birchwood.

As usual there will be prizes for the best entries and consolation prizes for the runners up we will accept entries from 4 to 7 year olds, 8 to 11 and 12 and over.

We will also accept entries from adults in the limerick section assuming they are fit to print but we will not be awarding prizes for these entries if we get any!

The closing date for entries is Sunday December 4th.



Joy Wright (Church Warden)

Invites everyone to
St Mary's Carol service on Dec 18th at 11 am.

Carols and readings.

Please come and make it an enjoyable service
Mulled wine and mince pies to be served afterwards.

Birchanger in bloom

A team from the Open Gardens have planted around 800 daffodil bulbs along Birchanger Lane. The going was tough despite recent rain. Hopefully they will increase and brighten up the lane for years to come. Watch out for them next spring.



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Letter to the Editor

I would like to thank all the members of the over sixties club who gave me a lovely leather writing case with pens, paper, envelopes, pencils, calculator, a calender , ruler etc, as well as a pen and pencil set on my retirement as secretary of the club.

I would also like to thank the teachers and children who invited us to dinner on the 14th October Mr Derek Porter and I enjoyed a lovely meal. It was a pity that more people did not attend. It was nice to see the children and to talk to them

Yours sincerely. June Brown.

Jess Bush

The village has been saddened by the death of one of Duck End's longer term residents. Jess Bush was admitted to hospital with Pneumonia on October 20th. She was transferred from Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow on 23rd to Colchester. Unfortunately she suffered a stroke while she was there and died on Thursday 27th.

Jess had many friends in Birchanger and was a popular figure at the Thursday night bingo sessions at the club where she was a cleaner for many years. She was 82.

Jess was a very generous lady and it was not unusual for her neighbours to come home to a bag containing home grown Lettuce hanging on the door or some of her home baked Cornish pasties.

Jess moved into her bungalow with her husband Charlie in 1962 and lived alone there since his death. We offer our condolences to her family and friends.

Nick Yeoman

Many people in the village have been saddened by the death of Nick Yeoman in hospital on November 3rd . He had been suffering from cancer for some time.

Nick and Carol Yeoman moved to Birchwood in 1975 where they raised their three children Justin , Claire and Vanessa. Nick worked as a baggage handler at the airport.

Carol is keen to pay tribute to the care Nick received particularly from the MacMillan nurses. She said. " He could not have received better care". The family have requested no flowers at the funeral but would encourage donations to The Oncology Ward at The North Middlesex Hospital.

Nick's funeral was held at St Mary's on November 14th.

We offer our condolences to Carol her family and friends.

Peter Banks

We were also saddened to hear of the passing of Peter Banks who was born in the village and had lived in Birchwood for many years. I know many people will remember him walking George and Gill Dodson's dog Jamie. His funeral was at Parndon Wood on November 8th. We pass on our sympathies to his family and friends.



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Village Diary

November/December 2005

November

- 20th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins
- 26th 10.00 am Church Hall
Christmas Bazaar
- 27th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

December

- 3rd 8.00 pm At the Club
Annual Social Night
- 4th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins
- 10th 8.00 pm At the Club
Christmas Draw
- 11th 11.00 am St Mary's
Family Service
- 13th 10.30 am Moorswood
Coffee Morning
- 18th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins Carol Service
- 23rd Time tba From the Club
Children's Panto
- 24th 8.00 pm At the Club
Christmas Eve
entertainment
- 25th 11.00 am St Mary's
Christmas Day
Holy Communion
- 31st 8.00 pm At the Club
New Years Eve
Entertainment