

## RAIN ,WIND AND SNOW

Well, the weather in the past month threw us everything at one time or another. Torrential rain followed by frost then high, battering winds, a mercifully light fall of snow with some fog to finish things off.

The village of course took all of this in its stride. The high winds did show up another down side to the presence of the wheelie bins as they blew over when put out over night scattering rubbish everywhere. At least the snow on the morning of Feb 8<sup>th</sup> did not cause too much chaos. Although the school was closed giving the children an extra day to their half term break. It seems some people found the time to enjoy it, as the photo below shows.



Christopher and Mathew Reed had great fun on the snowy day, creating the snow monster to welcome everyone into Birchanger. It beat going to work and school any day. The boys especially enjoyed the bibs and waves from the passing cars. Not to mention Dougie the dog who saw snow for the first time and spent most of the time barking at the snowman. They just can't wait until the next lot of snow comes and hope to see you all in the field then!

# PARISH COUNCIL NEWS *Elizabeth Godwin*

## A New Year, a new challenge?

This time of the year with the long dark evenings and a strong disinclination to go outside, and indifferent television, often makes people review just what is going on in their lives. Perhaps it is time for a new challenge, or possibly a new job and a different lifestyle.

There is one available on your own doorstep, if you are interested. Both the Parish Council and District Council Elections will take place on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Council work brings its own challenges and new horizons at both levels. It is possible that you might be interested in planning, in improving life for youngsters in the village, or services for the elderly. Whatever your interests, it is very possible that they could be useful in the role of a District or parish Councillor.

Experience is no bar, as induction training is available and encouraged, with a wide variety of optional speciality courses also available which could lead to a NVQ ultimately. It is also an opportunity to meet new people and a chance to contribute to the well being of the local community.

Birchanger Parish Council for more years than anyone can remember, has not had a sufficient number of candidates to hold an election. Fortunately this has not affected the quality of the Parish Councillors, but there is no limit on the numbers of people standing for the Parish Council. They must be local, on the electoral roll, and over 18, that is all. Meetings of the Parish Council are on the first Tuesday of every month. If you would like to know more, please call me on 812793.

## Runway location revealed

A little piece of tweaking from the original options, and BAA's long awaited preferred location for the second runway is revealed. Less cost and less land take, but a clear heralding of the demolition of all the communities around the airport for an additional runway which is no longer viewed by many as appropriate in these days of global warming and climate change.

Whichever way the proposal is viewed, communities will be irrevocably changed. One only has to imagine Heathrow transported into Stansted to have some idea of what could be in store. Land take may be down, but segregated mode will mean unremitting noise for those under the flight path by day and night. Communities will be split and roads around the airport regularly used by residents will be closed. Hatfield Forest, whose vegetation is already under threat will be overflowed and ultimately may not survive.

Heathrow has an infrastructure, but there are as yet no plans for any government investment in the infrastructure here. BAA is saving money in this latest plan, but no money will go for the fundamental massive infrastructure overhaul which will be needed for a second runway.

Noise is a major issue, a fact which the District Council came to appreciate in full during the application to increase the use of the original runway. Communities near Ware and Dedham are seriously affected. The affects will double with two runways and more areas will feel the strain.

The plain fact is that life in our area will change irrevocably. Those of us who like our life the way it is may find we will no longer be able to stay here, but the niggardly HOSS scheme will only compensate a few properties in a very narrow additional band, so it may not be easy to move for everyone else. With determination on everyone's part it might be avoided. That is up to you.

## A new way to connect to the District Council 24 hours a day

From February 8<sup>th</sup> one phone call to Uttlesford District Council on 01799 510510 at any time of the day will mean that residents can report problems or pay their bills even when the office is closed, thanks to a newly installed computer system called UConnect. The system means that all the council departments are now linked and a single operator can deal with multiple enquiries in one call.

The improvements also mean that dozens of services can also be accessed on line at anytime at the new email address- [unconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:unconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk) . These will include bill paying, licensing, environmental matters and the reporting of most of the problems which are normally dealt with by the council. Council Service Staff have been extensively trained to handle the wide range of expected enquiries. The new system should allow feedback from residents it can be monitored more quickly and it is expected that this will lead to improvements in the service overall.

The reception areas at the District Council's offices in both Saffron Walden and Dunmow have been redesigned and will be officially opened as Customer Service Centres at noon on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

### New health centre

For more years than we like to remember, we have been promised a new Health Centre in Stansted. The centre is expected to offer a range of treatment normally only available in hospital. It is now understood that negotiations with the owner of the site are progressing and it is hoped to sign an agreement soon. Building would not be expected to commence until 2008. With houses in Rochfords supposed to be occupied later this year, the new health centre cannot come soon enough.

### Could you be a Special Constable?

It seems that the only way we are going to see more policemen on the beat will be if more of us become special constables. We have seen initiative after initiative where more actual policing is promised, only to fail abysmally after a matter of weeks. The plain fact is that there are simply not enough policemen to go around.

Special constables are an important part of Essex Police. They are volunteers who assist the regular police, they are trained and give up a few hours a week of their time. To be a special constable you need to be between 18 and 50 years, fit and in good health, to be able to think fast and to be part of a team.

If you would like to know more, please call Kevin Wakefield on 01799 513232.

### New environmental crime enforcement policy for Uttlesford

The District Council is about to adopt a new policy which will mean that it will become an offence to drop litter anywhere. There will also be powers to force businesses to clear litter from their land, and to curb the handouts and pamphlets which frequently end up as litter. It also confirms that cigarette butts and discarded chewing gum are also officially classified as litter. There are also powers to deal with dog fouling and noise nuisance which will include burglar alarms and light pollution. It should be easier to get abandoned cars removed as well. The District Council will be the authority to approach to report any of these soon to be recognised environment crimes on 01799 510510.

Our noisiest neighbour and those who persistently refuse to clean up after their dogs could be in for a wake up call!

### Open gardens in hibernation.

In the past twelve years the open gardeners in Birchanger have raised over £7000 for village projects. These have included new equipment and benches for the recreation ground, support for the school garden projects by the provision of suitable tools, the village sign and numerous smaller projects. Sadly support from the village in latter years has been poor, despite the work which the gardeners have put into the project. It is probably a case of "been there, done that".

This means that Open Gardens will not happen again this year in Birchanger. The group will stay together and review the situation on an annual basis. They are always open to new ideas, and any new gardeners who would like to join them.

There was money remaining from the Open Gardens in 2005. Although this did not raise very much the Scouts will benefit from £250, the magazine will receive £200, and £50 will be spent on bulb planting around the village this Autumn.

If anyone has a small village project for which they would like some financial help, please call Sheila Deveraux on 813843.

# New Exercise Class for All

The Uttlesford Healthy Eating & Lifestyle Programme is providing opportunity for local residents to improve their health and fitness by introducing an exercise class at Birchanger Village Hall from this Spring.

The class will last approximately one hour and will be suitable for all levels of fitness.

The Healthy Eating & Lifestyle Programme is a Leisure Connection initiative, supported by and developed with local partners Uttlesford District Council, West Essex Primary Care Trust and Uttlesford MIND. The project is funded by Sport England and has an objective of encouraging and supporting people who want to increase the amount of health beneficial physical activity they participate in.

Programme Co-ordinator Steven Prosser says... "The government recommends people be moderately active for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week in order to reduce risk of developing sedentary related illnesses such as obesity and heart disease. This new class is a great way for people to go about achieving that target.



The classes, commencing weekly from Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March, will start at 12.30pm and cost £3 per person, going towards the cost of hiring the hall and instructor. Any person interested should attend in suitable, comfortable clothing and footwear.

Further details are available from the Healthy Eating & Lifestyle Programme Co-ordinator Steven Prosser on 01799 581720.

## The Numbers up for village youth

The inaugural performance by the AYB (that's the Acting Youth of Birchanger) is to be at the Village Hall at 8pm on Sunday 11th March. It is a dark comedy called *Numbers* about one-upmanship and bullying by London-based playwright Kieron Barry, which has been adapted for Birchanger life by director Hugh Allison.

According to Hugh, "The cast and crew have worked very hard putting this play on, and have done well just to put up with my constant alterations. I have been treating this like a proper London production, albeit a slightly off-kilter one in terms of design and style, and no-one has let me down in this or any other respect. The enthusiasm and suggestions are among the most impressive I have ever come across"

Tickets all cost £7 and are available from Helen Chant at 5 Birchwood, or on 01279 816416.



Anyone interested in being involved with future AYB shows, please contact Hugh on 07941 236871, or email him [directing@t-y-p-e.net](mailto:directing@t-y-p-e.net)

# On the Highview beat    With Michael Daw

January in Highview had a sad ending. We lost a well known character in Terry Lee who died on the 28<sup>th</sup> after a short illness.

Terry had lived in Highview for over thirty years, he leaves his wife Anne and Daughter Becky. He will be best known for all of the work he did in High View and the rest of the village. Terry was the main man in High View if you needed a new bathroom etc fitted. But he was best known for getting people out of trouble if they had an urgent gas, water or electrical problem. No job was too big or too small.

He will be sorely missed by his loving family and all of his neighbours.

Highview was badly hit during the high winds last month with numerous fences being blown down. The wall at number 49 which adjoins Birchanger Lane was blown down.

Along with all of the things in life that are sad, we often find something good. I lost a number of panels during January; the last storm was particularly bad as there were some electrical cables involved. On Friday morning I rang Jay Leavers with the bad news, by Sunday morning he had been round assessed the damage and by Monday morning all the work had been done. That is what you get when you use a local craftsman Thank you Jay!

Michael is looking for news snippets for each month issue you can contact him at 43 Highview or 814180.

## First Fixed Penalty Notices In Birchanger?

It has taken more years than anyone would like to remember, but last month penalty notices were actually issued to motorists who block the pavement in varying locations in Birchanger. Any one who actually walks in Birchanger will know how dangerous this parking is for pedestrians, particularly the elderly and those with young children.

I wonder how long it will take to stop the articulated vehicles who continue to use the lane as a rat run. It is not for lack of trying!

The Birchanger Over sixties club are going on their annual holiday to the Isle of Wight on March 5th. Twenty one members are going. We hope they have a lovely time.

**Birchanger over 60s**

**Prize Bingo**

**Saturday March 24th  
At 7.30**

**In the Scout Hut**

**Admission £5**

# School News

## A big thank you from Birchanger School

This goes to everyone who contributed nearly 9000 Tesco Vouchers for play equipment in the recent promotion. The bumper collection was sent off to Tescos last month, and the various pieces of playtime equipment should start to arrive shortly. Thank you everyone, we could not have done it without your help.

## Holiday Creativity

If you thought that children did very little over the Christmas Holidays other than play with their new toys, visit relatives and enjoy Christmas entertainment you would be wrong in the case of Birchanger School. Throughout the Autumn Term Class 4 Reading Groups had been reading and discussing with the rest of the group some of the modern classic literature for children. Their task for the Christmas Holidays was either to make a comic strip, or a Diorama.

You might be forgiven for not knowing just what a Diorama is. The dictionary describes it as an exhibition of pictures seen through an opening with lighting affects. The children mainly used shoeboxes to create their scene and placed the characters from the book inside.

The results were stunning, and are displayed just inside the school entrance. The books included were by a variety of authors including J.K. Rowling, Roald Dahl, and other authors who have become household names. The characters portrayed were all very familiar and well crafted. Congratulations everyone.

## New assembly well supported

The weekly assemblies on Fridays are proving to be popular with both pupils, parents and friends. Held at 2.45pm every Friday, they offer an opportunity for a class to show everyone just what special projects they have been studying. It is also a time when the stars of the week for each class are announced as well as the Head Teacher's Weekly award. The pictures of each of the stars are then displayed for the following week on a board outside the hall. These awards are not just for scholastic achievement, but are also for improvement, hard work and helpfulness.

There is a new award this term, which involves the children's own choice. This is the Special Friends nomination. Pupils are invited to place their own nomination for a special friend in a box beside the

school council notice board. During the assembly a member of the school council will draw a name out of the box. This name is then entered into the new Friendship Book, which is also on display in the front lobby. The first name drawn out was that of a pupil in year one, showing that all the children no matter how young are involved in the initiative. Class 1 have also been nominated as the class who settled best on the return to school after the Christmas Holidays.

The end of the week assembly is open to everyone, even if they do not have a child at the school.

## Birchanger School plays host

The long anticipated visit by sixty children from the Essex School in Manor Park took place last month. The children come from a densely populated area of east London, and the space and the freedom around Birchanger was a surprise to most of them. The day was bitterly cold, wet and windy but despite this they managed to visit the Church, Digby Wood, and to fit in a short village walk divided into five smaller groups. They also saw around the school which much have seemed tiny to them and spent some time with binoculars studying the bird life in the children's own garden.

The children were able to recreate the friendships which they had begun in their visit in December. They enjoyed a longer lunch and play time so when they regrouped for the afternoon activities they were noticeably relaxed and at ease with each other. There will be another visit by the other sixty children in the year group in the summer.

This is an important link for the school, as it introduces Birchanger School children to a world they could only imagine. It is also a chance to meet again the School's previous Head teacher, Mrs Cowan, who amused some of the children with her memories of them when she was at the school.

## PTA QUIZ

School PTA are putting on a General knowledge Quiz  
Saturday 10th March

7.30 for 8pm

5.00 per head bring own food and drink

Teams of up to 8 (but if not in a team and still are interested, PTA will arrange to put teams together)

Tickets available from school

Tel:- 812362

## St Mary's Birchanger

### Arts and Crafts Fair

Saturday 17th and  
Sunday 18th March 2007

## In the Church Hall

from 2pm until 5pm

Entrance fee £1 per adult  
Children free if accompanied by an adult.

For further information contact  
Pam Lee on 07702171744

## St Mary's Birchanger

### Mothering Sunday

Sunday 18th March 2007

in Church at 11.00 am

All Welcome

30 Birchwood  
Birchanger.

Return of thanks.

Dear Friends

I would like to thank all of you for the cards and flowers I received after my stay in Hospital. They were very much appreciated and very kind of you all.

Best wishes.

Phyllis Hill.

## USEFUL NUMBERS

Here are some useful telephone numbers. If there are any organisations who would like to be included in this list please forward them to the editor.

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

**Birchanger Open Gardens Committee**  
Enquiries to: Miss Sheila Devereux **813843**

**Birchanger Bowls Club**  
Secretary John Law **813176**

**Birchanger Cricket Club**  
Secretary Kevan Reid

**Birchanger Nursery Unit**  
Enquiries to Tina Crossley **814037**

**Birchanger Social Club** **812810**

**Birchanger Village Magazine**  
Editor Mr. Eddie Gilbey **816171**

**Church in Birchanger**  
The Benefice office **815243**  
Church Wardens Peter Odrich **323927**  
Pam Lee **07702 171744**

**Church Hall** Janet Gage **813507**

**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**

**Saturday Football Club**  
Mr. A. Lucas **813441**

**Sunday Football Club**  
Mr. Neil Gilbey **816039**

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## Village Diary February / March 2007

### February

25th St Mary's 11.00  
Holy Communion

### March

4th St Mary's 11.00  
Matins

10th At the School  
Quiz Night

11th St Mary's 11.00  
Family Service

11th Church Hall 8.00 pm  
Numbers

13th Moorswood 10.30  
Coffee Morning

17th Church Hall 2.00 pm  
Craft Fair

18th St Mary's 11.00  
Mothering Sunday

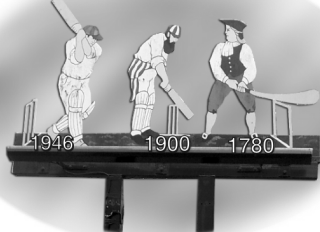
18th Church Hall 2.00 pm  
Craft Fair

24th Scout Hut 7.30  
Prize Bingo

25th St Mary's 11.00  
Holy Communion

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### COFFEE MORNING



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Moorswood 330 Birchanger Lane

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