

# ROADWORKS BEGIN AT LAST

At 8 am on Friday 14th, Birchanger Lane trembled with the vibration of road resurfacing equipment. Work began almost immediately opposite "Centuries". With a large swath of road surface lifted. The contractors were working back towards the Church Hall. Phase 2 will work from the Pub up towards the A120. The bulk of the equipment was stored temporarily in or around the pub car park.



Despite several "Road Closed" signs there were still some motorists who concluded that it did not mean "Closed" to them and had to reverse and turn round to escape.

Some of the crew at work

## New Bus service times

From September 1st the 301 bus will no longer run through Birchanger. It will still stop at Sion House and the new village bus service 7 or 7a will run between Bishop's Stortford, Birchanger, Stansted, Elsenham, Henham and the airport. The journey to the airport will take over 40 minutes. The timetable lists the times at Bradley Common and commences at 6.45 for busses to the airport and 7.26 for buses into Bishop's Stortford.

The times for busses to the airport are as follows:- 6.54, 08.04, 09.04, and 4 minutes past the hour until 19.04.

Times for busses into Bishop Stortford are more complicated due to not all of the services stopping everywhere in Stansted :- 07.26, 08.16, 09.29, 10.26, 11.29, 12.26, 13.29, 14.26, 15.29, 16.26, 17.26, 18.26, and finally 19.26.



# PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

*Elizabeth Godwin*

We are all relatively healthy, official!

The health profile for Uttlesford for 2009 showed that overall the health profile for people living in our area is still better than the average for the rest of England. This also includes hospital admissions for drug and alcohol misuse.

The early death rates for all diseases including those for cancer, heart disease and stroke have improved over the last 10 years and are significantly better than those in the rest of England. There are still health inequalities by deprivation, location and gender. Men from the least deprived areas are living almost five years longer than those in the most deprived areas. Hip fractures and winter deaths in the over 65's are on a par with the rest of the country.

However road deaths and traffic injuries are significantly higher than elsewhere. Although Uttlesford children are more active in school, 1 in 15 children have been found to be obese in reception classes (excluding Birchanger of course.) The levels of teenage pregnancies are down, while GCSE attainment is up.

As we all know, we do suffer from public transport deprivation due to our rural nature, and access to services for many is limited. However the district came fifth in the country in a recent survey of 350 local authorities as the place where 87% of the people believe that they get on well together and was top overall in the Essex survey results in 10 of the categories which were covered.

Hopefully we will be able to improve services to those in areas of deprivation while still keeping the sense of well being which pervades the area as a whole.

When Swine Flu comes

We are rated as officially healthy but that is not going to make us immune from the effects of swine flu. We may try to barricade ourselves in, or quarantine those who are suffering from it, but sooner or later it is almost inevitable that we will have some kind of contact with it.

Some groups will be particularly at risk and these include the elderly, very young, and those who live

on their own. As all medical services will be severely stretched it will fall on the community at large to provide what help they can as far as they are able.

One simple way is to watch out for the vulnerable in your neighbourhood. Their needs may be simple such as picking up a few bits of shopping or collecting prescriptions to obtaining medical help where the person appears to be seriously ill. If you think there is a problem and you are unable to help the individual yourself for whatever reason, please try to find someone who can.

I am available to do my best but I may not necessarily know that there is a problem. If you do have concerns where you think additional help is needed and you cannot access the appropriate help, please call me on 812793.

Community information centres have moved

The Community Information Centre in Dunmow has left the council offices in the High Street, to take up residence in the brand new library which can be accessed from the main car park in Dunmow. The usual council services will operate from this new site. The new library itself is well worth a visit and is part of the scheme for new shops and homes in the town centre.

The old council offices will only be open when the CAB is open. The sole access will be from the doors at the side of the building. The front access is to be closed.

BAA gets a date for the competition appeals tribunal

BAA will formally make its case to keep Stansted Airport to the Competition Appeals Tribunal on October 19<sup>th</sup>. The appeal is expected to last 3 – 4 days. Ryanair has been granted permission to “intervene” in the proceedings as a major BAA customer. What this really means is anyone's guess.

Three days seems to be a very short time to hear such a major issue. Judgement could take 3-4 months, but it could be sooner.

Stansted's community helpline

Stansted's Community Helpline is 25 years old this year. Many of those involved in the scheme have been working with it since its inception.

A team of approximately 60 volunteers are available to help disabled, housebound or elderly individuals by transporting them to the doctor, hospital appointment, or any medical practitioner where private transport is the most appropriate option. They will arrange to collect shopping or prescriptions when required.

#### Vacancy on the Parish Council

Following the resignation of one of the members on the Parish Council there is a vacancy for a new

member. Accordingly the Parish Council would like to hear from anyone who is interested in taking on the role.

It is an important position. Pressures are not too onerous but it is an opportunity to find out more about Birchanger and what happens here. It is also a vital community service which only residents of the village can understand and provide. If you are interested and would like to discover more please contact me on 812793.

## Helicopters

In the latest Birchanger news, Elizabeth Godwin writes that the only course of action is to complain, complain, complain.

In this, she is correct, but she fails to give the best person to write to. He is Head of Aviation Regulation Enforcement, Civil Aviation Authority, Room K504, CAA House, 45-59 Kingsway, London WC2B 6TE.

I have recently written to him asking whether radar tracks are kept of aircraft – they are, by law, supposed to fly at a minimum of 1000 feet above residential property, and they quite clearly are not following this law.

If enough people from the village bombard him with letters, I am sure that some action will result that keeps the helicopters away from our village!

## PETANQUE (BOULES) IS ALIVE AND WELL IN BIRCHANGER

Some of you might remember the halcyon days of winter (now merged with summer to make one long season) when a few hardy souls would gather at Pub and Club to play boules and also venture out of the village to such mouth watering venues such as Potters Bar or Botany Bay.

Well the piste (playing area) at the Social Club is now available to any member (or signed in guest) and there are 3 sets of boules and 5 jacks behind the bar together with a set of the rules.

Sunday afternoons seems the preferred option for friendly games but of course it can be played any time the Club is open (please return the boules to the bar).

If you need any assistance phone me on 07880 916375 or ask the Steward if any players are in the bar (I will give him a list of those who have played before).

The piste at the Willows is also available and has floodlights so if there is any interest in playing evenings (Friday is a favourite) let me know.

Bob Jennings

# Paparazzi problem for Birchanger?

Birchanger residents may well have to face the intrusion of Fleet Street snappers and journos if the ambitions of one Duck End citizen come true

Rhiannon Handy is a highly talented actress, dancer and singer who, as regular readers of Elizabeth Godwin's column (and the Herts and Essex Observer) will be aware, has just been accepted by the prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) for a six month foundation course starting in September. She has appeared, locally and in the West End, in many productions over the years, both as part of her school's drama group and the Theatre Train Drama School's productions

The RADA course was hugely over subscribed so, when I met up with Rhiannon, just before she jetted off on holiday, I asked her what the selection process had been like, she said, "I had tried all of the drama school three year degree courses, but they aren't prepared to look at someone as young as me, they want people in their 20's who have had a bit of life experience. So I started looking at these foundation courses and was invited to attend initial auditions in March, then I got a re-call in May where all being auditioned had a series of workshops and monologues to do plus an interview. After that we were told that it would be about two weeks before we were notified one way or the other, but I had only just got home and was telling my mum how it had gone when I got a call telling me I had been accepted!" Since then it has been all hands to the pumps to sort out accommodation in London, which thankfully, has now been achieved so Rhiannon can concentrate on looking forward to the course

But this is not the first time Rhiannon has been away from home, last year she attended a four week class at Harvard University in Boston on the NY Film Academy's 'Acting in Film' course, "It was fantastic," she remembers "there were students from all over, and we became very close in that short period of time, I learnt so much about film technique and also about surviving away from home"

Rhiannon, an ex student of Birchwood High credits her drama teachers, Jan Stacey and Angela Barnes,

at the school as being major influences in her decision to choose a career in the theatre "I have never thought of doing any thing else, I feel so comfortable on stage, but I also had a very close group of friends, and we supported each other in whatever we were doing, in fact all of us are following a theatrical path in some form or other". Other influences also include her mum and dad, Graham and Sandra, who have always supported her in her endeavours

I then asked Rhiannon who her role models in the profession are, and she chose two, one very well known while the other is possibly less so. "I admire Cate Blanchett, because she is so versatile, she is like a chameleon, you think she can't play that role, it wouldn't suit her, but then she does and she is fantastic! The second is the American, Idina Menzel, she has such a good voice".

Finally I asked Rhiannon what she plans to do after the RADA foundation course "Well", she said "I plan to work, whether that will be in a theatre, possibly front of house as opposed to acting, or waitressing or I may travel, anything to get the life experience the top schools are looking for, then I will re-audition for the three year courses with a view to completing my BA"

And then? "Well, I would love to be in a musical but whatever happens I want to be a respected actress so I might do some of the weightier roles, perhaps Shakespeare? But whatever I do, it will be in the industry, even if I don't succeed as a performer I will want to be involved in some other area". Well, I know people who have seen Rhiannon on stage and none of us are in any doubt that she has the right stuff to succeed in what is a tough industry, may her waitressing days be numbered, good luck and break a leg Rhiannon!

Mark Crossley

## July delivery problems

A mix up at our printers last month led to late deliveries at the Rochford's estate last month. For which I apologise. The late delivery was further exacerbated when our deliverer Jenny Wraith fell and broke her hip. We wish her well in her recovery. We will also be looking for a temporary deliverer for the Rochford's estate until she has recovered.



# BIRCHANGER SOCIAL CLUB OPEN DAY

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# School News

## Sports day fun for everyone!

It is now a firm tradition for the school to combine the sports day with the PTA Summer Fete. It all makes for a successful and entertaining afternoon for everyone.

The day was very warm but that did not spoil the fun. After the races were over, which this year included a challenging obstacle race in teams for all classes, everyone was free to enjoy burgers, sausages, cakes a drink at the bar, to purchase a number of very attractive goodies or to try their hands at the wide range of stalls scattered around the grounds.

Despite the warm weather a record breaking amount of money was raised and the total is still rising.

A big "thank you" to the PTA and the staff at the school for all their hard work which made the afternoon full of summer fun for all ages. A record breaking £2055 was raised, helped in part by matched funding on the adult raffle by Barclays Bank.

## A chance to display a year of hard work

A great deal of work goes into the Open Evening in July. A whole year's worth in fact. The children's work since September is proudly placed on their desks for their parents to see and to mark their progress throughout the year.

There is a great deal more than this. Teachers and a Governor representative were also on hand to answer questions. The children's work is also displayed on the walls and in the hall there was a sample of every child's handwriting on display. Parents could see for themselves the teaching aids around the walls and the text books the children use.

For those parents coming straight from work there was the opportunity to have some light refreshments and a very welcome glass of wine or Pimms, with soft drinks available for the children. A welcome touch, again provided by the PTA.

## A day outdoors

During the warm weather any opportunity to spend some time outside is welcomed by everyone. This occasion was fun for some, and a chance to work very hard and to demonstrate sporting skills and to pass them on to the rest on the school's first ever Multi Skills Day.

Year 6 Pupils aided by five of their classmates from Year 5 set up their sporting stalls all over the school grounds. The rest of the school came in smaller groups to try to sample the sports on offer and to receive basic instruction from the stall holders as well. They learned about hockey, bowling, tennis and cricket to name a few.

The "instructors" were run off their feet as they were busy helping, carrying, demonstrating and coaching throughout the day, which was pronounced a success and it is hoped to repeat it next summer.

## Immaculate new suite

Over the last weeks of the summer term all the staff spent time gradually getting the school back to normal and installing equipment in the new resources centre. The room dividers are in place which means that the suite can be used for additional teaching, art and music as planned, or for a bigger room for meetings when the doors are open. The larger fully equipped kitchen means that the older children can learn cookery in smaller groups. There is also much needed storage space, a proper home for the large photocopier, a second toilet for use by the disabled, and a replacement toilet for members of staff.

The benefits will be felt throughout the school next term as additional storage space will mean more space in the hall and classrooms. The entrance hall has been opened up by the removal of the photocopier and the addition of a small table which provides information leaflets for visitors to use. Staff can now be accessed from a glass hatch without the need to enter the office, which in turn has been re-organised to provide more working room for the two members of the clerical team.

This is part of a never ending plan for improvements for the whole school. The re locateable classroom will not last forever, the hall could be extended and this is always under review. Other classes also need improvement. Everything depends on finance but work has already started on plans for the next projects. All we will need is the funding. The County Council are aware of our needs and sooner or later at least some of them will be met.

## Birchanger helps in the battle against Cancer

The attractive raffle prizes decorated the entrance hall of the school for weeks, the sponsorship forms were completed and Birchanger School made a major contribution to the fight against cancer. The raffle was drawn at the final sharing assembly, Amy and Sophia from Year 1 completed the children's sponsored run, and three members of staff took part in the 5 kilometre Race for Life. The raffle made £250 alone and the sponsorship money is still coming in. It is hoped that the final total will be close to £500.

Did you know that all cancer patients from April 1<sup>st</sup> this year, can now obtain their medicines, whatever their age, without a prescription charge? This will prove to be a great help to many who could otherwise struggle to pay the prescription charges for what may be a confusing number of much needed curative drugs.

## This year's play the best yet?

I seem to pose this question every year, but the Junior School children's performances in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat delighted all the audiences throughout their three performances. It was a very ambitious production which really hit the mark. The children sang their way through the show and were word perfect without prompting. They all clearly enjoyed performing and their audiences loved the show.

There were amazing performances from Daniel as Joseph, who clearly enjoyed his role and sang like a true professional, and a very memorable Pharaoh performed with style by Rajeew in the now traditional "Elvis" mode. The singing was clear and memorable, whether by the soloists or by the chorus. Two talented dancers completed the cast. The truly glamorous costumes were created by Tina Crossley: rumour has it that they may be available to hire by other groups on other occasions. The whole show was under the more than capable and enthusiastic direction by Miss Williams.

Yes, it just had to be the best show ever. There was so much to sing and so much for all the cast to learn. Congratulations everyone.

And so, farewell

Finally the last day of the school year dawned and it was time to bid goodbye to the seven children who were leaving to move to different secondary schools. They were given a good send off which spanned the two days after the play. A marquee was erected for their summer ball, discos now a thing of the past, to which everyone came in just whatever they fancied from disco gear to dinner attire. They had arranged a talent show along the lines of all the notable talent shows with their own Simon Cowell and his team to do the judging. Next was the Leaver's Assembly where they all received their books chosen to reflect their individual interests. Samantha was awarded the Governor's Prize for her effort and achievements. They also were presented with special

Bibles which in addition to the usual chapters, contained all manner of information to help them through the rest of their lives. The other prizes were not just given to Year 6 as Connor received a prize for being the only child with a 100% attendance record, and the Gardiner Reading Prize was awarded to Harry. In their turn the leavers entertained us with a slide show of their activities throughout their last year and presented the school with kitchen equipment for the new kitchen for the children to use in cookery club next term.

The next day it was back to school with old tee shirts for everyone to sign, a final Leaver's Service in the Church where everyone gave us their final thoughts about leaving the school. A surprise large white stretch limo full of balloons was waiting for them at the end of the morning, to whisk them off for an afternoon of Laser Mayhem at Abridge followed by a feast at the Old Orleans American style Diner near Epping, which was once more commonly known as the Wake Arms.

Farewell Samantha, Luke, Rhiannon, Jeremy, Oonnagh, Daniel and Louise. We hope to see you back at the school during the course of the coming year. We always welcome news, visits and updates from everyone who at some time was a pupil Birchanger School.

So keep in touch and all the very best for next term in your new schools.

## Lost ring

When I read this heading in the July issue of this magazine I could not believe it. I had lost a ring in the Scout Hut, but it had been a long time ago. After giving it a bit of thought, what harm could it do just to phone the number and make a few enquiries.

Dave Dartnell did tell me that he felt the ring they had found had been knocking around for sometime. I gave as best explanation as to what I recall the ring looked like as I had just been given it as a gift when I lost it. Dave said he would pop round with it the following evening.

Having 24 hours to think about it I really could not believe that it could be my lost ring as we worked out that I had lost it about 7 years ago. We had searched the hall after the party we attended and the following day searched the car park but to no avail. We thought it was lost forever.

Anyway, Dave arrived and I could not believe my eyes when he took the ring out of the envelope and there it was. It was a little damaged, but I have had it refurbished and it is now as good as new.

I would like to thank the person who found my ring and kept it safe for all these years and also for thinking to place the notice in the village magazine to see if they could seek out the owner.

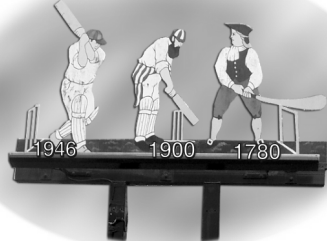
Many thanks Julie Richards

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



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## Village Diary August/September 2009

August

23rd 11.00 am St Mary's  
Holy Communion

29th From 12 noon At the Club  
Open Day

30th 11.00 am St Mary's  
Matins

September

6th 11.00 am St Mary's  
Matins

11 to 13th At the club  
Beer Festival

13th 11.00 am St Mary's  
Holy Communion

13th Harvest Auction

20th 11.00 am St Mary's  
Family Service  
With baptism

27th 11.00 am St Mary's  
Holy Communion

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