

Birchanger

January 2009



Magazine

Issue 73

Proposed Bus Changes for Birchanger

Essex County Council are consulting the Parish council on proposed new bus service changes. They are proposing that the 301 service should not pass through the village, but will stop on the B1383 at the junction with Birchanger Lane. They are proposing a new Service 7 which will be a smaller bus which will run between Bishops Stortford, the Herts and Essex Hospital, Birchanger, Stansted, Henham, Elsenham, and Stansted Airport. Unfortunately the times of this proposed service are not particularly convenient for the school children, but stopping at the hospital may be an advantage for many. It will be a two way service.

Please let me have your views by Tuesday February 3rd so that they may be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council on 812793, or Rachel Price at Essex County Council on 01245 432098.

Mondays to Saturdays

Bishops Stortford, Interchange	0819	19	1919	Stansted Airport, Coach Station	0719	19	1919
Bishops Stortford, Herts & Essex Hospital	0826	26	1926	Molehill Green, Elsenham Road	0724	24	1924
Dunmow Road, Nags head	0828	28	1928	Elsenham Industrial Estate	0726	26	1926
Birchanger, Bradley Common	0834	34	1934	Elsenham, Crown	0730	30	1930
Stansted Mountfitchet, Chapel Hill	0839	Then 39	1939	Henham Green, Vernon Close	0733	Then 33	1933
Stansted Mountfitchet, Maitland Road	0841	at 41	1941	Henham, Wood end Green	0735	at 35	1935
Stansted Mountfitchet, Lower Street	0843	these 43	1943	Henham, Church	0737	these 37	1937
Elsenham, Memorial Hall	0848	mins 48	Until 1948	Elsenham, Rail Station	0742	mins 42	Until 1942
Elsenham, Rail Station	0849	past 49	1949	Elsenham, Memorial Hall	0743	past 43	1943
Henham, Church	0854	each 54	1954	Stansted Mountfitchet, Lower Street	0748	each 48	1948
Henham, Wood end Green	0856	hour 56	1956	Stansted Mountfitchet, Maitland Road	0750	hour 50	1950
Henham Green, Vernon Close	0858	58	1958	Stansted Mountfitchet, Chapel Hill	0752	52	1952
Elsenham, Crown	0901	01	2001	Birchanger, Bradley Common	0756	56	1956
Elsenham Industrial Estate	0905	05	2005	Dunmow Road, Nags head	0802	02	2002
Molehill Green, Elsenham Road	0907	07	2007	Bishops Stortford, Herts & Essex Hospital	0804	04	2004
Stansted Airport, Coach Station	0912	12	2012	Bishops Stortford, Interchange	0811	11	2011



November 21st was a very cold day in Birchanger the over 60's held their annual Christmas bazaar at the church hall. We did not expect many people to turn up but we were pleasantly surprised at the turn out. Several stalls and a large raffle was manned by members. At the end of the day £539 was raised which went towards our Christmas dinner at the Social club. A good time was had by all. A photo of the event accompanies this item.

B F King



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Welcome To Birchanger

At the beginning of December there were 43 new electors in Birchanger from the Rochfords estate. We welcome them to the village and send very best wishes for their new lives in their new homes.

Resurfacing for Birchanger Lane!

Yes, but don't get too excited! So far they have only guaranteed it as far as the Three Willows! The Parish Council will try to get this extended but don't hold your breath. The whole of the lane at least to the Recreation Ground urgently needs resurfacing and perhaps more. Ann Kent took a walk with a representative from Essex County Highways pointing out all the numerous defects. Everything was taken on board, but we will not be too optimistic about any action. Apparently potholes do not need to be so deep now as they used to be before any action was taken. We all remain to be convinced.

Incidentally the Duck End bend has virtually become a no go area between 7 and 7.30 am as vehicles cross to enter the yards at Duck End Barns without any heed of oncoming motorists. Take care.

Birchanger Brightens Christmas.

Thank you to everyone who shared Christmas with the rest of the village by lighting up their home. It all contributed to a brighter Birchanger, whether it was by a simple Christmas tree in a window, or by an incredibly complicated and ingenious display. It was a pleasure just to be out and about after dark. Your time and sometimes possibly hazardous efforts were greatly appreciated and commented on throughout the Christmas season.

So this was Christmas!

Despite the fact that all the Christmas Bazaars were well and truly over and it was an austere year, Christmas was still a very special time for many families in the village. The club Christmas Dinner was a sell out on most occasions, and the Over Sixties Club enjoyed a memorable Monday Christmas Lunch provided by the club with drinks on the house included. Chris, Sue and their team worked very hard to make sure that it was a very special occasion and served up 45 three course Christmas Lunches with a full choice

of menu. Later Chris ran the disco, and a very lively time was had by all!

There were two Christingle Services in Birchanger Church, one for the children at Birchanger School and one for everyone in the usual Sunday morning service slot. These services are always very special, remembering that everyone is really a child at heart and loves the brightly lit orange and the sweets on sticks in its side.

Keeping the tradition alive, the school children all made their own Christingles under the practised guidance of Pam Lee, ensuring that generations to come will be able to benefit from the skills their parents learnt years before. They placed their lighted Christingles on the altar, where they burned brightly until the children collected them at the end of the service. The school children also lead their own service with the school choir and some excellent soloists. Some of the children had been unwell all week but they still made the effort to come to the church. They were later rewarded by an excellent Christmas Dinner and an afternoon of their favourite films.

The real show stopper of the season was the Infant's Nativity play, The Big Golden Owl, which played to a packed school hall. The nativity story was seen through the perspective of a rather cold owl who could not find shelter from the wintery weather anywhere in Bethlehem. Despite all his efforts, groups of bats, rats, mice and humans all turned him away. As usual it was the very lovely Mary who found him a place with the shepherds, wise men and angels in the stable. The story was told by a very able group of narrators with songs arranged by musical director Mrs Sherriff. Mrs Manning and Mrs Crossley provided scenery costumes and makeup with a large band of willing volunteers to help. It seemed that everyone enjoyed the performance including the players.

Paths into the church were lighted by Christmas lights for the annual Parish Carol Service, and the Benefice Choir led the singing. There were mince pies and mulled wine for everyone after the service.

In every community there are always those who would prefer to forget Christmas, for many different reasons and sometimes for events beyond their control. If I can help anyone in any way through a bad time in 2009 please call on 812793.

Skating Fun.

Everyone had a chance to try out their skating skills on a specially prepared ice rink at the Romeera Sports Centre. It had been hoped to hold the event in the Church Hall but the organisers found that the hall was not large enough. Everyone who did make it to the new venue spent a fun hour, with the children performing far better than their parents in most cases. The event was organised to raise funds for the Nursery Unit.

Dental care just does not happen at Christmas

Imagine the scenario. Everyone is having fun on Christmas Day. The children have opened their presents, and nobody has actually broken anything yet, when it starts, that first nagging little pain which by Boxing Day has become so horrendous that it completely takes over your life. Everywhere you try you get the same recorded message, no they will not be opening until the new year, or no they will not take any more emergencies. Even the London Hospital turns you away. NHS Direct refers you back to those recorded numbers you have already tried who are closed anyway. What you do, I do not know. In the end treatment was found on December 29th from a dentist who had compassion for the tortured voice at the end of the phone and who found a serious abscess. Something must be put in place this year so that nobody has to go through this again.

Record breaking poppy collection!

Congratulations to Geoff Driscoll and his team of Poppy Collectors who managed to beat the record for a collection in Birchanger. The money raised hit the £3000 mark for the first time ever, even more amazing considering the grim news on the economy which was everywhere in mid November. It might also reflect the fact that for the first time ever no collection boxes were stolen from the service station. That apart, it is still an enormous sum to raise and it is a big tribute to all concerned.

A new face on the Beat!

We have all become used to the sight of PC Kelly in her "Smart" car everywhere in the village, and in fact in many areas she has become a welcome friend. She is now to be joined by PC Stuart Stranger, who is in the process of introducing himself to Birchanger residents. They are both very happy to discuss your issues and concerns and can be reached on the community mobile -07801 461 666 or through Stansted Police Station 812211 extension 484850. There is also a new number for non urgent calls 0300 333 4444.

Have you got your Bottle?

The message in a bottle scheme has saved many lives since its inception a few years ago. It is well used by the police, fire and ambulance services across the county. The scheme involves simply keeping a small bottle in your fridge with all important medical, medication and contact details inside it. They are intended for use by anyone who is vulnerable or who

lives on their own. It is accepted now by thousands of people and is known to have saved many lives. If you would like a bottle please contact the Essex Watch Co-ordinator Lindsay Baillie on 01376 556233.

International Lottery Scam.

This delightful little scam raised its ugly head around a year ago. It is somewhat alarming that the perpetrators have not yet been caught.

Several Birchanger residents received a letter informing them that they had been entered, unknown to themselves into a Spanish Lottery Sweepstake and had won a very large sum of money. To make their claims they were asked to complete an enclosed form giving details of themselves and their banks so that the money could be forwarded directly to their accounts. They were also expected to pay a 10% commission. There are no known legal lotteries where participants are entered by charities or tourist boards as the letter claims. This is merely a scam to find out more about people and their banks. The loss of their own money from their bank is the most likely outcome. The scam is believed to originate in Nigeria.

Free Legal Advice for Community Groups

There is now a national network of volunteer lawyers who are prepared to provide free legal advice to community groups on a wide range of legal matters. If you do have a problem they can be accessed on their website www.lawworks.org.uk or by telephoning the team on 0207 929 5601.

Changes to the Library Visiting Times

The Mobile Library will visit the village fortnightly starting on Friday January 23rd. It will be at the club between 15.50 and 16.15, it will be at the entrance to High Viiew between 16.20 and 16.35. Please use the service if you can, we are in danger of losing it!

Mobile Police Station

The mobile police station will park at the Church Hall on Fridays between 10 am and 11.15. Again please use this service or it will not be with us for long.

How About Life in Oman?

A great many British people have chosen to spend some time working in Oman, some of them permanently. On a recent visit to friends who are working out a contract in Oman, it is easy to see why. There is a thriving expat community which supports wives and partners and some very good British schools. A liquor license can be obtained for use in a government controlled outlet, and which permit the holder to buy 200 reals of liquor each month. There are familiar high street names, in the form of Marks and Spencer and Next, Waitrose is there under a different name as is Carrefour, to name a few.

This is important, as integration with the local Muslim community is not always easy. The Omanis are a very friendly nation, but their culture is very different to ours. Their weekend happens on Friday and Saturday for religious reasons, and although the dress code is more relaxed than in most Arab countries, the burka is worn by many, and the dress code for entry into the mosques is strict. A glimpse of skin above the feet and below the face attracts a warning from the mosque police.

Children attend school in Muslim dress, but the boys can be seen in top British club football shirts as soon as they get home. They go early to school and their afternoons are usually free. Football is played on any spare space. Children also help their parents on the market stalls, to load the day's fish catch, while their sisters are more likely to be engaged indoors.

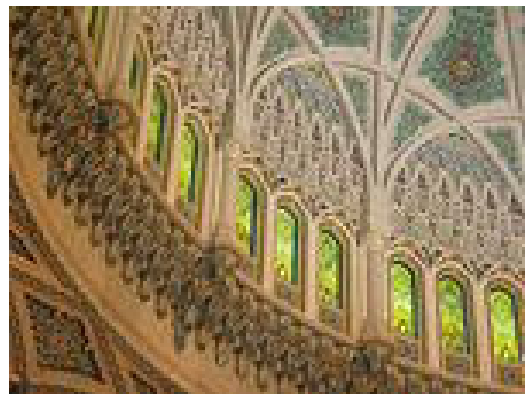
There are many beautiful beaches and high mountain ranges. At least two thirds of the cars are four by fours, and this is one place they do really need them. Roads apart from motorways have some strange surfacing and in the vast mountain areas may be largely unmade. Motoring in these areas is certainly not dull. There is also a huge desert which boasts hotel tented accommodation and delights such as camel riding, dune bashing and even dune skiing. Sunsets and sun rises are spectacular, although the temperature drops to just a few degrees above zero at night.

Tourists are welcome, although tourism is in its infancy. The big international hotels are there in force, and provide a source of alcohol for the expat community. In Muscat they are generally on the beach with all the trappings of a luxury hotel. They are not cheap. Most Omanis are more than just comfortable and their houses are huge. They rely on cheap labour mainly from Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. The Sultan is co-ordinating a program of very expensive improvements for just about every aspect of Omani life.

He needs to complete soon and to find another source of income for Oman. There are signs that the oil and gas will run out halfway through this century and in a country where temperatures get to over 40 degrees in summer, where water depends on a certain extent on desalination plants, Oman is going to need to find a new direction sooner rather than later.



An Omani Oasis



View in the grand Mosque

I enjoyed my few days in Oman. I would willingly return, but while shopping in the souk is incredibly cheap, elsewhere it is not, so unless I can find a really good package, or the pound recovers it is an option I will need to save up for!

Elizabeth

School News

Fancy an evening at the Birchanger School pictures?

About 50 pupils at Birchanger School did when they attended a film show run by the PTA. They were treated to a showing of Kung Fu Panda complete with all the trimmings of an evening at the pictures which help to make for a good night out. The evening was run by the PTA and it is the first of a planned series of events. There may be specially selected films for differing age groups as the program develops throughout the year. On this first evening over £160 was raised for PTA funds.

Christmas Fun.

It is hard to know whether the Autumn or the Summer term has the more exciting ending. There was plenty going on in the last week of term in this December. First was the nativity play, with the Christmas parties on the next day. Following that on the next day came the memorable Christingle Service, after which there was a Christmas Dinner for everyone with the opportunity for another film afternoon. On Friday the children entertained their parents with a Christmas Musical Morning. The choir and each class sang songs for the Christmas season, and Class 3 excelled themselves by singing part of the Welsh Lullaby in the Welsh language. There were also performances by the Recorder Group and solo percussion. Then it was off to Cambridge for the Christmas pantomime Jack in the Beanstalk. Was school always this much fun at Christmas? Your own memories would be very interesting.

Literacy explained

Nobody quite knows how a child learns to read. What works for one child will not necessarily work for another. Many parents would like to help but are bewildered by the different strategies and government rethinks.

In an effort to shed a little light on the mystery all the teaching staff at the school stayed behind for an evening meeting with parents to try to explain the latest reading schemes and the thinking behind them. The six parents who did turn up did learn a great deal and were able to look at the variety of books and reading aids currently available. It proved to be an interesting and lively session as well as a learning experience as they left with a better understanding of what the school was trying to do and how they could help. The sadness is that for the majority of the parents, literacy will still remain a mystery. It is hoped to arrange a further session so that just possibly more people will be able to come.

Olive Irene (Rene) Kadwill 17-04-1923 to 10 -01-2009

My Mum was a lady whose family line goes back over 200 years in the village; I recall her looking after many older Aunts and Uncles during my childhood. Since the age of 7 when her mother had a bad road accident in Bishop's Stortford in 1930 Mum cared for others and this showed through her passion and commitment for the Poppy Appeal (which she organised for 55 years) for the British Legion and those who were injured as a result of conflict, or just less fortunate than most of us.

Mum was a committed villager, from being in the church choir as a young girl, to being a member of the Women's Institute and a founder Member of the British Legion she helped organise and run many fund raising events, she loved ballroom dancing, played tennis and then bowls for the village and was competitive in all she did.

Born in Broadley Common, she never left the village, met my father in the village hall in 1941, married in 1942 she lived in Digby View, Birchwood and then to her family home at Hybanks.

No matter how busy and committed Mum was to her causes Mum was always there for me, if my friends came around; Ed, Peter, Stephen and a crowd of muddy lads from the recreation ground a drink and biscuit were always ready. No matter what question I asked she always had the patience to provide an answer, always with wisdom and a smile. Mum may no longer sit at the window knitting her jumpers for children but she is keeping an eye on village life and how it will develop.

Chris Kadwill

This Month's Recipe

Meringue Chantilly with Raspberry sauce

Ingredients

8 Ratifia biscuits or 2 digestives

½ oz butter

3oz or 8 meringue shells/cases

½ pint double cream/whipping cream

½ tsp vanilla essence

Raspberry Sauce

½ lb fresh raspberries

2oz icing sugar

Method

- 1 Place the biscuits in a plastic bag and crush them.
- 2 Melt the butter and brush inside a 1pint fluted mould (or similar)
- 3 Add the biscuits to the mould and turn to evenly coat the sides.
- 4 Crush the meringues lightly
- 5 Place the cream, vanilla essence and sugar in a bowl, whisk until the cream just holds its shape.
- 6 Fold the meringue into the cream mix gently and place in the mould, smoothing the top.
- 7 Cover with cling film and freeze for 3-4 hours.
- 8 Liquidise the raspberries, with the icing sugar, saving a few for decoration. Then sieve and pour into a jug to serve. (Reserve a few raspberries for garnishing)
- 9 To serve loosen edges of mould and tip on a serving dish, garnish with the reserved berries.

Valerie Law

Valerie Law lived with her husband Alan in Birchwood for many years. She originally came from Hornead, where her parents kept a Pub. Shortly after Christmas she was taken ill and was taken to Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, where she passed away on Saturday January 10th. She was 60 years old. Val had formerly been an Auxiliary Nurse and had spent some time as an escort for school children on their busses to and from school.

A plea from Birchwood

Please, please, please. If you walk your dog off its lead could you keep an eye on where it goes to the loo?

I live in Birchwood and am forever cleaning up dog's poo! Today 31/12/08 I have three heaps on my path, another on my lawn. Last week there was even some on my front door step mat! It was a good job that it was still daylight when I came home otherwise I might have trodden it indoors.

I love all animals but please don't let them leave yesterdays meals in my garden, any more.

From Muriel Baker.

News from St Mary's

Another busy December has passed by and I thought that some people like to know how things are progressing - so here goes:

The new light fittings have not yet been installed. This is because the faculty was issued so late in the month that the electrician could not fit it in his schedule. Hopefully, the new lights will be fitted this month.

The school Christingle service was very well attended and the children sang and read beautifully. Some weeks earlier they had each taken home a Children's Society Christingle candle, to be filled with coins. The returned candles contained a total of £143 which will be sent to the Children's Society along with monies collected in church. Thanks to all for your generosity.

Numbers in church for the Evening Carol Service were a little down on previous years (88 this year) but it was still well supported. many thanks also to the Benefice choir, Rosemary Saward and Elaine Wright who provided beverages!!

Please make a note in your diary for 4pm of the 15th February when we shall be having our Celebration of Marriage service.

Pam Lee

Church Diary for 2009

These are the dates already agreed for the program of fund raising and social events in 2009 for Birchanger Church. The list is not necessarily complete. There will be different events added as the opportunity arises, and there will be a plant sale on a date to be arranged in May. If you have any good ideas for other events please let Pam Lee know on 815938.

March 3rd Coffee Morning at Moorswood 10.30 am to noon.

March 29th Spring Lunch in the Church Hall 12.30 pm. Tickets £10

May 12th Coffee Morning at Moorswood 10.30 am to noon.

Midsummer Lunch at Moorswood. 12. 30 pm.

September 13th Harvest Auction at Birchanger Club.

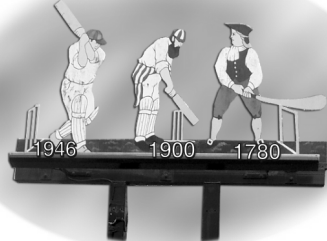
September 27th Harvest Lunch in the Church Hall. 12.30 pm

October 13th Coffee Morning at Moorswood 10. 30 to noon.

November 21st Christmas Bazaar in the Church Hall 2pm.

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Village Diary January/February 2009

January

25th St Mary's 11.00 am
Holy Communion

February

1st St Mary's 11.00 am
Matins

8th St Mary's 11.00 am
Holy Communion

15th St Mary's 11.00 am
Family Service
St Mary's 16.00
Celebration of marriage

22nd St Mary's 11.00 am
Holy Communion

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Birchanger Social Club

Would like to remind members

That Subscriptions are now due

Subscriptions are currently £15

Life members should present their gold cards

Members who have reached state retirement age
And have five complete years of full membership
May now apply for life membership