

Birchanger

April 2011



Magazine

Issue 100

ISSUE 100

This as you must have noticed is our 100 th issue. For those of you who don't know, Birchanger magazine first published in January 2003 with a front page highlighting the installation of our village sign. This was soon to cause controversy as our rector at the time Andrew Spurr criticised its rural theme.



A SIGN FOR OUR TIMES



Raised

The story of our village sign has been ongoing for some time now, and at last it is in place.

A number of villagers including Ian Kennedy, Sheila Devenaux, Ken Wheatley, Mark Crossley, Hub Jennings, Elizabeth Godwin and David Darrell attended to help erect the sign. After some problems being the bolt twice the sign-post was fixed into place. Then the sign was covered for a official dedication that took place the following day.

The Dedication.

A crowd of around fifty people gathered to hear the sign dedicated by Canon Derek Jackson after a well attended Sunday morning church service.

Elizabeth Godwin then made a presentation to Sheila Devenaux who had done so much to bring the project to a conclusion.

"I am delighted with the result!" She said. "We were determined to have the sign up in the Jubilee year and it is wonderful to finally see it."

She continued: "For approximately seven years now, money has been raised at the open garden weekends and at the Village Fete."

"In all, we collected £3,500 and many individuals have also given their time and energy, for which we are grateful."

Local artist Mary Moore translated the painting into cast metal to produce the sign as a work of art.

The sign was designed by Heather Brown and depicts our Parish Church with a Fox, a Peacock, and Hinch trees in the foreground. The sign has the Essex County crest with the date at the top of the frame and a bas-relief of the entry in the Domesday book relating to Birchanger below.

Birchanger Village Magazine 1

The magazine only went into print at all because the Birchanger Parish Magazine that was formerly produced by the church ceased publication. Direct copy input from the church also ceased so the church news is now all gratefully received from Pam Lee.

Within two months we had a murder to report, happily no one from Birchanger was directly involved in this except as witnesses. Since then things have settled down to more mundane matters such as Bus timetables, school news, lost dogs and road safety issues.

We had a short purple patch when we were producing twelve page issues but the printing costs soon made this untenable and eight pages is now all we can afford.

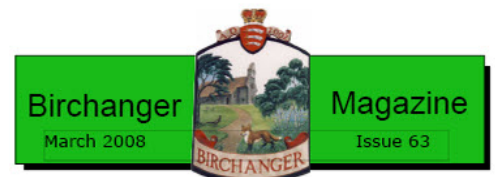
Quite a few advertisers have come and gone but The Three Willows, Suds and D Bonney have remained our most consistent advertisers. We are also very grateful for the contributions received from the Parish Council, Birchanger Club, and the Open Gardens Committee.

From a management perspective the editorial committee is still essentially the same with Ken Wheatley handling the finances and Ken Devine providing the printing facility, Mark and Tina Crossley are still involved and Malcolm Roberts is a very consistent proof reader. Which leaves me and Elizabeth Godwin who is our main contributor.

Thank you to every one who has helped or contributed to our first one hundred issues

Additional contributors are always welcome and if you wish to get involved there is a monthly meeting held at the club on the first Monday of each month at 8.00 (unless it's a bank holiday)

Who knows what the next hundred copies will tell us?



BIRCHWOOD BETRAYED

Over the last few months I had been receiving complaints that householders in Birchwood were not receiving their copies of the magazine. This was baffling as we know that sufficient copies are printed for each household as well as some spares that are shared out between the School, Church, Pub and Club.

Last month I placed an item on the back page to try to establish the scale of the problem and the responses duly came in! Eventually I received a call from someone via someone else that some of last month's copies were "Stuffed down a man hole in Birchwood!"

So naturally I investigated and found 25 copies as reported, down the drain. I photographed them in situ so you can see the evidence for yourselves. The 25 copies represent about a third of those intended for Birchwood readers and I am sure that these were not the first disposed of in this way. I cannot be sure that only 25 copies were dumped and I don't know how long the dumping has been going on. But I can assure readers that the dumping will now stop!

As an organisation the magazine operates on trust. Everyone from the editor to the deliverers does their bit for free for the benefit of the village as a whole. Any monies we receive (and we are grateful to all of our sponsors) is used to print each issue. It is especially galling to see that money being wasted by selfish individuals who let down everyone including themselves.

As editor I apologise to any reader who has not received all of the recent issues and I thank those people who let me know there was a problem. I also thank all those people who are still giving their time for the benefit of the rest of us and to the people who have offered to take over the deliveries in Birchwood. You will note I have not named anyone in this report. It is not about recriminations, it is about people taking responsibility for their actions.



Mystery uncovered

Birchanger Village Magazine 1



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

An Olympic business opportunity?

Everyone has the chance to become involved in the Olympics in their own way, whether by acquiring tickets, becoming an Olympic Volunteer, or a television addict throughout the duration.

One thing is certain, you are not going to be able to drive to the games at any venue unless you have a special pass. Unlikely for the great majority. Most of us will have to make our way by public transport to whatever venue, as will the visitors who will be coming from far afield and all over the world. They are going to want to stay as near as possible to the venues, and in the scheme of things we are better placed than most.

So how about that spare room? Would you consider renting it out for the duration of the Olympics? Perhaps you fancy a stab at the B and B business. In hard economic times the games do present a unique business opportunity. What you will offer will be better than a converted prison ship on the Thames which will be one option if you can't get into any of the liners which will also be moored there.

Maybe you have other good ideas. How about a camp site in your garden? I am serious. It will be summer and a lot of people will be doing just this. Essex has Mountain Biking at Hadleigh on the last day of the games and canoeing at Waltham Cross. Several teams have booked or are expected to book at training locations in the County as well. Teams and visitors are expected to fly into Southend and City Airports. Stansted is reserved mainly for Heads of State. Tourists for the games will come to whichever airport they can.

The District Council would like to hear from you if you would like to participate in this way. It is possible they will be able to compile lists of accommodation which is available and this would be distributed to potential customers. It is something to consider in the next few months but don't leave it too long. Visitors are making bookings now.

The state of Uttlesford

The people who seem to know the most about those living in Uttlesford are the soon to be defunct Primary Care Trust. They use their data to produce reports to inform the Surgeries hospitals, pharmacies and the District Council which are vital to secure the right levels of service provision.

On the whole Uttlesford continues to do well in comparison with the rest of the county. There are isolated pockets of deprivation in rural areas but this is lower than most other places in Essex.

Life expectancy is above the national average with large rises in the over 65's and 85's predicted. Our population is scheduled to grow faster than elsewhere in Essex but this is to do with the imposed regional housing requirement for Uttlesford which is no longer in place. The district will be left to determine its own housing needs now.

In spite of all this the demand for social housing is lower than elsewhere. There is still a higher use of social services, possibly reflecting the increasingly older population. We are also fitter, less coronary heart disease, diabetes and we are better at hearing and seeing. We do have obese children and mothers are slower to have their children vaccinated than elsewhere, a consequence of the higher sense of well being which Uttlesford residents appear to have, perhaps.

Birchanger set to shrink

The residents of Forest Hall Park were given the choice as to where they felt they belonged, in Stansted or Birchanger. Although the great majority actually reside in the parish of Birchanger, their close proximity to Stansted meant that the majority of those who responded felt they were closer to Stansted than Birchanger and that they actually belonged there. Some were surprised to find that they were in reality in Birchanger parish. Their postal addresses had always said Stansted.

Every home on Forest Park was consulted as were residents of the older properties along Forest Hall Road. From those that did respond there were a few who would have preferred to remain in Birchanger but not enough to prevent the Parish Boundary change.

The new boundary will go along the centre of Forest Hall Rd with all properties to the North moving to Stansted, those to the South will remain in Birchanger with the exception of the cottages at Parsonage Farm. The boundary will then continue along Bridleway 27 to the Parsonage Farm Industrial Estate until it meets the old parish boundary just beyond Parsonage Farm. Gypsy Lane will remain in Birchanger but the properties to the North which will include Brooklands will come into Stansted. The old boundary was at the Bell Inn. The

District Council, in the case of Parish Boundary changes can make the order. Ward changes can only be made by the Electoral Commission, so Forest Park will remain in the Birchanger ward for the time being. There are no immediate plans for a consultation on ward changes but they will happen eventually.

This is all very confusing. We will be having District Council elections using the old boundary, but the Parish Council elections for both Stansted and Birchanger will not happen until next year and will be within the new boundaries. This will mean that the present council will serve 5 years and the next one 3 years only.

Fly tippers are prosecuted

Fly tipping continues to be a menace but the enforcement team are taking everyone who fly tips to court and they are being identified from the smallest items found in their rubbish.

Not everyone is as obvious as the idiot who drove into a field in the winter and was caught when his vehicle was stuck. The enforcement team use the smallest scraps of evidence to confront the culprits, who nearly always believe that they had covered their tracks when they are caught. Fines are always substantial when the case comes to the magistrate's court.

Please continue to report fly tipping when you see it, either directly to me or to the District Council on 01799 510510. The sooner we act the better the outcome will be. They even seem to think it is ok to dump it outside people's homes as in Birchwood a few weeks back.

Birchanger's own litter picking kit

Along with other villages, Birchanger took advantage of the District Council's offer of free litter picking equipment. If we can get the volunteers, we can do litter picks more frequently. The next litter pick is to be arranged. Please support it if you can.

Please take down your advertising eye sores

Yes, in Birchanger we are all fed up with the entrance to our lane being spoilt by the businesses who seem to think that it is fine to leave their free advertising in place for as long as they like, or at least until the deadline for prosecution starts. Quite frankly you are wrecking our village and are now such a turn off that I would go a long way to avoid using any of the services advertised. We also have a parade of cars to contend with as well which are just as unacceptable and enforcement action needs to be taken against those as well. The message needs to be drummed in to these people. We don't like your services littering our village, we don't like your cars and if you want us to respect you and your businesses, take your rubbish away from our lane! Even passersby on their way elsewhere contact us to complain about you all.

Please consider organ donation

Recycling is not just on our doorstep. It is becoming firmly entrenched in our hospitals too. At first it was kidneys and hearts, but now it seems that voice boxes, faces, limbs along with a daily increasing list are wanted as well.

We may think that our various parts might be too well worn to be of much use, but there is a lot in us which could have a much longer life and which could make a huge difference to somebody else and their family. If you have not done so, pick up a form at your surgery or register on line. It could be your best legacy.

You have been warned

The famous first ever Birchanger 10 kilometre run will soon be upon us. You may be happy to walk the 5 or 10 kilometre course, but it is a really good idea to try to get fit for it first! There is still time to enter and refreshment will be available to sustain you on the day. Entry is £10 each per adult, or £12 on the day. Additional sponsorship is optional. For further details please contact the school. You can enter on line at EntryCentral.com All funds raised will help to buy computers for the children at Birchanger School. The run will start at 10am with the children's race starting later on. The Church Hall will be open for refreshments at the start of the race, the school will serve refreshments at the end while the club will be open to non members all day.

Not quite so fit?

Maybe none of the above was for you. Could it be that it is smoking that is making you not as healthy as you should be? Maybe the New Year's resolution to quit smoking disappeared months ago. The following facts might help you quit.

Remember, when you stop smoking your body gets better straight away.

After 20 minutes, your pulse and blood pressure return to normal.

After 8 hours you are not at so high a risk of a heart attack.

After 24 hours you have cleaner lungs.

After 48 hours, the hard part, you are out of nicotine. Your sense of smell and taste return.

After 72 hours you breathe more easily and have more energy.

Two weeks later your blood moves better around your body, and it is easier to exercise.

3-9 months later your lungs are working better and you don't cough so much.

5 years later your risk of having a heart attack has halved compared to a smoker.

After ten years your risk of getting lung cancer compared to a smoker is halved. Your chances of having a heart attack are the same as a non-smoker.

Worth another try?

School News

In addition to our normal work, children and staff have taken part in a number of special projects in the last few weeks. We also have a number of future projects planned including the Birchanger 10km Fun Run (details below) on Sunday 8th May and the Summer Fayre on Saturday 9th July. We would encourage anyone in the village to come along and enjoy these events with us.

Red Nose Day

Children and staff paid for the privilege of dressing up with girls coming to school as boys, and boys as girls. Some children came covered in jokes and others wore their clothes inside out. There were a number of 'Blues Brothers' on the staff! During the day, we learned about some of the projects money raised by Comic Relief has funded, and how peoples lives have been changed. At the end of the day, we sold 'red nose' cakes made by Mrs Sowter and biscuits decorated by Ladybirds. We raised a magnificent total of £338.29.

German Day

This year we are finding out more about European culture and languages. In January, we held a French Day and more recently we had a German Day. Siegfried Sauerkraut (James from the School Support Group) came and gave us lots of facts about Germany including information about German food and kugeln (skittles). We danced and played 'Simon sagt' (Simon says) using the German words for various animals. The words were accompanied by some very convincing actions and noises, particularly those for the wolf! We also had German snacks at break time. The children had learned some German before James arrived and were able to greet him appropriately. The children tell us they really enjoy enrichment days like this. We are having a Spanish Day in June.

Birchanger 10km

With budget cuts affecting all schools in the area, head teachers are more reliant than ever on additional contributions made from PTA fundraising. We are determined that the children at Birchanger Primary School should not suffer from reduced funding. Mrs Warbrick, Headteacher, has set a goal for the PTA to help raise enough money to provide each child in the school with a computer notebook to replace the existing ageing computer suite. This will in turn release space for a much needed expansion of the school library. The challenge has lead the PTA to look for new fundraising ideas and as a result **Sunday May 8th** sees the launch of the first ever **Birchanger 10k**. The fun run has pulled all elements of the

Birchanger community together. The Church will be providing refreshments at the village hall for competitors and spectators. The social club will be extending a special licence to invite non-members through it's doors on the day, the nursery will be providing a bouncy castle, the Willows Pub has provided a slap up meal for the two race winners and the local Scouts will be helping to marshall the course. Phil Elms who has two children at the school, as well as being a regular competitor in iron man competitions and a coach at Dunmow Tri club is co-ordinating the event which hopes to attract runners and novices alike. The course is designed to incorporate two 5 km laps of the local area, starting and finishing at the school so there is plenty of opportunity to see and cheer on the competitors. There is also a children's one mile fun run, so the event will offer a competitive and fun day out for all the family.

Double Club

Every Thursday afternoon for the past few weeks, Tom Bromley has come to coach children in Squirrels and Owls classes in football. This scheme is being run in conjunction with Arsenal Football Club. Girls and boys have been coached separately. All the children have been really enthusiastic. This has resulted in Tom starting an after school football club for girls in addition to the club which boys were already attending. The girls have a tournament coming up in the near future and are also now looking for schools to play friendly matches.

Class 1 Loves Outdoor Learning

It has been a long hard winter, but that has not stopped Class 1 children donning special overalls and heading out into the cold for special lessons in outdoor living delivered by the Wild Life Trust. The Outdoor Learning Project has proved to be so successful that it is set to continue throughout the year. So far in addition to learning about the wildlife in the wooded areas of Birchanger they have learned to build dens and even how to light a fire to toast marshmallows on. The school is very grateful to the land owner Roger Pryor who has allowed the school to use his woodland.

School Council Appeals for Healthier Lunch Boxes.

School meals are healthy and child friendly but not everyone in the school has a school lunch, preferring instead to have a packed lunch from home.

There is no problem with this except that the School Council has noticed that the content of a great many of these lunch boxes is distinctly unhealthy. In fact these boxes undermine all the good that is being done by the promotion of healthy food throughout the school.

Last term the School Council asked parents to ditch the sweets, chocolate bars, crisps and fizzy drinks in favour of fruit, yoghourts and cereal bars. They also reminded parents that the school is a Nut Free Zone and that spreads such as Nutella and Peanut Butter endangered the children in the school who suffer from nut allergies.

Please make sure that these items are not in your child's sandwiches. For some children even a minute contact with nuts can prove to be a disaster.

Mission X

Space is always a subject to excite us mortals who are earthbound for the foreseeable future, but it becomes more real when you are able to obtain information directly from the American Space Agency NASA. Birchanger School has a unique opportunity to make direct links with NASA through Mission X. The school became one of only eight schools who responded to the

agency who were looking for schools to work with in the UK. Through this project the school is looking at the practicalities of life in space. The children are involved in designing special food for consumption in space, they study the practical science involved in space travel and they have a direct line to established scientific reporters and there is more to come. Will Birchanger have its own home grown astronauts one day?

The Little Gems of Birchanger School.

At least that is how a group of staff who are dedicating their time and energy to fundraising to support research on Ovarian Cancer have called themselves. This is a particularly invidious cancer as it is usually not discovered until it is at an advanced stage. The symptoms are non-existent or negligible in the early stages when it is easiest to treat.

Their first fundraising event will be a Coffee Morning to be held in the Church Hall on Wednesday June 8th between 10am and noon. As well as tea, coffee and with jam cream and homemade scones, there will be stalls selling plants, cakes, gifts, raffles, a tombola and much more. All the proceeds will go directly to the Charity. The group will then go into strict training to walk the full 26.2 Shine Marathon on October 1st. This is a night time event starting at 7pm. At least they will all have taken part in the Birchanger 10 kilometre run next month.

Parking in Birchwood, Again!

It is a bit of a stop/ start situation for the summer term, with a late Easter, the keenly anticipated Royal Wedding followed by the first May Bank Holiday. The summer term will be fully under way next month with SATS tests for some and the anticipation of Sports Day and the School Play on the horizon.

Parents will be back with their cars bringing with them some inconvenience to the residents of Birchwood, particularly those living closest to the school. There is nothing more infuriating than being forcibly kept on your own drive until a parent eventually deigns to move their obstructing vehicle.

The police did a spot check last term and noticed that some parents did cause serious problems by their inconsiderate parking. There are other places to park available but these parents decline to use them. Even the club has offered their spare parking but it seems that is too far to walk, even for those without small children. PC Kelly will be back to monitor the situation. There will come a time when she will not be so friendly. You have been warned.

Quite apart from the inconsiderate parking surrounding the school run, events hit a new low on the afternoon of Mothering Sunday when one bright spark decided to plonk his/her hatchback half on the pavement and directly opposite another vehicle just inside the entrance to Birchwood, leaving an ambulance or fire engine no chance of access. Bravo!

Disabled toilets at the hall

The Church hall is happy to announce that they now have Disabled toilet facilities. This was made possible with very generous donations from Uttlesford District council, Stansted Airport Community Trust Birchanger Open Gardens and Birchanger Parish Council. Our thanks go to them all for making this possible.

Royal Wedding still on despite Touraid clash

This month Bishop's Stortford will play hosts to two teams of underprivileged children from Africa. The teams, from Botswana and Uganda will be arriving here during the week of the Royal Wedding and will be the focus of a large part of the community, but sources close to the Palace are confident that Wills and Kate will keep their booking at Westminster Abbey because they will lose their deposit if they cancel now, and anyway uncle Putin has already booked his hotel.

The project which is being led by the Bishop's Stortford rugby club's under 13 age group, of which Birchanger resident Dan Crossley is a member, and has been covered in the Observer in recent weeks, is a massive challenge for the committee formed to organise the trip, which is a platform to promote the basic ideals of rugby, integrity, friendship and hard work as a way to live life.

The Crossley family are playing hosts to two lads from Botswana and are really looking forward to their visit. "We were involved in the project 3 years ago when sides from Botswana and India came over, but we did not host on that occasion" said Mark Crossley, Dan's dad and a coach for the U13 age group at the rugby club, "so when it was announced that the project was being run again we jumped at the chance to host"

The week will be packed with events including a Stortford's got Talent evening, a trip to London and possibly even a visit to the Botswanan Embassy!

But there is a cost to all of this and the financial target is high. To pay for flights and activities for the week long trip is a cool £50,000 and a lot of hard work is going on behind the scenes to realise this figure

Fund raising has been under way in earnest for a while now, with a quiz night and a race night attracting hundreds of locals looking for a great night out while donating to a fantastic cause, over £8,000 has been accumulated from these two events alone. There has also been a wine tasting evening in the City

News from St Mary's

The Annual General Meeting in March was reasonably well attended and it was good to be able to report that, in the main, all is well. Peter and I were pleased to be able to report that the work on the organ had been completed and that at the quinquennial inspection, the fabric of the church was judged to be in relatively good order. The Rector commented that the Diocese inspection report was the shortest that he had ever seen! That said, there is still work to be done to make sure that our lovely church does not fall into disrepair. Some floor boards need replacing and some windows need attention. Also, the boundary fence still needs to be constructed. These are things that we hope to attend to in the coming months but in the meantime, we thank the all those who have given encouragement and financial support, particularly the Friends of St Mary's, Stansted Community Trust and Uttlesford District Council.

Looking at church finances, donations made by direct debit (£2564) were slightly down on last year (£2744). This pattern was repeated on loose collections (£4551 as opposed to £4946). Total income from all sources was £18774 against outgoings of £17386 with no contribution being made to benefice expenses. However, this year the value of our Diocese contributions will reduce and we shall use some of the monies saved to pay off our debt to Stansted Parochial Church Council who has been extremely patient.

Library van visit dates.

Fridays

Jan 7th, 21st, Feb, 4th, 18th, March 4th, 18th, April 1st, 15th, 29th. May 13th, 27th. June 10th, 24th.

Club, 15.50-16.15. High View, 16.20-1635.

11.30-12.30

Jan 21st, Feb 18th, March 18th, April 15th, May 27th, June 24th, July 22nd, August 19th, September 16th, October 14th, November 11th, December 9th

Refuse Collection Changes for April/ May

Due to Easter, the Royal wedding
and May Bank Holiday

Wednesday April 27th non food waste only.

Thursday May 5th Food Waste and Dry Recyclables.
Following Week normal Collections.

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What's on at the club?

MAY

Friday 6th **Poker Night**

Saturday 7th **Julie Nevada**

Saturday 14th **Race Night**

Saturday 28th **Winnie**

SKIP VISIT DATES 2011

Mornings only

Sunday May 15th

Sunday Aug 21st

Sunday Oct 30th

COFFEE MORNING

In aid of Church funds

Tuesday 10th May
10.30 till Noon

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Everyone welcome



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Village Diary March/April

April

24th 11.00 am St Mary's
Easter Sunday
Holy Communion
30th 8.00 pm At the club
Hit and Run
Royal Wedding night

May

1st 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins
6th 8.00 pm At the club
Poker Night
7th 8.00 pm At the club
Julie Nevada
8th 10.00 am At the school
10 Km Fun Run
8th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion
10th 10.30 am Moorswood
Coffee Morning
14th 8.00 pm At the club
Race Night
15th 11.00 am St Mary's
Family Service
22nd 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion
28th 8.00 pm At the Club
Winnie
29th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

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