

Birchanger

August 2011



Magazine

Issue 104

Duck End

Final edition

THE FRACTURED CLUB

The Special General Meeting which was called on July 20th to discuss the installation of a particular piece of play equipment at the club ended, with the same bitterness as the ones where the admission of ladies as full members ladies was voted against, and the vote on the admission of children to certain areas of the club was won.

Now it is the provision of one small but costly play item that has divided the membership once again. Feelings are such that so many members are reputed to have resigned that the committee may not be quorate.

Resigning solves nothing but may make the person feel better but probably not for long. The club is primarily a facility for Birchanger residents with others welcomed as the membership lists allows. Birchanger residents come in many shapes, sizes and ages. There must be a presumption that membership is open to all and that includes the elderly, disabled as well as those with children.

If it is to be a club for everyone then it will only work if there is a degree of tolerance and respect for everyone's needs. This cannot be provided all at once but there is no reason why there should not be a master plan as to how things will eventually be which will include an attempt to provide for everyone.

There are reasons for the bitterness felt on both sides. Older residents are upset by the few badly behaved children who run around the bar. The bowls club is upset by the fact that some children have thrown pebbles all over the bowling green. There is an image of parents getting drunk at the bar while their children run wild elsewhere. A perception, which can only apply in fact to a few irresponsible individuals.

There is a way through this if people don't just give up at the first hurdle. The needs of all the various groups need to be reviewed and affordable plans made. An indoor facility would provide longer term all year round provision for the children, perhaps in a different location. The same location could also include a toilet for disabled members as well as for the use of children. This might also stop them running through the bar. Maybe a review of the roof needs to be done, especially in the light of possible internal re-organisation. Get the various factions to work together over this.

Birchanger Club is the envy of the District. The committees in recent years are to be thanked for all the hard work they have put in to make it the success it still is. The stewards are doing an excellent job. It is something this village would be crazy to lose.

We have to get out of the mess somehow, not give up as soon as there are obstacles. A golden opportunity was missed after the vote to sound members out on the way forward. It is hoped that the committee will not remain depleted, and that everyone will think again, taking the long term view as opposed to the quick fix.





PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

A big September lies ahead

Sometimes it seems that you wait ages for something to happen then everything seems to come along at once. It is the case with Birchanger this September. There are three events coming that will bring entertainment for the entire village.

First of all there is the long awaited Birchanger Fete, which will take place on Saturday September 3rd on the Birchanger Club sports field. The club will be open to everyone on the day whether they are a member or not. There will be something for everyone and non members will be able to buy drinks at the club bar. In addition to all the usual fete fun, you will be able to buy a variety of food and drink and it is hoped that everyone will be able to relax, catch up with friends, and help to raise funds to benefit groups in the village in the process.

Don't put away the bunting as the following week on September 10th comes the promised return of Birchanger's very own Last Night of the proms, which is back by popular request. Here you will be able to participate in Horse Racing Birchanger style, enjoy a Fish and chip or Chicken and Chips supper, before settling down to watch the last night of the proms as it happens from the Albert Hall and Hyde Park. There are still tickets available price £15 from Brian Ross on 814961 or myself on 812793.

The Harvest Supper will take place on Saturday 17th in the Church Hall, tickets and further details from Pam Lee on 815938.

Birchanger Art Exhibition will return after just a year. In addition to the works by well known local artists, which will be exhibited and on sale in the Church Hall, there will be a photographic competition for all age groups in the Church. To find out more about the exhibition or to obtain an entry form for the photographic competition call Angie Driscoll on 817376. It is not too late to take that award winning photograph whether you are five or ninety five. It is open to all.

Bye bye bottle banks

Uttlesford is about to improve its waste collection services. From next spring householders will be able to put their bottles into their green recycling bins and the bottle banks will disappear forever.

In addition the large brown bins for food recycling will disappear as well and residents will be able to use brand new 25 litre caddies for their food waste. There will be a single vehicle which will collect the food waste every week, as well as the alternate green and black bin collections.

Householders are also to be offered the opportunity to buy into a garden waste service. There will be a weekly charge for this service which is to be running between April and the end of November. The charge will depend to a greater extent on the take up of the scheme. The council would like to know if you would like to pay for a garden waste collection bin, and if so, how much would you feel was a reasonable charge. They can be contacted on 01799 510510, or I am happy to discuss the matter with you.

The change is timed to take into account of the fact that the council's fleet of waste collection vehicles is due for replacement and the change now will mean that the appropriate vehicles can be brought in to start the new service.

Some householders may find that the new waste food caddies and the green bins are too small for their needs. Additional bins will be delivered on application to the council.

Gypsies move in and move on

We have been expecting that gypsies would appear in our area sooner or later after they were finally given their marching orders on the Crays Hill site near Basildon. We did not expect them quite so soon.

The timing was classic experienced gypsy move in procedure.

Wait until after 4.30 on a Friday, as the council offices will be shut down, pick a holiday period and with a bit of luck you will be there for at least 28 days from the following Monday. Sure enough the tactic worked. All the key players were unavailable immediately.

The wheels were put in motion, but they will take time. Sadly previous experience of gypsies in Birchanger has not been good in recent years. Please make sure your property is secure at all times, and if you do own land with a gateway access please take extra precautions. There are more looking for places to go. Although officers are doing their best in Basildon to provide accommodation, the travellers do not always want to take up their offers. These travellers have moved on for now.

Dog Mess Bins

As a dog owner myself I fully sympathise with the lady whose plea for a dog mess bin in the village was published in last month's magazine.

Years ago we tried, but there was a huge outcry when those in the most obvious places for a bin, unanimously said not outside my door.

Now we would face this again with the added problem as to who would empty it permanently and on a weekly basis? Any volunteers on either count? If we get positive responses to both questions, coupled with the fact that in a long village like Birchanger we need at least two sites, we might be in business. Incidentally if you don't want to use your own bin, there is a small bin near the entrance to Bradley Common which the council does empty.

Summer Lunch on a Summer Sunday

The weather is nearly always good for the Annual Church Summer Lunch at Moorswood. This time the weather was as good as it could possibly be, with not too much sun and no wind or rain to spoil the day. The lunch was greatly oversubscribed, but the numbers have to be kept down in case the lunch has to be moved indoors where there is only seating available for 30.

In all 12 people were turned away. We were very sorry about this, particularly as four people actually cancelled on the day and we were unable to contact the 12 who would have liked to come.

Next year if tickets ordered are not paid for by the previous Sunday, they will be offered to those on the waiting list.

A big "thank you" to the team who worked so hard to make the day a success. A total of £220 was raised for the Church Funds.

Drains in Birchanger.

Drains in Birchanger are not perhaps in the best of condition, due to their age and the topography of the land. They are very unlikely to be replaced in the immediate future, and must be used with care.

Pouring old fat down them is one of the best ways of ensuring that both your own and your neighbours drains are going to be blocked. Not a fun prospect for anybody as the sewage backs up, and one which will ensure considerable expense when drainage firms have to be called in. If it is you who have done the pouring, it is very likely that it will be you who will be landed with a very expensive tab.

Warning.

Shed and car thieves are active in Birchanger. Take care. Report anything suspicious, no matter how trivial it seems on 07801461666. If you see a crime happening dial 999.

Beware Bogus Gas Men

Some people in Birchanger are being visited by a man of possibly Indian origin who uses some kind of apparently bogus accreditation, and carries the word gas stamped on the back of his jacket. He claims to be conducting a survey as to whether you use gas or not. A check with the gas board tells us that there are no surveys being carried out by them in this area, so what this guy is about is anybody's guess.

Problems registering on the Council Waiting List?

Every few years the council has to update its council house waiting list. This time it can only be done by computer, which is difficult for many, but which is the way most councils are taking these days. If anyone is experiencing difficulty reregistering, please let me know or tell the council on 01799 510 510. Officers are aware that there may be those who require help. Don't miss out whatever happens.

Does Your Green Bin Overflow?

People in Uttlesford are getting very good at recycling these days. In fact they are so good that frequently their green bins overflow. It is possible to put recycling items which cannot get into the green bin in a plastic bag beside the bin, with one proviso. Do not use a black plastic bag as this will never be taken by the recycling team, whatever the contents. Transparent ones are the best so that the recycling nature of their contents can be seen. Large cardboard items should be placed beside or on top of the green bins.

More Church Music.

Following the visit to Birchanger by "Songcycle" you may be developing a taste for Music in a Country Church. If so, why not visit the Church at Hatfield Broad Oak where the English Chamber Orchestra will be performing on Friday 26th of August?

The following day sees a morning piano recital at 11am followed by a performance by a group known as the King's Consort in the evening.

Telephone 01603 628319 for tickets and further details.

School News

All the Fun of the Fair

The PTA and staff at Birchanger School really pulled out all the stops to make sure that Birchanger Sports and Fete Day was another winner for everyone. After the races, where everyone cheered themselves hoarse, the fete was immediately declared open by Head Teacher Mrs Warbrick. Children, parents, staff and Birchanger residents toured the stalls, snapping up bargains on the tombola, trying their luck at the coconut shy, enjoying a barbeque lunch washed down with a glass of Pimms and having a go on the wide variety of attractions, with a cup cake for dessert.

The Bocking Brass Band played, the children entertained with dancing, cheer leading and judo displays while everyone was invited to have a go at the tug of war.

The rain held off until the end, although it was a gang of soaking wet parents and children who faced the awesome task of the big clear up. Thank you to the PTA, staff and all who helped to make the occasion so enjoyable and raising nearly £2000 for the school in the process. Where would we be without you?

Parking When visiting the School

This will always be an eternal headache in every school in the country until the powers that be wake up to the fact that unless a school bus picks the children up to take them to school as is the practice in America, parking provision has to come from somewhere.

In our case we are luckier than most. Both the club and the Church Hall let us use their car parks. The one at the club is not used enough as it seem parents do not want to walk that far. However it is there for our use. It is after all a much better option than parking across someone's drive for the mythical minute and causing them to miss their train/ appointment/ be late for work. After all we would hate it if it happened to us.

Every leaver is a Proficient Cyclist.

All Year 6 pupils have once again left Birchanger School having achieved their cycling proficiency test. For 6 weeks they have brought their bicycles to school and completed the course which does include a road test. They have demonstrated that they know how to cycle safely and this knowledge should stay with them for the rest of their lives. Hopefully those who use our lane as a race track will appreciate the fact that quite a few of us in Birchanger use our bikes and do not appreciate being scared by the many bad drivers who

use the village as a rat run which must be done at totally ludicrous speeds.

New developments mean that this is the last year that there will be a cycling proficiency test in the old style. A new way of teaching children cycling proficiency, called Bikeability replaces the old cycling proficiency from next year. Last month two members of staff undertook the week long training and are now fully equipped to teach Bikeability next school year.

This may be a blow to the many of us who remember the days of cycling Proficiency tests from our own school days.

Excellent SATS results

The children who left Birchanger School last month could be really proud of their outstanding key stage 2 results. Congratulations to them all on their outstanding achievement and we wish them all the very best for their lives in their new schools.

The Wizard of Oz is a Smash Hit

Everyone who came to see the Wizard of Oz, which was this year's play at the school enjoyed every moment of the performance. After finding their feet during the only matinee performance, even the children realised they had a smash hit on their hands and pulled out all the stops.

Dorothy as played by Becky Hayward delighted everyone with her talented and polished performance in the lead role. She was ably supported by Scarecrow , played by an unrecognisable Monty Garrett, the not so brave lion Charlie Truscott, Tin Man Austin Moulton who of course found his heart in the end .

The chorus all seemed to enjoy their parts, whether they were winged monkeys or munchkins as was obvious in the quality of their singing.

Fortunately most people recorded their own special moments so the show will delight families for years to come.

The children made a large part of the settings, with help from artistic director Mrs Culpin. The show was produced by Miss Williams with technical input and ideas from Miss Chinnock. A big thank you to all who helped with the costumes and makeup. Congratulations everyone on another great show. Roll on next year.

Birchanger Cricket Club the season so far

The 2010 season was a difficult one for the cricket club, a shrinking player pool (in numbers if not in waste-line) made it difficult for the club to put out teams of sufficient strength for the league games in Divisions 2 and 6 of the Herts & Essex Cricket League. The decision was taken in the winter to do our utmost to attract new players, with a particular emphasis on young players so that they could gain competitive experience in the second team and would move to the first team in due course. Indoor nets were held from January through to May and it was encouraging to see several new young players netting regularly.

The first and second teams had new captains for the season, with Paul Tyler taking on the first team captaincy with Justin Bass as his vice captain, while Paul Richardson was second team skipper with Ian Mills as his second in command.

1st May saw the start of the league campaigns and both teams got off to a disappointing start, the 1st XI losing away to what was High Roding's 1st XI and the 2nd XI losing to Matching Green's 2nd XI. Since then however, the 1st XI have shown that they are a strong side in Division 2, beating Harlow Town 2nd, Matching Green 1st, Dunmow 2nd, Takeley 1st and Rickling Ramblers 1st XI whilst being beaten by division leaders Stansted and the game against Hockerill being abandoned due to rain. The bowling attack, led by Alex Griffiths who has bowled with pace and has taken wickets throughout, has variety and skill. The attack, backed up by good catching and ground fielding, has limited sides to below par scores. New team member Craig Montano has added class to a batting order, including 116 versus Dunmow 2nd, that bats deep and has allowed the team to chase down the opposition's score. As at 18th June, the first team are 3rd in division 2 only 1 point from a promotion place.

The 2nds have endured a more difficult campaign so far, with only 2 victories against Little Bardfield and Takeley 2nd and 6 defeats. There have been bright spots, new signing Jack Townsend has scored quick runs at the top of the order consistently, Mark Thornton scored an impressive 96 against Little Bardfield. Paul Boggas rolled back the years with his 10 overs only going for 7 runs versus Takeley 2nd whilst Charlie Warwick and Jon Hampson have been consistently taking wickets. It is hoped that the school/university holidays will see a greater consistency of selection and that the 2nd XI can move up from 9th in Division 6.

On Sundays, the club plays friendly cricket with the main highlight of the season being Laurence Ahmed's impressive effort of 186 not out and 5 wickets in a

recent 35-over match versus Matching Green. Not a difficult choice for the man of the match award.

Saturday 6 August 2011 saw Birchanger 1st XI play hosts to Takeley 1st team. Birchanger won the toss and continued the thus far successful policy of asking the opposition to bat first. However, in this instance it was a policy that Birchanger would rue. The Birchanger bowlers made a good tight start to the game but were unable to take any early wickets and when an injury reduced the home side to 9 fielders the Takeley opening batsmen took full advantage dispatching some wayward change bowling to all parts of the field. Takeley closed their innings on 298 for 5. Chris Thake was the most successful of the Takeley batsmen recording 138 before being caught by Elliott Sellaars off the bowling of Rob Tyler.

In reply Birchanger never really got out of first gear and were soon teetering at 13 for 3. The Takeley bowlers are to be applauded for extracting some lavish swing and seam movement and reduced a previously buoyant Birchanger side to 52 all out. Ross Leavers was the only Birchanger batsmen to make double figures and finished on 24 not out.

Birchanger play host to Rickling on Saturday 13 August and will be looking for a much improved performance in order to cement their place in the top four in division 2.



The new club sponsors David Lee estate agents sporting the club's new shirt

FROCK SHOCK AT NEWMARKET

It was several years since I last went to the July course at Newmarket races, and despite the threat of adverse weather I looked forward to my Ladies Day visit. The weather was awful so I bowled up in appropriate weather proof and reasonably smart gear.

The first shock was on arrival. The car park was full of pink stretch vehicles whose occupants dressed in chiffon and fascinators who were trying to stand upright on 7 inch heels. They were doing their best, trying to pretend they were having a ball and sipping champagne, while a monsoon raged outside their totally inadequate umbrellas. Some unfortunates received a shower they did not need.

We were fine, we just sat in the car and watched the unscheduled entertainment. Eventually we got into the racecourse as the rain abated. By this time I was convinced I had turned up at the wrong event. This must surely be the biggest hen party of all time as well as the biggest worst dressed competition ever. Whatever possessed these not so young ladies to think they looked good on a wet day in unintentionally see through strapless dresses which were so tight they must have been agony to actually wear. So much fat showed over their backs I thought they must have their heads screwed on the wrong way. The queue for the best dressed ladies competition reached round the block and was full of these individuals. They missed the sarcasm in the scrutineer's voice, or at least I hope they did.

Pimm's at Newmarket is a "must", and the jugs were particularly good this year. They had to be at £26 a go plus another £10 for the piece of plastic which called itself a jug. In fact the Pimms proved to be so good that at least one group of ladies remained huddled under an umbrella drinking it all afternoon, and never so much as had sight of a horse.

There actually were horses, some very lovely ones, even if as far as I was concerned they all ran the other way. The money prizes for the winners were large and all the big names were there. Around the paddock there were other ladies who did not look as though they were coming to a wedding and who were actually there for the horses so I felt a bit less of frump. Sadly Newmarket cannot survive on the horse racing fraternity alone in this economic climate and there is a need to make the racecourse attractive to a new breed of race goer. Nobody wants to see a national past time die.

All in all it was a very good day, and highly entertaining even if it was not what I expected. At least I know what never to wear now, and there were a few really stunning outfits on those who had managed to get the weather and the occasion just right.

Those who had provided the unlooked for entertainment trooped away happily as well, despite the realisation that their ruined hats, dresses and footwear could never be worn again.

A Government health warning, if you do bring a man with you to Ladies Day next year, take his blood pressure tablets with him as well. He will see more of the fillies than he ever bargained for. Otherwise just come with a bunch of girls, dress up and have fun.

Nursery Welcomes a New Administrator.

After ten years during which she made the role of Birchanger Nursery her own, Tina Crossley is stepping down to devote more time to her growing and very successful business. She is standing down very reluctantly, but the work pressures are such that doing justice to both her business and the nursery has become increasingly hard in recent months. After a great deal of agonising over the situation, Tina decided that the break had to be made.

She leaves a nursery unit which has become well established over the past ten years. Under her administration the nursery became a viable entity, its reputation grew and the building was replaced. Pupils come both from Birchanger village and further afield.

Lynn Dorsett has been appointed as administrator from next month. She has all the qualities needed to fulfil her new role and will have support from Tina whenever she needs it. Lynn is a very familiar face both in the school and the nursery unit as three of her daughters have been in the nursery unit before moving on to Birchanger School. All the very best for the future to both Tina and Lynn in their new enterprises.

Can you help?

I am going to run a stall at the village fete on September 3rd. I need bric a brac, nearly new and any unwanted gifts to raise funds for your village Magazine, which has now been delivered free to your door for the past 7 years. In order to continue we need funds. It costs around £140 per issue so any help, would be gratefully accepted. Please ring Sue Gilbey on 01279 816171 and I will collect. Thanking you in advance. Sue.

Another Airport consultation

The Government is undertaking a consultation exercise to help it decide on its future airports strategy, as it considers that the infamous 2003 white paper is now out of date. The Parish Council is preparing a response to the consultation and would like to hear the opinions of residents. We'd like to hear about any impact you think the airport has had on any aspect of your life or the life of the village, positive or negative. We'd particularly welcome anecdotes giving us concrete examples of how the airport has affected you. If you have anything to say then please email it to ken@birchanger.com, put it through my door at 69 Birchanger Lane or call me on 814678.

St Mary's Produce Auction
At Birchanger Sports and Social Club
Sunday 28th August
At 7pm
Non-members welcome

If you have any fruit, vegetables,
flowers, cakes, jams etc that we can sell,
please contact Pam Lee asap. on 07702171744

Birchanger Sports and Social Club

September Entertainment

3rd Birchanger Village fete
Open Day and
Beer Festival
3rd Ash
24th Ray Collins

Follow us at **www.birchangerclub.com**
229 Birchanger Lane 01279 813441

Quiz Night

On behalf of

Birchanger Buddies

Baby and Toddler Group

Come for a fun night out on

Friday 30th September!

8pm at Birchanger Village Hall.

£7 each and 6 people per team.

Bring your own drinks and a supper is included.

Tickets are on sale NOW!

Call or text Gemma on
07745036066 to book a table.

Don't Panic

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Village Diary July/August

August

27th 8.00 pm At the Club
Chris Keen

28th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

September

3rd Birchanger Village Fete
Open day and Beer festival
On the Club field

3rd 8.00 pm At the Club
Ash

4th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

11th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

18th 11.00 am St Mary's
Family Service

25th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

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