

Birchanger

June 2011



Magazine

Issue 102

BIRCHANGER BUDDIES GET CERTIFIED

Birchanger Buddies is a baby and toddler group for 0-5year olds they meet in the Village Hall every Friday from 1.30 until 3.00pm.

The group opened on the 28th January 2011 and have had a successful, fun filled couple of months, with children of all ages coming to enjoy themselves with their parents, grandparents and carers.

There is a wide range of activities on offer, which include a baby area, arts and crafts, play-dough, imaginative play in the toy kitchen, physical play within the ride-on area, as-well as puzzles, building, books and a tray for messy play. At every session there's tea and coffee for the grown-ups in the kitchen and a healthy snack and drink for the children. All followed by singing and story time to end a fun packed session.

On the 13th May there was a party to celebrate the group passing the Good Practise Checklist from the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The committee of mums worked very hard to meet all of the requirements and are very pleased that they passed.

It was a very enjoyable afternoon which included an extra special visit from some baby guinea pigs and chicks that the children were able to hold and stroke, all thanks to Leanna Ellena. The children decorated their own cakes which were all devoured later at snack time along with the adults tucking into a rather delicious chocolate cake and some wine.

They said "We are very much a community led group and if you would like to help on our committee please let us know, all help big or small is very much appreciated.

Birchanger Buddies is a non-profit group run by a committee of mums all with children under 5. we are supported by Spangles children centre and sponsored by local businesses. We charge only £2 per family to cover costs."

If you'd like to know more about coming to the group or becoming a committee member, please contact us at birchangerbuddies@gmail.com, or call Gemma on 07582 683140. We look forward to seeing you.

You can find Birchanger Buddies on Facebook and at www.birchangerbuddies.co.uk



Roz Petch, Sophie Andersen, Oya Er Wilkes, Gemma Mills, Lesley Murdoch, Stacy Sturgeon and Kelly Sampson.



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Our choice of names at last.

Birchanger Parish Council were mortified when the naming of the Rochfords Nursery site was inadvertently given to Stansted Parish Council with no reference whatsoever to Birchanger. Although the area was 90% in Birchanger this seemed to have escaped Uttlesford Building Control. Stansted Parish Council seemed happy to go ahead regardless. When Birchanger Parish Council found out about this it was apparently too late and although wrong, the names could not be changed. Finally the district council has acknowledged this at almost at the 11th hour, when most of the area will become part of Stansted next May. Apparently the small part yet to be named will have Birchanger names. The irony is that most of that will now be in Stansted.

Move to a single PCT draws nearer

Next year our PCT which includes Harlow will progress closer to the establishment of a single PCT across North Essex. To this end a single executive team for the three amalgamating PCTs was formed and started work on June 1st. It will act as the transition team which will see the establishment to the new local NHS by April 2013.

The really worrying thing is that if the site for our new surgery is not agreed very soon the money will all end up in the general pot and we will have to fight to get it back.

We need the new surgery now, wherever it is and the arguing has to stop now. It really is a case of use it or lose it.

Birchwood recycling skip has gone forever

After months of overflowing litter and improper use by individuals, most of whom it is believed are not resident in Birchanger, the skip in Birchwood has finally been removed. The District Council has given the option of a recycling bin to almost all the residents of Birchanger and this additional facility was continually abused. Litter which could not be placed in the bin should have been taken back but sadly it was not and was left to blow all over residents gardens. That in itself was an offence. If bottles are simply placed beside the bins when the bottle banks are full that is also an offence. We really don't want to lose those as well! The district council is trying to maintain the bulk of its services in times of cutbacks, but misuse of any kind, no matter how

frustrating it is when the bottle bank is full, is not going to be tolerated now. I am trying to get an additional bottle bank for the site, but it will take time. Maybe one day bottles will be collected from homes as well.

Last Night of the Proms will return in September

No need to queue up for the last night of the proms, when it will all be happening here for you in Birchanger once more. There is the added bonus that a Race Night is included along with fish and chips.

Tickets sell out fast and are available from the SSE office on 870558, Brian Ross on 814961, or myself on 812793. The price to include a fish and chip or chicken and chip supper is £15. Please state your preference for fish or chicken when buying your tickets.

Shed raiders are back in Birchanger.

Burglars are particularly spineless individuals. They prey on the more vulnerable members of the community, work in pairs to distract the elderly and cheerfully smash their way into other people's homes, oblivious of the damage and subsequent heartache which they alone create.

One of their soft targets is your garden shed, and yes they have resumed that pastime in Birchanger. It is the easy cowardly way. They know there is a very good chance that they will be neither seen nor heard and will therefore get away with it. Most people do not discover any break in of a shed or garage until sometime after the event. The glass in shed doors is often easily removed making them a prime target for the tools and surprisingly valuable items stored there. Worse still some insurance companies do not automatically cover out buildings.

Please try and secure your sheds and garages as best you can. Be on the outlook for loitering strangers and unmarked vans. Above all, tell the police about anything which arouses your suspicions. It is the seemingly small irrelevances which catch the criminals in the end. The duty police officer can be reached on 07801 461666

Code of Conduct for builders

Uttlesford District council has published a code of conduct for all builders and developers to follow when they start a development following the grant of planning

permission by Uttlesford District Council. It is hoped that this will stop some of the builders' menaces such as dust, noise, after hours working, mud on the road in fact most of the nuisances which could be mitigated with a little more care.

Of course it won't stop everything, but it will give sufferers more support when they need to report such nuisances in their neighbourhood.

The new code is available via the Uttlesford District Council website.

I am sorry to keep on about this, but.....

Yes it is Dog Fouling again. You must be tired of reading about the subject but somehow it is now appearing in the recreation ground where dogs are not even supposed to go unless it is through the footpath. In any event responsible dog owners are certainly not expected to allow their pet to make a deposit by the children's play equipment without immediately cleaning it up.

There is not much, probably there is just one irresponsible owner, but that one person could still make several children sick. If you must take your dog near the play equipment please clean up if necessary and keep your dog on a lead at all times.

Reminder, the grassy paths around the fields are not for us

Many people thought that the grass verges around the fields were additional walking areas. Nice idea, but sorry they are not. The school was given special permission to use them through DEFRA for their recent 10 kilometre run, on this one occasion but they are not for us now. Notices to this effect will be in place later this summer.

At last the footpath at the back of Birchwood has had the ruts filled in. It took an injury before ECC footpaths, after months of requests from the Parish council and others, finally took action. I don't think they properly appreciated the danger everyone was exposed to and to wait until somebody is hurt is not the right way to go about it.

Please be careful on all the footpaths. They became very dry and hard in the recent warm weather and it could be months before they are back to normal no matter how much it may rain.

An Idyll in a field.

That is how the developers have depicted the most recent development in the village on the old Churton site. Gone are the immediate neighbours and the houses in Birchanger Lane, as well as the pub. If you do see some people wandering around the village looking confused, they might need directing as well as an explanation.

Internet, blessing or a curse?

After my experiences of the past month I am inclined to think it is the latter. I have been trying to complete my Tax Return, or rather my husband has. There could be a change of status, imminent divorce.

It all sounds straight forward, log on, submit password. First snag, last year's password does not work. Inland Revenue says it does. We say no. Eventually they send a new password. This one is as useless as its predecessor.

Husband spends over an hour trying to get through to ineptly named "help line". After a few questions they want to talk to me. Never mind that he is my husband, they have his details, he has done my tax for the past 50 years, but I am out and another hour has been wasted.

New password number 2 arrives in two parts, half for him and half for me. Again it is completely useless. Find a time when we are both in. Try again. 45 minutes later someone actually picks up the phone. Apparently we tried to use the new password twice yesterday, and two shouts means you are out. We will always wonder how that happened, once was enough. We are given not only a new password but a special contact number. Is this progress?

Well it was as we finally completed the return. My husband has dealt with the revenue all his working life. He found the new system impossible. How the rest of us are supposed to cope I do not know.

I actually got a refund! However if getting a TV, car and drivers license are all computerised in the same way, most of us are in for big trouble. At the very least they should provide us with a help line which is answered promptly. After all it could save millions in tranquillisers!

What lone lady drivers must know

There have been reported cases of rape which have happened when an apparently unmarked police car pulled up a lady driver. The driver was not a policeman, but a rapist. The car sported a blue flashing light and appeared convincing.

There are two things about this. First of all you do not need to stop for an unmarked police car if you are a lady driver on your own. Secondly the way to deal with this is to call the police using the little known direct emergency access number from a mobile phone of 112. Should this number fail dial 999 in the usual way. Then pull into the nearest busy place such as a service station and wait for police assistance.

School sports Day and Fete.

Saturday July 9th

Sports Noon to 1.30.

Fete 2-4 pm.

Everyone welcome at both events.

Nature Watch

The Bird life in Birchanger has recently become more Interesting.

The occasional unusual bird is sometimes seen in Birchanger, I mean the feathered kind, but it must have been several years since a pea hen roamed the village.

Several people were startled to look out into their garden to confront a pea hen looking in on them. Instead of roaming parkland and big gardens she seemed to favour small gardens and enclosed spaces. She disappeared as suddenly as she came. Does anyone know where she came from?

Ducklings are also back in Birchanger Lane. Not exactly the safest place to be but they were well supervised by their mother as she shepherded them through the village and hopefully to a fox free place of safety. Just where they hatched and where they finally ended up is unknown.



John Napier snapped this buzzard at the Stansted end of Digby wood

We have the buzzards circling regularly, at least one resident sparrow hawk, and there are red kites and goshawk sightings that have also been reported.

The magazine will be delighted to print your wildlife pictures. Just send your pictures (preferably with some information of where and when it was photographed and attach it to an email to the editor

"An Open Letter from the Birchanger Sports and Social Club Committee Chairman, Peter Booker

We have been part of the village for well over 100 years and during that time many things have changed and some things within the club are still changing.

A few years ago there was a parish survey carried out to understand what the people of Birchanger Parish wanted and expected from the parish and what they liked about it. One interesting item from the survey was the importance of the club as a gathering and social point for the parish community.

Unfortunately today this is not reflected in the membership of the club, over half the members come from outside the village and parish.

Membership of the club is a very simple process, come in and talk to the steward or any committee member who would be pleased to show you around and supply you with an application form which on completion will cost you £5 [one off signing on fee] with a further £15 when your membership is accepted.

What ever your age there is some activity or sport which you could get involved in, should you wish. Or if you prefer you can relax in the club and enjoy your favourite pint, also we might tempt you to have a meal from our extensive menu which includes many homemade specials.

Young families are always welcome in the club where we have a family room for children which must be supervised by their parents.

*On **September 3rd** we are running a joint fete, open day and beer festival where all are welcome.*

Throughout the year on many Saturday nights we have entertainments with various groups with different musical styles and occasionally we run race nights and poker nights. At Christmas we have party's for the children and older members.

To be honest there is something going on for everybody, whatever age. So why not join the club and see what you have been missing?

Look forward to seeing you.

Peter Booker

Chairman

Birchanger Sports and Social Club Committee.

Clare's trek part three

Tuesday 23rd November

An ok nights sleep but the camels were making some strange noises though. Up and at em again this morning and left camp at 8:30 again, got a long day today.

Its now 1:20pm and just stopped and am in the shade of a tree, not as we know it but a giant dead one that is uprooted out of the sand, and I am glad as its hard going today we've been walking up and over sand dunes most of the way, today my boots were filling up with sand and I'm sure I've now got blisters, I just want the boots off now, and never have to put them back on.

Lunch today was very interesting, are you ready for this a boiled egg! Ok can deal with eating that, but as well as that a nice COLD Jacket Spud! Yes that's right, a nice cold jacket spud, no butter or anything just munch it like an apple!

How am I still alive after this morning? I don't know, it was SO hard, I don't know how I'm still breathing. All the training in the world could not have prepared me for today, many times through out today I have wished I was back home doing the normal day to day things, I hope to God its not this bad tomorrow, I can't explain how much pain I'm in at the moment and how hot it is (45o again today) and have just been told we've got an hour or sos rest and then we will be climbing the largest sand dune on route namely Eric who is 100 metre's high which I'm not looking forward to as I feel so ill at the moment, I don't know how the tour guides and camel handlers do this all the time,

Evening

Well I feel better now, it would seem that my body wasn't cooling down properly as I couldn't rest I was up and down like a Yoyo and on edge, so Jimmy the tour guide had to shock me by tipping cold water onto the back of my neck unexpectedly, it did the trick, it was like a slap in the face I now feel as if I've been brought back to life.

Ok so I managed to walk up Eric, in bare feet and the sand was so soft, what a feeling, I've never really been bothered by heights but walking up Eric was like walking on a knifes edge and I have to say it did make my belly churn a few times, but Eric is certainly a very big sand dune which took about 30mins to climb which doesn't sound long up going up on very soft sand it was very tiring but at the same time some amazing views and watching the sun set, now that was something else up here, something I will probably never experience again, not like this anyway.

Coming back down Eric was very good too, Jimmy said "we are going to Berber surf down" what a fantastic feeling, surfing down the side of Eric, scary at times as you just can't stop yourself but fantastic to be able to do, and so much easier coming down than going up.

Another excellent dinner made by Brian, spaghetti Bolognese, how he's making us these meals in the desert is just unbelievable.

Wednesday 24th November

What a good day today, really enjoyed it and felt good with a lot of get up and go, so much better than yesterday. Set off at the normal time of 8:30am and walked across the dunes and then through the Dray river which is a dried up river bed, this was quite strange as the dunes are a reddish colour, but the river bed is more like the sand at the beach.

We came across a well in the middle of nowhere, very strange. We stopped here for lunch, with a 2 hour siesta as again it was much too hot to keep walking in.

We collected water from the well so that we could have a good wash later, got quite excited at the thought of a strip down wash, therefore the tent went up in record time, and boy was that good, its made me feel a little like a human again.

After a good dinner I'm sitting here writing this and the tent has turned into a scene from Holby City as poor Emma has so many blisters she's sitting there with her head torch on and a scalpel in hand popping then to try and relieve some of the pain, bless her I'm glad its not my feet, I have just the one blister on my little toe and boy that hurts enough, but all in all a good day!

School News

After SATS.

For Year 6 Children this is often the best time of their final year at Birchanger School. They took the SATS tests in their stride but there are a great deal more exciting items on the agenda for the rest of the term, including a visit to the Emirates Stadium.

Where permitted a great deal happens outside in the summer term. The grounds can be a venue for lessons, additional sporting activities as well as the Cycling Proficiency Training which is well under way. There are additional Sports Events and training in anticipation of Sports Day and the School Fete on July 9th and the School Play where parts are keenly contested at auditions. It is a time to study subjects which are just outside the narrow government prescribed official curriculum. There are also the Prom and Leaver's Parties to arrange.

Bring Your Favourite Book.

That was the theme for the last day of the first half of the summer term. Not only were they invited to bring their favourite book they were also asked to come dressed as their favourite character. It is always the way, some fictional characters are a lot more popular than others, but nobody was worried and the day was both interesting and fun.

School Play The Wizard of Oz

Matinee Mon July 18th 2pm, everyone welcome, tickets available at the school.

Evening Performances Mon July 18th and Tuesday July 19th at 7pm.

Please note, no pre school age children are allowed to come to the evening performances but they are very welcome to attend the matinee.

Situation Vacant

BIRCHANGER NURSERY REQUIRE A PART TIME NURSERY ADMINISTRATOR

Birchanger Nursery is a well-established, thriving & expanding committee-run pre-school with a charitable status. We are looking for a Nursery Administrator, to work 17 hours per week to start August 2011 mainly during term time only. In this role you would be expected to provide administrative support in the running of the nursery including managing admissions, dealing with parents, keeping the accounts, invoicing and payroll

We seek a friendly, flexible person, committed to young children & families and able to work well in a strong team. You will need excellent oral and written communication skills, a working knowledge of Microsoft-based office programmes, office administration experience including book keeping and payroll.

For further information please email:
lorijackson@sky.com

News from St Mary's

It is said that if you wait an hour for a bus, two will then come along at the same time - the same principle seems to apply where organists are concerned! For many months we had been searching for an organist to take over from Geoffrey Martin. A young man from Hockerill College joined us for a few months but then was awarded a place at Cambridge. Geoffrey kindly offered to play the organ on some Sundays with Jo Sherriff continuing to play at our Family Services. At the beginning of the year Ruth Martin joined us so that she and Geoffrey would play at Holy Communion and special services. Now, Phillip Cowling, who lives in the village, has agreed to play the organ at matins and other services. We are very pleased that the organ will be used on such a regular basis and take this opportunity to thank Geoffrey, Ruth, Jo and Phillip for their support.

Since the overhaul of the organ was completed it sounds wonderful. Come along and listen - the church is open every Sunday at 11am

Summer Lunch at Moorswood

Sunday 3rd July at 12.30pm

Tickets £10 includes 3 course meal with wine

This is a very popular event where tickets sell out very quickly so if you want to join in call me now on 07702171744

A NEW WEBSITE FOR THE CLUB

The site has many features including up to date information on all live entertainment events; sports activities; food and bar prices; membership information and promotions. You can enter your email address and get free updates from the club of all forthcoming events and there links to Facebook and Twitter social network sites so everyone can keep up with all the latest news.

The website will be launched at the end of May 2011 and there will be publicity at the club, in the village and the surrounding villages to highlight the benefits the club can provide to all it's members. The website address is www.birchangerclub.com.

Birchanger Saturday 1st XI vs Rickling Ramblers 1st XI

Saturday 11 June Match Report

Heavy overnight rain resulted in a very wet Rickling wicket and meant that it was crucial that Birchanger won the toss if they were to continue their recent winning ways. The toss was duly won and Birchanger began the task of restricting Rickling Ramblers to a total of 148 from their allotted overs. The main wicket takers being Paul Parker and Alex Griffiths who both recorded the impressive figures of 3 – 29 from their 10 overs, whilst Elliott Sellears chipped in with a respectable 2 – 29 from his 10 overs.

When Birchanger's response began the wicket had dried and was now an easier proposition than the surface that Rickling Ramblers had faced at the start of the game. However, a good bowling performance from Rickling restricted Birchanger to 59 for 2 off the first 20 overs of their innings and made for a nail biting finale, which has been the way of the majority of Birchanger's recent victories. Birchanger did however prevail and passed the target of 148 with 2 overs and 5 balls remaining having lost 8 wickets. Justin Bass top scored for Birchanger with 38 and was ably supported by Elliott Sellears who scored 22, James Reed who scored 22 and man of the match Paul Parker who having earlier taken 3 wickets and 3 catches saw Birchanger home to victory en route to a personal tally of 29 not out.

Birchanger Sports and Social Club

July Entertainment

2nd Andy Loxley
16th Stone Cold
22nd Poker Night
30th The Ghias

Follow us at **www.birchangerclub.com**

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Village Diary June/ July

June

26th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

July

2nd 8.00 pm At the Club
Andy Loxley

3rd 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

10th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

16th 8.00 pm At the Club
Stone Cold

17th 11.00 am St Mary's
Family Service

22nd 8.00 pm At the Club
Poker Night

24th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

30th 8.00 pm At the Club
The Ghias

31st 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

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