

Birchanger

May 2011



Magazine

Issue 101

BIRCHANGER CELEBRATES THE ROYAL WEDDING

Royal Wedding Celebrations as You Liked Them.

There was something for everyone in Birchanger on the day of the wedding. Hardly anyone was to be seen on the street as Birchanger joined the rest of the country glued to their television sets.

Things were different later. Harrisons held a private street party, as did High view while the pub and club offered special Royal Wedding food and bubbly.

There were numerous small parties providing opportunities for neighbours to get to know each other better. The school had arranged a week of celebrations and history to mark the occasion, with their own street party in the playground on the day before the wedding, complete with balloons and bunting.



There was the odd unwelcome interruption. Cold calling telephone callers did not seem to understand what was going on and the importance of the day to a great many people. A member of my own family had a visit from a well known religious organisation just as the vows were being exchanged. Some days are very special and even if there are points to be made and things to sell, that time was a totally inappropriate time to try to make a pitch.

ELIZABETH RETAINS HER SEAT

Elizabeth Godwin has retained her seat at Uttlesford district council beating off a challenge from John Hudson of the Liberal Democrat party 381 votes to 99 there were 9 spoiled papers and a disappointing turnout of only 44%. She said.

"A very big thank you to everyone who supported me, particularly Ken Wheatley who was my agent and Pim and my many friends who helped throughout in so many different ways.

To all those who did not, sorry you are stuck with me for another four years. To everyone, I will work as hard as I can to improve whatever I can for everyone living in the Birchanger ward until the next election in 2015."





PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Volunteers needed to help stop speeding in Birchanger

At the recent Parish Meeting there were many people who voiced their concern about speeding in the village, and who were told by the policing team that if there were enough people, training could be given in the use of a speed gun by parish volunteers.

The Parish Council is now appealing for those who would like to be a part of the scheme and who are willing to undertake the necessary training to come forward now. A minimum of 6 volunteers are needed before the police will consider training. Hopefully the number of volunteers will be much higher than that.

If you would like to be part of this program, please call me with your details as soon as possible. Each team consists of 3 volunteers. The Parish Council would like to have several teams available who will be able to operate on different days and at different times.

The number to call is 812793.

Let's try to do something about those noisy Helicopters

Helicopters do not have to follow a particular route to land at Stansted Airport as most other aircraft. There is a route which is the preferred option, but there are absolutely no penalties for infringing this. However they are a noisy menace wherever they fly and should be subject to the same penalties as other noisy aircraft.

One way to draw the airport's attention to the fact that the helicopters are causing as much of a nuisance as the noisier aircraft is to keep on reporting them as they overfly our homes. At the moment there is no documentation of the disturbance as the overflying is simply not reported and so as far as the authorities are concerned, does not exist. Anecdotal evidence alone is not enough. Dates and times are needed as well to convince the airport and the government that the public out there has had their fill of these noisy aircraft.

Next time a helicopter disturbs you, make a note of the date and time and report the intrusion. You can do that by registering your complaint on the airport noise line on 01279 662066, or you can tell Stop Stansted Expansion on 01279 870558. You can also report the incident directly on their website at www.stopstanstedexpansion.com where there is a specially printed form for your use.

PS the kerosene smells are back. It took us a long time to prove to the airport that they did exist and were not due to somebody's faulty boiler. Please use the method above to report these smells as well.

And on the subject of noisy aircraft

One of the noisiest airlines currently using Stansted is Air Asia. So called third world countries are still allowed to use the noisiest aircraft to assist them in their development even when flying to countries where they have long since been banned. Having just returned from a trip to the Far East I am very surprised that this is still allowed to happen. Their development is far and away ahead of our own these days. They make our new Shard building look positively obsolete.

Surely the time has come to stop these aircraft for good worldwide? Otherwise we will be pleading third world status and seeking to use them again here!

So we live in the best part of England?

I wonder how many of us believe this, with a motorway and an airport close by, as well as ever increasing housing development? Uttlesford came third in the list of best places to live, second only to South Cambs and East Herts who are both on our borders. We apparently live longer, have better employment prospects and health than other places. Our houses are some £100,000 more expensive than those in less favoured areas. Fortunately our average salaries are apparently higher than elsewhere. We have more sunshine but we also get less rain fall, perhaps not a plus for gardeners who are threatened with hose pipe bans. So what happened to the Lake District, the West Country and other well known and beautiful areas?

For the past few years Uttlesford has been in the top ten. The challenge is to keep it there.

Less Dog Fouling but----

Thank you to the dog owners who are cleaning up there acts literally regarding the deposits left by their pets, however there is a downside as parts of the hedge grows are littered with little pink bags which are an unwholesome addition to the rural scene.

The idea is that you have to take the bag home with you. Sorry, it is an inconvenience but you are actually creating a menace which is as bad as the actual fouling. These bags just won't go away.

The Parish Council will be asking the new council for dog fouling bins and eventually they will be installed, meanwhile it remains your responsibility and the penalties are large for offenders.

A very different Art Exhibition

The weather was great, with warm sunshine making patterns through the trees, all helping to provide a unique opportunity for people to wander down the new path in Birchanger Wood and to admire the paintings of the wood by the children of Birchanger and Summercroft Schools. The art from the schools was of a very high standard and there were contributions from children from 4 -11 years old. Some of the work from the youngest children was particularly admired. It was both a very novel way of raising money for the wood, as well as for the children to study the trees and to paint what they had seen. Many people who were on their normal saturday stroll were very surprised to see the exhibition but were happy to enjoy the pictures as well as the refreshments which were also available.

An idea to be repeated we hope?

Birchanger Fete needs your help

The line up for the fete promises to be the best ever in Birchanger. In addition to a wide range of stalls there are also a bigger than ever range of attractions and many prizes to be won. These include old favourites such as the band, bouncy castle, coconut shy, tombolas, hog roast and bottle stalls to the newer jousting, laser battling and gladiators.

All the fete needs is you as a welcome visitor and perhaps as someone with an hour or two spare to help to man one of the many attractions.

The fete will run between 1 and 5pm, the club will have an open day for everyone to use the facilities and there will be a full range of refreshments available throughout the afternoon.

There is something for everyone and promises to be a memorable day. If you would like to help please call Peter Booker on 813012.

Birchanger's own tea towel

Specially designed village tea towels featuring the village sign have been commissioned by the Open Gardens Group. This is a first for Birchanger, certainly in recent memory, and they will be for sale at the main village events throughout the summer.

The tea towels are of a premium quality and as well as being very attractive and will make useful gifts whether for use or decoration. They are priced at £4 each and will be on sale at the Coffee Morning at Moorswood on June 7th. They are also available by contacting Angie Driscoll on 817376 or myself on 812793. There are other items which the Open Gardens Group may consider commissioning later in the year. All profits from the sale of the tea towels will go as always with Open Gardens Initiatives, to village projects and groups.

Recreation Ground Equipment Alert.

The combination of winter weather and vandalism has taken its toll of the play equipment in the Recreation Ground. The Parish council have the repairs in hand but they will take a while to complete. The damage is relatively minor, but for the next few weeks care is needed while cracks in the wooden items are filled, the slide refurbished and the spring animal tops are replaced.

Neighbourhood watch alert

There is a new name for a very old type of crime which is happening all over our area as we go about our normal routines. The latest name for this is Distraction Theft, a crime which is true to its name: someone distracts you while an unseen accomplice nicks your wallet, your cards or your car. It is very common around supermarket car parks, cash points and busy shopping areas.

When you are entering your PIN details at an ATM or check out make sure nobody is behind you watch you punch in the numbers. Criminal often watch and enter your pin while someone else steals another card from your bag. Beware the apparently well meaning individual who asks for your help with a seemingly innocent request in a car park, their accomplice could be stealing your purse or wallet. These individuals are skilled operators and the chances are you will not notice the loss until you reach home.

At an ATM recently my husband was pushed to one side as he was about to collect his cash by an individual who apologised profusely. When he reached for his money his cash and card were gone. The two crooks then went to another ATM and extracted more cash before the card was blocked.

Under the Dreaming Spires



It might come as a surprise to some but there is a long standing link between Birchanger and New College Oxford. This is because the college supplied almost all of our rectors going back to 1391 the last being T Evans-Pughe. In 1549 the book of common prayer was introduced to England which changed the communion service to include wine this meant that each church would need a goblet or chalice big enough for the congregation to take communion. So in 1567 New College Oxford kindly provided St Mary's with a wonderful silver chalice that graced the altar in Birchanger until comparatively recent times.

With the modern world as it is and the risk of theft of a valuable antique. The chalice was taken into the personal care of the church wardens and there is a story of it being kept under the bed of Joy Wright for a time. It was eventually decided to return the chalice to Oxford for safe keeping which is where it now resides.

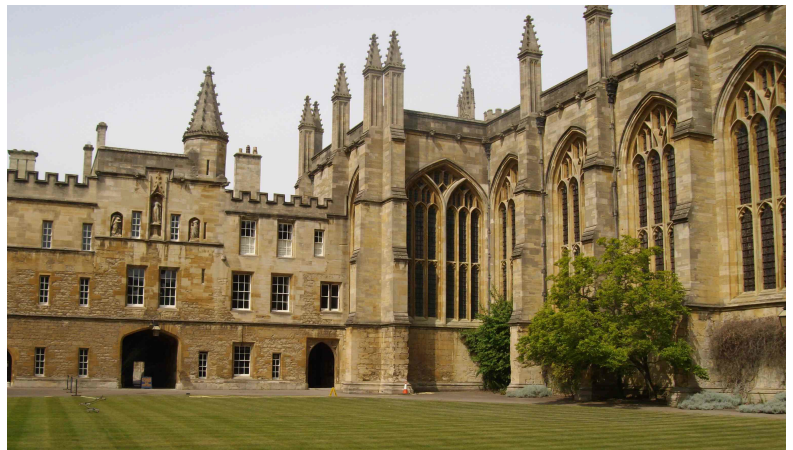
On Friday 6th May a coach load of 18 visitors left Birchanger to view the chalice in the college treasury. The visit was organised as we would now expect by Pam Lee and our Rector also joined the pilgrimage which was graced by some lovely spring weather.

The Chalice

The chalice was no disappointment and it shares the treasury with some extraordinary exhibits including two narwhal horns, civil war vintage body armour, and other religious artefacts.

New college proved to be welcoming hosts and lunch was taken by many of the pilgrims. While others chose to take their repast in an Oxford hostelry and marvel at the City's architecture.

We took our leave of Oxford for the long drive home reflecting on a time when it would have been unthinkable to steal from a church.



The Quadrangle New College

Birchanger has a National Dressage Champion

Congratulations to Julie Hugo who triumphed at the British Dressage National Championships at Hartpury, Gloucestershire. Julie was riding her own young dressage horse, Welcome O ('Wellie') which she trains at her Little Hallingbury stables.

She said. "Wellie is an immensely talented young horse" and added "It's fantastic to see him beginning to realise his potential."

At 17 hands, he's physically big and powerful and has a personality to match. I wasn't the only one cheering when he won the championship because he had a lot of support amongst the crowd."



Clare's trek part two

SUNDAY 21ST NOVEMBER

Well too much thinking resulted in a rough nights sleep, but after a good breakfast we left for another 5 hours drive that would take us to the start of our walk, definitely didn't enjoy this bus ride very rough and bumpy. Suddenly we literally hit the end of the road, one minute the road was there then it was gone and there was just sand, and more sand. We had arrived at the edge of the desert. This is where we meet our five friends for the next few days THE CAMELS and I have to say I could not believe how much stuff they carry, it makes me feel like I should have packed even lighter than I did and believe me that was light, just bare essentials. Their camels carry everything, our small two men tents, the chef's tent, all the food and water for six days, amazing when you think about it.

Well the boots are on and the camels are loaded and off we go. We walked for about three hours to the first camp where we would spend our first night. It was amazing, so surreal. The sights were unbelievable, at one point whilst walking we passed a few mud huts and people that were living here with children playing outside with no shoes and its not the nice soft sand you would think its all hard and a bit like rubble. How these people survive I do not know, they travel for hours at a time just to get some water, food etc it's amazing.

After a while we did hit some soft sand and small dunes and my God it's just fabulous to walk in. Well at camp, we had to put up our own tents for the night, they might be small tents but they caused a lot of laughter among us amateurs, Oh no the time has come, I NEED A WEE! CAN I DO THIS? Well needs must and I did it! What an experience, literally a hole in the sand, imagine that!

Dinner time! Who would think the chef could produce such a yummy 3 course meal in the desert it was lovely to eat in the open under the stars. That's another thing we didn't think about, when the sun went down it was so dark apart from the stars, because we were in the middle of the desert, no houses showing light, no streetlights, no airport glow and certainly no car lights passing, just pitch black everywhere except for the candles we had alight and they do not create much light, had to rely heavily on our head torches, which were used as little as possible to save the batteries. Well I'm zipped up in my tent now, but I am a bit concerned about Cedric the camel joining me in my tent as he has decided he wants to sleep just outside my door, I hope he doesn't loose his bearings in the dark and trample on me and the tent.

MONDAY 22ND NOVEMBER

Well I was up at 6:30 and God it was freezing, feeling a bit stiff this morning, and the bonus is I didn't have a visit from Cedric, and we're all good and ready to go after having breakfast and taking the tent down, we set off about 8:30 am.

This is not too bad, its still quite hard under foot with a few sand dunes now and again, but by golly it's getting really hot now and I'm starting to struggle a little, but some of the views are fantastic even though it's all sand, where the sun reflects it's quite magical. At about 1 pm we stop to make camp and I'm glad, I want to take my boots off as my feet are starting to hurt a bit now. The camel handlers have put the big tent up, so we all collapse in there, it's way to hot to even attempt to put our tents up yet! Brian the chef brings us out some amazing looking salads, just can't believe food can look and taste great out here, but I do have a downside to this and that is these blooming flies they are everywhere, so annoying.

We have too stay put for now as it is way too hot to walk anymore as it's about 45°C. After some rest and much foot massaging it is starting to cool down a bit but believe me its still hot but cooler than earlier, we start to put our tents up, with no trouble today.

The views, now what can I say apart from WOW; I saw the moon coming up before the sun had set, watching that was out of this world. One of the camels has decided to go to the top of one of the dunes near us, and there he was silhouetted against the sunset, BREATHTAKING!

Clare

School News

Royal Wedding Celebrations

We spent the week before the Royal Wedding focusing on British history, particularly our kings and queens. The children were fascinated by Prince William's family tree. For each of the three days we were in school that week we had a British themed lunch which included roast beef on one day. The fish and chip lunch proved very popular with over 85% of the children having lunch that day. We finished the week with a street/playground party with food and decorations provided by the PTA. The children enjoyed an afternoon of playground games before parents joined us for a cream tea. Mrs Manning, Miss Shirley and Squirrels class baked 150 scones for the event. They were delicious.

Letter from the Queen

Donna Saint-Pierre has been running a very popular art club after school since September. Before Easter, the children made birthday cards for the Queen and sent them off to Buckingham Palace. We were delighted to receive a letter of thanks from the Queen at Windsor in which she commented on the care that the children had taken with making the cards.

Residential Trip

Owls class spent 3 nights before the Easter holidays at the Kingswood Centre at West Runton in north Norfolk. The children experienced a range of activities including climbing, caving and aeroball (a cross between trampolining and basketball). They also had a go at being forensic scientists in an attempt to catch a 'thief'. The children's behaviour was excellent and we had a wonderful time – we have photographic evidence to prove it.

Swimming

Ladybirds and Hedgehogs class are swimming every week at Grange Paddocks this term. They have had two lessons so far and are thoroughly enjoying the experience.

Birchanger's First 10k Run is a Big Success.

With capital funding for the school slashed Birchanger School PTA has risen to the challenge to help to meet the huge deficit which the school now faces in its funding. With serious Athletes now among the parents at the school they decided to stage the first ever 10 kilometre run in the village. The event attracted Olympic hopefuls, the route proved to be challenging yet attractive, the sun shone, and there were bacon butties galore for everyone..

The whole event was judged by the top runners and the children alike to be a huge success. At the time of going to press the money raised is not yet known, but a great deal of hard work by the PTA and their band of helpers was the key to making the event one which those who took part, hope will become a regular fixture in the Birchanger Calendar.

Particular congratulations go to the winners of the Men's Race Doug Slater in 44 mins 6 seconds and the women's Race winner Kathryn Chapman in 47 min 40 seconds, as well as to the sight impaired athletes and to all those who are not athletes at all but who managed to complete the run.

Over £2000 has been raised for the school.

Little Gems Coffee Morning

Don't forget the Little Gems Coffee Morning in the Church Hall on Wednesday June 1st between 10 am and noon in the Church Hall in aid of research on the very silent killer, Ovarian Cancer. This disease has few symptoms and sufferers are rarely diagnosed early enough.

The event is being run by Birchanger School Staff who are also in training to run the Shine full Marathon on October 1st. None of the participants has tried a full marathon before. Some have never run a long distance race of any sort before. If you are around please drop in. There will be a lot more than just a cup of coffee on offer. See you there.

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Coffee Morning to Celebrate 90th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion.

This will be held at Moorswood on Tuesday June 7th between 10.30 am and noon. All profits from this event will go to the Royal British Legion. Although there is no official British Legion Branch in Birchanger anymore, there is still a well organised Poppy Collection and the village supports the Legion to the tune of some £3000 per year on the amount collected. The money is very much needed now to support the families of the soldiers killed or seriously injured in Afghanistan.



COFFEE MORNING

In aid of the
Royal British Legion

Tuesday 7th June
10.30 till Noon

Moorswood 330 Birchanger Lane

Everyone welcome





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Village Diary March/April

May	
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
June	
4th	8.00pm At the club GTO's
5th	11.00 am St Mary's Matins
12th	11.00 am St Mary's Holy Communion
18th	8.00pm At the Club Tequila
19th	11.00 am St Mary's Family Service
26th	11.00 am St Mary's Holy Communion

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