

# Birchanger

September 2011



# Magazine

Issue 105

## FRACTURED? NOT US

Birchanger Sports and Social Club hit back at its critics, who described it on this page last month as being 'fractured', in the best possible way: by staging a fete and beer festival that had villagers turn up in their hundreds to enjoy stalls and attractions to suit all tastes.

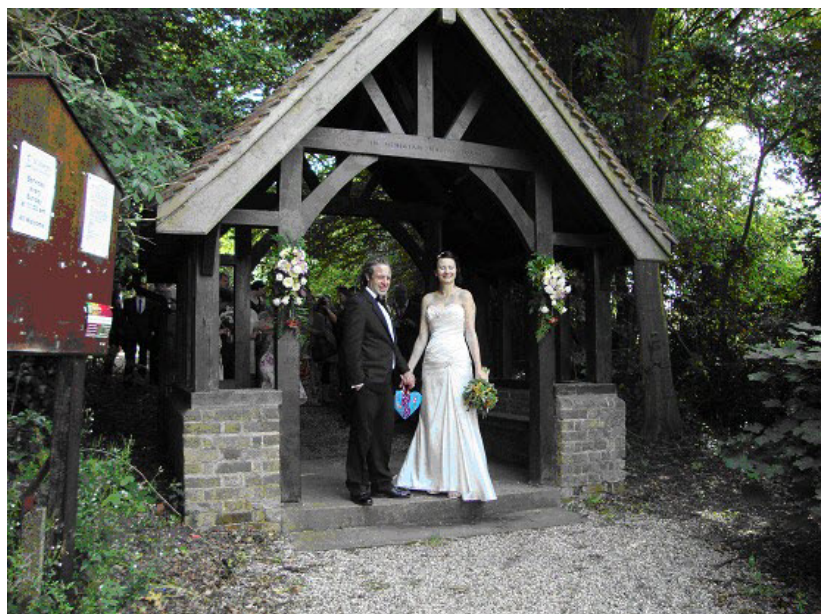
Against all odds the day was warm and sunny, and the scene was set for a perfect English summer afternoon. A brass band played, the gentle waft of smoke from Jay Leaver's hog roast drifted across the field, there was Pimm's, tea and cakes and there were adequate supplies of unusual beers and ciders available from the Club.

This magazine was represented by Sue Gilbey's white elephant stall and by Tina and Mark Crossley, who gave lucky visitors the chance to pay a pound for an old wine bottle full of stagnant water. Well, some of them got real wine instead, which must have been disappointing. These stalls raised over £340 for the magazine, which represents nearly three months printing costs.

Birchanger Wood Trust made their first appearance at the fete. The Trust are the guardians of the village's own piece of ancient woodland. They have been fundraising very successfully to enable them to lay over 2500m of paths, allowing access to the woods for the less mobile, as well as to parents with buggies. The path has the additional benefit of reducing the wear and tear on the vulnerable habitats present in the wood. You can learn more about Birchanger Wood Trust on **page 6**.

You can read more about the fete on page 4; and see exactly what Peter Booker, chairman of Birchanger Sports and social Club, thought of last month's article on **page 4**.

*Weddings of Birchanger people at St. Mary's Church don't seem to be very common these days, so we were pleased to receive this picture of the wedding of Donna Smith and William Sanders on 11th July. We join the whole village in wishing them many happy years together.*





# PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

*Elizabeth Godwin*

## Churton Gate: Welcome to Birchanger

The perimeter of Birchanger at Forest Park has been expanding for three years now. The fact that it is isolated from the main body of the village has meant that most Forest Park residents, as well as those living in the original part of Birchanger, have never felt that it was part of Birchanger Village.

Now 9 new houses in the centre of Birchanger are in the process of becoming occupied by their new owners. We would like to welcome them to the village and hope that they will enjoy living in their new homes. We hope the new residents will quickly feel part of Birchanger and soon come to enjoy all that Birchanger has to offer. We hope they will very quickly feel at home here.

Meanwhile Forest Hall Park will join the Stansted Parish next April. There will be parish council elections for both Stansted and Birchanger, and the boundaries will be reviewed for district council election purposes shortly.

## Dog fouling moves on a stage

It has not been a good summer for those who like to walk the footpaths without a dog. Dog fouling has been bad, despite the police doing their best to educate dog owners and the best efforts of the dog warden.

The message is partially getting there it seems. People are taking bags for their dog, but a habit is developing whereby the bag is left on a bush to be collected later.

Trouble is, the owner forgets and the hedgerows are becoming decorated with small plastic bags of varying hue with outrageously offensive contents.

Who on earth is going to want the job of collecting these little beauties? They will be there until they

rot. Sorry guys, but your pet and its excrement are your responsibility alone. You are getting there but there is a way to go yet it seems.

The illnesses dog excrement can cause are very serious. You would not want a member of your own family to become the next person to be infected.

## And now, we have the parcel scam

How do they think of them? This particular little beauty is being only too successful in the home counties in the past few months.

We all get parcels in the post, usually they are things we have ordered, sometimes we have a nice surprise when an unexpected gift arrives, but do we actually check the name on the parcel when we accept the delivery? We should it seems. If we do not, the following sequence of events could happen to you .

It is a busy morning. A delivery van arrives with a parcel. He may simply hand over the parcel or ask you to sign for it. Most people will accept the parcel even if they are not expecting anything. You do not check the addressee, after all the delivery man appeared to have your name right as he greeted you. By the time you actually look at the name the delivery man has vanished.

You puzzle over what to do next, but events overtake you. First of all a lady arrives. She has been using a flamboyant auburn wig in recent events, but this will change. She will say she understands that a parcel intended for her has been delivered to you by mistake. You happily hand over the parcel. A few days later the trouble starts. Letters and calls are received demanding payment for the goods which you signed for. You did do this but you probably did not even know what they were, and you handed them over to

someone whom you did not know and cannot even prove existed. Where can you go from here?

The only answer is to check the name on every parcel you receive before you sign for or accept the parcel. Even if the address is correct, if it has the wrong name do not accept it under any circumstances. That is the only way you can be safe from this menace.

### Shed and Garage reminder.

Sadly the thieves are still active and they are helping themselves to all manner of useful items from outbuildings. Please secure your sheds, garages and other outbuildings to avoid this particular menace if you can.

### Fly Tippers are being caught.

There have been several fines issued and successful prosecutions carried out in recent months. If there is any way of finding out who the fly tipped goods belong to they will be caught. The most frequent excuse is that they paid somebody else to get rid of the rubbish. That might be true, but if the rubbish is traced back to you, it is still your responsibility.

You may employ people to do the tipping for you in all good faith. Fine, but check their credentials with the environment agency first or the District Council. All bona fide waste disposers are registered with the environment agency. Nobody else has a license to dispose of your waste otherwise, whatever they may claim.

### Policing Changes.

In this area we are used to well trumpeted announcements of policing changes, which are dressed up to camouflage the fact that cuts have to be made somewhere, under the guise of new policing improvements.

In this case the rural areas of Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford, Colchester and Maldon are all to be under the umbrella of by far the biggest policing area in the county to be known as the North Area. A truly massive area for one police superintendent to cover!

To mitigate this we are to have closer links with the forces of neighbouring counties, although the references refer to Kent which would not be of much use to us I fear.

There will be a new number for non urgent calls to the police. This is number 101 which at the immediate moment is available in Essex only.

Mercifully they are not abandoning our very successful community policing scheme.

### Neighbourhood Watch Needs Your Help.

Are you thinking of doing something different this autumn. Perhaps you might like to consider volunteering for something. There are plenty of organisations out there who need your support, and one of them is our own neighbourhood watch scheme.

Neighbourhood watch is a valuable self-help organisation. It is a local tool which everyone can use to do their own personal best to fight crime on their own doorstep. Right now, new neighbourhood watch co-ordinators are urgently needed in Birchanger. The work is not onerous and does bring you into contact with your neighbours. The police provide training and support and there are regular meetings of the neighbourhood watch team in the area to attend.

Interested? Give the community police team a call on 007801 461666.

### Have You Got Your Blue Recycling Bag Yet?

Everyone should have had a blue plastic bag for recycling textiles, delivered to their home in the last few weeks. They can be used to fill up worth all manner of textiles, including old bedding. When you run out please tell the council or your bin men about it and a new supply will be delivered to your house.

# Letter to the Editor

*The following was received from Peter Booker, Chairman of Birchanger Sports and Social Club.*

Following a close vote at a Special meeting which debated whether to purchase play equipment, last month's leading article depicted BS&SC as a 'fractured' club. As Chairman of that club I am therefore grateful to the magazine for allowing me the opportunity to place my views on record.

When I first read the article (which included words such as 'bitterness' and 'mess') I had to pause and carefully re-read to ensure that this referred to BS&SC.

Indeed since the magazine's publication I have been overwhelmed by support from voters for and against the proposal surprised and disappointed by the tone and of the content.

I would like to briefly articulate a number of key points concerning the club, the way in which it is run and the Special meeting at which the vote was taken:

- On the 3rd Sept the club hosted a highly successful village fete and beer festival. This was an amicable occasion enjoyed collectively by many club members together with those of the public
- The committee currently comprises 10 members (double that required to form a quorum) who continue to work tirelessly to support the club
- Many members have supported events throughout the year and the financial forecast for the end of this year is looking extremely healthy
- The Special meeting engendered passionate debate with the issue democratically resolved. Emotions ran high but I am certain that members (however they chose to vote) would join me in claiming that there remains 'no mess' from which the club has to extricate itself
- The rationale for play equipment was seen as a method to reverse continuing poor attendance on Sundays and to attract new lifeblood into the club. Nevertheless the committee has respected the vote against the proposal and is actively seeking both short and long term views from across the age group of the membership to ensure that the club continues to thrive

Finally from my perspective I do not recognise a 'fractured' club. On the contrary, I believe that the overwhelming majority of the members feel that a more accurate description is one, which is flourishing.

## Memories are Made of This.

We have waited a very long time for the fete to return to Birchanger. The fact that it did return on a perfect English summer's day after a miserable summer set the scene for a record breaking Birchanger Fete.

It takes courage to bring a large scale operation back to the village after a long absence, but that is just what Birchanger Club showed when it set up a Fete sub committee in the autumn last year. Nearly a year later the result of months of careful planning became obvious to everyone. Peter and Clare led the team to produce not only the first fete for many years, but an incredibly successful one at that.

There was something there for everyone, whether you were a group just trying to raise money for a village project or to raise funds for the club itself. Outside groups such as the Badger Group set up their stalls alongside a stall from the school and all the other village organisations. There were competitions which included Welly Wonking, jousting, laser battles, bowling, coconut shies and much more.

The village representing all generations turned out in force and nobody was disappointed. The band played for longer than expected, the Pimm's bar flourished while beer drinkers worked their way through the extensive beer list. There was plenty to eat in the form of the hog roast, barbeque and tea with homemade cakes provided by the scouts.

There have been several red letter days at the club in recent years. These included the Golden and Silver Jubilees, with pram races, jazz bands and giant marquees. The atmosphere at this year's fete matched all of those. It will definitely be a day to be remembered as another very special Birchanger occasion when people living in Birchanger, whether club members or not, came together for a day of fun and relaxation, perhaps getting to know each other better and to make new friends in the process.

EJG

# BSSC Entertainment 2011

## September 2011

3rd - **Birchanger Village Fete, BSSC Beer Festival and Open Day.** Plus live evening entertainment "**Ash**"

24th - **Ray Collins live**

## October 2011

1<sup>st</sup> – **Quiz Night 8.30pm**

15th - **Melody Beats live**

22nd - **Diverse Diva's live**

28th – **Poker Night** (registration at 7.30pm)

## November 2011

12th - **Red & Black (Louise & Bernie) live**

19th – **Race Night 8.30pm**

26th - **Tequila live.** Social night, free raffle for all members. Non-members are welcome but must sign in and pay £2 per head

## December 2011

10th - **Julie Nevada live.** Plus Grand Xmas draw

17th - **Childrens Party**

24th - Xmas eve. **Hit & Run live.** Bar open until 12 midnight

31st - New years eve. "**Music through the ages**" **disco.** Bar open until 12 midnight

- Meat Draw every Saturday 1pm
- Quiz every Monday 9pm start
- Bingo every Thursday 8.30pm start
- Tote drawn every Friday evening
- Bonus Ball every week (ask bar staff)
- Saturday Bingo Lottery (ask bar staff)
- Bottle Draws, Cash Raffles & Prize Raffles throughout the year



## A Lovely Day at Birchanger Fete (from Birchanger Wood Trust)

Thank you for your support. The winner of the 'Guess the Cones in a Sweet Jar' will be announced after our next event in Jackson Square on the 24<sup>th</sup> September, and the Quiz will be advised after the closing date in November. Any more Quiz forms which you require may be obtained from myself – [daphnewj1944@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:daphnewj1944@yahoo.co.uk) or by telephoning 01279 562749 or 812259

***Birchanger Wood is 69 acres of ancient woodland through which many people from Stortford and north Essex travel when using the A120 from Hertford to Colchester in order to reach Stansted airport. It is, of course also your local Wood and provides a green lung separating the airport with its further development and urbanisation from the villages of Birchanger and Stansted and the town of Bishop's Stortford. It absorbs noise and creates a place of calm respite, together with a great facility in which to exercise AND IT IS FREE, and is available 365 days of the year.***



*Wood Anemones in Birchanger Wood*

The Trust is looking for funds to enable further refurbishment of its woodland paths to enable all-year round and wheelchair access to this local woodland. Many of you are Users of the Wood and will know that the exciting first refurbishment was completed in October last year and that a second stage is almost finished. When this is completed it will provide grade A woodland paths over a distance of 2,625 meters in Birchanger Wood.

Trust has plans for a further 2 long refurbished woodland paths - one of which will feature a circular path on the Birchanger side of the A120; the second will improve the path between the central public footpath and our first refurbished path at the rear of Birchwood school; and, there will be a third, smaller upgrade – the central public footpath itself.

Refurbishing paths enables conservation too – the undergrowing English bluebells and wood anemones have lost ground due to feet (and wheels) going off-path to avoid the previously slippery and boggy areas; the improved paths will encourage them to re-establish themselves.

The Trust is also anxious to establish a base compound and equipment store from which to operate, construct tree baskets to protect newly coppiced trees, have a tree nursery and a hedgehog sanctuary. It will of course enable efficient maintenance to be carried out and obviate the need to trundle equipment, cuttings and heavy equipment around the Wood in wheelbarrows.

The Trust has “partnershiped” the local scouts carrying out their Duke of Edinburgh award, to complete a spur path. This leads to a pond and an associated picnic area with benches - a project still under development.

Our Warden Pat Forrest was runner-up Community helper in the last year's competition run by the Observer newspaper. He works with the local cub group and their leader to help them gain their badges by carrying out clearances in the Wood. The scouts have also learned how to coppice and 'lay' hedges under his instruction. The local junior school, Summercroft, has featured their woodland art paintings in the Wood, and an experienced artist has built 'the old man of the Wood' from fallen trees. Pat also takes guided tours of the Wood and works with a dedicated group of woodland volunteers to keep the wood in control and conserved for the future.

The Birchwood High School encourages cross-country runs throughout the Wood and local Stortford health walks include Birchanger Wood in their weekly exercise schedule. The RSPB has carried out a bird count and the Natural History Society keeps a check on the local fungi population in the Wood

Visit our Wood and visit our web-site: [www.birchangerwoodtrust.org](http://www.birchangerwoodtrust.org)

Daphne Wallace-Jarvis, Secretary and Trustee, the Birchanger Wood Trust.

# News from St. Mary's

## Produce Auction Another Success

Yes - we have no bananas! They were sold along with the other items at our annual Produce Auction which was held in the Sports and Social club on the 28th August. What a cracking night it was. Our Rector, Paul, was on good form telling jokes when things got a bit frantic. The stage area was heaving with apples, potatoes, flowers etc and the room was filled with club members and their friends who joined in the bidding. Plums, marrows, beans and beetroot bags sold as fast as the helpers could manage. Preserves made by Rosemary Saward went like hot cakes (the cakes sold quickly too) , along with two bonsai trees donated by Scott.

A massive £722.50 was raised for church funds - a record! Thank you to everyone who helped to make this event a great success.

## Church Floor

We are pleased to say that one section of the old rotten flooring has been replaced. The next area will be done as soon as finances and the weather allows.

## Birchanger Arts Festival

24th & 25th September 10:30 - 5p.m. in Birchanger Village Hall.

Original paintings and drawings for sale,  
art demonstration, light refreshments and raffle.

Photography competition, flower display and music in the Church.

Entrance by catalogue 50p



A Stall at the Fete

## Quiz Night

On behalf of

Birchanger Buddies

Baby and Toddler Group

Come for a fun night out on

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> 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.



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## Village Diary September/October

### September

24th Ray Collins live at the Club

25th - 26th. Birchanger Art Festival. Village Hall 10.30 - 5.00.

25th 11.00 am. Holy Communion, St. Mary's

30th 8.00 pm. Quiz night in aid of Birchanger Buddies. See p7.

### October

1st 8.30 pm. Quiz Night at the Club

2nd 11.00 am. Matins, St. Mary's

9th 11.00 am. Holy Communion, St. Mary's

11th 11.00 am. Coffee morning in aid of St. Mary's, Moor-swood

15th Melody Beats live at the Club

16th 11.00 am. Family service, St. Mary's

22nd Diverse Divas live at the Club

23rd 11.00 am. Holy Communion, St. Mary's

28th 8.20 pm. Poker night at the Club

30th 11.00 am. Matins, St. Mary's

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