

# Birchanger

December 2014



# Magazine

Issue 144

## Merry Christmas Everyone

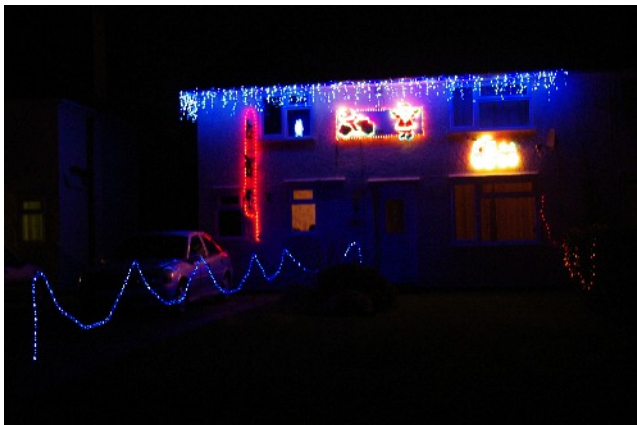
### The night Birchanger lit up for Christmas!

It was bright, beautiful, amazing and it cheered up the end of November gloom! That was the big Birchanger Light Up, where so many people switched on their Christmas lights to cheer everyone living, or just passing through the village. It may have been too early for some, but in reality there are not many who plan to celebrate Christmas, who have not given it some thought by November 30th. The creativity and generosity of their neighbours will perhaps help them in the very busy period to come.

It certainly lifted the mood of everyone who came out to see the lights. There is a competitive edge to the efforts this year again and there will be a reward for the winner. If you would like to nominate a particular house, please tell me on 812793, drop me a note at 330 Birchanger Lane, or bring your nomination to the club before 9pm on December 19th. It is planned to declare the winner during that evening.



“Very festive but where is the door again?”



Just two of the participating homes



# PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

*Elizabeth Godwin*

## A new playground for all children.

The Playground in the recreation ground was completed over the summer months. The equipment is either all new, or has been renovated, painted or replaced. There is something for all ages, and the football pitch to practise on as well.

There is a delay in the supply of the zip wire, which is unfortunate as for some the zip wire provides the greatest fun of all. Hopefully it will have been erected by the time you read this.

Perhaps over Christmas there will be some warmer days, when you will be able to see for yourself all that has been done with the Section 106 money from the new developments.

It is a pity that a certain group cannot keep their grubby little hands off the spray paint can. There is always someone trying to spoil the fun. Money like this will not be available again.

## What can the Parish Council do for you?

It was good to see so many people at the Parish Council Meeting in November. There was a hot topic, in the form of the new Stansted Airport Management Team talking about helicopters and the proposed flight path avoiding over flying Birchanger, but many people did stay for part of the meeting afterwards.

We would like to know if the situation has improved where you live.

The Parish Council always meets on the first Tuesday of each month, at 8pm, with a possible break in January and August. The agendas are published and placed on the website and on the noticeboards 5 days beforehand. Members of the public may address the meeting before business starts at every meeting. Council rules dictate that members of the public cannot participate in the meeting after this, but they can be the first to have their say.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday February 3<sup>rd</sup>. You can also phone the chairman, Angie Driscoll on 817376 or myself on 812793 if you would like to speak to somebody in between.

## Village vandals make life intolerable for bus passengers

I cannot wish a Happy Christmas to everyone in Birchanger this year. There are only a very few people off my Christmas wish list and the reason they are not on there is because they have made catching a bus by the club a nightmare for everyone.

Piece by piece they are smashing the glass and leaving yet more dangers to the early morning users. This always happens later in the evening, when they are probably fuelled up by alcohol from whatever source. As if doing yet more damage was not enough, they proceed to bring in a fresh supply of rubbish to strew about as well. Consequently the shelter is a no go area come morning.

This cannot happen quietly and someone somewhere knows who these people are. These people must be reminded that they are actually committing a criminal offence which will go on their records. The tariff will be increased if someone is injured, as it is almost inevitable now. If anyone does hear noise from the area of the shelter at night, please call the police immediately.

The shelter was repaired, as soon as the red tape was sorted out, but one wonders now if it is worth it? It is for the people who are older who need to sit down as they wait for the bus. I wonder what will happen to the vandals when they reach 75?

## Do you take your mobile when you walk your dog?

It might be a very good idea, if, along with the poo bags and the lead, you take your mobile phone as well whenever you walk your dog. Recently over 4 dog walkers are known to have had an accident or been taken ill while walking the paths and bridleways around Birchanger. In all these instances, there was nobody around who could help. Had they been carrying a phone, help would have been available and the injuries possibly less severe. As it was the victims had to struggle to habitation as best they could. Makes sense doesn't it, to go equipped for any eventuality?

## And on the subject of dogs

A resident in Birchanger had a bit of a shock last month. He was seen allowing his dog to foul the pavement on

one of the busier footways. On this occasion he was reported to the dog warden, who arranged for the mess to be cleaned up and the owner of the perpetrator of the crime received a warning. If it happens again it will not just be a warning which will be handed out. So you see it does work if you report dog fouling and the bonus is, the mess gets removed as well, and does not end up in someone's house.

## Poppy Appeal Exceeds £4000!

For the first time ever the Poppy Appeal topped the £4000 mark for the Birchanger area. The record breaking amount of £4449.50 was collected through the sales of poppies, other merchandise and donations. This is all down to the hard work put in by the Poppy Collection organisers in Birchanger, Geoff and Angie Driscoll. It is not just a straight forward matter of putting out and collecting the tins and the poppies, it means servicing the poppy trays, regularly replenishing the stock, particularly in the area of the Service Station which requires daily visits, and is one of the prime areas for the theft of the tins. There are also the poppy wreathes to order and to deliver to those who wish to lay them combined with a great deal of organisation and form filling in the weeks around Armistice Day.

A big thank you both for all you have done for the British Legion. The tradition handed down by the Kadwills is still very much alive and succeeding beyond all that was thought possible before.

Sadly this record may never be matched or exceeded. One of the main outlets, The Service Station have decided to make children in Need their main charity for November, with poppies on sale for only three days in the overall two week period of the appeal. It seems a shame that those who have fought for us and who are left in need themselves should be passed over. Should the buying public not be allowed to make their own choice as has happened this year and in previous years?

## Christmas Bin Collections.

Over the Christmas period Recycling Bins i.e Green Recycling of paper, plastics etc, and Food Bins only will be collected.

For Birchanger

The Recycling bins as above due to be collected on

Friday December 26<sup>th</sup> will be collected on Saturday

December 27<sup>th</sup>

Recycling bins again as above, due for collection on

Friday January 2<sup>nd</sup> will be collected on Saturday January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Collections return to normal for us on Friday January 9<sup>th</sup> when the black bin and the food bin will be collected.

## Hello Birchanger!

With Christmas almost on us, it is time to make sure our home protection is up to scratch. It is the time when the selfishly minded members of the community who are too mean to buy their own presents, or who enjoy inflicting misery on their other people, decide that it would be far easier to just help themselves to some of the ones which the rest of us have carefully selected and purchased for those who are closest to us. Definitely not for the burglars to get their thieving hands on. Just ask one of the residents of Harrisons who was burgled while he and his wife were at work on November 17<sup>th</sup> last month. Thieves smashed the front door, found the keys of the car which was parked just outside, and calmly drove it and other possessions away.

Please everyone, take care of your house and your belongings. Don't light up the rooms when you are out unless the curtains are drawn. Leaving them open provides a shop window where the thief can choose the goods he fancies. Hide your car keys, but don't lock your interior doors.

If anyone wants advice or help on matters criminal, please call me, Alex Stewart, anytime on 07846467575. Make sure that your Christmas is a safe and happy one.

## Mid-day assistant.

We are looking to appoint an enthusiastic caring mid-day assistant and wishing to join our highly dedicated team of support staff.

You will help provide support in the school dining hall and supervise pupils both inside and out during the lunch break.

Applicants need the following:

- Experience of working with children

- To be a confident and caring person

- Patience, a good sense of humour

- Good communication skills

- The ability to work as part of a team but also to be able to use your own initiative

- A strong sense of commitment

- Ideally a willingness to undertake food safety and preparation training so that you can cover for our cook if she is absent

Hours will be 12.00pm to 1.15pm term time (plus training days if required)

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As such, the post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

For an application form, speak to Carolyn Field at the school office.

## The Garden Route, Ostriches and the Swartburg Pass

Driving in the wide open spaces of the Southern African coastal route is an absolute joy. It is no wonder it is called the garden route, to say it is picturesque is a complete understatement, the scenery is awesome!

As we set off in the morning sunshine passing such places as “Somerset West”, “Gordons Bay”, “Betty’s Bay” and many others, I couldn’t help but reflect on the legacy of British rule in this part of Africa, I like to think that we left something more than some parochial names and ex-pat communities behind when we left.

We spent the morning marvelling at the sea on our right and the mountains on our left as we drove on in glorious sunshine arriving at about 2 PM at L’Agulhas which is the Southernmost tip of South Africa.

Most people want to have their picture taken at this point where the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet. However as we left the car in the car park to walk to the sea I noticed about 30 Harley Davidson motorcycles tilted lazily on their stands and hoped that we weren’t going to be assailed by a group of Hells Angels. Imagine our surprise therefore when, as we got to the rock marking the spot, we were greeted by a group of men, none of whom was under 70, laughing and joking, splashing about in the shallow water. One superannuated leather clad biker even offered to take our photo together.



For the rest of the day we continued on our way until at about 6 pm we arrived at a sign pointing us onto a long farm track just outside of a town called Heidelberg. The track seemed never ending until we finally reached the gates of the Skeiding guest farm where we were to stay for the next 2 days.

This was truly a working farm but not as any farm we would recognise. We were shown to our room, a beautiful bungalow overlooking sprawling meadows where sheep and cattle grazed in the evening sunshine. There was one other resident animal on this farm which we would get up close and personal with in the morning.

Seven am saw us and several other guests clamber onto the back of a four wheel drive truck, together with Neels, the Afrikaaner farmer, three black farm hands and two wild and willing sheepdogs which were a cross between border collies and Australian hunting dogs! For the next hour we bucked and rolled our way over fields and down ditches herding sheep, separating cattle and dropping off the farmhands so they could tend to the Alfalfa plants used to feed the animals. Before arriving back at the farmhouse for a hearty breakfast we were taken to see the other ‘herd’, Ostriches! Neels explained that his father had always kept Ostriches and his tenure of the farm was continuing the tradition. The birds are huge.

They are kept for their plumage, their eggs and their meat. They can live for up to 50 years and are very fast movers. They have even been ridden and raced in the past though this practice has now thankfully been stopped.

Back at the farm in the evening after a dip in the pool Neels cooked Ostrich steaks over a Braai or South African barbecue. I can tell you the steak was delicious, looked just like a sirloin but contains no cholesterol whatsoever. Neels explained that he exports the steaks to Europe, mainly to Germany, but he expressed puzzlement that the UK, so far, had not succumbed to the delicacy.



In the morning we made some purchases of souvenirs ( I even had my picture taken standing on an Ostrich egg!) perhaps I’m not that heavy after all ! We said our goodbyes, packed up the Toyota and off we set again.

A long days journey later saw us arrive at our next home which was a delightful little house in a complex miles from nowhere at the foot of the Swartburg Pass. Looking out from our balcony up at the pass we felt a great sense of inertia come upon us.

After a long and tiring day we decided *not* to take the guided tour that had been booked for us the following day, we had, however, not reckoned with the force of nature that was Charlie Nunn, who was to enter our world the following day!



## BIRCHANGER SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB DECEMBER NEWSLETTER OUT WITH THE OLD IN WITH THE NEW

### CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR BIRCHANGER STYLE:



### NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:

The lights are up, lists are in and the family arguments have started, it's once again the time of year the Turkey and Goose fear, Christmas. Over the period the club will be running a number of special entertainment events to keep you occupied this Yuletide, including a special New Year's Eve party with disco, Christmas Eve entertainment and a host of other exciting things on offer.

For many of you it will be the first time you have enjoyed the brand new dance floor and light system, or enjoyed a relaxing afternoon sat in our new chairs, or enjoying a bite to eat from our great new tables, so please do come along and give us a try. New members (even those looking to escape their families) are always welcome.

### DECEMBER PROMOTION:

Following on from the huge success of previous years we are reintroducing our popular drinks promotion throughout December. Each time you buy a drink then make sure to get your card stamped. Once you have eight drinks stamped then you can redeem a free drink at a special evening we are hosting on Saturday January 31st 2015!

This is simply a small way to thank our loyal members for their patronage at this special time of year.



With a New Year come new promises. Alongside the fad diets, promises to exercise more and commitments to positive change, why not make your resolution to get out more and come and socialise in your new club. January is the time of year when we renew membership at the club, and is either the opportunity to enjoy a new year of great value food, entertainment and award-winning drinks, or to join for the first time and become part of our Birchanger Sports and Social Club family.

We're still the cheapest club in the area and according to CAMRA we're the best club in the whole of East Anglia, so why not make 2015 the year to join us! Membership forms and details are all available in the club!



Live Entertainment - Great Food - Excellent Bar - Snooker - Darts - Pool – Football - Cricket - Bowls

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Treasure Chest Draw

19<sup>th</sup> December



### Jamie Callis Christmas Eve



Jamie is one of the region's shining lights, set to dazzle the crowd with his versatile vocals. I'm sure he will even throw in a few Christmas classics if we're not sick of them by then.

### Whisky Draw Boxing Day



### New Years Eve Disco



## CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS



- **22/12 Monday** 1900 – 2300  
(Quiz) (No Food)
- **23/12 Tuesday** 1900 – 2300  
(Food Evening)
- **24/12 Christmas Eve** 1130 – Midnight  
(Jamie Callis live on stage) (No Food)
- **25/12 Christmas Day** 1200 – 1400  
(No Food)
- **26/12 Boxing Day** 1200 – 1700  
(Whisky Draw) (with discretion for Steward to close earlier)
- **27/12 Saturday** 1130 – 2330  
(Free Juke Box) (Food Lunch/Evening)
- **28/12 Sunday** 1200 – 2230  
(Food Lunch)
- **29/12 Monday** 1900 – 2300  
(Quiz) (No Food)
- **30/12 Tuesday** 1900 – 2300  
(Food Evening)
- **31/12 New Year's Eve** 1200 – 0030  
(Family Disco) (No Food)
- **01/01 New Year's Day** 1200 – 1700

(No Food) (with discretion for Steward to close earlier)

The Officers, Committee & Staff would like to wish all our Members a Happy Christmas & Prosperous New Year

Birchanger Sports & Social Club, 229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger CM23 5QJ  
Tel: 01279 813441

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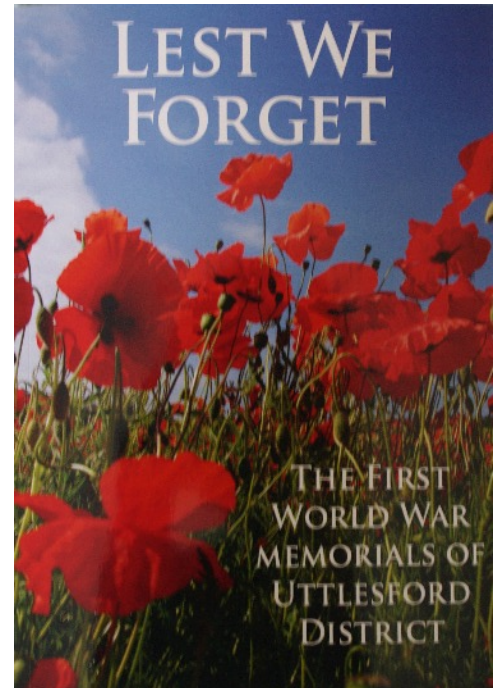


Everyone welcome

In aid of Hall maintenance funds



"If any of you have been affected by issues raised in this drama..."



Compiled and edited by Fiona Bengtsen this new book is a complete listing of all the World War 1 memorials in Uttlesford. With full colour photos by Gordon Ridgewell and selected details of the servicemen commemorated.

The book is published by the Recorders of Uttlesford History and represents their combined efforts. It costs £8 and is available at the Tourist information Centre in Saffron Walden and online at [www.recordinguttlesfordhistory.org.uk](http://www.recordinguttlesfordhistory.org.uk)

## Birchanger All Girls Society

Come along and join us on the last Wednesday of every Month  
Meeting Room in Village Hall  
Doors open at 7.30. for 8 – 10 p.m.

'A Warm Welcome to all Newcomers'

Forthcoming Events

**December** – No BAGS meeting this month

**Wed. 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015**– Our A.G.M. Meeting (with drinks & Nibbles)  
Tel. Angie – 817376, Michelle - 814481, Barbara - 813007

# School News

## November fundraising month

This half of the term is the busiest in the school year. Sporting activities are still there and all the children had the chance to try cross country running at Stansted School, with a shorter course for the younger children.

Then it was Children in Need Day, in which the school always participates. There were fund raising events and everyone, including all the staff, came as someone they would really like to be, their own personal super hero. For those who preferred to see someone else depicting their hero, they could come in the clothes they really wanted to wear, with their teddies being the heroes for a change! Everyone donated 50p for the privilege.

The object of the day was to create a Pudsey Bear made from money. This very special Pudsey contributed to the total of £119 which the children raised for Children in Need.

Despite the fact that they were all very busy raising money for Children in Need, the British legion Poppy Appeal was certainly not forgotten. The school collection amounted to £126, and a big thank you to everyone who contributed to the total.

Reports also went out last month and two evenings were set aside for parents to come in and view their children's work and to discuss this with their child's class teacher. Bag 2 School where parents brought bags of clothes to the school to be sold by their weight totalled 450kg, or £180 in cash. The next collection will be in May and you do not have to have a child at the school to contribute. The date will be displayed on the noticeboard.

Operation Christmas Child was well supported and the pile of boxes in the hall was a tantalising reminder that Christmas was not far away. A total of 30 boxes went off, nearly one box for every family at the school. So for one reason or another gifts and a total of £425 was raised for good causes in the first two months of the school year.

## A Friday assembly to remember

On most Friday afternoons in the school the children hold a special assembly to which all the parents are welcomed. Rewards are given to children who have done something special that week, either in their class or to those who have done something which is particularly special in school that week in other ways. These awards are known as Stars of the Week. Other awards are also given out, such as to the class for the best attendance and the house with the most points, but most of all it is an opportunity for each class to take it in turns to show what they had been doing to their parents.

Last month it was one of the Key Stage 1 classes, known as Badgers, who had been studying the Antarctic and Emperor Penguins in particular. Through their readings and their acting they demonstrated their knowledge of the Emperor Penguins year, from the long trudge inland to the breeding grounds, the finding of their mate again, the egg laying, the careful handover by the female to the male to incubate the chick, the female's return trudge back to the sea and her return to the chick with the food.

Then another departure by the male, the females finally leaving their chick, and at last the departure of the chicks when they realise they have to forage for themselves. The children acted out the different ways the male and female penguins walk, the strange and different grunting cries of adult and young, in fact Emperor penguin behaviour as it really is. The actors were aided by a team of very able narrators who told the story as events unfolded. An assembly not to be forgotten by participants and the audience alike.

## Flu drops for Key Stage 1

More inoculations are being administered in a child friendlier way these days. Last month Key Stage 1 children received not a jab, but a gentle squirt of the vaccine in each nostril, to protect them against the current type of flu expected this winter. If this works, it will be a huge benefit to all school children, and there is less likely of an epidemic if there is more take up of the inoculation by all sections of the public.

You may not be lucky enough or young enough to get the nose drops, but an inconvenient jab could be a very small price to pay for a healthier winter?

## A well attended Christmas fair

Parents and staff at Birchanger School turned out in force for a Christmas Fair which was both fun and provided a source for a large number of Christmas goodies for everyone.

There was a cake stall with cup cakes and other goodies galore, the children had made many Christmas items themselves, there were the usual Christmas raffles, Father Christmas with his queue of visitors all afternoon, and a chance to sit down with a welcome cup of tea at the end of it all.

A highly enjoyable afternoon and another success for the PTA

# News from St Mary's

## Christmas fair with a difference

Everyone is getting used to the hall extension now, so much so that it seems to have always been there. Then Pam Lee had the great idea to turn it into a dress shop for the duration of the Christmas Fair. Her idea proved to be a winner. Items on offer included new or high quality pre owned items, and most of the stock was snapped up quickly, with warm coats and hand knitted hats proving to be particularly popular. A true pop up shop, which will certainly pop up again.

Meanwhile all the traditions of the Christmas Fair continued in the main hall. Christmas cakes, mince pies, tombolas did brisk business. Teas were served from the new kitchen and there was room to sit down, relax and talk to old friends. Altogether £939.60 was raised for Birchanger Church.

The hall ceiling is to be painted over the Christmas period. Yet another step in the upgrading of the hall in the last 18 months.

## Voices Sing Out

Our newly formed village vocal group "Birchanger Voices" were invited to sing at the recent birthday celebration of long time Birchanger resident Mr. Christopher Deane-Bowers. At the happy occasion the friends, family, children and grandchildren were treated to a programme of songs ranging from old standards, through to the Beatles and even taking in a song by the current teen favourites, One Direction. Resplendent in their new uniforms and using a newly acquired P A System, the group performed for 30 minutes at the function and were warmly received. Finishing up with a few festive numbers. The singers, who only formed months ago, acknowledge the support they have received, both from the B.A.G.S. and from local artist Donna St. Pierre, who designed their logo. It is this strong local involvement that marks out our community as remarkable and with this in mind the singers renewed their commitment to bring music and song to the village and would like to thank everyone for their support.



## Festive Recipe, Sue's Chicken Liver Paté

This is a delicious starter for Christmas day which I have been making for years. It is really simple to make, and is more tasty than any supermarket paté.

### Ingredients

8oz [230g] Chicken Livers.  
4oz [120g] Cream cheese.  
5oz [150g] Bacon.  
1 ½ Tabs Tomato Chutney.  
1 Small onion.  
Garlic to taste.

### Method

1 [Cook the Bacon in a non stick pan.  
2 [Add the livers and cook in bacon fat.

3 [Cool and liquidise or mince with onion and garlic.  
4 [Cream the cheese with the chutney.  
5 [Mix the cheese with the liver in the blender.  
6 [Put in one large souffle dish or several small ramekin dishes.  
7 [Melt some butter, decorate the top of the paté with peppercorns and bay leaves  
8 [pour the melted butter over to seal.  
9 [Cool in fridge until ready to serve with some toast.

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## Village Diary

**December/ January 2015**

**December**

- 19<sup>th</sup> 6.45pm St Mary's  
Candle walk to  
Carol Service
- 21<sup>st</sup> 11.00 am St Mary's  
Christingle Service
- 24<sup>th</sup>
- 25<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am St Mary's  
Family Communion
- 28<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am St Mary's  
Matins

**January**

- 4<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am St Mary's  
Matins
- 11<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am St Mary's  
Holy Communion
- 18<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am St Mary's  
Family Service
- 25<sup>th</sup> 11.00 am St Mary's  
Matins

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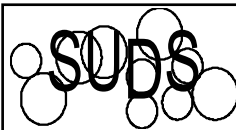
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## Christmas Bin Collections

**Saturday 27th December**

**Black and Food bins**

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> January**

**Green and Food bins**

**Normal schedules resume  
on Friday January 9th**

Published on behalf of the people of Birchanger, and distributed free to each household in Birchanger. The views expressed herein do not automatically reflect those of the Editor or any of the organisations or institutions represented. Editorial team: Eddie Gilbey (816171), eddie.gilbey@btinternet.com Elizabeth Godwin, Ken Wheatley. Submissions are welcome but may be edited depending on available space.