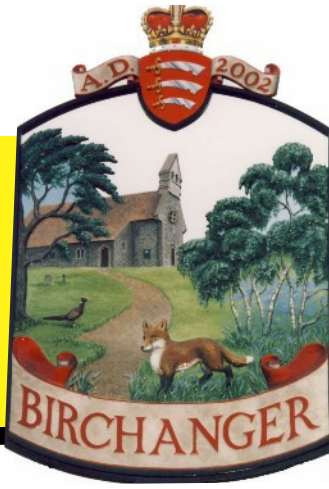


Birchanger

January 2016



Magazine

Issue 156

LIGHT UP OUR LIVES



This year the whole village is to be commended on their incredible lights that drew crowds from across the region. January will seem that little bit more dull as the decorations come down and we return to everyday life. The village has never looked so festive. To the left we can see this year's winning house. Harry Hayden did an incredible display in front of his home at the heart of the village and was a well deserved winner. Alongside the immense honour and bragging rights that the title of 'Best Bulbs in Birchanger' bestows, he also won a meal for two at the club, which he generously donated to the church.

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

Conspiracy lovers' tongues were wagging last month when the Lee family walked away with first and second prizes in the club treasure chest, totalling over £1,300. Pam is reported to have literally skipped her way through the packed club, much to the delight of fellow members, none of whom struggled to hide their deep-seated jealousy. Whether it was divine intervention or just a case of good old-fashioned luck, the win was perfectly timed in the run up to Christmas. The Treasure Chest Game continue in January with some incredible cash to be won. So whatever happens - don't let it be them again!



CLUB CELEBRATES 125th YEAR

The Social Club has served the people of Birchanger and the surrounding towns and villages since it was provided by Sir Charles Gold in 1891. His act of Victorian philanthropy gave the village a Working Mens Club and reading room. 2016 marks 125 years of the club and there are plans afoot to celebrate in style throughout the year. Make sure to watch this space to see all the special events and promotions.



a letter from the editor

Dear Birchanger,

I sit this month like many of us in January with a certain malaise. After the binge of the party season January tends to hit us with a bang, Indeed January 18th is set to be 'Blue Monday' the most depressing day of the year, so good luck to all the readers with that one!. In the words of Taylor Swift, however, I must do my best to 'shake it off'. So be warned the tone and content of this month's magazine is somewhat light-hearted as I try to motivate us all to work off the mince pies and turkey. Let us embrace 2016 and all that it may bring.

On that note I always welcome suggestions about what you want to find in the magazine, whether that be recipes, health tips, fashion advice or salacious gossip let me know and I will see what can be done. Furthermore, any contributions or budding reporters out there would be welcome to join the editorial team. As a free publication, we rely on advertising from the club and other local businesses as well as support from the local council and other charitable organisations. With funds ever tight, we are looking for someone who would be willing to act as the magazine's advertising salesperson. This would be a volunteer post, so if you think you have time available and want to get involved then please do get in touch!

Tom Granger



magazine@birchanger.com



816349



319, Birchanger Lane

LOCAL HEROES

Elizabeth Godwin



It may seem like nepotism to call out our very own page 3 girl, but village life would be nowhere near as vibrant without everyone's favourite 'Stick'. Often seen whizzing through the village on her bike, between parish council meetings, school organisations, charity events there is seemingly no rest for this tireless lady. In 2015 alone Elizabeth was central to organising the best ceilidh the village hall has ever seen, organising the village lights competition, helping out with the Art Show, writing for the village magazine, and being on the Parish council not to mention her legendary coffee mornings for the school. Hats off to Elizabeth and also to Pim who supports her every endeavour with a wry grin.

Supporting Club Social Life



Each week two unsung heroes ensure there is meat for the popular club meat raffle on a Saturday. Drawing in crowds from afar the meat raffle is a great bit of fun for members to get involved with. For years now the Turners have been heading out to get high-quality fresh meat for the raffle. They do this 'just-because' for no gain or benefit and should be recognised. Just think how village life could be even further improved if everyone took on tasks like this for the benefit of others.



VILLAGE NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Dispose of Your Old Banger For Free

It is unlikely for most of us that we should ever be given a car for Christmas, but just in case Santa has put one in your stocking, you can now dispose of your old banger for free.

The District Council has to regularly pick up abandoned vehicles and there are times when Birchanger has been a regular dumping ground, particularly in the areas by the M 11 and in Tot Lane. Now we can get the offending hardware removed simply by calling the District Council who will come and take the vehicle away as long as you have a key and the log book. You do not have to pay anything.

Abandoned vehicles should also be reported to the council. They will try to trace the owner and if the owner fails to remove the vehicle speedily the council will remove and destroy it. Tempting way to deal with Airport Related Parking? It has happened!

In addition the offending owner can also be fined up to £2500.

A Time When Emotions Run High

It is that time of year; Christmas time is a time for families and friends to get together, when drink flows freely and over eating seems to be the order of the day. This works well for most people, but there are always those who feel left out, for whatever the reason. The top of the list is usually the elderly, those who live alone, the sick and children with mental health and emotional difficulties. These groups always seem to be on the outside looking in.

It is perhaps easier to recognize the older people and it is hoped that their neighbours will look out for them at this time, but those with children or young people are often having a very difficult time. Their children may behave strangely, react badly to strangers and a shift in their usual routine. Whatever the reason, it is frequently a time when these youngsters kick off and the family is left to cope alone throughout the Christmas period. Living with anyone of any age with any form of condition can be difficult, especially at Christmas time. It may be that the family does have support, but for those with youngsters with emotional or mental health problems, there is a new source of help for parents and carers.

You do not need a doctor as you can simply call yourself. All callers are contacted within 24 hours of making a call if nobody is available to take your call at the time.

This service just might provide you with help to deal with your own situation, not just at Christmas but throughout the year. If Christmas might be a problem for you, it might be as well to get advice beforehand. The number to call is 0300 555 1201.

For the rest of us, please help those less fortunate this Christmas if you possibly can.

Making the Most of Your Doctor's Appointments

Appointments to see the doctor, whether at home or in Outpatients Departments are hard to come by, and often when we do finally get into see the doctor, we forget all the things which we wanted to ask or needed to know. In the days of patient led medical care, we are going to need to be smarter than ever to get the treatment and answers which we know we need. I know, in mid November I was told that there were no appointments until January on a routine matter, and the January schedules were unavailable.

One way of doing it is to write everything down before we even get to the appointment and this can be very useful if we actually know what we want to ask beforehand.

Sometimes we are so knocked backwards that everything we wanted to ask is forgotten.

There is a simple way to find out a great deal of what you need to know, in just three main questions.

1. What are my options? The treatment offered may not always be the best one for you.
2. What are the possible benefits or risks. We are often are taking so many tablets that we do not know what will work with what these days!
3. How can we make a decision which is right for me. What has worked for others may not always be the best option. There is usually more than one.

This attitude may surprise your doctor at first, but if he knows you want to be involved in decisions and are far more than just a consumer of services, you will understand more and the doctor will respect your interest. It is a way of taking control of your health for yourself. There is a great deal out there to help you. A helpful website is [http://www.selfcareforum.org/fact sheets/](http://www.selfcareforum.org/fact%20sheets/) All this may be especially useful in the coming months, when doctors appointments, already difficult to get, may be at a premium.

Winter Walking

With darkness setting in so early and lasting for so long, many of us find ourselves walking the dog or going for a run in darkness. When we are doing this it is very hard for other people, especially motorists to see us at all. To keep ourselves safe we need to be aware of this. We should all have cycle lights or carry a torch.

Latest advice asks us to wear high vis clothing and reflective bands. These really do show up in a car's headlights. Our dogs should be wearing a reflective vest, or collar and lead. If there are no pavements then pedestrians must take particular care and always walk facing the oncoming traffic.

Uttlesford District has a limited supply of reflective bands available at the Council Offices in Saffron Walden, or at the Library in Dunmow. First come first served so move quickly to obtain your bands. Birchanger. A look bright and lovely this month, but there is still January and February to come.

Hot Soup on a Wet Day

What could be better on a truly awful day? Supporters of St Clare's Hospice arranged a lunch of home made soups, sausage rolls and cakes to raise money for the hospice, which has helped so many families in Birchanger through the years.

Pam Lee and Olivia Wright and friends organized the event held in the Village Hall, and offered a choice of three delicious soups which were more than just a little bit welcome on the day. There was also an excellent raffle along with tea and coffee galore. It was also a good time to enjoy a Saturday lunch and help the hospice as well as the Hall.

Sadly sooner or later we may need the services of the hospice, which survives on donations and fund raising. This is the second event to help the hospice this year. We need more people to participate and to help the hospice fulfill its very necessary role.

We Have a Defibrillator

The potentially life saving defibrillator has been installed on an outside wall at the club.

You cannot miss it! It is bright yellow and sits under a light which is permanently on.

There are clear instructions as to how the device is to be used on the outside. You just follow need to follow these to obtain speedy help in a possible cardiac emergency. You will be talked through the process by the ambulance service.

The key to a successful outcome is speed. In a cardiac emergency is crucial to get the patient's heart up and running as quickly as possible. So having picked up the defibrillator it must reach the patient quickly. The ambulance service will talk you through the procedure and support you until help arrives.

Training is to be offered to those who would like to learn more about using the defibrillator and how members of the public can use simple techniques and procedures to help save lives. It is hoped to perhaps offer a short explanatory session at the Annual Parish Meeting on March 23rd, while additional first aid help and primary support procedures are on offer, if sufficient people are interested and would like to attend a special session given by the ambulance service.

Meanwhile a big thank you to our District Councillor Thom Goddard who provided the funding to purchase the defibrillator and to the club who have allowed their premises to be used.










Photograph by E. R. Wethersett]

11.50 a.m. ex Liverpool Street, near Birchanger

What's On ...

January (it's a quiet month)

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1 <small>New Year's Day</small>	2 <small>Day After New Year (Scot.)</small>	3
4	5	6	7 	8 	9 	10
11	12	13	14	15 	16	17
18	19	20	21 	22 	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 	30 BSSC - Entertainment - Bazooka Joe	31

Line Dancing for Beginners

A new class for absolute beginners will be starting on Thursdays at 13:00 in the village hall.

Tea Room At the Village Hall



Every Wednesday

2.00 till 4.00



In aid of Hall maintenance



BIRCHANGER
Sports & Social Club

Weekly

Saturdays
Saturdays
Mondays
Wednesdays
Thursdays
Fridays

Event

Meat Draw
Bingo Lottery
Quiz night
Steak night
Bingo night
Bottle Draw

When

1.00pm
Ask bar staff
9.00pm
Evenings
08.30pm
Evenings



BIRCHANGER

Sports & Social Club



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



DECEMBER IN THE CLUB

The committee and officers would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to the members for making this December one of the biggest in recent memory. A huge thanks also must go to Del and his team who have been working tirelessly to produce great food and drinks alongside some cracking entertainment evenings organised by Evan and Rosalynd.



SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

As we return to work after the Christmas period the last thing any of us want to do is face cooking and cleaning up. So why not come along and try out our new Sunday lunches in the club. Back for the first time in years this healthy meal is made using only the finest fresh ingredients. Families are welcome in the family area and there are also grown up only areas to enjoy some peace and quiet should Christmas with the kids have been enough to handle.

BURNS FOOD

January sees us celebrate the birth of Robert Burns. The club has a number of Scottish members and many others who appreciate this occasion. The club will be putting on a special Burns menu with haggis, neaps and tatties. Keep an eye on the boards in the club for more details

WINES OF THE MONTH



Following the huge success of the wine tasting evening the club is introducing wines of the month each month. Costing only £12/bottle these wines were those that were selected by the members during the wine tasting event. This month the white is a Victoria Park Sauvignon Blanc, which is known for notes of lemongrass and citrus fruit with crisp acidity and a lovely finish. This will be perfectly complemented with the Victoria Park Shiraz Viognier. The bold, black fruit of the Shiraz is softened and lengthened by the addition of a small amount of Viognier giving the wine a charming silky texture

RENEWALS TIME

It's that time of year again and the renewal price remains fixed at £20 - one of the cheapest in the area, so don't forget to submit your forms in January

ENTERTAINMENT

30th January - Bazooka Joe



This indie/rock covers band is the first of many new acts to come to the club for its 125th year celebrations.

Birchanger Sports & Social Club, 229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger CM23 5QJ
Tel: 01279 813441 email: club@birchanger.com Follow us at: www.birchangerclub.com

Seasonal Advice



Gordon Blue Review: The Flitch of Bacon 4* - Good for a special occasion

“Not another gastropub, surely!” was the response when I suggested the **Flitch of Bacon** as an option for supper. Yet this recently refurbished and updated eatery is definitely not just another gastropub – managing to maintain restaurant quality (this is Daniel Clifford of Midsummer House fame after all) but with a relaxed feel and jaunty interior.

Pre-dinner drinks were ordered as we stood at the bar beside the fire and initial impressions were positive although the lighting was a little harsh and unflattering on your crooks and crevices. Once seated we had a particularly difficult time choosing from the small but perfectly formed menu, with prices matching the restaurant end of the dining spectrum as another example of a desire to move away from the gastropub theme. In fact it was so difficult to choose that we ordered some nibbles from the bar snack menu and we were very glad we did. The ham and cheese croquettes were sublime but the real star was the crispy quail's eggs. We weren't expecting to bite into something so innocent looking and yet when you do, the explosion of yellow gooeyness that fills your mouth is an experience to savour. So much so, we temporarily forgot about the rest of the menu as we contemplated ordering more of the little protein-filled balls of joy.

Starters included such regular delights as seared scallops and duck liver parfait as well as the more unusual baked beetroot and a smoked duck and crispy hens egg dish that merely added to the protein explosion taking place. Our diners agreed that the mains were on the pricey side but were good value if you consider the quality of ingredients and imagination of the presentation - £14.50 for fish and chips maybe the new norm perhaps.

Now for the highlight of our night: For dessert all four of us chose the pistachio soufflé with dark chocolate sorbet and we all agreed that it was simply sublime. The delight that greets you when you dip the spoon in is immense, the sheer bouncy, air-filled ramekin of joy is worth every one of the 18 minute wait.

On a negative note, they only had two bottles of a particularly delightful Bordeaux in stock although I will give them the benefit of the doubt for this heinous of crimes as it has only just opened. A personal tour of the operation from Daniel himself topped off a wonderful night and we all agreed that the place is a winner. When we can afford to, we shall be back!

The Flitch Of Bacon: The St, Little Dunmow, Dunmow, Essex CM6 3HT Tel: 01371 821660

Gardening Gold

I for one have a miserable looking garden at the moment as months of rain and wind has battered even the most hardy of shrub into submission. But whether it's as part of a 2016 exercise routine or to make sure you beat next doors display, now is the time to invest those hours and dig for victory!

1) Use wood

Recycle your Christmas tree as useful mulch (real trees only)

2) Open Up

Your greenhouse to air on sunny days (wishful thinking)

3) Dig for Victory

Digging over any plots that haven't been turned

4) Beat the bulge

Trim and reshape lawn edges

5) Play the tubers

Checking dahlia or other tubers for rot or signs of drying out

6) Trim and Proper

Prune apple and pear trees

7) Barbed Comment

Start 'forcing' rhubarb

8) Plan Ahead

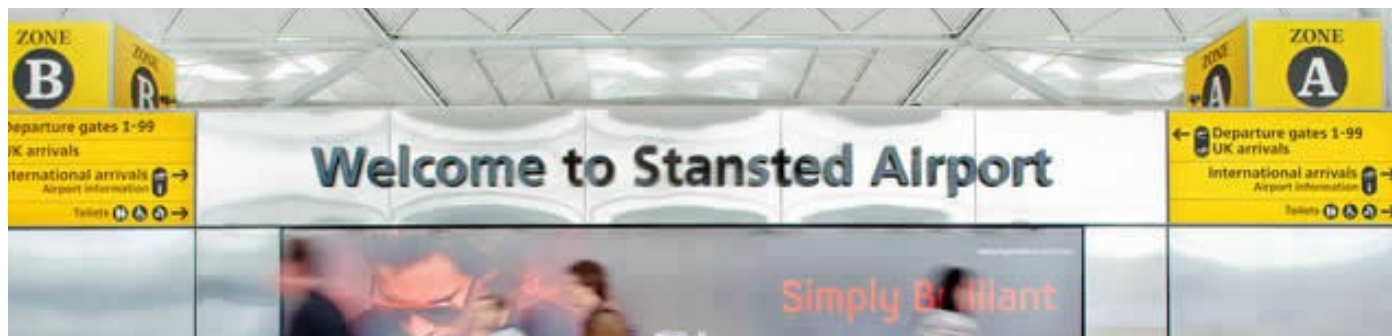
Make a plan of what vegetables you're planting for the year

9) Fat Birds

Keep feeding the birds

10) Cover your peaches

Prepare a polythene tunnel for your peaches or nectarines



The uncertainty goes on and on and on

More than three years ago, the Government ducked the issue of new runway capacity at one or more of London's airports. Instead, in the summer of 2012, the then Government set up an independent 'Airports Commission', comprising a panel of experts, to examine all the options and to publish a final report with its recommendations in the summer of 2015.

The timing was significant because the Government insisted that the Commission must not publish its final report until after the May 2015 general election.

Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) engaged fully with the Commission and made 11 separate evidence submissions setting out the case against a second Stansted runway. We were rewarded for this major effort in the Commission's interim report. Much to the relief of the local community, Stansted was not even on the Commission's short list. It was to be a straight choice between Heathrow and Gatwick.

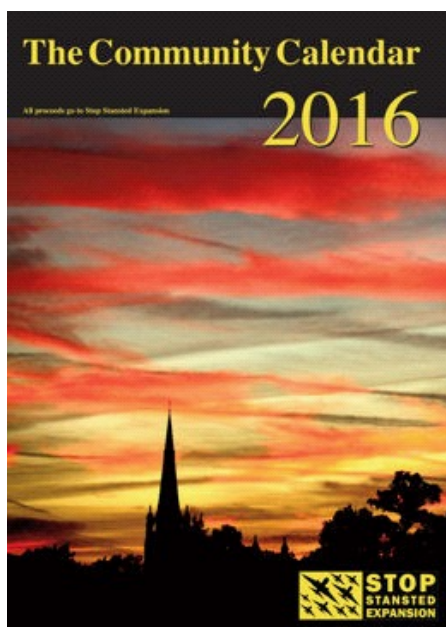
The Commission published its final report in July 2015 and it unanimously recommended another runway at Heathrow. The Government responded by saying that it needed time to study the Commission's recommendations. The Prime Minister at first promised a decision by the autumn and then said there would be a decision by the end of the year.

And so we waited and we waited – knowing that the Commission was only advisory and the Government would ultimately decide whatever it wanted to decide.

Finally, on the 11th December, the Government made its decision, which was to say that more studies were required before a final decision could be taken! We're now told that a final decision will be made in the summer of 2016.

The uncertainty will therefore continue for at least another six months.

Meanwhile, we cannot assume that Stansted is off the hook as regards a new runway. It currently seems to be a choice between Heathrow and Gatwick but we know from past experience that Government policy can be as fickle as a snowflake. We can only hope that we'll be better placed to relax and enjoy next Christmas.



If you are interested in joining SSE and supporting the ongoing campaign, you can find more details on the SSE website at www.stopstanstedexpansion.com.

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.

Forthcoming meetings:

Wednesday 27th January
BAGS AGM - All Birchanger ladies welcome

Make 2016 the year you join the BAGS!

Tel. for details: Michelle - 814481,
Barbara - 813007, Rosemary - 814678

News from the School

Alphabet Assembly



Friday Assemblies are always a big hit with parents, particularly when they involve the very youngest children. Ladybirds Class were a very big hit with everyone when they showed that they knew every letter in the alphabet, both by name and by phonic sound. They demonstrated this with actions, and seemed to enjoy every minute.

It was a great achievement, as most of the children are not yet five years old. They delighted all the audience of delighted parents who were with them every step of the way.

Christmas at Birchanger School

Christmas at Birchanger School is a very special time. Everyone gets into the Christmas mood and decorations are made along with items to sell at the Christmas Fair. Christmas really started with the tree assembly in the first week of December when every child hung a decoration, specially made for the occasion, on the school tree as the children sung carols and Christmas songs.

Then there was the Christmas Fair, run by the PTA with Santa very much in attendance in his grotto, along with his attendant elves and fairies, and of course a sack full of presents. £1610 was raised for PTA funds to support the school.

There were the usual Christmas Class Parties, and a visit to the pantomime for the whole school. However, the most eagerly awaited event was the school Nativity Play, which was performed three times to very enthusiastic audiences on each occasion. All the elements of the Christmas story were there, Mary, Joseph with their baby, but surrounded by a large cast of animals. Perhaps the highlight of the nativities was seeing a defiant young King dressed as a pirate, wowing audiences with an intense gaze and silent countenance. Alongside this Oscar winning performance, the acting was done with clear enjoyment and the singing was outstanding. Everyone knew

their words, what they had to do, and clearly enjoyed every bit of it. It is always a great deal of hard work put in by all the staff, helped by a team of parents, who gathered props and costumes and generally helped throughout. A lovely traditional start to the Christmas season.

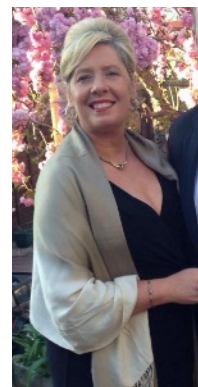


A treat especially anticipated was the visit to the pantomime at the Rhodes Centre. This year it was Jack and the Beanstalk, with ice creams in the interval provided by the PTA. In the last week of term came the traditional

Christmas Dinner, cooked by Mrs McArthur and her team, then Christmas Parties with party snacks, again provided by the PTA, and the spectacular Christingle Service with a lovely display when every child has placed their candle at the top of the central aisle.

Top Chef Takes Flight

Local chef leaves the school kitchen on a record high. December saw the last days of Liz Lane McArthur working as Catering Manager at the school. Since taking on the position Liz has revolutionised the schools kitchen, using her years of professional catering experience. During her time Uttlesford has been blown away with the results she has delivered time and again, with Birchanger Primary school having the highest increase in uptake of meals in the region. Liz leaves the kitchen with the processes and procedures in place to ensure that her legacy will last for years to come.



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CALLING ALL CLUB MEMBERS

BSSC is run by and for its members.
Throughout the year the committee are
working hard on entertainments, drinks, food
and sports for the members, but we can't
succeed without you. If you have any ideas or
have time to dedicate to sub-committees then
get in touch!

Drop us an email at
club@birchanger.com or speak to
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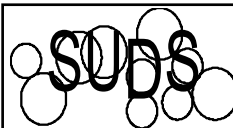
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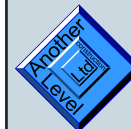


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