



# Birchanger Village Magazine

January 2017

Issue 168



## *The night Christmas came to Birchanger*

**Christmas** seemed to come quietly but suddenly this year in Birchanger. Households preparing for the 'Big Christmas Light Up' had worked steadily over several weeks. Most did not put their lights on until the big night so nobody knew just what the participants had been planning. Those who came to the club to see the lights switched on were treated to the best display in the club's history!

On that early dark December evening, Birchanger never looked so good. So many people had taken the time and the trouble to quite literally light up the lives of others, many of



whom, they had probably never met. The lights of Birchanger have for some years been a talking point for miles around, and 2016 was no exception. People from surrounding villages and towns actually make a detour on their way home at night just to see the fantastic displays. The Light Up officially began at the club, with a traditional countdown, where the tall elegant Christmas fir tree was to become the focal point for the whole village. Evan and his team had worked long hours to put on a special display, not only on the tree, but around club house as well.

## Countdown

The countdown began and there was a gasp of admiration as the centre of the village came to life. Shortly after, the celebrations continued inside the club with mulled wine, songs and carols by the Birchanger Voices and later soloist and bassist John David completed the evening of fun and dance with songs from the 60's, 70's and 80's.

It was an occasion for everyone, from those enjoying their first Christmas right the way through to the seniors, who had never seen a display quite like this before. It will be a hard act to follow next year but it will be even better if some of us have our way. After all, bringing good cheer, friendship and reassurance are important parts of the Christmas message. The club issued voting slips so that everyone could choose their favourite light display and the winner was announced on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Unfortunately, as this month's edition went out to print before the announcement was made the winner is not mentioned here! A big thank you to everyone who made Birchanger such a special place for Christmas 2016 and congratulations to the winner

## Birchanger's resident Santa Clause

You may not have realised but this Christmas we were treated to our very own Santa! Someone in Birchanger lane created a special post box for requests to Santa, and guess what? Our Santa answered all the letters received together with a little present for everyone who included their address when they wrote to him.

*Thank you Santa*

# Happy New Year





# A letter From the Editor

## Hear ye, Hear ye, hear Hear ye!

**Dear readers,**

We hope you like the new fresh look of the 2017 magazine encompassing the village sign and birch tree which are both synonymous with Birchanger. The old style has served us well for many years but we thought it was time for a wash and brush up. This is a special colour edition which we will try to do every new year subject to funds. As the saying goes, ring out the old and ring in the new!

Before modern media and newspapers, a town crier, or bellman was employed as an officer of the court and made public pronouncements. In Medieval England, town criers were the chief means of news communication with the townspeople, since many were illiterate in a period before the moveable type was invented. We have come a long way since then. However, with the arrival of the supermarket, Internet and online shopping, electronic media and E- mail we have seen the gradual demise of the village infrastructure and in recent years this has caused a steady decline in village schools shops, post offices, pubs, local amenities and services. This has in turn reduced meeting places and communication among villagers.



**Town Crier**

Thus a local newspaper or magazine is an important part of today's modern village life, without which villagers would have little knowledge of what is going on, what events are coming up, when entertainment is on and what amenities or leisure activities are available. The Birchanger Magazine is a local newspaper distributed free to almost four hundred homes and the seven hundred & thirty adult residents of Birchanger and since its single page beginning, seventeen years ago, the publication has been produced and distributed entirely by volunteers, whereby the only costs incurred are for printing.

### New advertisers wanted

The magazine receives a yearly donation from the parish council which helps us along the way but in order to pay for the shortfall we rely on local advertisers like the sports and social club and several other local small businesses. However, as there are fewer businesses in the village today our income from advertising has steadily dwindled and as such we need to find new advertisers or sponsors. Would you or someone you know, like to place a regular advert in the magazine? Advertising is not that expensive and would help maintain our local magazine. A single 6 cm x 6 cm advert costs only £15 and for twelve adverts just £156 per year. We accept finished artwork or adverts of varying sizes, or we can produce an advert for you free of charge to suite your business, alternatively if you would like to become a sponsor we will produce a prominent banner for you at the head of a page. As always, non-profit making or charitable organisations will continue to advertise free of charge.

By supporting your local magazine, you will not only be promoting better communications and interest in the village but help to bring everyone closer together as a part of the community. Furthermore, if you advertise your goods or services you would almost certainly gain a few more customers. Remember, the magazine is only as good as the content it receives so please keep sending me your news, views, notices, concerns and complaints. All copy should be submitted by the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month and may be edited. Please contact me by E-mail, phone, or letter as shown below.

Kind Regards

*Peter Sampson*



magazine@birchanger.com



01279 813193



2 Harrisons, Birchanger





# VILLAGE NEWS

*By Elizabeth Godwin*

## Back to the future!

So, it will be back to normal very soon, the parties and feasting just distant memories and the working routine grinds inexorably on. So how has Christmas left you? Hopefully you did not have a family fight, more common than you might think in the festival of good will to all. I am sure you had at least some of the presents you had hoped for and that your waistline is not too many inches above normal and if you managed to escape the pitfalls of Christmas, the feeling of being generally unfit is a bit of an uncomfortable reality. However, you do not have to look very far afield to do something about it, as there are plenty of fitness classes' right here at the hall in Birchanger. Ballet has been here for years and not just for youngsters either. On Tuesdays, there are ballet classes for adults at 9.30 am or alternatively Zumba at 11.15 am. There is Tai Chi on Wednesday mornings at 9.30 am and Line Dancing for beginners at 12.45 pm on Thursdays. You don't have to do them all to get fitter and those who lead the classes are very understanding of all abilities. There are plenty of others in just the same boat as you who will give you plenty of encouragement. Maybe one class will suit you better than another. The advice is, just keep trying and enjoy the fellowship which the getting fitter with friends brings.

## Gala dinner helps pay for the hall

Restoring the Hall after the flooding earlier this year has been a long and painful process. Dealing with non-user friendly claim forms, insurance companies who only want to pay out the minimum and who will not hesitate to substitute an inferior product for the damaged one takes some doing. It was Pam Lee, who took charge of the hall restoration project from the start, who had the brilliant idea, that with all the floor boards up, and the floor replacement delayed while the building dried out, there would never be a better time to replace the ancient gas heaters, to implement the much needed renovation of the

ladies cloakroom area and to redecorate everywhere. She was brave enough to take a chance that the funding, which was not covered by insurance, could somehow be found!

## £1300 Raised

It was from this that the idea of hosting a Gala Dinner to celebrate the opening and refurbishment of the hall was born. And what an evening it was. There was bubbly to welcome the guests, Jay cooked Birchanger's favourite hog roast, the Birchanger Voices sang and wine flowed, as did some rather good gin cocktails. There was an auction where guests could bid for local artist Heather Brown's pictures and a signed photo from the 1966 World Cup to name but a few of the items on offer. The evening rounded off with dancing and a great deal of appreciation, not only for the new hall but for the hard work that made the gala evening a huge success and raised over £1300 for the hall extras. Let us hope that future users of the hall will enjoy and respect the amazing effort that made everything possible.

## A seasonal plea

Modern medicine gets better every year and helps us to live a longer, albeit not always pain free or trouble free. Even when there are ongoing health or mobility issues most of us have the help and support of our family and friends. However, for those people that live alone, who would never dream of asking for help it can be a difficult and depressing time. The best support comes from good neighbours who keep an eye out for them from time to time and this is where every single one of us can help. Most of the time our neighbours cope well, but in the cold at this time of year, a quick look in to see if they are alright, an offer to pick up shopping or prescriptions works wonders, and would be more than just a little welcome for most.

*Continued on Page 4*

## Birchanger All Girls Society

Come along and join us on the last Wednesday of every month in the meeting room at the village church hall

### Forthcoming Meetings:

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 7.30 for 8.00 pm  
Annual General Meeting

A warm welcome to all newcomers  
Telephone for details Michelle-814481  
Barbara-813007 Rosemary-814678



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## Getting used to the new Stansted Surgery

And it does take some getting used to as well! Right now the builders are still around, the new Co-op has opened its doors but the pharmacy at the time of writing is not finished yet and if you are not careful you will end up there or in the Co-op, as all the doors are so close together. For me the first hurdle was the car park. Staff parking places abound but most of them were empty. The bulk of the cars are parked at the far end where there are far less non-reserved spaces available for the public or patients. Looking at the layout, it would appear that staff will outnumber patients by two to one. Surely this cannot be right? I thought there was a general shortage of GPs and nurses?

Having negotiated the car park, and finally opened the right door, I am confronted by a bland "good taste" mag-nolia interior, a sign which tells me that the surgery is on the first floor and the choice of lift or stairs. Three flights of stairs later I arrive gasping on the so called first floor and a large spacious beige layout. They keep saying we must take more exercise, but what with the walk from the end of the car park and the stairs, I don't think I need that advice right now. The check-in machine is still there, which was just as well as the receptionist was not, and then it was the usual wait in a modern, but still uncomfortable chair.

There is no call system; a loud ping sound alerts you to a board where a name appears with an instruction for the name concerned to go to a room number.

The surgery is modern, bland, and just like any government building anywhere. By the time my name finally appeared, I had mentally repainted the walls, changed the magazines and relaxed in an comfortable modern chair! Yes the surgery is long awaited, functional, clean, and very, very dull. It is new, large and will perhaps attract the new young GPs the Practice so badly needs.

We need the doctors and hopefully after the trauma of moving it will all settle down and the long awaited new surgery will become a very much valued part of the community. In the meantime, I shall spend my waiting time there re-designing the decor, selecting pictures, blinds and fabrics. It is probably the best ever way to keep the patients quiet in the long waiting times ahead. The magazines by the way are not to be relied upon!

## A new information service

Uttlesford District Council has launched a new Information service which is free for everyone to use. In addition to receiving a regular update on Council news, you can choose to receive information and news from dozens of different organisations. To find out more, simply log on to; [www.uttlesford.gov.uk/keepmeposted](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/keepmeposted)

The best thing about this service is that you select the information which you would like to receive regularly, whether it is about health, legal matters, council updates, benefits and so much more. It is worth a visit to the site to find out just how much there is on offer. You can sign up for regular updates, or simply visit for information as you require it.

## You call us - we don't call you!

This is the new message from the appointments systems in Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, Herts and Essex and St Margaret's Hospitals. There are now so many patients, that for many the appointments system has broken down, to the point where you do actually need to phone and make the appointment yourself.

Forget that you were told that your next appointment will be sent to you, as there is a fair chance that your appointment letter may not arrive. The doctor may well have told you that you will be seen in a certain number of weeks or months but this is very unlikely to happen. There are simply too many of us putting a severe strain on over worked services, so your on-going health care is up to you in most cases.

## Nobody does Christmas lights better than Birchanger

Congratulations Birchanger you did it again. The best Christmas Lights ever for miles around. It is the fact that so many people actually do take part in so many ways, no matter how small, which make Birchanger the best and most creatively lit village I have seen.

It is a real Christmas gift to the community, as walking through the village on cold dark winter evenings is made wonderful by what you have all done for neighbours. Thank you all so very much.

*Elizabeth Godwin*



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# What's On in the Village...

January 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
30 (Jan) BSSC Quiz Night	31 (Jan)					1 St Mary's Church Matins
2 Church hall: BSSC Quiz Night	3 Church hall: 9.30 am Ballet for adults 11.15 am Zumba Gold 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	4 Church hall: 09.30 am Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room  BSSC Steak night	5 Church hall: 12.45 Line dancing for beginners 13.45 Line dancing for advanced	6 Non Re-Cycle Bin BSSC	7 BSSC	8 St Mary's Church Holy Communion
9 Church hall: 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults  BSSC Quiz Night	10 Church hall: 9.30 am Ballet for adults 11.15 am Zumba Gold 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	11 Church hall: 09.30 am Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room  BSSC Steak night	12 Church hall: 12.45 Line dancing for beginners 13.45 Line dancing for advanced	13 Re-Cycle Bin BSSC	14 BSSC Karaoke with Jules from 20.00	15 St Mary's Church Family Service
16 Church hall: 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults  BSSC Quiz Night	17 Church hall: 9.30 am Ballet for adults 11.15 am Zumba Gold 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	18 Church hall: 09.30 am Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room  BSSC Steak night	19 Church hall: 12.45 Line dancing for beginners 13.45 Line dancing for advanced	20 Non Re-Cycle Bin BSSC	21 BSSC	22 St Mary's Church Holy Communion
23 Church hall: 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults  BSSC Quiz Night	24 Church hall: 9.30 am Ballet for adults 11.15 am Zumba Gold 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	25 Church hall: 09.30 am Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room  BSSC Steak night	26 Garden Bin Church hall: 12.45 Line dancing for beginners 13.45 Line dancing for advanced	27 Re-cycle Bin BSSC	28 BSSC Charity race night	29 St Mary's Church Matins





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



### Entertainment - That was the year that was!

2016 was another busy and successful year for entertainment in the club and on behalf of myself and the committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members for their support over the year and their generosity in supporting the raffles and other fund raising events.

I would also like to thank all of those that have helped Rosalyn and me over year with the running of the entertainment. Without their help I'm sure 2016 would not have been the success it was. Let's hope that 2017 will be just as good. We already have several new and exciting acts lined up as well as a few of the old and more recent favourites.

Here's to a happy New Year and we look forward to you joining us in 2017. Many thanks from Evan, Rosalyn and the Entertainments Sub Committee.

*Evan Hill*

### BSSC 2017 – Our Club | Our Community

Following the successful promotion of the '125' events in 2016, the club committee have turned their focus on 2017 for

special events that will further solidify the club's close association with the community in and around Birchanger.

Look out for events and activities run by the club throughout the year that will include partnership with individuals and organisations central to the village and community life. If you have any ideas of your own, whether about people or businesses that

may be interested in being involved please let the club know by emailing us at; [club@birchanger.com](mailto:club@birchanger.com)



### Children's Christmas Party

The children's Christmas party held at the club on the afternoon of the 17<sup>th</sup> December was a great success. The kids were entertained by a Punch and Judy show, party games, a magician and a bundle of balloons. A big thanks to all Committee and Staff and Helpers for a fun filled afternoon for the children.



### Top winners of the Christmas Draw 17<sup>th</sup> Dec.

1st Prize	£250.00	Zoe Stapleton
2nd Prize	32" Television	Mrs. Short
3rd Prize	10" Windows Tablet	Terry Minnet
4th Prize	Luxury Hamper	Gary Knight
5th Prize	£50 Amazon Voucher	R. Hayden
6th Prize	£40 M&S Voucher	Pete Thrale

### Club Calendar at a Glance

Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> January	Karaoke with Jules from 8pm
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	Charity Race Night

### Weekly Events

Day	Event	When
Saturdays	Meat Draw	1.00 pm
Saturdays	Bingo Lottery	Ask bar staff
Mondays	Quiz Night	9.00 pm
Wednesdays	Steak Night	Evening
Thursdays	Bingo Night	08.30 pm
Fridays	Bottle Draw	Evening

Birchanger Sports & Social Club, 229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger, CM23 5QJ  
 Tel: 01279 813441 Email: [club@birchanger.com](mailto:club@birchanger.com) [www.birchangerclub.com](http://www.birchangerclub.com)



# Birchanger Primary School



## Sports Award

At Birchanger we think developing active, healthy lifestyles is really important and good habits start young and Children at Birchanger enjoy a range of sports activities. Tom, our Sports coach, works with each class every week. Younger children develop their movement skills, coordination and strength through games and activities. Older pupils learn the key skills in a range of sports – football, tag-rugby, rounders, cricket, running... Children have another PE session each week working on gym, dance, swimming, athletics and Forest School activities. We also take part in lots of inter-school sports competitions, and run clubs and teams in football and netball.



Mrs. Miles leads PE across the school, coordinating the PE curriculum and organising events and we are fortunate to have lots of staff and parents who support us by running clubs and supporting events. With all of this going on we were delighted to receive the School Games Mark for 2015-16. The School Games Mark is a Government led awards scheme launched in 2012 to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community. The school has been working towards Bronze, then Silver over the last couple of years and we are

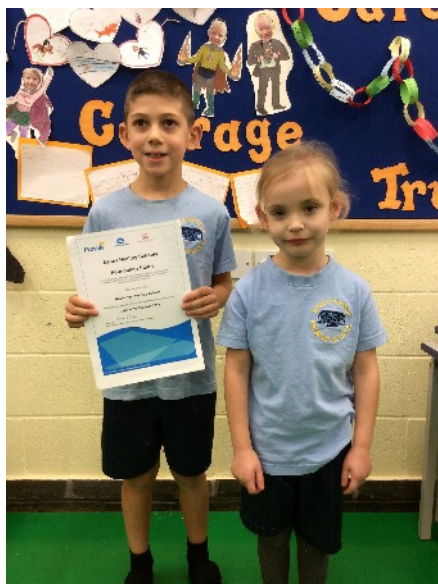
delighted that this year we have been awarded the **GOLD AWARD!** A big 'well done' to Mrs. Miles and thank you to all the staff and parents who support our PE provision.



## Healthy School Award

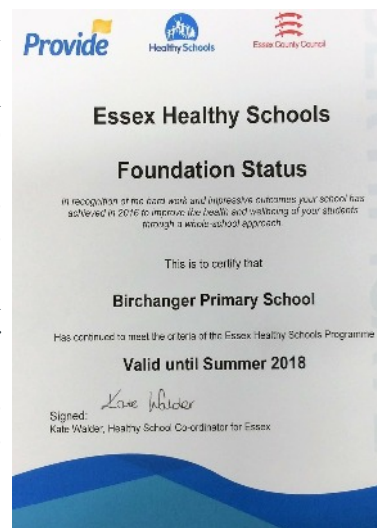
Another award we are pleased to have achieved is 'Healthy School Status.' Healthy Schools recognises the work schools do in teaching children about healthy lifestyles. This includes:

- Exercise
- Healthy eating
- Promoting emotional wellbeing
- Learning about keeping safe, including online safety
- Making good decisions
- Taking on responsibilities and pupil's having a voice in school decisions



The school was visited by the Healthy School Team and their report states; "The children are very aware of the benefits of good PSHE and recognise that the school is helping them learn to make sensible choices and make safe decisions. They are very keen to celebrate each other's successes, and classroom displays reinforce this mutual support and encouragement. Furthermore, children participate in highly active and challenging P.E. lessons which develop their fitness, their sports skills and their team spirit. Playleaders engage less active pupils at play times and school sports ambassadors set up challenges within their houses in order to inspire and motivate all to have a go."

*Helen Coop (Headteacher)*



# Letters to the Editor

## Car parking and vandalism

Dear Editor, In response to last months letter 'Thoughtless Parking' I would like to express my frustration on the topic. I live on a narrow part of the village and when necessary, park on the road. Since the road is so narrow, I am forced to position my vehicle partly on the curb but leaving enough room for pedestrians and the bus. My car has been vandalized whilst parked in this position which I feel is a bigger issue, it saddens me that someone would prefer the option of vandalism than asking me to move my vehicle for whatever reason. If I felt my vehicle was obstructing pedestrians or traffic I would certainly not park it on the road. Perhaps suggestions of other parking spots in the village could be useful as it seems to be a growing issue causing some residents to feel disgruntled.

*Franki (frustrated resident), Birchanger*

## Stolen Number Plates

Dear Editor, in the early hours of the morning on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November, the registration number plates were stolen from my car. I thought I should bring it to the attention of the parish and residents of Birchanger to make them aware that there is a thief about and alert them to keep watch on their vehicles. My car is a blue Rover with the registration number BG53 EHM and I live at 242 Birchanger lane. I hope that by highlighting my misfortune it will make people more aware of what may be going on in our village at night whilst we are sleeping and possibly during the day too. The incident has been reported to the Police.

*Mandy Anderson, Birchanger*

## Mobile Library Service - Use it or lose it!

Dear Editor, very few people in Birchanger are using the mobile library service at the moment and we could be in danger of losing it. This would be a great loss for those that have come to rely on the mobile library for their learning, information or entertainment. Essex mobile libraries carry a wide range of books and other items and if you can't find a particular title you can reserve a copy. All mobile libraries are wheelchair-accessible. The mobile library visits Birchanger every fortnight.

### Visiting dates:

December 13, January 10 & 24, February 7 & 21, March 7 & 21

### Visiting points

Sports and Social Club: Arrives at 15.00 and leaves at 15.35  
High View: Arrives at 15.40 and leaves at 16.10

If you can't get to the library owing to age, disability or caring responsibilities, you can still use Essex Libraries. Home Library Service volunteers are your link to the library, bringing books and any other library items you'd like. A friend, neighbour or relative (with your agreement) can select and collect library items for you. To join the Home Library Service or sign-up for a Friends and Family card you can call 0345 603 7628. So come on Birchanger, start using this service before it disappears altogether!

*Sally Taylor, Birchanger*

## St Mary's Church News



### Church services:

1 <sup>st</sup>	January	Matins	11am
8 <sup>th</sup>	January	Holy Communion	11am
15 <sup>th</sup>	January	Family Service	11am
22 <sup>nd</sup>	January	Holy Communion	11am
29 <sup>th</sup>	January	Matins	11am
5 <sup>th</sup>	February	Matins	11am
Wednesdays:		Tea room 2-4pm at the hall	

### Hall bookings

To book the village church hall for an event or to simply make an enquiry, you can now call to a dedicated number between the hours of 9am and 4pm daily, (you can call out of hours in an emergency only) on 07398 536717. We hope to have a new Hall Manager starting in January, more details about that next month.

### Tea Room

The Village Tea Room will re-open on the 4<sup>th</sup> January at the village church hall with a bumper selection of homemade cakes and nibbles! It is open every Wednesday between 2pm & 4pm and caters for children with a selection of sweets so mums can pop in with their little ones and have a cuppa. The village Tea Room is a place for all the community to enjoy with their families and friends. In the New Year we will have some special events going on so watch this space!

### Would you like to help?

If you would like to offer some help running the tea room then please pop along and see one of the helpers.

### Parochial Church

The Parochial Church Council is looking for village people to take an active role on the Parochial Church Council who manage the church and its services to the community. The council meets 4 times a year so if you would like to come along and observe what we do please join us on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017. Contact Elaine Wright on 01279 813474 with your details if you wish to attend.

### Thank you from Pam Lee

I would like to thank everyone who wished me well over the past two weeks. You have all been so kind and encouraging. Living in this close community is such a blessing.

*Pam Lee*



### The Three Horseshoes

P. D. Tucker & P. Stapleton

Hazel End Road, Hazel End, Bps Stortford, Herts CM23 1HB

Tel: 01279 813429

Mon-Sat: 12noon - 3pm & 6 - 11pm # Sunday: 12noon - 3pm





# The Village People

## Do you know who this is?

**The profile of a Birchanger resident obtained through a series of probing questions:**

Where were you born?

*"I had quite an auspicious start to life; I was born in the Manor House at Chesterton, Cambridge during a visit there by my mother and her family".*

Who are the upper branches of your Family Tree?

*"My Dad was a Bricklayer first of all and then later he became a civil engineer in charge of some very large building projects. My Mum was a housewife who had a very lucky escape during the war when a Zeppelin crashed very close to her house".*

Who are the lower branches of your family tree?

*"I have two Daughters and one Son, four Grandchildren and two great Grandchildren".*

Where and when, did you meet your significant other?

*"At a dance in the Co-op Hall in Haverhill, it was very lucky for me as she was only there that one night to see a Bishops Stortford band who were playing there that evening".*

Can you name one person throughout history you would most like to meet?

*"Apart from Keir Hardy the great socialist campaigner, I would most like to go back and meet my old Grandad Charlie Mayes who worked at Beech Tree Stud with racehorses. He loved animals he kept chickens and pigs and I have happy memories of a lovely Grandfather".*

What is your favourite Book, Film or Game (so that we all might enjoy it!)?

*"Oliver Twist because Charles Dickens managed to tell a great tale but also showed how hard life was for people back then".*

If you had not done the job you do (or did), what would be your fantasy profession?

*"I would have liked to have studied accountancy or failing that to have been a rich businessman".*

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner, where in the world would you like to have them?

*"I was in the Royal Navy and the best sight in the world is watching the sun come up in the Solent after a trip to the Far East. So my breakfast would be on board, knowing we were nearly home. I would have a fish lunch at Puerto Rico on Gran Canaria together with a local beer. In the evening I would enjoy a meal of venison sausages and mustard mash at Dunoon in Argyll, Scotland".*

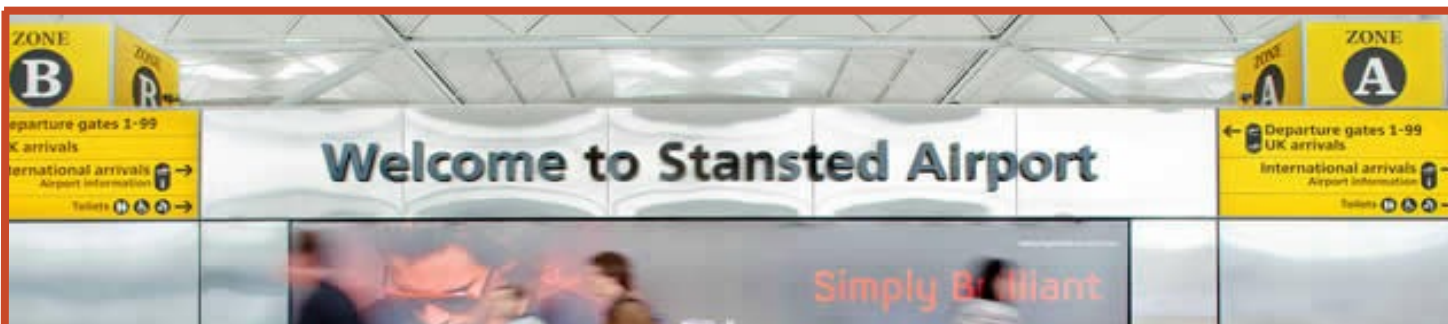
How do you think people see you, or how would you like to be seen?

*"I think people see me as a bit of a local fixture now, but it took quite a while to be accepted. I am not bothered about what people think about me, but I will always help anyone out if I can, that is my outlook on life".*

How long have you lived here and can you see yourself ever leaving Birchanger?

*"No I can't see me leaving, not after 60 years"!*

**Did you guess who it was? If not the answer can be found on the back page**



# Shame over airport evictions

## Shameful behaviour over evictions

Stansted Airport's decision to give two months' notice of eviction to 11 families renting airport-owned houses was described by Stop Stansted Expansion as "shameful behaviour." At the beginning of November, Manchester Airports Group (MAG), Stansted's owners, suddenly announced that it wanted to sell off its entire housing stock of 268 properties within two years. MAG acquired these 268 houses when it bought Stansted Airport from BAA in January 2013.

In response to the airport's attempts to blame SSE and local councillors for the eviction notices, **Brian Ross**, deputy chairman of SSE stated: "It's a desperate attempt by Stansted Airport to avoid taking responsibility for its own shameful behaviour." The houses were mainly bought by the airport in connection with its plans for a second runway, which were abandoned in May 2010 after massive opposition. "For years, any tenant who wanted to buy was met with a refusal. However, there has now been a complete change of policy," said Brian Ross.

## No more quit notices before Christmas, says airport

Facing widespread condemnation in the media and from the local community over its eviction policy, Stansted Airport suddenly announced that it would stop issuing eviction notices for the time being. This followed the setting up of an 'Airport Tenants Action Group' when around 70 airport tenants attended a public meeting in Broxted to consider what they might be able to do to persuade Stansted Airport to adopt a more reasonable approach. Councillor Julie Redfern, Uttlesford District Council's housing lead, attended the meeting and said that the council only became aware of the issue when the Essex County Councillor for the area, was knocking on doors on unrelated issues.

The Airports Tenants Action Group issued a statement, saying, "Why is MAG destroying the local communities yet again and in such a rush to do so?" They said that the airport's action might be legal but it was morally wrong and a shortage of properties made it very hard to find alternative accommodation. Some tenants say that they were offered the option to purchase their properties but were given less than two weeks to provide evidence as to how they would finance the purchase.

## Increase in planes over towns and villages is 'a disaster'

Residents in parts of Uttlesford have been left angered by changes to Stansted Airport's flight path which has resulted in a vast increase of planes passing over their heads during the day, according to the Saffron Walden Reporter and Dunmow Broadcast. Noise from the re-routing of flights taking off from Stansted, introduced in February, has adversely affected many towns and villages, including Dunmow, Felsted, Stebbing, Hatfield Heath and the Easters. Residents say the increased air traffic is "turning a peaceful part of Essex into a disaster". National Air Traffic Services (NATS) implemented the changes to flight paths after a 12-week consultation in 2014, despite 85% of those who responded to the consultation, including Uttlesford District Council and Stop Stansted Expansion, objecting to the NATS proposals. Unsurprisingly, the number of noise complaints caused by flights in and out of Stansted nearly doubled in the first six months of 2016 compared to last year. There is still a degree of hope that these changes could be reversed when they are reviewed by National Air Traffic Services (NATS) early next year. "The message is, do not give up on complaining when you are annoyed by aircraft noise, or give in to complaints fatigue. Otherwise the aviation industry will think the problem has gone away," says Martin Peachey, SSE's adviser on noise.

## New Arrivals Building for Stansted

Stansted Airport has submitted a planning application for a new arrivals building sandwiched between the main terminal and the Radisson Hotel. It was originally intended to extend the main terminal building by a further two double bays to fill that space but Manchester Airports Group (MAG), who now own Stansted Airport, have opted instead for a separate arrivals building. Subject to the relevant planning consents and approvals, it is expected the new £130 million arrivals building will take up to three years to complete.

The new building will enable Stansted to grow from today's throughput of 24 million passengers per annum (mppa) to 35 mppa in line with the planning permission granted in 2008. MAG says that the new arrivals building would also enable Stansted to grow beyond 35 mppa and make full use of its runway which is capable of handling around 43 mppa. However, a further planning application would need to be submitted and approved before Stansted could grow beyond 35mppa.

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## Do you have a complaint? - Get involved!

If you have an objection regarding noise or fumes etc from aircraft you can enter the details on the Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) website at [http://stopstanstedexpansion.com/noise\\_complaint\\_form.asp](http://stopstanstedexpansion.com/noise_complaint_form.asp) It takes less than a minute to complete the on-line complaint form. If you would like regular updates on Airport matters, you can register free of charge on the SSE website as an online supporter at: [http://stopstanstedexpansion.com/mailling\\_list.asp](http://stopstanstedexpansion.com/mailling_list.asp)



## Bags of fun at the BAGS Christmas Party

The Birchanger All Girls Society, BAGS for short, held their annual Christmas party at the village church hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December and what a great evening it was. Supplied with copious amounts of Finger food and Prosecco the BAGS and their partners were entertained in style by the villages very own acapella group 'The Birchanger Voices' and danced the night away to pop and rock music until late. Rosemary Wheatley on behalf of the the committee said "we were really pleased with how well the evening went. It was a relaxed evening among village friends and everyone seemed to have great time. We do hope everyone managed to enjoy their evening and that there were not too many sore heads the next day".

She continued, "we would like to express our thanks to the Birchanger Voices for their wonderful singing and for supplying the music at our Christmas dance on Saturday evening. I know they put in quite a lot of hours of practise for these occasions and it shows in the quality of their singing of late. I think they excelled themselves on Saturday and believe they sang better than ever before. Adding a bit of live entertainment really takes our party to another level. You could see how much the people enjoyed it by their reaction and by the way everyone was so happy to join in with the singing. The choice of songs; a mixture of old and modern popular numbers mixed with a sprinkle of Christmas songs was made to suit the audience and was well received. It was so good the Voices were even asked to do an encore"!



The Birchanger voices started in 2014 as a four piece acapella group but have recently added two more to their number. With the help from a village grant last year they invested in a professional sound system and started to work with backing tapes to increase their repertoire.

"We do it mostly for the enjoyment and to socialise together", said leader Tony Wilson. "We don't charge to perform but we do now have a sponsored charity, namely 'The Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust' for whom we proudly raised £300 for their Christmas appeal by singing in local pubs around Stansted in December. This finished our year on a high note and we look forward to going from strength to strength in the coming year. We thank everyone in Stansted for their donations and all those in Birchanger for their continued support".

## Poppy Appeal breaks all previous records

The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal made a staggering £4,904 in Birchanger this year. Perhaps this was boosted by the return of house to house collections in the Lane resulting in yet another record breaking total for the village. It is a tribute to the organisers Angie and Geoff Driscoll, who have run the collection since Bert and Rene Kadwill retired some 15 years ago. During this time the proceeds have risen from £900 to nearly £5000 this year. Angie and Geoff will be standing down for next year but the job of running the appeal will be well looked after by Liza and Justin Clark. We wish them every success for the future.

## Recreation ground abusers

It is the same every Monday! The lady who takes care of the recreation ground and keeps it safe for the children finds regular evidence that a very unwelcome minute section of the population has been using the recreation ground for drug abuse. On Monday morning the evidence is very clear and is speedily removed. The police are informed and sooner or later, something will happen which the abusers will not like. Meanwhile, those who use the recreation ground for the purposes which it is there for can be assured that the Parish Council is doing all it can to keep the area clear and safe. Residents should also be aware that the recreation ground does not have sufficient provision to cope with the waste from the church yard, so please, could everyone tending the graves please take their rubbish home with them. Thank you.



### The Hundred Parishes Society

#### A Good time for a walk

This is a great time of year to walk off the Christmas excesses and enjoy our unique part of the country. With crisp, bright days, we can all enjoy the countryside in its winter clothes. One essential I would recommend is an Ordnance Survey map, ideally the orange Explorer map which has a scale of 1 to 25,000 and shows many detailed features including footpaths and field boundaries. They can be purchased from good stationers or online from [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/leisure](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/leisure). Investment in a good pair of walking boots, probably for less than £100, will be paid back over many years and hundreds of miles, especially if you look after them. Our area has an extensive network of generally well-maintained public rights of way – footpaths for walkers and bridleways that may also be used by horse riders and cyclists. Do try out new routes, planning before you set off. Bear in mind that a path that runs beside a field edge is less likely to get muddy than one that crosses a field. Plan your route so that the sun follows you. This is good practice at any time of the year, but especially so in winter with the low sun. For a lengthy, circular walk, try to start near the southeast corner and head clockwise. The sun will follow you, keeping the glare from your eyes and giving you the best views. Most of the walks on the Hundred Parishes website follow this principle. Finally, be sure to wrap up warm with double-thickness woolly hat and gloves, a scarf and layers of clothing . . . and enjoy!

*Ken McDonald, Secretary*



### Calling All Club Members!

The Birchanger Sports & Social Club is run by and for its members. Throughout the year the committee work hard to provide the best possible entertainment, drinks, food and sports for their members but we can't succeed without you. If you have any ideas or have time to dedicate to sub committees then speak to one of our staff at the club or drop us an Email: [club@birchanger.com](mailto:club@birchanger.com)

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Providing a safe, caring and stimulating learning environment at Birchanger nursery for children aged from 2½ to 5 years old. Our nursery staff encourage creativity, independence and confidence to enable each individual child to realise their own potential. For further information contact our Nursery Manager:  
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