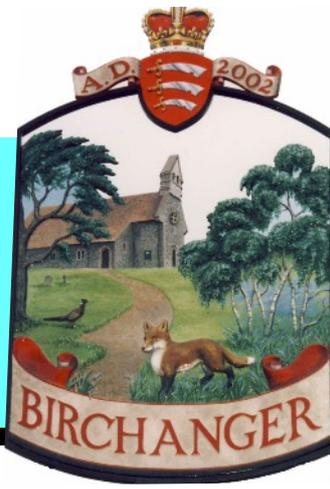


Birchanger

January 2014



Magazine

Issue 133

ARE YOU WET ENOUGH YET?

As I look out of my study window it comes as no surprise that it is raining again. It has rained in Birchanger now almost every day since December 20th. Some days it is only drizzle, other days there is a deluge.

We are fortunate in that we do not suffer much from flooding in the village. The roads even seem to be coping with out the puddles of yesteryear but I suppose living on a hill helps enormously.

Our previous memories contain pictures of flooding by the B1383, all along Birchanger Lane to the dip towards the Birchanger roundabout. Flooding has occurred, but for much shorter periods of time. Perhaps at last our drains are working better.

The effect on the brook that runs parallel to the motor way is a good indicator of the volumes of water that have fallen and I've rarely seen it moving so fast!

The ground is thoroughly sodden and as we enter the one hundredth anniversary year of the start of the great war I realise the conditions that the armies had to endure all that time ago, huddled in in various holes in the ground, while some unseen enemy lobs a high explosive shell at you every few minutes were indescribably grim.

The worst I am having to deal with is getting splashed by the speeding plonkers in the lane and having to bathe my dog every time we go for a walk.

Ok rant over enjoy 2014





PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Thank you Birchanger.

The big switch on was a big success, with a large number of families switching on their lights on November 30th. Comments from outside the village ranged from amazement, to congratulation, and acknowledgement of a really good idea for sharing Christmas and a determination to do it next year in their own villages. It certainly cheered me up and made walking through the village a real pleasure in the long dark evenings. Those using the bus through the village in the evenings really enjoyed the show. Thank you to everyone who took part, from the smallest display to the bigger masterpieces. In your own way, you all shared Christmas.

We did ask for votes for the winner, whose display you may not even have seen, as it was situated at the end of High View, the home of the Felton family. Congratulations to Shirley and Kenny, it was truly spectacular, and despite the fact that it was harder to find, took by far and away the most votes. The runner up was Charlie Grange, whose lighting displays have become part of Christmas for a long time now. Also spectacular were the lights of all the houses close to the Village Hall. They made a beautiful Christmas Focus for what is arguably the centre of Birchanger. They are especially commended, as although they could each have been a winner, together they made a real Christmas Statement.

The majority know that this is not something for everyone, but for many it is part of the Christmas Experience and brings a smile to so many, where previously there was gloom.

We have a lovely new hall extension. Now use it!

The Parish Council were among the first people to use the new hall extension to set the precept last month. It was comfortably warm, the lighting was excellent and there was a ballroom dancing class going on at the same time in the main hall. Neither user inconvenienced the other in any way.

The toilets and the kitchen could have been used by either of us without any impact on anyone else. For both there were plenty of car parking spaces, and the closing of the hall could have been done by either party.

So it is there for everyone now. Please arrange to visit it to check the facilities and the hire charges, which will vary according to the space used. The kitchen is state of the art, with a large cooker, new fridge and dishwasher. If you want these there is an additional extra charge which is not applied if you are simply holding a meeting. The most important addition for many is the provision of a toilet facilities for the disabled, which can be used by any user of the hall.

To find out more and to check the facilities for your use for yourself, please contact the hall manager, Mrs Trudy Revell on 812309.

Art Exhibition Set to Return

With the new hall extension completed, the Birchanger Art Exhibition will be back and will make good use of the bigger and better facilities now available. The extension will provide a place where artists and visitors alike, can relax and enjoy the improved range of refreshments which can now be provided.

It is hoped that this will mean that even more artists will be tempted to submit their work, and where visitors might even pick up the odd early Christmas present. The standard of painting is high, but the prices are always reasonable.

So for those who have never visited the exhibition, now is an excellent time to come and to enjoy the experience, which is happening right on our own community. The dates have been confirmed as the weekend of 13th and 14th October!

We do not need the extra decorations.

Many people in both Bishops Stortford and Uttlesford have worked very hard to maintain and to preserve the ancient wood for everyone. Unfortunately not everyone understands this and appear to have no respect for all the hard work the many volunteers have put in. The wood does not need decoration and therefore paint ball games and the tree spraying which happened in early December are an unnecessary act of pure vandalism. It is hoped that the wood will not suffer long term damage from this toxic paint, but you do have to wonder why this happened at all.

Weasel Words.

There was initially great excitement when Stansted was not proposed, in the current round of new runway deliberations, to provide two additional runways in the south East. Instead what was buried amongst the small print was just as deadly.

One of the reasons Stansted was not in the frame was that the transport links, both rail and road are hopelessly inadequate. The line out of London has required investment for years for ordinary users, never mind the airport passengers.

The real scenario is. Look at the other options rule them all out, develop an improved transport system to Stansted and there we have it, the perfect place for further aviation development. Never mind the listed buildings, the countryside, and the picturesque villages. We wrecked a few of those first time round, a few more is neither here or there.

After all, it beats moving the M4, knocking down all those skyscraper hotels, and mucking about with the existing runways. There will be a change of government when the final decision is made in 2016 and everything could be turned around again for the umpteenth time.

The runways are apparently needed by 2030, but no government has been able to tackle the unpopular decision as to where these should be. Particularly now, in the days of coalition when there is far too much to be lost.

Top tips for frozen pipes.

Hopefully this is not going to happen to you, but these tips might help if it does.

If you think your pipes may be frozen, turn off the water to the mains and the boiler at once.

Open all the cold taps to drain the system, but do not turn on your hot water taps, you could damage the your cylinder if the pipes leading to you boiler are frozen.

Look for any leaks particularly around the pipe joints.

Thaw out frozen pipes using a gentle heat on a hairdryer, or wrap the pipe in a hot cloth, never a naked flame.

Turn on the heating system and immersion heater only when you are satisfied that all the pipes are unfrozen and there are no leaking joints.

Worried about the costs of Winter?

I think we all are. If you are a pensioner make sure you are getting your winter fuel payment. In prolonged cold weather you may be entitled to the additional cold weather payment as well. There are insulation schemes available. For details of these contact your supplier.

You may find yourself with fuel bills which you are unable to pay. If this happens to you, tell your supplier immediately as they may be able to help, or at least help you to spread your payments.

Essex County Council is also running a new community bulk buying scheme . the aim of this scheme is to have a large group of members and then bid for gas and electricity supplies for the group in a block, with the idea that the more people in the scheme, the cheaper the price.

You can register for the scheme, with absolutely no obligation to participate between now and February 17. Then on Feb 18th all the suppliers will be invited to tender their best prices to the group. Essex County Council will then inform all possible subscribers of the price they have negotiated. If it is cheaper than your current deal, you may

switch or not, the choice is yours.

The address to register is [www.essex.gov.uk/energy switch](http://www.essex.gov.uk/energy-switch).

Probably worth looking at now, as there is no obligation to join the scheme.

For further details of other schemes which you may find useful, call the Money Doctor Team on 01799 618840.

Coming home from Hospital?

Not always a happy experience as many people feel they are being discharged too early and are unable to cope. Some end up back in hospital and early discharge is not always a happy experienced, particularly if there is nobody to help you, or those who might wish to do so, are frail themselves.

There is a new organisation to help with these difficulties called the West Essex Safe and Well Scheme, which aims to help those who live in West Essex and who have been inpatients at Princess Alexandra, Herts and Essex, St Margaret's, Addenbrooke's, Saffron Walden Community Hospital, and Whipps Cross. You need to be living in Uttlesford and registered with an Essex GP and meet at least one of the following criteria to qualify for their help.

You should be recently or about to be discharged from hospital, receiving visits from a community or district nurse, receiving outpatient treatment, living alone or with a partner who needs help looking after you, or have a history of falling.

The scheme is managed by the Papworth Trust, Epping Forest District Council and the RVS. Their service is confidential and they can arrange transport to take you home from hospital, get your home ready for you by switching on the heating and providing basic food supplies. They can help with benefits and housing options, assist you with hospital visits, collecting prescriptions, shopping and social activities. They can also phone or visit you if you would like that as well. The service is free. It compliments the work of carers and cannot include personal care. However if you are unlucky enough to end up in hospital this winter, it could be just what you need.

Call 0300 333 6543 to find out more, or visit the Royal Voluntary Service at Melvin Ward, Princess Alexandra Hospital.

Don't forget the Stansted Day Centre is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and they serve really good home cooked lunches as well as providing companionship and activities during the day.

Driving in Winter.

When the weather is really bad it is better to live off your store cupboard, if you have one and it is stocked up, and only go out on essential journeys. Unfortunately we cannot always avoid these, so it might help if you took along the following as well.

Start with a torch, mobile phone, ice scraper and de-icer, blanket, boots and heavy coat. You may need a small

spade or shovel along with a tow rope, and jump leads for the stronger and those who actually understand how to use these things. There may be unplanned diversions so you might need a map. Hopefully you won't need a first aid kit, but somebody else might.

Finally a hot drink and some food would be very welcome when you are stuck. I know because it happened to me, and it is amazing how quickly the car gets cold. You really don't want hypothermia, but if you become very cold, feel your mind wandering, and have slow, shallow breathing you need help. For this you will need your mobile phone. After all that, was your journey really necessary?

Fancy trying something new in 2014?

I visited a friend in Birchanger before Christmas. Propped up on her dresser was a new landscape picture. I immediately thought she had been shopping at one of our local artist's studios.

Wrong! She had actually been learning to paint at one of Heather Brown's art classes. My friend had never actually been to an art class ever before, never been known as particularly artistic, but here she was, having created a picture which could easily hang on anyone's wall after only this one lesson.

Heather has been running art classes for many years, but up to now most of the pupils have come from outside the village. Not only are there special classes and courses for absolute beginners, you can choose to learn how to make special effects and other techniques as well.

So in the long dark days which we still face, why not try something different? It is a very good and therapeutic way to pass an interesting and instructive morning perhaps with a group of friends. Remember painting is a skill which the right teacher will instruct you in, and which will give you a great deal of pleasure in years to come. Maybe you could become good enough to enter your pictures in the Art Exhibition which will be back later this year. Why not try it? Call Heather on 815453 to find out more.

Keeping the Bugs at Bay.

It seems we are all very vulnerable to infections of one sort or another at this time of year. Most people will by now have had their flu jabs if they were eligible for them and others may have already suffered flu like colds and other viruses.

We can help ourselves through a lot of infections by simply washing our hands more frequently and simply staying away from crowded places if you are particularly vulnerable. One danger lurks often unnoticed in our fridges and in the way in which we prepare our food.

We have come to rely on our fridges, but do we really know what lurks inside? Do we go through our fridges regularly and make sure that they are clean? Do we keep raw food and food ready to eat apart from each other? Are our shelves too tightly packed so that the air cannot circulate properly to keep the food cool? Let's just not go to the state of our fridges at Christmas as probably most of us overload our fridges then. Do we actually check the

temperatures of our fridges? We could be surprised at what we find.

What about outside the fridge? The latest advice is that we should wash all our food very carefully and keep ready to eat and all food which must be cooked. You need separate chopping boards for raw or ready to eat food and you should never use the same unwashed knife on both types of food. Now many times do we actually forget to do this?

Some bugs you simply cannot avoid, but it is a good idea to avoid unnecessary sickness. Stay well!

SOME USEFUL NUMBERS

Birchanger Church of England Primary School

Acting Head Teacher Mr Geoffrey Slide 812362

Birchanger Open Gardens Committee

Enquiries to: Miss Sheila Devereux 813843

Birchanger Social Club

812810

Birchanger Village Magazine

Editor Mr. Eddie Gilbey 816171

Church in Birchanger

The Benefice office 815243.

Pam Lee

01279 815938

Church Hall Trudy Revell

01279 812309

County Councillor

Mr Ray Gooding 01279813103

District Councillor

Mrs. Elizabeth Godwin 812793

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator

Mr Alex Stewart 07844446467575

Parish Council

Chairman Mrs. Angie Drisscoll 817376

Clerk to the Council Mrs. Julia Peachey 503912



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



FREE DRINKS AT THE CLUB

2014 sees the launch of a brand new promotion at the club that entitles people to free drinks if they help the club attract new members. At the club we're very lucky to have a loyal group of regulars who support us week in week out. In 2014 we wanted to reward that loyalty, and also attract the next generation of club stalwarts. From January through to March, existing members will be given a free drink if they introduce (and propose) a new member to the club. There is no limit to how many new members you can introduce, and therefore how many free drinks you can get, so with a little word of mouth and persuasion this promotion could see keen members having a very cheap start to the year. Members will be rewarded with a free pint of ale/lager, glass of wine or spirit and mixer each time a new member they have proposed is accepted and has paid their membership and joining fee in full. As regular club goers will attest, the club is one of the village's strongest assets, offering great value food and drink, regular entertainment and a whole host of sporting facilities. It is hoped that this promotion will help introduce new members perhaps previously too shy to come along and experience what we really have to offer.



Eat in or Takeaway, it's up to you!

With a dedicated, professional team of cooks and a great value menu of freshly prepared fare the club is the perfect venue for food in 2014. A re-launched menu sees classics and continental food sit alongside each other, with one main thing in common: Incredibly low prices! So as the winter nights get colder and flooding and extreme weather threaten your well being, why not give yourself a break and pop down to the club for your next meal. Even if you simply fancy a night in front of the TV at home give the club a call on (01279) 813 441 and they can do you a nice takeaway. Similarly the club is happy to cater for larger parties, just let them know and you will be given the full Birchanger welcome!

Bringing in 2014 with style

New Year's Eve was one of the most successful events in recent club history. With a disco on offer people from across the region came in force to celebrate the passing of another year. It was especially great to see so many new faces in the club, enjoying the great value food and drinks and incredible family atmosphere. Thanks to all who came along and we look forward to welcoming many of you as new members in 2014!

Christmas/ New Year Treasure Chest Beats Odds!

During the festive period a very special version of the Treasure Chest took place. This was a one night only event where whatever happened however much money went in the chest WOULD be won, even if it took 13 attempts to pick the winning key! Our very own ringmaster, Dave Woods, carefully placed all 13 keys in



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

the bag. With a tidy £170 sum everyone was anticipating a hard fought battle between the members to see who would eventually draw the winning key. First up came the intrepid Dick R. The tension was palpable as a hushed crowd sat back and watched Dick pull out a key. Emotions were mixed some egging him on to victory, whilst others dreaming that his failure could see them given the chance to step up to Dave's Chest. Incredibly, lady luck was on Dick's side that night as the very first key opened the chest to victory. This was a separate and special game to the ongoing treasure chest. At the time of going to print, the ongoing treasure chest jackpot remains locked away, so make sure you come along and play, you've got to be in it to win it!



Don't forget to renew your membership

Members are invited to renew their membership by the end of January. At £20 per year, Birchanger Sports and Social Club remains the best value for miles around. As a club, over the years we have consistently beaten not only pubs but other clubs on drinks prices, whilst never compromising on quality, and our current membership cost remains overall the lowest, but if you find it lower elsewhere, please do let us know! So make sure to get your money in asap!

Weekly events At the Club:

Weekly	Event	When
Saturdays	Meat Draw	1.00pm
Saturdays	Bingo Lottery	Ask bar staff
Mondays	Quiz night	9.00pm
Wednesdays	Steak night	Evenings
Thursdays	Bingo night	08.30pm
Fridays	Tote Draw	Evenings

Plus Weekly Bonus Ball, Bottle Draws, Cash Raffles & Prize Raffles throughout the year.

Tequila 1st Feb:

Back by popular demand, Tequila is a talented trio, known for their vocal agility. Playing to the crowd they can bring that rare gift of the buzz of live music coupled with an uncanny ability make every song their own. Make sure you're there to see the sparks fly at their next Birchanger gig!



Premonition 15th Feb:

(Lisa and Graham 'Gee' Martin) have gone from strength to strength and are now one of the most sought after duos in the UK due to their versatility of being able to perform all genres and decades of music. Their vocal talents are endless and coupled with their way of interacting with the crowd they will be raising the club's newly refurbished roof !



Entertainments Calendar:

- 25th Jan – Charity Race Night – Burns Night
- 31st Jan – Treasure Chest Draw
- 1st Feb – Tequila performing live on stage
- 15th Feb - Premonition
- 21st Feb – Treasure Chest Draw

Birchanger Sports & Social Club, 229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger CM23 5QJ
 Tel: 01279 813 441 Email: club@birchanger.com Follow us at: www.birchangerclub.com

News from St Mary's

It may be only a few weeks into the new year but, following on high numbers attending festive services, we are pleased to be able to report continued good attendances at Sunday services.

We are now gearing up for our Annual General Meeting which will take place after the services on Sunday 9th March. If you want to have a say, on any matter involving the church, at that meeting then please make sure that you hand in a completed application form so that your name will be included on the church Electoral roll. If your name is not on the Roll, you will have no right to take part in the meeting.

You can apply to join the PCC or become a Churchwarden. All you need to do is complete a form and hand it to either the Rector, Peter Odrich or Pam Lee, before the 2nd March 2014. The forms are available in church. We urge you to join us to help shape our church for the future.

Present members of the PCC are reminded that the next meeting will take place on the 10th February.

Finally our thanks go to the members of the Social Club who play bingo on a Thursday evening. With the introduction of a charity game, since its inception in July

2013, members have raised £639 for church funds. This is a significant sum for which we are truly grateful.

Church Hall News

Now that the extension is complete, we are in the process of purchasing new furniture for the Meeting Room. We hope to use the room as a Tea Room, one afternoon a week (probably Thursday) but we will need volunteers to operate this. If you can give a hour or two to serve tea and cake, please let us know asap. Contact is Trudy Revell on 812309.

Coffee Morning.

Don't forget the first Coffee Morning of 2014, to celebrate Pancake Day, well ahead of time this year, will be on Tuesday February 11th between 10.30 and noon in Moorswood. Shrove Tuesday is unusually late and in March this year, so we decided to brighten the winter gloom early and at the usual time in February again this year.

Everyone is very welcome and if you are new to Birchanger, the coffee mornings are a really good opportunity to meet new people and to make new friends.

New Years eve at the Willows.



The Three Willows embarked on a new format for a new year celebration with a 5 course set party menu that pushed forward the culinary boundaries in Birchanger.

The event was sold out and sixty eight diners enjoyed a Kir Royale welcome drink to be followed by a varied assortment of dishes ranging from Pan seared Scallops to Beef Wellington via an amuse bouche of Lemon sole and finishing with a trio of home made desserts. Chefs Tony Wilson and Craig

Lyons pulled out all the stops to make a memorable end of year celebration That I was unable to find fault with.

There were nine staff on duty to provide the service and entertainment was provided by guitarist Russell Parish.

Dan and John Thompson have wrought some changes to the tried and tested formula at the Willows. Who knows what delights 2014 will bring!



School News

If you go down to the woods

Most of us like to walk in the woods around the village, but if you were to go down there on a weekday morning, you might find yourself in for a surprise. Ladybirds[Class 1] will have taken over and will be having a lot of fun and learning a great deal as well.

So what actually is happening? Once a week a lady called Laura, from the Woodland Trust in Essex comes to the school and takes the youngest children into the woods in two groups. The children are dressed in warm clothing provided to the school by one of the parents. They all wear boots and school gloves. Getting dirty is therefore no problem, and they do!

Using their new woodland names, such as Oliver owl and William Woodpecker, they are encouraged to jump in the mud, hear the squelching noise and paddle in the stream under Laura's ever watchful eye. They pick up sticks, break them up and count the pieces. They make find beams to swing on. They made a water "volcano" on a tree with a convenient hole and watch just how far the "lava" spreads. They learn basic numeracy and literacy skills along with the science and ecology of the wood. They learn how to light a fire as well as all the rules about fire. When the weather permits they learn how to cook on a fire. Safety is paramount, yet all the time they are having fun, even if it is winter. People learn better when the learning is made enjoyable.

There are very few opportunities for children to learn about the outdoors and to simply play in the woods these days.

A lovely memory of the old Year

There were many memorable events at the school in December, including the whole school trip to the pantomime at the Rhodes Centre, the Christingle Service where the sight of 106 lighted candles is spectacular, but right up there with the best of them has to be the Key Stage 1 Nativity Play.

It is an event which is eagerly anticipated by all the families and tickets are keenly sought after, even to the dress rehearsal.

I may say this every year, but this December's performance was exceptional. Not only were the children relaxed in their roles, their singing and clear enjoyment of the songs was clear to everyone. The songs had been written by Miss and they were very catchy and the children sang them very well. The story was traditional, with all the usual characters and featuring the star, which managed to become brighter throughout the performance. There was the now obligatory "Away in a Manger" and at that point the tissues ran out. Congratulations, everyone it was really lovely.

Recipe of the Month

Waterzooi

A very tasty Flemish fish stew.

Serves four.

Ingredients

Either olive or vegetable oil, enough to cover the pan base.

1 Onion finely chopped

2 Carrots finely chopped of similar volume to the onion.

1 Garlic clove per person crushed/chopped etc.

350 ml of white wine

300 ml fish stock.

Boiled potatoes about 2 pieces per person is enough

Assorted fish.

Any combination of white fish or salmon and shell fish should work

Cod loin, skinned Haddock or sea bass fillet allow 2 to 3 one inch chunks per person.

Big shelled raw prawns allow 2 to 3 per person

Similar volume of scallop meat or mussels

150 ml single cream.

Method

Boil the potatoes separately, drain and reserve keeping them warm.

In a large pan heat the oil and fry the onion, carrots and garlic until the onions are transparent but not brown.

Add the wine, bring it to the simmer.

Add the fish stock then simmer for 15 minutes or until the carrots are cooked.

Add the potatoes.

Add the fish, bigger pieces first, then simmer until the prawns have turned pink. This should take about 3 minutes.

Pour in the cream and stir in gently try not to break up the fish.

Serve in warmed bowls with crusty bread.

The finished dish should have a slightly yellowish colour. You can garnish with parsley sprigs or cherry tomatoes.



NEW YEAR - NEW YOU? - NEW CLASS TRY PILATES

What is Pilates and how will it benefit me?

Developed by Joseph Pilates in the 1920's, it is a workout that recognizes individual needs, building strength, flexibility and increasing stamina

Pilates involves both mental and physical training to achieve an awareness and control of the body

Who is it suitable for?

Pilates is suitable for anyone, man or woman, young or old, mobile or less mobile. It will suit any level of fitness. Pilates is recommended by many Osteopaths, Chiropractors and Physiotherapists as a means of rehabilitation and to guard against injuries. It is suitable for back pain sufferers, those with hip mobility problems and is a safe and effective way to exercise during and after pregnancy

How is Pilates taught?

There are two methods of teaching Pilates, either with the use of static specialist resistance equipment, or more commonly seen and taught by me – mat based which primarily uses your own bodyweight

About me

I have been in the fitness industry for 23 years and am a REPS Level 3 Personal Trainer. Group exercise Instructor and Level 4 Sports and Rehabilitation massage therapist. Based on my experience, many clients who incorporate Pilates into their lifestyles have found it to be a very positive and beneficial experience. **If you are also interested in Personal Training (general fitness or Pilates), Sports Massage or would like an exercise class in Birchanger then please let me know.**

I have taught at Birchanger village hall on a Friday morning since moving to the area 5 years ago and enjoy teaching a number of local people. This year I am starting a Tuesday evening class (starts Feb 4).

Lorna Moulton Tel: 07799 622748

Email: lorna@amazing-u.co.uk

www.amazing-u.co.uk

Pilates classes in Birchanger
NEW Tuesday 8-9pm (starts 4/2/14)
Friday 9.15-10.15am

Contact me for more details and prices

Additional special offers:

Personal Training and Sports Massage both £25 usually £30 during February

Church Hall Hire

For rates, availability terms and conditions
And a description of the available facilities

Please contact

Mrs Trudy Revell
01279 812309

COFFEE MORNING

In aid of Church funds

Tuesday 11th February
10.30 till Noon

Moorswood 330 Birchanger Lane

Everyone welcome



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THE THREE WILLOWS



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 your village Pub!

Village Diary

January/ February

January

26th 11.00 am St Mary's
 Holy Communion

February

2nd 11.00 am St Mary's
 Matins

9th 11.00 am St Mary's
 Family service

11th 10.30 am Moorswood
 Coffee Morning

16th 11.00 am St Mary's
 Matins

23rd 11.00 am St Mary's
 Holy Communion

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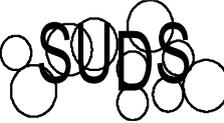
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