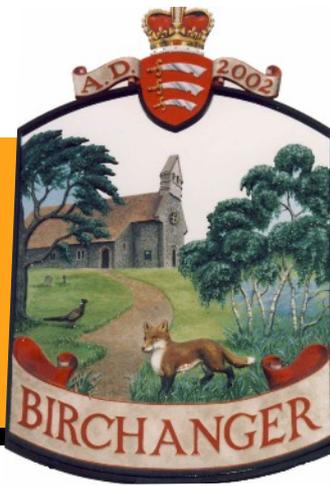


Birchanger

October 2014



Magazine

Issue 142

BIRCHANGER CLUB WINS TWO CAMRA AWARDS

After great work from our staff at looking after our ales, Birchanger Sports and Social Club was awarded with 2 awards from CAMRA, both for the best club in North West Essex and the best club from the whole of East Anglia. This means that on our very own doorstep we have the best club from across Essex, Herts, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire – no small feat.

The awards were handed out at an official ceremony in the club, where all the regions CAMRA glitterati assembled. We're now in the running for national club of the year so keep your fingers crossed! We're always proud to serve a great pint at a great value price and these prizes go alongside our existing awards for the outstanding serve of our Guinness, endorsed by Master Brewer Fergal Murray!



Polling Station to Remain at the Church Hall.

From May we shall become a larger ward with two members known as Stansted South. There was some concern that we might lose the hall as a polling station as well, but this is not going to happen. Next election it will be business as usual for polling in the Village Hall.



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Come and hear what Manchester Airports Group have to say.

The MAG Group as they are widely known is going to visit Birchanger Parish Council at 7.45 on Tuesday November 4th in the Village Hall.

They will discuss their plans for the airport development and there will be opportunities for everyone to ask questions about anything airport related. They are proud to be increasing their numbers again, but at what price to the community?

The big Birchanger light up!

You may be putting your head under the duvet at the very mention of the word "Christmas" in October, but it is very much on the way. Next month the Christmas Fairs will begin.

On the 30th of November the Big Birchanger Light Up will be back.

It may seem rather early to be doing this, but the shops will be nearly through their Christmas season, and the end of November never seems to have much to recommend it, other than the promise than all the joy that the Christmas Season can bring, is just around the corner.

So after the success of last year, we are inviting everyone in Birchanger to participate again this year. Birchanger really was a brighter place last Christmas and it is an experience most people are looking forward to and want to have again this year. Never was walking through Birchanger at night, just so much fun. By participating you are contributing to Christmas Cheer for everyone.

Light up will be at 6 pm on Sunday November 30th. You are invited to vote for your favourite at any time up until 6 pm on December 18th. You can let me have your preference by either dropping it in to 330 Birchanger Lane, or drop it into the club. The winners will be announced at the club after the carol service on Dec 18th

There will be prizes for the winners, It is a way to thank all those who contribute to Christmas in Birchanger.

Park and Ride in Cambridge?

Quite a lot of us will be visiting Cambridge in the run up to Christmas. It is quite possible that for many of us a drive to Cambridge is something that we do very infrequently, so if this is the first visit since summer you may not know that you now have to pay for the privilege of parking at the "Park and Ride", even if you do have an over sixties bus pass.

The Technology is the latest. All you have to do is to remember three letters in your car registration plate and suddenly there is your plate on the screen in front of you. You have to confirm that it is correct, then you move to the payment stage. You can buy the bus trip and parking or simply parking at this stage. Parking for 18 hours is £1. Unfortunately, like so many greedy car parking payment machines, no change is given.

The notices that this has become a payment required car park from a free car park, are not exactly conspicuous. If you have a bus pass they are very easy to miss as you by pass the ticket machine completely. We did just that. The penalty for this is a whopping £70. We discovered this on our return and quickly bought a ticket. With new technology there is no need for a traffic warden. So far no ticket, but we will wait and see what, if anything happens, but we did pay the required fee in the end!

An Apprenticeship instead of a college course?

This could be an option to consider when you are leaving school or college and are not quite sure where to go next. There are various schemes on offer in many and varied careers.

Two of the places who are in the process of setting up new schemes are the airport and the District Council. The first apprentices are already in post at the council but there is going to be room for more shortly.

Apprenticeships at the council in the next round will be for admin assistants in Environmental Health and the Housing Repairs Departments, a Plumbing apprenticeship also in Housing Repair, Fitter apprenticeships in the Council's own Vehicle Repair Workshop, as well as opportunities in IT. To find out more, call Uttlesford District Council on 01799 510510.

111 is Fully Operational.

After much promising and shaky starts, the 111 telephone number is finally available in our area, although not yet nationwide. The number is the same for land lines and mobiles and it is a free service. It is not for true emergency calls, where the 999 number will still apply. You may need help with a medical condition quickly but the situation is not yet dire. That is where the service will be of the most benefit and ultimately ease the pressure on A and E departments.

It is available 24/7, and it will put you through to an experienced team of highly trained advisers who will be assisted by experienced nurses. They will ask you questions and assess the symptoms and advise you about your next steps. If the adviser thinks you need an ambulance, one will be sent.

For less urgent situations, contact your GP as usual, and if you do have a specific telephone number given to you by a health professional, please continue to use that number. If it is life threatening, it is still 999.

And Another One!

This IT scam comes at you over the phone. In my case the voice was very smooth and cultured and he informed me that I had experienced problems with Windows. I told him I had not, he insisted I had. After a pretty pointless few moments, entertaining for me, hopefully frustrating for him, when he tried to ask me a lot of details about my computers and I gave nothing away, he asked me for my windows license agreement number. Well I certainly was not going to give him that! I asked for his name and organisations. Not surprisingly nothing was forthcoming. I terminated the call.

The thing to remember about this one is that Microsoft will never contact you. When I tried to get the caller's number, of course I could not! Watch out.

Charge Your Electric Car for a Fiver in Saffron Walden.

Well that assumes that you actually have an electric car and are prepared to drive it to Saffron Walden in the first place, but 300 odd miles for a fiver does seem to me to be quite a good deal.

The service is fast, 15 to 20 minutes and there are three different types of connection on offer. Payment is by means of a card, and there is almost time for a swim or a cup of coffee while you wait. Hopefully electric cars will improve their range and the number of charging points. It could also be difficult if there are several other motorists all wanting the same point, in front of you.

The other point is that you can trickle charge your vehicle at home overnight. I think that travellers face the biggest problems and until electric cars have ranges of around 500 miles, owners could find themselves in difficulty as the concept takes off.

Batteries also need to come down in price. Having a second battery is not an option for most electric car users. I shall wait until the technology is a bit more user friendly I think.

Have you been wiped from the system?

It appears that the wonderful computer rationalisation of NHS and GP services may have resulted in several thousand patients disappearing from the system altogether. This would mean that apart from your paper notes and files, on the computer system you no longer exist. This has happened to several thousand patients all over the country, most of them over the age of seventy five. At this age you have to fight for the right treatment more often than not, never mind trying to prove that you are who you are to the bureaucrats as well.

Many people over the age of 75 lead productive and useful lives. They may not need to receive the highest level of treatment, but it should be considered and at least offered with explanations to those in their senior years. Not everyone is completely gaga as some ministers appear to think. It is also accepted that some of the very young are having to travel abroad and to pay for their treatment as well. The NHS is short of money but losing thousands of patients is not the answer.

What you need to do if you do have regular appointments, is to call the hospital if your appointment has not been sent to you just after the time you would have expected it to arrive. I did just this, to find that I no longer existed as far as the hospital computer was concerned. Thank goodness we still have paper files. My notes were found and apparently I do exist and I am now back on the electronic system. I still will not trust it, yet and goodness knows what will happen if they ditch the paper. How will we prove our identity, never mind what is wrong with us if they do? If you can find your hospital number, keep it in a safe place. You might need it.

Teenagers wise up with Motorwise.

If your teenager is aged between 16 and 17 and goes to an Essex County Council school in Uttlesford, they will have had the opportunity to spend some time at Carver Barracks, practising their motoring skills as well as learning all about driving from the professionals. The day was aimed at being interesting, fun, as well as teaching road safety when you drive a motor vehicle. Around 800 students participated and had an interesting and stimulating day. It was an opportunity to learn about driving, and all the legal implications and to try a vehicle in completely safe conditions. Hopefully the lessons learned will be there for life as we have a very poor record for road casualties in this area.



The Hundred Parishes Society

The Hundred Parishes

Consists of a roughly rectangular area in Essex, Herts and Cambridgeshire. Ranging from Buntingford in the West to Finchingfield in the East up to Linton in the North and down to Sawbridgeworth in the South. Birchanger is included in the list of villages covered as are all of the surrounding villages and Hamlets.

For membership details please contact the society

The Hundred Parishes Society

A registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The Society's objectives are:

(a) To advance the education of the public in the character and history of the geographic area comprising The Hundred Parishes.

(b) To promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of the geographic area comprising The Hundred Parishes and the surrounding areas the provision of information and facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the quality of life of the said inhabitants.

(c) To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of The Hundred Parishes, especially its features of historic, architectural and wildlife interest

Further Information and contacts

Registered charity 1157891
Registered office: 2 Greenfields,
Stansted Mountfitchet,
Essex CM24 8AH
Douglas Kent (Chairman)
T: 01799 540105
Ken McDonald (Secretary)
T: 01279 813226
hundredparishes@btinternet.com
www.hundredparishes.org.uk

What is special about the Hundred Parishes?

People, whether resident or visiting, will be aware of special places within the Hundred Parishes, but this initiative introduces the concept that these individual places are each examples of what characterises the area. Furthermore, because these examples are not isolated, but numerous and in close proximity to one another, the area as a whole is special and worthy of recognition.

- It is an area that has shared a common history which shaped and preserved its distinctive landscape: a landscape of small and medium-sized farms linked by winding lanes and ancient rights of way to hamlets, villages and then to small market towns.

- This historic rural pattern has been little disturbed by industrialisation and urbanisation, (Stansted Airport excepted) although the Hundred Parishes is surrounded by examples of such developments that have taken place over the last century.

- The landscape, combining natural beauty with an exceptional depth of rural and architectural heritage, is probably not surpassed by any other part of the country. It is also a living landscape, rich in wildlife and culture.

- The name Hundred Parishes has been chosen to reflect the fact that this area of approximately 450 square miles (1,100 square kilometres) encompasses around a hundred administrative parishes, and also to signify that within the overall area each of those parishes has its own special characteristics and traditions.

Church Hall Hire

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

Please contact

Mrs Trudy Revell
01279 812309



News from Birchanger Social Club

TREASURE CHEST WITH 1 KEY



Earlier this month was an epic game of the treasure chest, with £2,200 in it to win. Only 2 keys were left to draw, and one lucky person had the chance to walk away with £1,100 of that without doing a thing. On this tense evening the club was packed with members keen to have a go and be a part of it. No one expected the lucky gent (who for security reasons shall remain nameless) to act the way he did.

Stepping up to the plate he decided to gamble it all for the big money. Feverishly he drew the key from the bag and tried his luck, but try as he might the key did not fit and he had to walk away with a consolation prize of £150 and the disbelief of his better half. What this means though is that at the next draw there will be at least £2,200 available and only 1 key left.

So if you want to come along for the best odds in Birchanger and a great night out then come down to the club on Friday 24th October. This pot of money will be won by one of our members that night.



CHRISTMAS RAFFLE IS BACK!

I know the John Lewis ad hasn't aired and already we're talking about Christmas. Don't worry we don't have the tree up yet and are not planning on lighting up too early, but even the most bah humbug amongst us will have to get excited about the prizes in this year's raffle.

- 1st prize £250 cash
- 2nd Prize 32" TV
- 3rd Prize Hudl 7" Tablet

All you need to do to enter is buy a raffle ticket from either someone behind the bar or a member of the committee!

FURNITURE FOR SALE



As the final stage of the refurbishment comes about the entire new look will be complemented by brand new furniture supplied from a local company. But our existing furniture served us well for many years and it is with a heavy heart that we are saying goodbye to it.

After strong demand from members, before we sell it on to other establishments, we would like to give members a chance to buy the furniture, see our discounted rates below: Large Tables: £10, Small Tables: £7, Bucket Chair: £10, Standard Chair: £7, Stools: £5, Banqueting red chairs - £5. Just ask at the bar to get your name down



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

AGM

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held on the 22nd October from 8pm. This is an opportunity to come along listen and have your say about the running of the club and to find out how we're doing and what's in store. It's also the chance to stand to be a part of the committee if you want to play a part in the success of the club moving forward. Keep an eye on notice boards over the coming weeks to see the agenda and find out more.

Treasure Chest Draw

24th October and 4th November



We are down to one key
The prize keeps growing,
but you got to be in it to win it

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.

ENTERTAINMENT

Red and Black – 1st November



Back by popular demand; make sure to arrive early for a seat for this act!

Charity Race Night – 8th November



Place your bets now please – great night out and all in a good cause

Toni Lee – 22nd November



This blonde bombshell is the master of disguise pulling off numerous singing legends including the fabulous Karen Carpenter – a must watch in November!

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

Email: club@birchanger.com Follow us at: www.birchangerclub.com

Discovering South Africa

From Vineyard to Farmyard

The wines of South Africa are, quite rightly, well regarded throughout the world and it is easy to see why. Though they are a relative newcomer to the world of fine wines the beautifully laid out vineyards and sunny climate make for wines of great variety and they are worthy of the many awards they have won.

A short drive of around 50 kilometres from Cape Town gets you to the town of Stellenbosch and you can understand why vineyards were established here. The fertile valleys were discovered by a man called Simon van de Stel, who in an act of great humility named the settlement after himself ! Stellenbosch means Van de Stel's bush. He also called the first river he discovered there "Erste River" which translated means "first river" .

However it was the river which was the key to wine making in the region and when the first Huguenot refugees arrived in 1690 they brought grapevines and viticulture from France and within a few short years Stellenbosch was the centre of South African wine production.

For Barbara and I, the tour was to be by bicycle! So it was that we were picked up from our hotel at 10 o'clock and taken to the bike sheds where we met our fellow travellers. There were 8 of us in all and as we set off in the hot sun I began to realise I was not as fit as I used to be. However our guide Fabian was very patient and helped us slowly negotiate our way to the first stop, a field of vines, where we got a crash course in viticulture and grape management. After that it was on to our first tasting and, with a German couple, Max & Maria, we concluded that it was best to swallow the wine rather than the swilling and spitting favoured by the experts! This was to prove rather a mistake as there were quite a lot of wines to taste! So the next stop was lunch at another vineyard and after wobbling our way there, we decided a bottle of wine with lunch would be fine. That would have been fine if it wasn't for the final stop on the tour, a visit to a Brandy tasting. After this final intake it is fair to say that we, (and Max & Maria), were pretty well beyond cycling, so Fabian supervised us walking our bikes back to the starting point where we said our goodbyes and as the hot sun began to set we reflected, on a satisfying day and retired to a sound, slightly alcohol induced good nights sleep!



The following day we set off to see Franschhoek another town surrounded by vineyards. The name means French corner, a reference to the many French settlers who came here.

All of the vineyards are beautifully laid out with great entrance gates which are reminiscent of the plantations in the southern states of America. There are already workers in the fields harvesting grapes and, as we climb above the town, the whole area is laid out below like some great canvas that Monet forgot to paint. We take the steep drive up Mont Rochelle national park and our hire car works overtime as we drive over mountain passes into Drakenstein nature reserve. There is an abundance of wildlife in South Africa but what was most impressive to me were the flowers. I had not realised how many of our familiar garden flowers & plants have their origins in this country. I will come back to this subject in more detail later!



We returned to Stellenbosch in the evening to find the town heaving with people. It is then that we realise that this is a university town and there is a varsity rugby match between Cape Town and Stellenbosch. All of the restaurants are booked and the bars are heaving, but we manage to find somewhere to eat and enjoy part of the match (which Cape Town narrowly won) in the company of some young eager students who appear to have adopted us as honorary home team supporters!

Our final day in this area is spent with some shopping and of course we had to purchase some of the local wines before we set off on a 325 kilometre journey to Swellendam where the tour company have arranged for us to stay on a working farm where they breed among other things Ostriches- we can't wait!

Tony Wilson

School News

It is only a few weeks since our Reception children joined Birchanger school in Ladybirds Class and already they are playing a full part in our school community. Our youngest children enjoy having their own outside learning area adjacent to their classroom. A canopy over the courtyard means children can be outside come rain or shine, enjoying learning experiences such as construction and role play. As soon as they are ready, children join in whole school playtimes and lunchtimes. It is one of the benefits of our small school that children soon get to know everyone and it is a real joy to see the older children playing with and helping our new starters. Through all of these experiences within and beyond the classroom, our children are acquiring knowledge and learning new skills. Already a number of Reception children have been awarded Star of the Week for their learning successes in our celebration assemblies on Fridays.

Of course, it is at this time of year that parents of children who will begin school in the Reception class next September start to think about visiting schools before making their application. We warmly welcome visits from parents and prospective pupils and would be pleased to show you around our school. We are holding an open morning on Tuesday 4th November with tours of the school from 9.15am and a short talk from the headteacher and an opportunity to meet our Reception Class teacher at 10.30am. If this is not convenient, please telephone the school to arrange another time to come and look around.

I look forward to meeting you
Helen Coop
Headteacher
Birchanger C of E (VC) Primary School
Tel: 01279 812362

Coffee with the Head Teacher.

It was never like that in my day. If my parents were invited to see the Head Teacher it would have been to catalogue all the complaints about me. Coffee would not have been featured.

In the past few weeks, Mrs Coop has invited parents to come to school for coffee and to meet her informally. It was their opportunity to ask her questions and to have an informal chat about anything which was of concern to them. It was a really good idea, we may be subject to stringent rules, Ofsted's and the like, but it is good to know that plain old fashioned friendliness and common sense are still here.

Record Breaking School Lunches.

A whopping 83 school lunches were served in a specially arranged Best of British Lunches Week. All the British lunches were popular, but Fish and Chips found a record breaking 83 takers. Never have the school lunches taken by the children, have the numbers been so high.

Think I must pop in myself sometime soon.

Operation Christmas Child

The school is going to participate in Operation Christmas Child this year. This requires a shoe box to be filled with appropriate Christmas Goodies for a Primary School Age Child. Maybe you don't have the goodies but do have the odd spare shoe box which could be filled.

If you would like to participate in this and would like further information, please contact the school on 812362.

Close encounter of the reptilian kind

You never really know what to expect when you return home from a holiday. In early September we came home from a week in Norfolk. It was an uneventful if long journey due to the road works on the A11. Arriving came as a relief as we had been in the car nearly three hours. So after depositing Wife, Mother in Law and Dog in the house I unloaded the car. In the meantime someone had opened the back door to let Millie out into the garden.

I'd been quite keen to get out there myself to check the progress in my greenhouse which was laden with ripe tomatoes and chilli peppers. (Thanks to Bryan Reed who watered for me in my absence) all was well.

But before I got there imagine my surprise to discover a full size grass snake sunning itself inside the house by our back door! It held its ground for a second or two while I called Sue to come and look. Then it slithered out of the back door and crossed a decked patio and a piece of lawn at break neck speed. I was frantically trying to bring the camera of my phone to bear on it but it was just too fast and it escaped through the tiniest gap in the fence to next door never to be seen again. All in all, the encounter was about 6 or 7 seconds, I had no idea they were so quick!

Grass snakes are known to be harmless, it was only the second I have seen in my lifetime but I now know they have a presence in the village. If anyone else has a similar encounter please let me know.

Ed

Birchanger Primary School CATERING MANAGER

Required Immediately
22.5 hours per week - £8.90 an hour (pro-rata)
Monday to Friday - Term time only (43.1 weeks per year)

We are a vibrant and happy school in this beautiful rural Essex village looking to recruit an experienced and enthusiastic catering manager to prepare fresh home cooked food for our pupils. You will be preparing approximately 70/75 meals daily.

A knowledge of budgets and menu planning would be an advantage although training will be available as part of our commitment to staff.

- Do you have Level 2 Food Safety?
- Are you able to cook delicious healthy balanced meals?
- Are you looking to work in a friendly supportive environment?

If so, we would like to hear from you!

Visits to the school are warmly welcomed. Please telephone: the school office to arrange a visit and request an application pack.

Closing date: 24th October 2014

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants must be willing to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

Bob Jennings

We were very saddened by the news of the passing of Bob Jennings. He was a generous man who lost his way in life.

We offer our condolences to his family and friends.

Birchanger Parish Council

Require a Parish Clerk.
This is a part-time position (10 hours per week),
working from home
but attending evening meetings in the village.

For more information
www.birchanger.com/vacancy
or call Ken Wheatley on 814678.

Festive Coffee Morning



In aid of Church funds
Tuesday December 9th
10.30 till Noon

Moorswood 330 Birchanger Lane

Everyone welcome



Tea Room At the Church Hall



Every Wednesday

2.00 till 4.00

Everyone welcome

In aid of Hall maintenance funds



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Village Diary

October/November

October

26th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

November

2nd 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins

9th 10.00 am St Mary's
Remembrance Sunday

16th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

23rd 11.00 am St Mary's
Family Service

29th 2.00 pm Church Hall
Xmas Bazaar

30th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

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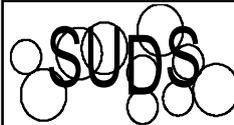
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