

LITTLE  
HADHAM  
PARISH NEWS  
FEBRUARY 2010



Snowdrops at Easton Lodge – page 13

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Log on to [www.thehadhams.com](http://www.thehadhams.com) for issues dating back to May 2006

## Letter from the Rectory

*It has been a cruel winter. The freezing conditions and snow have brought picture book landscapes and joy to many who love playing in the snow and skating on ice. But to those caught in the extremes, the iced roads and the drifting white have brought danger and hardship.*

*I recall a novel by Gillian Slovo: the "Ice Road" is a vast ranging story about love and war. It begins and ends in the snow and ice. On the way we enter the lives of those who endured the siege of Leningrad in almost unbearable conditions. We see that their liberation comes eventually through the ice road that brings supplies past the German lines. The climate and the landscape are intimately connected to the human relationships in a kind of symbiosis. The novel, as in life itself, contains suffering and salvation.*

*Lest we should complain about the problems of our climate, of the ice and snow; as if to give a salutary lesson of what could be, the news is just reaching us of a catastrophic earthquake in Haiti. It may be that up to 150,000 people have been killed and perhaps 3 million made homeless or injured. In one movement of the earth's plates, and through the intense heat of the earth's crust, total devastation has been wrought: it is like a scene from hell. But it is not the work of the devil.*

*The response of the American evangelist Pat Robinson, (saying that Haiti has made a pact with the devil and therefore reaps the rewards), is frankly beyond contempt. He is a disgrace to the Christian faith. There is no simple relationship between perceived sin and natural disaster. Nor is this a time for Christians to agonise about how a loving God can allow this to happen. It is time to act and give aid. It is a time to pray for the survivors; to demonstrate that our God is a God of love. Our churches will be sending immediate aid, and during Lent we shall collect more money from our Lent lunches to help with the long term rebuilding and hopefully better protection against future tremors.*

*This natural disaster will take its place alongside many others in history: From it we hope that eventually the people of Haiti will be restored to a better life. It is sad that it has taken such a tragedy to awaken the nations to Haiti's need.*

*Gradually I hope that Christians will develop a better understanding of the God who is present in creatures and creation; and of the symbiosis of humans and their landscape. But for now we pray that human endeavour and God's spirit will be united in the saving of lives.*

Chris Boulton

## Parish Plan Group Success Story

Carmela Piccolo

*I am very pleased to report another Little Hadham Parish Plan Group success story.*

*Conor Saggars, a very promising Little Hadham teenage footballer, has enjoyed a wonderful day's football at the David Beckham Football Academy.*

*Conor, who was voted 'man of the match' (together with Jack & Pierce), showed great skill and promise on the day of the football tournament last summer and his gentlemanly behaviour on the pitch was remarkable. The Saggars family must be very proud. Here's to you Conor! Congratulations and keep up the good work. Report on page 14.*

2010



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**ASH WEDNESDAY - 17th FEBRUARY**

Service of Holy Communion  
at St Mary's Braughing  
at 7.30pm

An opportunity to mark the start of Lent.

During the service there will also be the opportunity to receive the imposition of ashes – that is, the marking of the forehead with the sign of the cross in ash as a sign of repentance and turning to God for help.

Lent begins on the 17th of February with Ash Wednesday and ends with Holy Week and Easter (March 29th to April 4th). During this period our new Bishop, Alan Smith, has issued a challenge to the parishes “Dare to make a difference” in our lives, in the community and in the world, by living the words of Jesus.

The idea is to read a verse from Luke’s Gospel each day, to think and pray about it, and resolve to do something to act upon it.

It is accessed on [www.challenge2010.org](http://www.challenge2010.org). The verses can be by email or text, Twitter or RSS; and will be downloaded by me from the website for those who do not have access to the technology.

At the same time, we will be holding a series of home groups to discuss the challenge, and to look deeper into St Luke’s Gospel through bible study; “Words of challenge. Words of Life”.

Lent is very early this year and we are still finalising times and venues across the Team. We will put the final details on the village websites; but these are the provisional arrangements:

There will be several evening meetings across the Team.

**Monday evenings**, hosted by the regular home group; location begins at Providence House Little Hadham (Commence Monday 22nd Feb 8pm.) (Monday 1st March at Laureldene, Much Hadham). (Monday March 8th at Crown House Much Hadham)

Also at the Rectory, Braughing. Hosted and led by Jeanette Gosney.

Groups will be on **Monday evenings** at the **Rectory** from **7.30-9.00pm** on the following days: February 22nd, March 1st, March 8th, March 15th, March 22nd and March 29th.

**Tuesday Lunchtime** at 12.45pm, hosted by Diana Dillon at the Red House; with soup and roll to start. (Commence 23rd Feb)

And also on **Wednesday mornings** from **10.00-11.30am** in various people’s homes:

24th February – The Ewen’s, Wash Farm (01279 777350)

3rd March – The Buxton’s, Pheasant Hall, Furneux (01279 771377)

10th March – The Dailly’s, The Stables, Hay Street (01920 838692)

17th March –The Reed’s, Green End House Braughing (01920 821401)

24th March – The Davidson’s, Thatch End, Furneux (01279 777330)

## Ham-Fisted

by Damian O'Malley

*Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall has a lot to answer for. I was frying some cheap bacon and there it was, swimming around in water. Unbidden the thought came into my head, make my own bacon. A qualified success I'd say, obviously the lack of a bacon slicer didn't help, but Christmas would take care of that. Christmas, mm, wouldn't it be nice to make my own Christmas ham as well? It was only October, plenty of time.*

*Burtens is probably the best butchers in Bishop's Stortford, well in fact it's the only butchers in the centre of town now that Rob's Chops has been replaced by a firework shop. It's a puzzle to me that a region apparently as well off as East Hertfordshire has so few fine food stores or decent restaurants. David Beckham lives here, where does he go to eat? But Burtens is one of Rick Stein's food heroes, something to do with the fact that it has a display of pigs' heads in its window I imagine. Meat.*

*They get a pork delivery from Great Garnetts farm in Dunmow every Wednesday and if you get in quick you can buy a whole leg before they chop it in half, bone it and roll it around greasy stuffing. A leg of pork is heavy and unwieldy, but cheap. The equivalent amount of lamb would set you back fifty or sixty quid, and don't talk to me about the price of beef. And it's great stuff, the pigs are reared with love by the Smith family, and they get plenty of fresh air and sunshine (well that's what it says in the brochure, maybe Dunmow is further away than I thought) and the kids look very healthy on it from the photographs.*

*HFW recommends the Wiltshire cure for Christmas ham, three litres of fine English ale and one and half kilos of salt mixed with molasses, juniper berries and peppercorn. I substitute a*  
*continued on next page*

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## Ham-Fisted, continued

tin of treacle for the molasses, not found, and Budweiser left over from my daughter's 18th birthday for the ale. The foul smelling mixture comes barely halfway up the pork. I still have plenty of Budweiser and another tin of treacle, but no more salt, what to do? Another trip into town beckons until I remember that the salt tablets we use in our water softener are stamped "food quality", and they come in 25 Kilo bags.

An hour later I'm still stirring, the tablets won't dissolve completely. I figure they will over the 21 days the pork will be in the mixture, so in it goes. It's not quite covered, but there are plenty of large flint rocks lying around, so I wash some and place a couple either side of the hock to raise the liquid level and balance a couple more on a chopping board on top of the leg. Success as at last it subsides into the brown murk.

HFW is concerned about the temperature of the mixture. He says it should be kept below 4°C; otherwise bacteria can spoil the meat. They'd have to be pretty hardy bacteria to survive the Budweiser/salt solution, but in go a couple of freezer packs as well just in case.

Once the leg of pork has been cured the next stage is to smoke it for 24 hours. While the pork is curing I worry fitfully about how I'm going to do this. HFW suggests hanging it in a tree over a fire. I reject this solution, no suitable trees, and in any case the winds blow from the Urals straight across the East of England. Last Christmas I woke up to find it had blown out the Aga, again, but that's another story.

A couple of years ago I built a pizza oven in the garden. My wife had thought it would be

*continued on page 8*

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## Nature Notes: December/January

Jonathan Forgham

A period of cold temperatures and more than the usual snow fall during the period 18th December – 17th January meant that birds were harder to find, but mammals were easier to track with their footprints clearly visible in the snow.

A new bird for my parish records was found on Christmas Eve at the lakes behind Hadham



Hall. This was a little grebe, presumably forced from its regular winter quarters by icy water. A photo, shown here, of the 98th bird for the parish. During the month I received several messages regarding birds so many thanks to Sue, Kirsty and Sandra for reports of snipe, redwings and greater spotted woodpecker. All super birds to find in or close to your garden. As the winter bit hard, winter thrushes, especially redwings, descended on gardens where berries were still on the vegetation. Fieldfares were found eating the holly berries

in Chapel Lane as well as south of The Ford. These birds now appear to have carried on their migration south west, but should be seen again in March/April as they make their way back to their breeding grounds in Scandinavia. Other notable sightings this period were: kingfisher (24th), nuthatch (27th), coal tit (28th), song thrush (5th), bullfinch (5th and 7th) as well as little owl and buzzard seen on the pre-Christmas walk to Much Hadham on the 20th. In all, eight of us made the snowy walk to The Bull and back seeing 28 species of bird.

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## Nature Notes continued

A regular bird in a strange setting was seen for three consecutive days. This was a moorhen, driven by hunger to search for food in my garden. A photo shown here.



A new badger sett was discovered courtesy of a trail in the snow. Tracks of muntjac, rabbit, hare, fox and squirrel were also observed. As January moves into February it will be time for the woodpeckers to begin their territorial drumming and for the first birds to start breeding. Tawny owls continue to be rather vocal and will soon be having their first brood. As I write we are having the first warmer day and



clear sky which should put the birds back on track for setting up spring territories. I shall be out and about checking on certain bird populations that are hugely susceptible to cold snaps, particularly goldcrest, wren, long tailed tit and kingfisher. I imagine that their numbers will have dropped markedly. An hour long garden watch on the 7th produced a list of 17 species on or near the feeders, with this song thrush being an unusual garden bird for Chapel Lane. As always, more photos and details can be found at [littlehadhambirding.blogspot.com](http://littlehadhambirding.blogspot.com) and any unusual sightings please report to [jforgham@theprimaryworks.com](mailto:jforgham@theprimaryworks.com). Many thanks for this.

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## **Ham-Fisted,** continued from page 5

*nice to incorporate an outdoor fireplace into the structure, so we could sit out in the autumn nights drinking mulled wine with a roaring log fire. Of course we never had, but this offered a possible solution. Could I balance something over the chimney of the fireplace, which is about two and a half metres high?*

*Voila, we have one of those bin things in which you burn garden rubbish. It even has holes in the bottom, perfect! Of course it wasn't necessarily food quality, but I thought if I filled the bin with hay and nestled the ham inside it would be protected from the sides of the bin, and maybe even Heston Blumenthal would approve.*

*All was going well, I'd lit the fire on the third attempt, man-handled the bin onto the chimney and was sitting with my twin boys, Mac and Finn, toasting crumpets and roasting marshmallows, feeling aglow with fine fatherhood. I glanced up and a huge plume of smoke was pouring out of the bin. Look at that, I said proudly, I'm off to get a camera to record my triumph. As soon as my back was turned one of the boys said, Dad, in a tone that conveyed both laughter and panic. Flames were now shooting out of the bin. The hose wouldn't reach, so up the ladder I went, no gloves, down the ladder, back up with visions of premature crackling.*

*The ham was fine, though the old muslin curtain it was wrapped in had seen better days. Hay clearly wasn't up to the task, but I didn't want the ham resting on the bottom of the bin in case it started to cook. I jammed two planks of wood into the bin and rested the ham in the V that they formed. We banked up the fire and I went to have a shower, my wife said I smelled like*

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## Garden Club News

By the time you read this we would have had our first lunchtime meeting and the ploughman's lunch is proving popular. Our next meeting on Thursday 18th February is again at lunchtime starting at 1.00. The speaker is from the Chiro Health practice in Stansted and they are going to talk about How to Avoid Injury in the Garden, something I am sure we could all benefit from as we all overdo it from time to time. We will be offering a ploughman's lunch from 12.00 but to assist with the catering please could you let me know if you wish to attend. Karin Green 01279 771532

### **Gardening Tips for February** (If the snow has gone)

#### **Veg Plot**

Warm soil by covering with cloches, clear polythene or fleece for early sowings in March

Keep digging and manuring

Prune autumn-fruiting raspberries

Plant bare-rooted fruit trees, bushes and soft fruits

Order seeds from catalogues ready for sowing.

Harvest the last of the parsnips and sprouts.

#### **Flower Beds**

Spread a thick layer of mulch around plants to

help suppress weeds

Plant snowdrops 'in the green' (still with their leaves but finished flowering) and divide congested clumps of bulbs

Prune roses, summer-flowering clematis, and dogwoods

Cut back deciduous grasses

Plant bare-rooted trees and shrubs; it is also a good time to move shrubs

And don't forget our feathered friends and continue to put out food and water.

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## Musings from Cradle End

*Can you remember all of the names of the Seven Dwarfs – Bashful, Doc, Dopey, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy and Sneezzy? But are they all correct, or have I just put in a name to make up seven? The two I seem to readily remember these days are Grumpy and Happy. Each day there is lots to be Grumpy about and I strive to have Happy thoughts. Most of the Grumps come via to day's world, with its numerous changes – everything moves so fast. We get political statements that have apparently taken months, or years, to be published, and cost vast amounts of money, and yet the problems are so logical. One example – apparently children cannot write, often when in their late primary years, or even in secondary education. Has it not occurred to the powers that be that the cause could probably have developed from the constant use of the computer? Amazing though this machine is, by introducing it to children in their Early Years, they will not have the need to write themselves. I am not critical of schools with this comment, but the government ruling for the school curriculum. Surely, learning the 3 Rs, reading, writing and arithmetic, is still of paramount importance and children's minds are so sharp, they will pick up the intricacies of the computer network in a wink, once they have mastered the ancient art of writing by hand.*

*On a happy note, we have 5 bird feeding stations in our garden and take great pleasure in watching the antics of numerous species feeding from them. Also, I am on 'snowdrop watch', as my 2009 calendar informed me I saw the first one early in January last year. Now that the snow has disappeared I must take a close look around the hedgerows, in case a little white head has popped up!*

Ann Onymous

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## **BAA needs to smell the coffee**

*Figures for 2009 published today (11 January) by BAA make a mockery of the airport operator's claims that it urgently needs planning approval for a second runway at Stansted Airport.*

*The full year figures show that Stansted handled fewer than 20 million passengers last year, the lowest annual total for six years. There was an even sharper decline in the number of flights where last year's total of 156,242 made it the quietest year for the Essex airport since 2002.*

*Despite the ongoing decline in passengers and flights at Stansted, BAA bizarrely still insists on continuing with its current planning application for a second runway based on its belief that Stansted will grow to 68 million passengers per annum (mppa) and 495,000 flights by 2030 which, on both counts, is more than today's Heathrow.*

*Stansted currently has planning permission to expand to 35 mppa – allowing scope for expansion of 75% on the current level of passenger throughput – and the full capacity of the existing runway is considerably more than 35 mppa.*

*Commenting on the 2009 figures for Stansted, Stop Stansted Expansion Campaign Director Carol Barbone said: "BAA needs to wake up and smell the coffee and acknowledge the reasons why Stansted has experienced such a dramatic reversal during the difficult economic climate of the past two years, in stark contrast to Heathrow. It also needs to recognise once and for all that there's no commercial logic in proceeding with a second Stansted runway costing twice the recent sale price of Gatwick and without any guarantee of additional demand."*

*"Finally," she added, "BAA needs to take a reality check with a cold, hard look at the views of the Competition Commission and the way the political wind is now blowing. This would hopefully make BAA see sense. It cannot justify continuing to blight so many lives over a new runway which nobody wants or needs. Any socially and financially responsible company would have no hesitation in ditching the plans forthwith."*

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# What's on in February ...

in the Village Hall unless otherwise stated

**2 Tue 100 Years of Guiding Party** 5-6.30pm.

Last reminder, please come and join us. Bring along your Guiding memories to share. Refreshments and Bring and Buy table in aid of India. See you there. Brown Owl 654624

**2 Tue Parish Council meeting**, 8pm, All are welcome to come and watch the fun.

**4, 18 Thur Mobile Library** times on right >

**9 Tue LH & A Social Club**, at the Nag's Head, Little Hadham, to celebrate our fifth anniversary (only those who have booked and paid please).

**14 Sun Antiques Fair**, 9.30 - 4pm. Article on page 15.

**18 Thur "Way Inn" coffee morning**. Join us for a cuppa and make new friends. Rear of the Village Hall, 10-12noon.

**18 Thur LH & A Garden Club**, 1pm. Our speaker is from the Chiro Health practice in Stansted and is going to talk about How to Avoid Injury in the Garden. We will be offering a ploughman's lunch from 12.00 but please could you let me know if you wish to attend. Karin Green 771532

**21 Sun 100 Mile Endurance Swim** Following the success of our Sunflower swim in 2009, 2010 will see a Star themed swim. To be held at Haileybury College Pool once again the Star theme means you can come as the twinkling variety or the celebrity variety! Swim as a team or an individual. This is a fantastic way for all the family to have a go and enjoy a great event whilst raising much needed funds for Isabel Hospice. Thanks to Churchills Estate Agents and Valuers for sponsoring this event once again. Call Maria Alexander on 01707 382500 for details.

**27 Sat Farmers' Market**, 8.30-11.30 last Saturday of the month.

**4th and 18th February**

**Mobile Library**

**Nag's Head from 13.45 - 14.05**

**The Smithy from 14.10 - 14.30**

**Bury Green from 14.45 - 15.05**

A fortnightly service.

**The 'Way Inn'**

**Come and meet friends and neighbours over**

**a cup of tea or coffee. Rear of village hall, third thursday of the month, 10 - 12noon**

**Coming soon**

6 March **Jumble Sale**, 2.30, Thundridge.

6 March **music@stansted**, see next page.

13 March **Quiz Night LH Cricket Club**.

20 March **Braughing Mudic Society** see p 23

27 March **Quiz Night** in aid of Isabel Hospice to be held at Memorial Hall, Welham Green AL9 7PG. More information to follow.

18, 19, 20 March The Young Ones present **'The Little Mermaid'** Tickets and information from 01279 771244

**Little Hadham Cricket Club**

**Quiz Evening**

**Saturday 13th March at 8.00pm**

in Little Hadham Village Hall

Teams of up to 8

Tickets £6.00 inc. food

Licensed Bar

Contact Alan South 01279 651603 or

David Wheatley 07528 129773

for more details or tickets

## Snowdrops at Easton Lodge

The much-loved Gardens of Easton Lodge will be opening for four, possibly five Sunday afternoons from mid-February to mid-March to show off the magnificent snowdrop carpets which are always a delight.

The annual 'Snowdrops' event has become a must-see feature of the garden lovers' calendar as the many thousand blooms herald the advent of spring. And after such a snowy January they'll be more welcome than ever.

A volunteer team will be manning the gates and serving home made soups, hot chocolate and other drinks in the courtyard of Warwick House to sustain visitors who venture out to see the first signs of the changing season. Opening hours will be 12 noon to dusk (around 4pm) and entrance costs just £2.50 for adults, with admission for children free.

Exact opening dates will be confirmed in early February since these depend so much on the bulbs themselves and an update can be obtained by phoning the recorded information service on 01371 876979, from [www.eastonlodge.co.uk](http://www.eastonlodge.co.uk) or by emailing [enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk).

The Gardens of Easton Lodge is located just outside Great Dunmow in Little Easton, off the B184 (Great Dunmow to Saffron Walden road). Follow the brown heritage signs.

## music@stansted

The fourth and final concert of our 2009/10 season features The Coull String Quartet and takes place on Saturday, 6th March at 7.30pm in St John's Stansted.

The quartet will be making a very welcome return visit to Stansted, their having already delighted us with their playing here in March 2006. They have been 'Quartet-in-Residence' at the University of Warwick since 1977 and have performed and broadcast extensively throughout this country, the USA and Western Europe. They have toured India, the Middle and Far East, South America and Australia. They toured China only last October and at one concert, where they had been asked to include a movement of the Yellow River Concerto, the audience erupted into spontaneous applause as they began to play!

The programme they are proposing for us on 6th March will be:-

Haydn Quartet in Eb Op 33 No 2 'The Joke', Shostakovich Quartet in D Op 83 No 4, Mendelssohn Quartet in E minor Op 44 No 2.

Tickets - Adults £12, Children £1 - are available from: Stansted Carpets, Chapel Hill, Stansted, Nockolds Solicitors, Market Square, Bishop's Stortford and Sonia Levy, 31 Chapel Hill, Stansted (01279 815282) or at the door on the night.

If you would like more information. please visit our web site at [www.musicatstansted.com](http://www.musicatstansted.com)

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## *My day at the David Beckham Academy* by Conor Saggors

*Last year I entered the Little Hadham 5-a-side tournament and I was chosen as one of the star players, the prize was to spend a day at the Davis Beckham Academy.*



*On Saturday 2nd January 2010, I left home at 6:45am with my parents to make the journey to the Academy. Today was going to be extra special because sadly after 5 years the Academy was closing, as reported in the papers the lease had expired. We were informed on the day that the LA Galaxy who David now plays for owns the O2 Arena and the Academy site, but it was not as simple as David writing a cheque to keep the Academy open, it is with much sadness and regret it I to be closed. The director and 4 coaches will remain working for the Academy, but the rest of the staff were given there redundancy notices on the day, so it was a very emotional day for all concerned.*

*When I saw the David Bekham Academy I just though WOW! There were lots of other children, 200 in fact, the biggest turnout for a day course. Shortly after arriving we were called into the changing rooms to be registered and be given the Academy t-shirt, my parents bought me a pair of Academy socks, shorts and a sweatshirt, so I had the full kit to wear. My parents went to the canteen for a meeting. All children were split into age groups, I am in year 10, and after a brief chat we were finally let onto the astro turf pitches, BRILLIANT! We started with a 'warm up drill'; followed by a 5-a-side game, after quick refreshment we carried on with training, testing out football skills. We stopped for lunch where we had a choice of healthy foods. On our return we were split into 4 teams, France, Germany, Spain & Brazil. We played each of the countries twice; during these games I scored 3 goals. Points were awarded and the country with the most points at the end was Spain, Brazil was forth, my team.*

*Before the presentations, my coach told me I could go onto achieve good things in my football career with hard work and dedication. David Bekham's parents were there to give out the medals. Also present wad the manager of the Estonia Ladies National football team, he used to be the Assistant Director of the Academy and had come back to the last day. I had the best time and was more excited about the day at the Academy than I was about Christmas. So, I would like to thank Little Hadham Parish Council for the fantastic experience. It was AWESOME!*

## Little Hadham Antiques Fair

Have you visited this small but interesting fair offering affordable antiques four times a year at Little Hadham Village Hall? If not, why not take advantage of the "free entry" ticket advertised in this month's Parish news?

The fair has been running for over 15 years and attracts a faithful local clientele as well as passing traffic and customers. As the fair is advertised nationally and in local Antiques Centres and other Antique Fairs you may even find yourself rubbing shoulders with visitors from the continent! We offer affordable antiques which include china, glass, jewellery, pictures, books, collectables, wooden boxes and treen, and decorative items for the home. Our customers often find something a little bit different for a present or Christening or Anniversary gift and if you are looking for something specific we will do our best to source it for you.

Whilst browsing you can take time out for a cup of tea or coffee and a slice of home-made cake, or a light lunch prepared in the kitchen.

The stallholders come from Essex, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and London and we try and maintain a high standard – we are definitely **not** a car boot function, though if you look closely you may be lucky and find a real bargain!

We have been made to feel very welcome by members of Little Hadham Village Hall committee and the wonderful caretakers Eileen and Gill so although none of us lives locally we do feel part of your community. We look forward to seeing you during 2010. The dates of the fairs are 14th February, 9th May, 12th September and 14th November. If you would like further information please telephone the organiser, Lis Glen, on 01279 424067.

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*Shopping in England's high streets is not a whole lot of fun. What with crowds, pushy, unhelpful assistants – or worse, no assistants – and fashion which appeals to the teens and twenties rather than the 'slightly more mature' among us, I find I can go without. But, whisper it quietly, I am now addicted to the internet and TV shopping channels. Those innocuous emails from firms beckon me to look at what's on offer.... and once you have given them permission to use your credit card regularly, it is just so easy to click on the mouse and order the goodies. Even worse, the shopping channels (especially QVC) are like a drug. I sit with the phone in one hand and the remote in the other, a glazed look in my eyes ..... and find myself wanting, needing, desperate for some obscure make up, pretty top, pair of shoes, floor cleaner or kitchen gadget that I just can't do without!*

*The fact that I've gone through three quarters of my life without any of these things seems irrelevant. I MUST have them now! Quick, the item is going fast, phone the number—curses, it is sold out. Just one thing, please don't mention this to the husband – he hasn't yet cottoned on to the fact that the parcels which now arrive quite regularly are all my illicit purchases!*

*As I write this (somewhat earlier than usual), the snow is still falling and our farmyard is like a skating rink. And if I have to fill up one more bucket of water for the thirsty alpacas, or unfreeze and fill up another water container for the assorted chickens or, even worse, unfreeze the water tap daily on our small caravan park where three stalwart families survived Christmas and the New Year, then I'll explode! Tomorrow, however, I'm off to warmer climes. That is, if we can make Heathrow airport and ever get through security on time. And you can keep the snow and ice, the frozen pipes, the chilblains, red noses, hats, scarves and wellies for two weeks. See you then!*

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## **Ham-Fisted,** continued from page 8

*I had been smoked.*

*24 hours is a long time to keep a fire going, but it was still smouldering, just, when I came down in the morning. More twigs and newspaper got it going again and I lobbed on another couple of logs from an old chestnut tree. A few hours later came the moment of truth. I let the fire die down and then, carefully this time as I didn't want to put my back out, retrieved the bin and its precious contents. The ham had looked like a steamroller had gone over it when I'd de-brined it, but now it was plump and a beautiful deep chestnut colour, appropriate really. We all stared at it until my wife, the worrier, broke the reverie, are you sure it's cooked? No, I said, we still have to cook it, but it's definitely preserved!*

*Nearer to Christmas I started to confront the issue of how I was going to cook the ham. I don't have any pans big enough, so boiling it was out of the question, into a bin it went again, one filled this time with pure water. On Christmas Eve I pulled it out of the water, cut off the skin, scored the fat and stuck in the cloves and then glazed it with a honey and cumin mix, finally I jammed it into the simmering oven of the Aga for a few hours.*

*Finally we had it, a beautiful, honey-roasted, succulent, juicy pink, gorgeous smelling Christmas ham, it had a complex taste, sweet and smoky, the least I deserved after all that effort, and a melting texture. The kids and the grandparents wolfed it down before returning to the Xbox and the comfy armchairs respectively. I sat contentedly among the debris, "To be honest it's a lot of work for a ham", said my wife. I smiled beatifically, nothing could dent my sense of well being, of course I hadn't told her yet that next year I was thinking about raising a couple of pigs.*

## **Stansted Airport Police Aviation Security Team**

*Essex Police (Stansted Airport Division) would like to introduce their new Aviation Security Team. Our purpose is to raise awareness in communities surrounding the Airport about terrorism matters and the potential links to Aviation.*

*We wish to encourage local people to work with us to achieve our aims. If you live or work around the airport and surrounding areas then you could be an invaluable source of information. You may see members of our team patrolling in your area and we may call on you to discuss our objectives. We look forward to working with local communities to defeat terrorism and make travel safer for everyone.*

*We also hope to enhance the work of your existing Neighbourhood Policing Team and will be working with them to address local crime and anti-social behaviour issues. If you see anything unusual or otherwise suspicious, or simply want to talk to a member of our team, then please call on the numbers listed below:*

*Stansted Airport Police Station - 01 279 680298*

*Essex Police non-emergency number - 0300 333 4444*

*In case of emergency call - 999*

## Little Hadham Antiques Fair

Have you visited this small but interesting fair offering affordable antiques four times a year at Little Hadham Village Hall? If not, why not take advantage of the "free entry" ticket advertised on page 5 in this month's Parish News?

The fair has been running for over 15 years and attracts a faithful local clientele as well as passing traffic and customers. As the fair is advertised nationally and in local Antiques Centres and other Antique Fairs you may even find yourself rubbing shoulders with visitors from the continent! We offer affordable antiques which include china, glass, jewellery, pictures, books, collectables, wooden boxes and treen, and decorative items for the home. Our customers often find something a little bit different for a present or Christening or Anniversary gift and if you are looking for something specific we will do our best to source it for you.

Whilst browsing you can take time out for a cup of tea or coffee and a slice of home-made cake, or a light lunch prepared in the kitchen.

The stallholders come from Essex, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and London and we try and maintain a high standard – we are definitely **not** a car boot function, though if you look closely you may be lucky and find a real bargain!

We have been made to feel very welcome by members of Little Hadham Village Hall committee and the wonderful caretakers Eileen and Gill so although none of us lives locally we do feel part of your community. We look forward to seeing you during 2010. The dates of the fairs are 14th February, 9th May, 12th September and 14th November. If you would like further information please telephone the organiser, Lis Glen, on 01279 424067.

**ADVERTS REMOVED**

## **Little Hadham & Albury Social Club**

*Despite the bad weather, we had a lovely group for our January meeting, when Peter Ruffles spoke of our County town of Hertford. His family has a long history of living in the town and he has an amazing collection of photographs and anecdotes that tell a delightful story. Our February meeting will be held at the Nag's Head, Little Hadham, when we will celebrate our fifth anniversary (only those who have booked and paid please).*

## **Norman Smith 24.12.34 to 28.12.09**

*Norman, or Norm as most people knew him, had lived in the area most of his life. He was born in Cradle End but, after both his parents died early in his life, he and one of his sisters were brought up by grandparents. In later years he lived in Widford. He spent his National Service in the RAF and was Head Gardener at Moor Place for a number of years. I met Norm in 1985 when he was the Caretaker at St. Andrew's School, Much Hadham, a position he held for 26 years. Upon his retirement he returned to his first love of gardening, maintaining a number of local gardens. For many years he judged at local Gardening Clubs, one of these being the Little Hadham and Albury Gardening Club. Norm never took a personal fee, but donated any money given to him to charity. He was quite a character, a one-off and will be much missed by his family and friends.*

*Eric, Ennis, Elizabeth and Ruth*

**ADVERTS REMOVED**

## Kyokujitsu Kyokushin Karate Club

*Did you know that Little Hadham boasts the most successful Kyokushin Karate Club in Great Britain .....?*

*Last year we finished top of the medals table at both the English and the Great British Kyokushin Championships and we have amongst our ranks numerous individual champions in all age groups and all categories – kata, semi-contact and full-contact. Four of our junior students were also picked to represent England.*

*In addition to all these notable successes, the club also prides itself on being very friendly, very disciplined and very spirited. We train hard so that we can fight hard! – but in the process we enjoy ourselves and receive so many benefits, both physically and mentally – if your new year's resolution is to get fit, I can think of no better way to do it! We train at the Little Hadham Village Hall on Wednesdays from 5.00pm-6.00pm (juniors / family session) or come along to Albury School Hall where we are temporarily training on Mondays as our 'Barn Dojo' is a little on the chilly side at the moment (6.30-7.30 for juniors / 7.45-9.15pm for adults & teenagers). The 'Barn Dojo' continues to play host to our Saturday morning 'Fight Club' (10.00am-11.00am). For further information, please contact myself on 01279 771636 / 07946484498 / [catherinepetch@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:catherinepetch@yahoo.co.uk).*

*OSU!*

Senpai Catherine Petch

**Many thanks to the Social Club for their donation to the Parish News**

**ADVERTS REMOVED**

## Cricket Club News

The club is currently holding indoor nets at the HECC sport centre for cricket, which is at Tharbies Farm, Rook End, High Wych near Sawbridgeworth. CM21 0LL. The nets sessions are from 10am until 11am each Sunday until the end of March. The club is always looking to attract new members, so if you are interested in playing cricket and therefore help support your village side, then please contact us on the numbers below. Indoor nets are an ideal way to get started if you have never played before or wish to take up the sport again after a break from playing. We are a very friendly club and would welcome new members of all ages and abilities. We currently have a membership with an age range of 10 to 70, so you are never too young or old to play. Please contact either Martin Hallmark 01279 771033 or Neil Oxborrow 01279 506062 for more details.

After a number of years' break, the club is once again holding a quiz evening in aid of club funds on the 13th March in the village hall. Please see details on page 12:

## Socks!

Once again thank you all very much for a wonderful collection of socks. Over 250 pairs are on their way to Jimmy's Night Shelter in Cambridge, where they are always welcome. Please keep the socks coming during the year. Any time!

All good wishes for 2010,

Ann Clayton.

**ADVERTS REMOVED**

## Little Hadham Conservation Society

The committee members of the Little Hadham Conservation Society are closely monitoring the progress of Gypsy and Traveller legislation and requirements placed on District Councils by the East of England Regional Authority. During the past few months there has been no appreciable activity to report, however, any planned committee meetings of EHDC called to discuss items concerning 'pitch allocation' or any other proposals relating to Travellers will be notified to LHCS and, if necessary, a member will attend to ensure our best interests are served. Enquiries should be addressed to Tony Skidmore (771 688) or Don Gibson (771 325)

## Words of wisdom

Looking through my late mother's books I found a scrap of paper. It is, I suppose, a prayer, written in her own handwriting. I don't know when she wrote this but the sentiments are timeless.

Give us, Lord a bit o' sun  
A bit o' work and a bit o' fun.  
Give us in all the struggle and sputter  
Our daily bread and a bit o' butter.  
Give us health, our keep to make  
And a bit to spare for others' sake.  
Give us too, a bit of song  
And a tale and book to help us along.  
Give us Lord a chance to be  
Our goodly best, brave, wise and free  
Our goodly best for ourselves and others  
'til all men learn to live as brothers.

I should also like to share an e-mail I received recently:

May you always have . . .  
Love to share  
Health to spare  
And friends that care

Many thanks to Barbara Taylor for this contribution.

**Congratulations** to Nancy and Stewart at Ford Barn with the arrival of Samuel Charles. A beautiful baby with a shock of dark hair. All our love and best wishes for you all.

Friends and neighbours of Nancy and Stewart

## ARC – OK for some

With reference to Rural Ramblings last month (Alternate Refuse Collections) I would like to say that I for one am delighted with the new arrangements. I couldn't wait for them to start, for I was always irritated by being unable to recycle brown envelopes, plastics and cardboard. In fact, our wheelie-bins seem to go out almost empty since the change-over, so the system is certainly working well for us. (Collections did go a bit pear-shaped over Christmas, made worse for us by the fact that our black bin had been missed two weeks before!) But there will be no need to leave food in the brown bin for two weeks in the hot weather; if you read your leaflet it says you may use the black bin for food if you must – but Margaret, why don't you feed your scraps to the chickens?

Frances Gynn

## AUDIO CD

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### The Choir

AND CONGREGATION

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ALL PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS  
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**Saturday 20th March - 7:30 pm**

**St Mary's Church, Braughing**

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[www.braughingmusicsociety.co.uk](http://www.braughingmusicsociety.co.uk)

## Minestrone Soup Serves 6

Brenda Kain

*A real winner that is good when you are dieting. As with many soups it improves the second day!*

2 tbsp olive oil      1 onion diced      1 clove garlic, roughly chopped  
2 carrots, peeled and diced      2 sticks celery, diced  
2 medium courgettes, diced (optional, only use when they are not too expensive!)  
400g can chopped tomatoes  
1 large sprig basil, roughly chopped  
Salt and pepper  
410g can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed  
Half spring pointed cabbage, chopped (or any cabbage you have)  
Grated parmesan to serve

*The best way to make this soup is to cook the ingredients as you go. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium-low heat. Add the onion and garlic and gently fry while you peel and dice the carrots. Stir in and continue with the celery, followed by the courgettes if using. Cook for 2 mins then stir in the tomatoes. Fill the tomato can with water, twice, and mix into the vegetables along with the chopped basil. Season and simmer the soup gently for 30 mins. Mix in the drained cannellini beans and the chopped cabbage and simmer gently for a further 30 minutes. The longer the soup cooks, the better it tastes. Serve with the parmesan cheese.*

## February diary for Little Hadham and Albury

(part of the Ash and Quin Valleys' team incorporating Much Hadham, Braughing, Furneux and Stocking Pelham.)

**3** Wednesday

8.00pm Deanery Synod at Standon

**7** Sunday **2nd before Lent**

9.30am Sung Matins at St Cecilia's, Little Hadham

**10** Wednesday

8.00pm PCC Meeting at St Cecilia's, Little Hadham

**14** Sunday **1st before Lent**

9.30am Shared Communion at St Cecilia's, Little Hadham

5.00pm Taizé service at St Andrew's, Much Hadham

**17** Wednesday **Ash Wednesday**

10.30am Holy Communion at St Andrew's, Much Hadham

7.30pm Holy Communion at St Mary's, Braughing

**20** Saturday

12.45pm Lent lunch at the Red House, High St, Much Hadham

**21** Sunday **Lent 1**

8.00am Holy Communion at St Cecilia's, Little Hadham

9.30am Village Hall Service

6.00pm Evensong at St Mary's, Albury

**28** Sunday **Lent 2**

11.15am Parish Communion and Sunday School at St Mary's, Albury

6.00pm Evensong at St Cecilia's, Little Hadham

There is a service of Holy Communion every Wednesday at 10.30am at St Andrew's

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**Young people's Confirmation Course begins on Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd February at 6.00pm. Led by Chris Boulton. Further details available.**

## Haiti Disaster

Following a suggestion from a lady parishioner St Cecilia's church has donated £100 to the Haiti Disaster Appeal. If any member of our community would like to add to this donation contact Don, Gibson 771325, Tony Skidmore 771688 or Frank Green 771532.

We will be arranging for further donations to be made from the Church during the Lent Courses.

Thank you for your help.

Don, Tony, and Frank  
St Cecilia's Church

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Editor: Jan Finn, Ash Cottage, The Ashe, Little Hadham, SG11 2DX (771113) e-mails to [htfp@clocktower.co.uk](mailto:htfp@clocktower.co.uk)

All articles for inclusion; sponsorship; and payment for advertising in the next issue **must** be received by the **18th** of the month. (cheques payable to **Little Hadham PCC**)

Little Hadham Parish News is distributed free by St Cecilia's church