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**THAXTED
COMMUNITY
MAGAZINE**

CHRISTMAS 2023

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**Thaxted Community Magazine
Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and United
Reformed Churches of Thaxted**

KINDNESS

by our guest contributor who wishes to be un-named.

As a newcomer to using a "pavement scooter", the correct name for a mobility buggy, and as an older member of the community I have become aware of so many kindnesses - a gift that many can give and which does not cost £s.

It may be only a moment of time and thoughtfulness - a smile or a few words as you pass by, the motorcyclists and motorists who stop for me and many others to cross the road in the middle of Town Street.

The cars that park on the pavements - but leave a gap between car and house for a scooter or a mother with a child in a buggy to get through and so avoid going on to the road.

The kind customer in Dorringtons who offered to get my filled roll to save me standing in the queue!

A kindness is good to give and so lovely to receive.

Thank you

"Thank You"

*To Kerry and all involved in serving our village for many years at the "Thaxted Butchers and Bakers"
We are happy to know that the original staff were offered employment by Dorringtons.*

RINGING OUT FOR CLIMATE

Thaxted Church bells will be “Ringing out for Climate” on Sunday December 3rd, from 3-4 pm to mark COP28 taking place this year in Dubai from November 30th to December 12th.

When you hear them ring, you are invited to join with friends and neighbours across Thaxted to pause and think about climate change, sustainability and the future for humankind.

Please make this an opportunity to decide on a practical step you could take to reduce your personal or household carbon footprint to mark COP28.

You may like to use the words of this prayer:

God of blessings, deepen our gratitude for all creation and awaken in us a renewed commitment to care for the earth and each other.

Inspire world leaders at COP28, with openness to listen and courage to act urgently and wisely so that our common home may be healed and restored and all people and generations to come may delight in it and thrive.

Amen.

Ringing the bells is also an invitation to everyone to come to Thaxted Church for the Advent Carol Service that afternoon at 4pm in preparation for the coming of Jesus at Christmas, bringing light in the darkness and hope to the world.

Thaxted Bridge Club

We are a small friendly club for people wishing to improve their game (at any level).

We meet at 1.30 pm on Mondays at Thaxted United Reformed Church in Bolford Street and deal and play random hands and then discuss what should have happened.

For more information, please contact Helen and Stuart Walker.

Email : brickhousecm6@btinternet.com or tel: 01279 850862

THAXTED LIBRARY NEWS

Janet Easterbrooke - Senior Customer Services Assistant

CHILDREN'S EVENTS

Some fantastic news to start -

Thaxted Primary School won the Uttlesford Summer Reading Challenge Cup this year! They had the highest percentage of children join the Essex Libraries Summer Reading Challenge, beating all the other schools in Uttlesford, a wonderful achievement! Well done to all the children who visited the library and did such fantastic reading over the summer holidays.

Just a reminder that our popular *Rhymetimes* take place every Friday, 9.30 - 10.00 pm and our monthly *Family Storytime* runs on the last Saturday of the month at 10.00 - 10.30 am. Come along and enjoy the stories and rhymes and make new friends! There will be a children's *Christmas Crafts* session on Saturday 16th December, times to be confirmed. Look out for details on our posters and on the Thaxted Library page of the Essex Libraries website.

ADULT'S EVENTS

Our warm hub coffee and chat sessions take place every third Saturday of the month from 10.30 am - 12.00 pm. Come in and warm up with a cuppa, chat and browse!

LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

Tuesday 2.00 pm - 5.30 pm

Friday 9.00 am - 1.00 pm

Friday 1.00 - 4.00 pm Information volunteer staff most weeks

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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Andy Frater - Chairman

As we enter the winter months in Thaxted, I'm delighted to be writing again in our Parish magazine. Winter has always been a unique and captivating season in our beloved Town, from the Christmas tree outside the Guildhall, brought to us by the Thaxted Christmas Tree Committee - thank you, to the crib service at the Parish Church, all part of what makes Thaxted special.

Toward the end of the year, many of our clubs and societies hold their Annual General Meetings (AGM) and I was very pleased to be invited recently to the Craftability AGM where I was very impressed with the work undertaken by the team and also, the collaborative attitude of the committee, working with the Windmill Trust to bring the history of the mill to life. I also attended a meeting of ECO Thaxted, bringing together ECO Church, the Parish Council and other interested parties to hear how Littlebury are developing a plan to reduce carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels with the challenges very old properties bring in doing so. I'm sure we'll be hearing more from ECO Thaxted along with what we can all do to make positive change happen.

In Council news, our refurbished Town signs have now been replaced following some excellent work by Bakers of Danbury. The Thaxted Society Chairman and I 'supervised' the installation, however, that did not stop the wrong sign going on the wrong post initially! We must try harder! Thanks to Tom Cannon and The Thaxted Society for their generous donations.



You may also have seen the water pump outside Wayletts has also had a makeover, returning to its traditional green colour and a recent 'Community Crocus Quest' led by Cllrs Alison Howells and Jenna Perkins, held at Mosscofts Meadow saw the planting of many spring

bulbs to compliment the ‘wilding’ of the area, which we look forward to seeing in bloom.



In planning news, the District Council Local Plan is now out for consultation under what is called ‘Regulation 18’ an important step toward finalising development guidance for the next 30 years. The Parish Council will continue to comment and give input to the plan but this is also your opportunity to make your view heard. The previous failed plans were criticised for lack of consultation so please do have a look at the draft and let UDC know what you think. Alongside the consultation, our Neighbourhood Plan refresh continues. We will soon be compiling a housing needs survey to help inform the update, do look out for the survey when launched - it’s your chance to tell us what kind of housing you feel we need in the area.

Looking forward, 6th June 2024 sees the 80th anniversary of the D Day landings in northern France. It will be our chance to remember the 210,000 allied casualties of Operation Overlord and the Parish Council hope to work with the Royal British Legion, ABF - The Soldiers Charity and others to mark the anniversary, culminating in the country wide lighting of a beacon at 9-45 pm. In keeping with our ECO Thaxted plans, the beacon will be gas powered and sited on the Rec so as many Parishioners as possible can attend the lighting.

Finally, on behalf of the Parish Council, I’d like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year, especially Mrs Joan Francis, long time supporter of the PC, who has been a little unwell lately.

Thank you for reading this far and warm regards.



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Thaxted - NEWS - Society

The Local Plan for Uttlesford is currently out to consultation. The deadline for responses is the 15th December 2023. The Local Plan is for the whole of Uttlesford for the next twenty years, with 5 yearly reviews. It covers: new houses, new services and amenities, design policy and requirements, health and wellbeing consideration, and environmental impacts with policy for climate change and the local environment.

Your Society will be robust in its examination of the plan as it affects Thaxted. Most importantly is the need for **legitimate infrastructure to support any housebuilding**. With our local bus service on the Essex County Council at risk list and those recent maddening diversions resulting in Thaxted being entirely cut off from one bus route, such services are essential for the lifeblood of a rural town like Thaxted. Every rural bus service withdrawn means more cars on the road and more climate damage!

Infrastructure of course means sewers and water, electricity, proper roads and pavements, but it also means services. Thaxted is lucky and unlucky at the same time. We have a Health Centre, a Primary school, shops, a market, a Post Office and a Library. But these services make Thaxted a 'key settlement' and that is unlucky when it comes to where to put the housing the government is demanding.

The Society has made the case for sensible infrastructure for Thaxted.

- *Some form of traffic control and mitigation to alleviate Thaxted's centre and ensure a safe and pleasant public realm*
- *Adequate flood and sewage disposal to avoid flooding in low lying Thaxted.*
- *Alternate energy policies covering listed homes and buildings*
- *Playing fields - there is a long waiting list at Thaxted Rangers, who must often use remote pitches.*
- *An agreed future for our Heritage assets, most particularly, the Guildhall.*

All these are among more detailed responses to each section of the Local Plan. If you have further ideas and opinions, you can make them known here: thaxtedsociety.com or on our FB page, or most importantly by responding to the consultation yourself here: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/new-local-plan.

Over the past months your Society has been at work quietly behind the scenes.

- *We organised and contributed to the costs of restoring our town signs.*
- *We attended the Societies Fair with our free 60th Anniversary cupcakes.*

- We published our *Introduction to the Society, What We Do and How*.
- We met with our MP enquiring about the next round of CLT funding*.
- We also cautioned against the government's roll back on green policy.
- The Committee met in September and considered the LP draft.
- We considered a vague letter response from the Minister (item 4* above)
- We agreed to republish our *Building Design Guide for 2023*.
- The Chair attended the AGM of the TCLT which the Society supports.

Thaxted is its VOLUNTEERS. What do we mean when we speak of those volunteers? Do we mean those who work unpaid for many local causes, who give their time and energy to charitable works and care? Sometimes these are folk picking up after a failure in government, where what should be done by our Local Authority is not done.

Thaxted's litter picks are a good example of this. But despite complaint and argument about the need to fill in, Thaxted folk do just that. They see a need and they pitch in. At the recent Societies Fair there were forty-two different organisations and the majority of these were local initiatives, with a few Thaxted branches of national organisations. But what these forty-two had in common was their workers, their volunteers.

As well as these there is another layer of volunteering, or just plain old-fashioned help and assistance. The shop owner who helps an elderly lady outside his shop to start her car. The residents who clear cobbles of weeds and accumulated dirt. The people who bend to pick up one stray piece of litter and put it in the litter bin. It is also those who respond to FB requests for help and do so without question, just because they were asked. It is the silent financial contributions to those in need; those who may not afford to rebuild a damaged wall, to prune an overgrown garden, to redecorate after water damage. Whilst these folk are not seen as volunteers, they fill a need, organised or not. Every time we respond in this way, we make our community stronger, better, kinder, and in the end the place we all love and call home.

And speaking of volunteers, much of a "Thaxted Christmas" is entirely down to the folk who make it happen. The Church Christmas Fair, the Thaxted Christmas Tree Committee, carols around it, Santa's visit to the tree courtesy of the Youth Club reindeer and Elves, Thaxted Morris' festive dancing out, and of course the historic crib and the Primary School Christmas carol service, and the festive Advent windows across town. While none but a Scrooge could fail to enjoy these Thaxted delights, they are all brought to you by volunteers. Cheers to them, and you, for caring for Thaxted.

Happy Christmas to one and all

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Founded 2021

It may have passed you by, Tuesday October 10th, but in the Council Chamber of the Thaxted Guildhall, at seven thirty, the Board of the Thaxted Community Land Trust met for their AGM. As well as the normal business there were extensive reports from Cllr Terry Frostick the outgoing Chair and from Lauren Barham the Administrator.

But what is a Community Land Trust and what does it do? Well, before those pesky details explaining what a CLT does, what happened that Tuesday evening was Thaxted CLT being able to celebrate the launch of their first scheme. This is to build homes on the Bardfield Road, on redundant allotments in partnership with England Rural housing association, experts in such schemes.

Which brings us to what it does. A Community Land Trust is an initiative for securing land and building partners, to provide housing for local occupation as low-cost housing. For many young families securing their own home is extremely difficult and expensive. In order to fill this need on a local basis, Community Land Trusts were developed. Their remit to develop locally, extends to community facilities and amenities such as parks and playing fields. Thaxted's CLT is the first and only CLT in Uttlesford and thus a rather special initiative.

It is entirely volunteer driven with just one paid Administrator and it is thanks to those that the CLT has endured since its inception in 2021. With the support of the Thaxted Parish Council, and CLT members, the CLT has signed a lease for the land and this is about to be signed over to English Rural. In the New Year we hope to have some designs to share with our members and those keen to contribute by becoming members or simply by offering their views and ideas. The success of this CLT is in our hands and at its core it is community driven, so, it is yours to make good the promise of community engagement with a bricks and mortar result! (NB *Other building materials may be used.*)

Four or five houses for local occupation may seem a small step, but using a slip of brownfield land, and a huge effort by the Administrator and the past Chair, that small step may well be a giant leap for Thaxted!

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2023

Thaxted Parish Church will be hosting a Christmas Tree Festival again this year over the weekend of **Saturday & Sunday 16 & 17 December** offering local businesses, clubs and societies an opportunity of decorating and exhibiting a tree in the Church. This will be the fourth time that we have held a Christmas Tree Festival in the Church and the photograph below gives a great

impression of the range of trees we have seen at past events.

The Festival is intended to raise much needed funds for the Church as well as giving visitors an early foretaste of Christmas and will be open to the public on **Saturday 9.30 am - 4.00 pm** and **Sunday 9.30 am - 11.00 am** and **12.30 am - 4.00 pm** (please note there will be the usual Sunday service between 11.00 am - 12.30 pm and visitors will be most welcome to join us). There will be no entry charge but donations in aid of Church funds will be invited.

We hope to serve light refreshments of coffee, tea and cakes subject to finding enough volunteers to help out.



If you would like further information or can offer help in any way, please email Perry Staker at perry@unicorn.ndonet.com or Trudie Tagert at trudietagert1@gmail.com



Simon and Hazel Latham will not be sending local Christmas Cards this year.

We will be making a contribution to Charity instead.

We take this opportunity to wish all our friends a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.





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THAXTED BROWNIES

It's been a busy and fun few months for the 1st Thaxted Brownies. A few highlights include:

A fantastic three days at Chigwell Row which is a residential activity centre set in 56 acres of countryside bordering Essex and London. 18 brownies, 2 guides and their leaders enjoyed the many activities on offer. The girls worked together to earn points for their teams with points given out for kindness, positive attitudes and even housekeeping chores. At the beach party on the final night one of our brownies Jessica won the talent show with her beautiful singing.

In September the brownies were delighted to take part in the annual Gardening & Craft show held at the URC. The girls visited the windmill to create colourful artwork inspired by the beautiful setting. They used a mixture of materials to create some fabulous artwork.

In October, the girls thoroughly enjoyed "Jailbreak" at the Jarmen centre in Newmarket, an 18 acre private woodland used by Girlguiding and scouting groups. This was an opportunity for the girls to work in teams to solve challenges, escape capture and enjoy the freedom to explore and have adventures. The girls wore camouflage, had face paints, built their jails out of bamboo and collected coins along the way.

Thaxted is lucky to have a proactive Brown Owl who takes time to organise many fabulous trips for the brownies giving them great opportunities and provide them with long lasting magical memories, including campfire cooking, spooky Halloween party and visits to Colchester Zoo, Kidzania at Westfield and JumpStreet/Clip and Climb.

Leanne Kell, Brown Owl said "I am always so impressed with the girls for embracing every opportunity they are given. They always show their adventurous streak and really get stuck in. Watching the girls climb the 12-meter outdoor wall or learn new skills in archery and campfire cooking is very rewarding. I'm always so proud of all the Brownies. They are a delight to take on trips and I look forward to many more adventures with them in the future."

To enrol your daughter into Rainbows, Brownies or Guides please visit www.girlguiding.org.uk

BAPTIST CHURCH NEWS

Peter Archibald

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The Men's Community Breakfast held on the first Saturday of each month continues to have a good attendance. For further details please contact Paul Tingey on 07494 757 114

HUMPHREY LODGE SERVICE.

As part of our community activities we continue holding a service at Humphrey Lodge every month on the 1st Monday of the month at 10.30 am.

COMMUNITY CHOIR

The Thaxted Ladies Community Choir meet fortnightly on Mondays at 7.15 pm in our Church Hall. We sing for companionship and pleasure, no experience is needed. If you enjoy singing come along and join us. For more details please ring Jill on 01371 830 104

COFFEE & COMPANY

If you have experienced the loss of a loved one and would like to chat and also have mutual support with people who understand, please come and join us for coffee/tea and cake. We meet on the last Saturday of every month in our Church hall between 10 and 11.30 am. For details visit www.thaxtedbaptistchurch.com : or ring Debbie on 01371831548

EXERCISE CLASSES

The exercise classes have now recommenced and are held in our Church hall every Thursday morning between 11 a.m. and twelve noon. All welcome

FRIDAY COFFEE MORNING

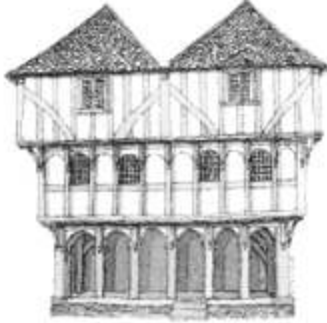
We have a Coffee Morning every Friday between 10 and 11.30 am in our Church Hall. Come and enjoy good beverages and company.

Thaxted Arts & Crafts Fair

This year's Arts and Crafts Fair was held on Saturday 21 October in Thaxted Parish Church and proved to be our best yet attracting a very large number of visitors from far and wide. The final total raised isn't yet known but will be in excess of £2,117 which will go towards Church funds.

*Next year's Fair will be held on **Saturday 19 October 2024** so make a note in your diary!*

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Pam's Place

Vicarage Mead, Thaxted, CM6 2RL



A message from a trustee of Pam's Place Charity .

It is now 20 months since Pam's Place first opened its doors. Starting slowly with the Friday "Drop-in Café", it has developed into a place where many different things happen. The charity brief is: "To provide a community centre for the benefit of the residents of Thaxted and surrounding areas, providing facilities and activities which aim to reduce social isolation and improve the health and well-being of the local community."

Over time we have developed in many ways. We have set up our Wednesday and Thursday lunches and other social occasions on Friday mornings and Mondays. We continue to look for better ways to provide a warm space with food and drinks within a sociable atmosphere. We have encouraged groups to use the place to offer recreational and social activities.

We also hire out the building to a wide range of activities, from small group meetings to big family parties. We work alongside Essex Police and Essex Fire & Rescue who

have dropped in regularly with lots of information on how to keep us safe. Recently we had a visit from Andrea, Essex Fire & Rescue who organised a slipper swap. Lots of people popped in and exchanged their old slippers for a brand-new pair free of charge - thanks Andrea! We have lots going on so stay up to date on our website, www.pamsplace.org.uk, Facebook page, or our notice board on the wall outside our building.

The Trustees are very grateful for the work our Managers Cassy and Cally do. We are also very thankful for our incredible volunteers who regularly give their time. Without their constant support we could not do what we do! We welcome our latest staff member, Lucy who has taken on the role of Assistant Cook. Thank you also to everyone that visits, every meal you buy, every donation you pop in the box enables us to go from strength to strength, building on what is our community centre, Pam's Place.

WEBSITE: WWW.PAMSPLACE.ORG.UK

WHAT IS ON WHEN

MONDAYS

3.30 - 6 pm - COMMUNITY CAFE

Everyone welcome! Pop in every Monday for tea and meet friends old and new. Pay what you can. We also accept vouchers, for more information on this contact

07973311550. Starting Monday 13th November come along and create homemade Christmas decorations - no charge!

TUESDAYS

10 - 11.30 am - BEREAVEMENT CAFÉ

Please come along to this weekly group for a coffee, chat and make new friends. This is a space where people can talk about the pain of loss and find courage and strength in knowing they are not alone.

2 - 4.30 pm - THREADS.

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7.30 - 8.30 pm - FIND PEACE WITH POLLY.

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WEDNESDAYS

12.30 - 2 pm - Lunch

Everyone welcome - two course meal with tea/coffee £10 per person. Bookings only, contact **07973 311550** to reserve your place.

7.30 - 9.30 pm - LECTURE SOCIETY - see notice board for more information.

SOME THURSDAYS

12.30 - 2 pm - Alzheimer/Dementia Lunch - Two course meal with tea/coffee, £10 per person. Bookings only, contact **07973311550**.

FRIDAYS

10 - 1 pm DROP-IN CAFE

Cakes and company.

2 - 4 pm - SEWING GROUP

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CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP £45/per person.

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CREATE A LEATHER-BOUND JOURNAL WITH GINGER KEOGH £45/pp

Saturday 9th December 1 - 4 pm. Contact Ginger on 07840320805

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FRIENDS OF THAXTED CHURCH - FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friends of Thaxted Church invite everyone who enjoys traditional carols to join in a joyful service to welcome the Christmas season on **Sunday 10th Dec at 6pm**. Mulled wine and mince pies served afterwards.

Saturday, 3rd Feb 2024 at 7.30 pm - Friends of Thaxted Church Quiz with quiz-master Ben Till.

Make up tables of 6-8 quizzers.

Venue - Thaxted Parish Church. Refreshments and bar. More details in the New Year.

THAXTED CAROL SERVICE

Join us to Celebrate Christmas with
Traditional Carols

Sunday
10th December
6.00pm

**Thaxted Parish
Church**

**All are
Welcome**

After
the service enjoy
seasonal
refreshments



Thaxted Surgery Participation Group

- ***RETURN OF THE CHRISTMAS RAFFLE***
- ***TICKETS ON SALE FROM 1ST DECEMBER***
- ***DRAW ON 20TH DECEMBER***
- ***PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE ILL TO BUY A TICKET***
- ***DONATION OF PRIZES TO THE SURGERY, PLEASE.***
- ***WE ARE RAISING MONEY FOR MUCH NEEDED EQUIPMENT FOR THE SURGERY THAT IS NOT COVERED BY NHS***
- ***GOOD LUCK***

***FRIENDS OF THAXTED CHURCH -
CLUBS AND SOCIETIES FAIR - OCTOBER, 2023***

Trina Mawer

The third Clubs and Societies' Fair organised by the Friends of Thaxted Church took place in early October. 40 different clubs signed up for a stall in Thaxted Parish church to inform and encourage residents to join in the wide variety of activities that take place week by week all over the village. Some go further afield to enjoy trips to shows in London organised by the Theatre Group, others play sports such as cricket, football, tennis or bowls. There are environmental, musical, country dancing, craft and wellness groups, to say nothing of the activities for local children.

On the day we were given a demonstration of karate kicks by some young Dragons from the very popular Karate Club, which offers classes for kids from 4 to late teens. Providing some musical intervals were the handbell ringers, a recently formed group, who now have quite a repertoire. The stalls themselves were colourfully and imaginatively decorated and the visitors clearly enjoyed the festive and friendly atmosphere - and the delicious homemade cakes!



Joshua and Jim Thorley

The Fair is a biannual event, so the next one will be in October, 2025. Meanwhile, we are updating our list of contacts for local clubs and societies and hope to have a copy in Thaxted Library before the end of November, which should enable anyone who is interested in pursuing an interest or hobby can see the broad range of activities available.

Many thanks to all the Thaxted volunteers who make this possible.

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A Step Closer to Saving Thaxted's Last Remaining Windmill



Thaxted Windmill Trust CIO has received a grant of £116,902 from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. With additional grant funding of £33,326 and advice from Historic England, this partnership support enables the Trust to progress the conservation of an important local landmark

THE LAST REMAINING THAXTED MILL

The Grade II* listed red brick tower Windmill was built in 1804 for Mr John Webb, a local businessman and farmer. In addition to owning both Borough and Park Farms and numerous other properties, Mr Webb was the owner of the town's brick and tile works. The Windmill was constructed from local red brick.

The largest and most advanced of the Thaxted Windmills, it was in operation for around a 100 years and is the only remaining Windmill in the area. The stories of the people who worked the Windmill will be brought to life as part of the project.

SAVING OVER 200 YEARS OF HISTORY

John Webb's Windmill was added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk register in 2019. The building is suffering from extensive internal damp caused by eroded brickwork and open joints, which is causing widespread mould on internal walls.

The interior of the building has been propped and the Windmill Trust is carrying out detailed investigations to inform a repair strategy to address these issues.

REVITALISING TRADITIONAL CRAFT SKILLS

The Trust aims to use the conservation work to offer work placements in traditional building and Millwrighting skills, and to promote careers

in these time-honoured but endangered crafts, which may be lost in the next generation. The project will also offer students work experience as conservators and will enable volunteers to try their hand at research, interpretation and delivering learning activities.

Community consultation will be an important part of the one-year development phase so that the project team can engage with people who live in Thaxted and the surrounding villages and reflect their interests and enthusiasms. Please visit the Trust's Facebook page and complete a short Survey regarding plans for the Windmill as your views are very important to us: www.facebook.com/johnwebbswindmillthaxted/

If you would like to know more about the project and discover opportunities to help during the development phase, please email johnwebbswindmill@gmail.com

Robyn Llewellyn, Director, England, Midlands & East at The National Lottery Heritage Fund said: "We're delighted to be supporting Thaxted Windmill Trust with the conservation of John Webb's Windmill. Thanks to National Lottery players, we're able to support important projects such as this one, ensuring that this rich heritage is safeguarded and the stories of the people who worked at the mill for over one hundred years will be passed on to future generations."

Trudi Hughes, Historic England Heritage at Risk Architect/Surveyor, said: "I am delighted that the Trustees of Thaxted Windmill Trust CIO have secured development stage funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund towards the repair and restoration of this iconic structure. This, together with the preliminary surveys which Historic England helped to fund, means that repair proposals can be taken forward to the next stage on a sound and robust technical footing. Millwrighting is an endangered craft skill. Trustees are liaising with us and with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings on how the windmill can be used as a vehicle for all to learn and for some to train in windmill repairs and maintenance."

Mark Rickards, Thaxted Windmill Trust CIO, said: "The Trustees of Thaxted Windmill Trust CIO are pleased to be working with both Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund on this very important stage of the Windmill's restoration. We all remain dedicated to the original objective of ensuring that this iconic landmark is truly 'Conserved for its Community'.

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| | | |
|-----------------|----------|---|
| Sunday 3rd Dec | 4.00 pm | Advent Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies |
| Sunday 10th Dec | 6.00 pm | Friends of Thaxted Church Carol Service |
| Christmas Eve | 8 am | Said Mass |
| | 11 am | Sung Mass |
| | 3.30 pm | Procession to the Crib |
| | 11.30 pm | Midnight Mass |
| Christmas Day | 10 am | Sung Mass |
| New Year's Eve | 10 am | Sung Mass |
| Sundays | 8 am | Low Mass |
| | 11 am | Sung Mass |
| Wednesdays | 10 am | Low Mass |

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Contact : Jim Ford Tel 07889758285

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| Sunday 17th December | 5 pm | Carol Service |
| Christmas Day | 9.30 am | Morning Service |
| Sundays | 10.30 am | Church Service |
| Thursday | 7.30 pm | Bible Study |
| Friday | 10 - 11.30 am | Coffee Morning |

Please see the Baptist News section for our community activities.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

For information contact : Patrick O'Brien 01371 830 480

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|--------------------------|
| Christmas Eve | Midnight Mass | 8 pm | in Thaxted Parish Church |
| Regular Thaxted Services | SATURDAYS | 5 pm | in Parish Church |

All other Services will be in Bardfield.

BAPTISMS.

20 August Margot Olive Wells, daughter of James Wells and Lily Wright

8 October LilyMay Belle, daughter of Alexander and Kate Dutton

MARRIAGES

26 August James Lacon and Emma-Jane Standeven

28 August Jack Crowe and Ellen Crawshaw

25 September James Peirson and Sheri Hirse

2 September Harry Kershaw and Meghan Gemmil

IN MEMORIAM

Doreen Gillespy, Maria Theresa Moore, Patricia McCook-Weir,
Robert Patrick Walbanke.

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH BOLDFORD STREET

For all events contact - Julie Barnard, 01371 830261

Sundays 9.30 am Service with Communion on the first Sunday of the month, with coffee following all services.

Sunday 18th Dec 3 pm Carol service on followed by refreshments.

Sunday 21st Jan 3 pm For the Week of Prayer for Christian unity there will be a service on followed by tea.

Second Saturday of each month. Our regular Coffee morning.

All are most welcome to all these events.

Second Wednesday of the month. We continue to hold Messy Church on the from 4 until 6 pm. Contact to register: Revd Mark Hayes:

markhayes@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 01799 524944 or 07706 701041
thaxtedmessychurch@outlook.com

May the sun bring you new energy by day.

May the moon softly restore you by night.

May the rain wash away your worries.

May the breeze blow new strength into your being.

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A VERY SPECIAL CRIB

Mike Collins & Mike Goatcher

In the 2022 Christmas edition were excerpts from Rev Jack Putterill's autobiography about Christmas in the Parish Church. Recently more details have come to light about the crib and in particular the figures and who created them. Consequently we felt there should be an update.

Fr Putterill wrote: "Then, as Christmas approached, we had to decorate the church with Christmas trees. These great trees were placed in tubs about the church; and the crib was erected. We had a very special crib at Thaxted. It had been designed by **Miriam Noel** and made by **Cedric Arnold** with a thatched Reed roof. It was constructed around half of the great screen at the East End of the north aisle."

"The figures of the crib were unique. **Father George Chambers** had befriended a travelling artist at his church in Carbrooke and in return for his hospitality, he had offered to make some figures."

"Father George arranged that this artist should model and make large figures for a new crib, and so Thaxted is now the proud possessor of these figures. They consist of the Blessed Virgin in a reclining position, "the Babe," Saint Joseph as a Carpenter with his bag of tools, two shepherds, one carrying a lamp and the other a tiny baby lamb, an ox head and the head of a donkey looking over the screen at the Babe, a goat, a hen and some birds."

Fr. George Chambers had a very close connection with Thaxted so it is likely

Miriam Noel was wife of Conrad Noel the vicar from 1910 - 1942.

Cedric Arnold was an organ builder who lived in Thaxted and did much for the Church and the town.

Father George Chambers was curate in Thaxted from 1910 until 1912. He was much influenced by Conrad Noel's teaching and his ideas of Christian Socialism. He kept in touch with his Thaxted friends and often returned to Thaxted. He became vicar of Carbrooke in Norfolk in 1927.

The "travelling artist" can now be identified as John Moray Smith 1889 - 1958, Artist, Sculptor, painter and designer.

that he asked John Moray Smith to make the Thaxted crib figures at the same time or just after he made the set for Carbrooke Church. Then a close scrutiny of the two tableaux show similar animals, Joseph's 1930 clothing and the carving style is the same.

Who was John Moray Smith?
He described himself as - "Artist, sculptor, painter and designer." An article, published in the Norwich Evening News in December 2018, tells us that it was first thought he was a Great War Italian prisoner-of-war. Later findings are that Moray-Smith was a Scot, born in 1889 in

Aberdeenshire, who moved to London where he married Catherine Muriel Mann; then they together moved to Norwich in the early 1930s. John Moray Smith was remembered as an eccentric character seen about in beret, red stockings and jodhpurs; that he bought bruised greens at Norwich Market for his rabbits and chickens kept at his ramshackle bungalow.

John Moray Smith was described as Norwich's most elusive and prolific artist. Several known works of art by Moray Smith are considered still missing - Are the figures in Thaxted's crib some of the missing works?



Thaxted's Joseph



Carbrooke's Joseph

THAXTED LECTURE SOCIETY

The Lecture society started life as The Thaxted branch of the WEA, but struck out on our own as an independent Society in 2017. Our aim is to provide a variety of interesting talks, usually one-offs, charging only enough to cover our costs.

Currently we charge £5 per session and meet most Wednesday evenings between October and April in Pam's Place, starting at 7.30 and usually finishing around 9 pm.

To give a flavour of what we offer, talks held during the last year include:

The Aberfan Disaster of 1966: Could it have been avoided; The History of the Thaxted Cutlers; RAF Wethersfield; The Secret Life of a wood; Talismans and Taboos at Sea; The Arts and Crafts Movement; Fens and Fenmen; Aspects of Russian History; Beekeeping; The History of Saffron; The life of Alec Hunter; Political scandals; Customs and traditions of the City of London; London's lost rivers and the Great Stink.

And coming next.....

29th November Musician and raconteur David Caulfield makes a welcome return to talk about Songs and Stories from the 60s

6th December Debden resident Trudie Tagert talks about her work with Children in Romania

17th January Local bookseller and author Janet Dyson talks about the Bardfield School of painters.

And later in the winter:

Japanese Gardens: What, Why and How

The History of Jewellery

Battlefield Essex (including the battle of the flags in Thaxted Church)

Women's Land Army in an Essex village and the roles of women in World War 2

John Ray - The father of Natural History

My Life in Prison

If you would like to be added to our mailing list and be kept up to date with upcoming events, please email Peter Simmons at simmons.peter@btinternet.com

THAXTED DRAGONS KARATE

The Dragons have had a busy 2023 and have enjoyed welcoming new students and their families to the club this year.

The year has included a successful summer school where all students grew in confidence, gained new skills and many students graded which meant they could proudly wear their new coloured belts.

They have competed in competitions in Malta, Docklands, Clacton, Uxbridge, Birmingham and Harlow. In all the squad have made it onto the podium but more importantly they have gained new skills, confidence, respect and enjoyed quality time with their teammates.



The club enjoyed a picnic on a sunny day at Thaxted Windmill where students and their families could relax, enjoy each other's company and have a few fun games and challenges.

In mid-November 2023, 12 Thaxted students will be travelling to Antibes in France to attend the WUKF European Karate Championships. This is one of the toughest karate competitions and something the squad have been training hard for it. The results will be in the next ABC&U magazine.

The club will celebrate all their hard work and achievements at the end of year Christmas party and awards ceremony.

Sensei Barry Healy, founder of Thaxted Dragons says "At Thaxted Dragons we make friends for life whilst building a life skill, inner strength and confidence. We do this by teaching dedication and discipline although our ethos is karate is best when fun!"

Thaxted Dragons offers martial art (shito ryu karate) classes for kids aged 3 years upwards. Classes are available on Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays at Bolford Street Hall in Thaxted. For more information contact Sensei Barry on 07522 067 436 or healy81@hotmail.co.uk

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THAXTED OPEN GARDENS - 2024

Thaxted Open Gardens has been running every 2-3 years since 1995 providing residents and visitors to our beautiful town with the chance to admire the many wonderful gardens the town has to offer.

The inaugural event came about thanks to the hard work of Joan and Geoffrey Holley who wanted to support Father Richard Rowe following the launch of the church tower appeal. Having moved to Thaxted earlier in the decade they resurrected an event that had been successful in raising funds to support the restoration of churches in the parish of Loughton - open gardens.

Whilst Thaxted already had other fundraising initiatives to support the tower appeal, including Dorothea Wallis who would regularly offer locals the opportunity to visit her house for soup and a sandwich, Joan and Geoffrey set about asking Thaxted residents if they would open their gardens for members of the public to visit. The Thaxted community responded with twenty-four gardens opening on the afternoon

of July 2nd, 1995. Many of the gardens provided refreshments and plants for sale to help raise additional money on top of the admission fee of £3.00 per person.

Advertising via Essex Radio, local horticultural societies, church magazines and local newspapers led to the event being a huge success, raising more than £1000.00 for the tower appeal.



Thanks to the continued hard work of Joan and her late husband Geoffrey, Thaxted Open Gardens has continued to flourish and is now part of the fundraising undertaken by the Friends of Thaxted Church. Many locals open their gardens and go above and

beyond providing freshly made cakes, homemade ice cream and beverages for visitors to purchase as they enjoy an opportunity to walk around and view gardens of varying sizes. Recognition must also go to the many volunteers who have supported the event over the years with the printing of posters, route maps and the selling of

tickets and refreshments on the actual day of the Open Gardens.

We are currently planning for the next Thaxted Open Gardens on 16th June 2024 and are looking for volunteers who will be prepared to open their gardens for 4-5 hours on the day. Gardens come in all shapes and sizes with some well-established and others work in progress, and we have had many different gardens over the years

including formal, courtyard, cottage and wild gardens to name just a few.

On behalf of Thaxted Open Gardens and the Friends of Thaxted Church we would like to say a special thank you to Joan Holley who has decided to hand over the baton for the 2024 event. We all appreciate Joan's dedication and commitment to the Open Gardens Scheme.

If you are interested in opening your garden, please email thaxtedopengardens@btinternet.com or contact Jane and Andy on 01371 832029 for further information.



Here we come a wassailing

Clarence House Conservation Garden,

Margaret Street, Sat 13th Jan 6 pm - 7 pm.

We're holding our popular wassail on 13th January 2024.

We invite you to join us when we come together to toast our fruit trees, drive off the evil spirits (!) and ensure a good crop. We need lots of people to sing, make loud noises and dance round the trees. There will be music and we will be serving mulled cider and apple juice and home-made apple cake. We will put up posters nearer the time and hope very much to see you there.



PATRICIA MCCOOK WEIR 1931 - 2023

A personal tribute by Simon Latham

Patricia came to Thaxted after a varied and well-travelled career as a private secretary and personal assistant to many political figures and also important businessmen. She was personal secretary to George Brown, then the Deputy Prime Minister under Harold Wilson's premiership.

When Patricia arrived in Thaxted it was not long before she involved herself in the town affairs. As an Anglican she soon became part of the church. She was a good singer and joined the choir. She was also a flower arranger and those skills were put to good use. Whenever there was any event which required food and drink Patricia was always ready to help. Mike, her future husband, was an alter server at this time and maybe that is how they first met!

Thaxted was part of the Twinning Association and had recently twinned with St Vrain in France. Patricia joined the Association and with her fluency in French and organisational skills soon made her an obvious choice as Chairperson. Her constant drive to get things done soon earned her the nickname of '*Knickers on fire*' or '*pantalon au feu*' in French. She was highly amused by this nickname and looked on it as a compliment. The association had several visits to France and hostings in Thaxted, all very successful under her leadership.

In June 2002 Thaxted celebrated the Queens Golden Jubilee. A committee was formed chaired by Patricia. Over that weekend there was an evening drinks party at Horham Hall, a picnic at Clarence House garden where Jubilee mugs were distributed to Thaxted children, a fun day on the rec, finished by lighting of the beacon and fireworks by the windmill. Patricia's organisational skills again came to the fore, and a great weekend was enjoyed by all.

In 2005 or thereabouts she and Mike McCook Weir decided to get married. The invitations were sent out of which Hazel and I received ours. I met Patricia in the street soon after and jokingly said 'You only asked me so I could walk you down the aisle', 'No I did not' she said 'My brother is doing it'. 'Only trying to be funny' I replied. Sadly her brother could not do the job and she rang me and asked me to do the honour. It was a great wedding day and I was very proud to walk this special

person to the altar and Mike. It was also a great rehearsal for me taking my daughter down the same aisle the following year.

Patricia continued to be involved in Thaxted affairs for the rest of her life and gave unstintingly of her time to help whatever needed doing. She was a kind and generous person who would always give a helping hand to anyone that needed it. In working life she had been very successful in whatever job she was in. After retirement she became an important cog in the life of Thaxted. She will be greatly missed.

Rest in peace Patricia

SILVER BAND CONCERT

Stephanie Hughes



On Saturday 28th October, Thaxted Parish Church echoed to the sounds of Trumpets, Cornets and Trombones as The Haverhill Silver Band gave an exciting concert to support the British



Legion Poppy appeal. It was conducted by their musical director Paul Filby, who in 1980 won the soloist prize in the BBC Best of Brass competition. It made for an exciting and entertaining evening.

The concert started with “The Australian” a rousing piece written to commemorate the Australians entering the Second World War. This was followed by “ Little Suite for Brass No 1” by Malcolm Arnold. The first half ended with Verdi’s “The Force of Destiny”.

After the interval, with drinks and snacks provided by members of the British Legion, the programme continued with music by John Williams, “Summon the Heroes”, Greensleeves and The Norwegian Dance by Edvard Greig. We were also treated to three performances by solo members of the group, including the head of the Saffron Centre for Young Musicians, who played “Abide with me” on her trumpet. One of the most rousing and exciting pieces was “Grand Central” representing the station in New York, with the trains, the smoke and the clash of wheels as the train pulls out.

It is with many thanks to Tom Walker that the British Legion is able to stage this well attended and exciting concert.

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THAXTED FESTIVAL
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Thaxted Festival 2024

‘A thriving model of what festivals should be’

Thaxted Festival 2024 will run from Friday 21 June to Sunday 14 July, with concerts across each weekend, and an even wider range of Thaxted Extra events in addition to the main programme. We’ll be including artists from our Developing Artists Programme, and also building on the highly successful education project held at Thaxted Primary School this year.

A particular highlight of our 2023 season was Wild Arts’ production of Donizetti’s opera *The Elixir of Love*, and we’re pleased to announce that they return in 2024 with Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*, complete with long interval for picnics and dining. Writing in the Catholic Herald, Michael White said of this summer’s event: *‘Gustav Holst was Thaxted’s organist during the early years of World War I, founding a festival that still runs in the church and is a thriving model of what festivals should be’*.

Full details of our summer programme will be announced at our Launch



Galina Averina and Alex Jones, in Wild Arts’ 2023 production of Donizetti’s The Elixir of Love.

Image: Lucy Toms.

Reception in Thaxted Church on Sunday 18 February. This will be open exclusively to our Thaxted Music Lovers members. Membership for 2024 will open at the beginning of January, and you will find details on our website then. Current members will get a reminder to renew, but if you are not already a member, or have missed out on a year or two, you’ll be able to join on our website or through our office. Thaxted Music Lovers make a huge contribution to the viability of the Festival, and membership starts from only £15, with benefits including priority booking.

Members of our audience often support us further by sponsoring individual concerts and events. If you would like to mark a special occasion, commemorate a loved one, or simply support an event you enjoy, we would love to hear from you. Just contact us as below and we will get back to you. Legacies are also a way supporting the Festival and helping to ensure its continuing existence; we would be pleased to advise you on how these can be arranged.

2024 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Gustav Holst, and we will be celebrating his work throughout our summer programme; details of the main events are already on our website. We begin this anniversary year with an unmissable performance of *The Planets* by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, presented by Saffron Hall in association with Thaxted Festival at Saffron Hall on Saturday 13 April at 7.30. Tickets for this event are now on sale at saffronhall.com, or via the Saffron Hall box office: 0845 548 7650.

We look forward to celebrating this anniversary year with you.

Peter Donovan, Chairman, Thaxted Festival Foundation
www.thaxtedfestival.co.uk music@thaxtedfestival.co.uk
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Dunmow u3a's dedicated Outing Team have arranged some fantastic trips this year for our members from Dunmow and the surrounding villages, including more than 20 from Thaxted.

We started the year watching **Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty** ballet at Milton Keynes Theatre, a gothic re-interpretation of the traditional fairy tale. We returned later in the year to see **The Mousetrap** on its 70th anniversary tour around the country. We completed the trio of theatre productions with a very popular trip to see **The Lion King** at the Lyceum Theatre in London.

Our other trip to London was primarily to visit the **British Museum**, though some went to Covent Garden for food and street entertainment. On a similar idea, there was a day in **Southwold**. Some were led along the coastal paths by our Walking group while others enjoyed traditional fish and chips on the promenade.

Our Science & Society group requested a day at the **De Havilland Museum** in London Colney, the largest museum devoted to the works of the De Havilland Aircraft Company. And our Quilting & Stitching and Garden groups asked for a visit to **Hemingford Grey Manor** in Cambridgeshire, the home of Lucy Boston who wrote the Green Knowle children stories, stitched exquisite bedspreads and designed an award-winning garden.

In June, we went to **Leeds Castle** in Kent, home of various monarchs but also Olive, Lady Baillie an Anglo-American heiress of the 1930s. And in October, we boarded the **PS Waverley**, the last sea-going paddle steamer in the world. We went from Southend Pier mid-afternoon and travelled up The Thames as the sun set, mooring at Tower Pier adjacent to the illuminated Tower Bridge.



The year was completed with a trip to the [Ely Cathedral Food and Gift Christmas Fair](#) which proved very popular and sold out very quickly.

If you are no longer in full time work or raising a family, [Dunmow u3a](#) could be for you. We offer opportunities to develop your interests, make new friends and have fun. There are more than 1,000 u3as across the UK, whose members are making the most of life by continuing their educational, social or creative interests in a friendly and encouraging atmosphere.

To find out more, contact us on 07385 879846 or go to Du3a's website <https://u3asites.org.uk/dunmow/welcome>
Registered charity number: 1168310

This delightful piece of writing was first published in the Christmas ABC&U in 2013 - 10 years ago - we could not resist re-printing it.

Were you that 8 year old boy?

GRANDMOTHERS.

A grandmother is a woman who has no children of her own.

So she loves the boys and girls of other people.

Grandmothers have nothing to do.

They only have to be there.

If they take you for a walk,

they go slowly past beautiful leaves and caterpillars.

They never say come along quickly.

Or hurry up for goodness sake.

They are usually fat. But not too fat to tie up my shoelaces.

They wear spectacles and sometimes take out their teeth.

They can answer any question. For instance, why dogs hate cats
and Why God is not married.

When they read to us, they never leave anything out
and do not mind if it's always the same story.

Everyone should have a grandmother.

Especially those who do not have a television.

Grandmothers are the only grown-ups who have plenty of time.

By an 8 year old boy.



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GUILDHALL CHRISTMAS TREE

It was in the early sixties that the first Christmas Tree was erected in Town Street outside the Guildhall - the inspiration of a small group of people led by Dr Michael Weller. It has now become an annual and welcome event, the start of Christmas. The tree over the last

30 years has been donated by one of two local farmers. If a tree this size was purchased and erected it would be beyond the means of Thaxted.

It is not just the tree that is donated, but all that goes with it, to make it such a special event. The machinery and labour to erect it is provided by a team of local volunteers, who can be seen up a "cherry picker" attaching lights and parcels to the tree after securely fixing it to the Guildhall. The lights and baubles are donated by local businesses. The youth club make up the parcels and importantly provide the reindeer and elves. The refreshments for the lighting up



ceremony and the carols under tree occasion on the Sunday before Christmas Day are all provided by the committee. Over the years financial support has also come from Yardley and Hunt's charities and the Parish Council.

In 2007, this enjoyable event, was nearly ended when

Essex Highways department took an interest. Initially they felt that the tree was too close to the Guildhall and asked that it should be positioned some distance away. They were concerned that it hindered traffic and it might tempt climbing to remove the parcels! The rules were that all such trees were to have a 2 metre high steel fence, 2 metres from the tree, erected round them. This, of course would then block the road completely, so it would have to be moved somewhere else. Some quiet behind the scenes diplomacy took place and good sense prevailed. In the 60 plus years that the tree has been there, no one has attempted this to climb it. A low wooden fence

was constructed and seems a fine compromise.

One day a man was seen leaning from his van window and pulling a parcel off the tree, but when he held it, he realised it was an empty box or a block of polystyrene.

A few years ago the committee realised that the sleigh and reindeers costumes were well beyond their life. The sleigh was running on furniture castors and the reindeers were a blanket and papier-mâché on wire. Two local craftsmen built a new sleigh with larger wheels and another made

the new wooden reindeer heads, the flowing robes were made by two local seamstresses.

This wonderful tradition is one of the reasons why Thaxted is so special. The sight on Christmas Eve of the sleigh, the elves, small and large, and of course Father Christmas coming up Town Street in almost complete darkness is quite special. So a big thankyou to all who help make this occasion. If you would like to be involved next year, speak to one of the stewards to find out more and help to keep this tradition alive for the future.

The logo for Thaxted Fayre Trust features the words 'THAXTED', 'FAYRE', and 'TRUST' stacked vertically in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below the text is a decorative banner with colorful triangular flags in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue.

Our Community Grant Scheme is now open to applications.

Visit www.thaxtedfayretrust.com to find out more & apply.

We are thrilled to announce we have over £4,500 available for distribution this year.

If you are a local project or group requiring financial support, simply visit our website to download our Community Grant Application Form. To be eligible, your organisation or project must be: Not-for profit, Not personally owned or for personal financial gain, Serving the community of Thaxted and Located within in the parish of Thaxted.

Completed application forms must be received by 31st December 2019, by e-mail to thaxtedfayretrust@outlook.com or by post to the TFT Secretary at Cobblers 57 Newbiggen Street, Thaxted, Essex CM6 2QS.

Applications are reviewed during January 2024 by our Committee and Trustees and funds awarded based on how the project benefits residents of Thaxted. Successful awards will be granted/distributed early in February 2024.



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THAXTED SINGERS

Maggi Griffiths

Thaxted Singers has now been in existence for just over five years, although we had to halt rehearsals and performances during the Covid period. However, we are now back to regular weekly rehearsals with a current membership of approximately 45 members. We are a friendly, welcoming, mixed ability, local community choir and we warmly welcome anyone interested in sharing their love of music with other like-minded people. Our most recent concert in Thaxted Parish Church in June, included performances by two professional soloists, Nancy May and Bonaventura Bottone.



We are now working hard preparing for three performances in December. On Friday December 1st we will be singing at the late night shopping event in Saffron Walden and on Sunday December 10th we will be joining members of the local community in the annual Thaxted Town Carol Service in Thaxted Parish Church. Thursday December 14th will be our own concert in Thaxted Parish Church. This concert will include some popular songs as well as a range of Christmas music.

Please contact Maggi Griffiths maggigriffiths@gmail.com for any further information about our choir.



FRIENDS OF THAXTED CHURCH

50/50 CLUB

The Friends of Thaxted Church has a 50/50 club. Anyone can join. Members pay £1 (or more) a month, £12 for one year. Each month a draw takes place. Half the money received that month goes to the prize winners and half goes to the Friends Of Thaxted Church. This supports Thaxted church in restoration work and other projects.

The draw takes place around 12 noon on the last Monday of the month.

We invite you to become a member of the club and to do so please contact Joan Holley. You will be asked to fill in your contact details on a form which you then send with your cheque, made payable to "The Friends of Thaxted Church", or cash to Joan Holley, 5 The Maltings, Thaxted CM6 2NB.

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THAXTED TWINNING ASSOCIATION
Thaxted twinned with St Vrain, France

THAXTED TWINNING ASSOCIATION is about our friendships and exchange visits we have had for over 20 years with our Twinned Town in France - St. Vrain. TTA have a new website that promotes both Thaxted and St Vrain with maps and details of where both our towns are situated, shops, places to visit and contact details <https://thaxtedtwinning.co.uk/>

It is so much fun to become a member of Thaxted Twinning for **ALL AGES** and our exchange visits don't cost the earth! Our return visit to St.Vrain is next year on May 30 to June 2nd. New Members are warmly invited to join us.

We had a GREAT long weekend entertaining our twinning friends from St. Vrain here in Thaxted in May 23. We have been twinned now for over 20 years and have enjoyed exchange visits and great friendships and now many new members from St.Vrain have enjoyed their first visit, with young families, to Thaxted and were hosted by our

membership families here in Thaxted and surrounding areas. It was a marvellous, fun time for all! (C'était un moment merveilleux et amusant pour tous)

Have a look at how we entertained our Twinning Guests this May 2023:

Thursday 18th May 23 - Our guests arrived by coach and we welcomed them in the Guildhall with refreshments and nibbles while the Thaxted Singers gave a rendition of *La Marseillaise*. The French were most impressed and joined in with the singing as well



as I *vow to thee my country!* Many thanks to Thaxted Singers. Our guests then went to host families for evening meal, chats and bed and breakfast - ready for an early start Friday.

Friday 19th May - We took our guests by coach to visit the Tower of London by pre-arranged booking and then for a 3-course meal in The Dickens Inn - St. Katherine Dock. The weather was kind and it was a thoroughly enjoyable event for everyone.

Saturday 20th May - The day was free for hosts and guests to arrange how they would like to spend the day. Saturday Evening - We treated our guests to a 'Dinner & Musical Entertainment' in Radwinter Pavilion. It went down a storm for both the food and the music, provided by Pete George. We cleared a space after the meal and the dancing commenced with both the adults and younger members joining in with the singing and dancing. Outside the pavilion the younger children played games of Football and Swings. A great Venue for all ages!

Sunday 21st May - We took our guests to collect their coach in the Coach Park for an 8 am departure. It is

always a sad moment when we have to say goodbye, but of course we will be visiting our Guests next year in St. Vrain where our hosts will treat us to excursions, meals and entertainment.

Thanks to all the Twinning committee who worked hard and to our host families in Thaxted and around the district. If you and family would like to join us please contact the President Theresa Egan theresa.egan@btinternet.com 07740610213 or via our new website <https://thaxtedtwinning.co.uk/>

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ABC & U EDITORIAL INFORMATION
DATES FOR NEXT EDITION - EASTER 2024

LATEST 3 EDITIONS ON THE WEBSITE: WWW.ABC-U.CO.UK

Date for copy to Editor: Friday 16th February 2024

Publication date: Sunday 17th March 2024

COMMITTEE

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Editorial | Mike Collins | editor@abc-u.co.uk |
| Adverts: | Emma Fearnham | email: adverts@abc-u.co.uk |
| Anglican Church | Yvonne Baccush | U R C Julie Barnard |
| | Glyn Pritchard | Thaxted Society Michael Culkin |
| Baptist Church | Peter Archibald | Richard Till |
| | Jill Jones | Parish Council Andy Frater |
| Catholic Church | Stephanie Hughes | Dena Oxley |

We would welcome more members on the magazine's editorial team. The committee is looking for new members to join in this developing new look magazine. If you have an interest in creating articles or other aspects of this magazine why not contact us to discuss the ways you could help.

We are always pleased to receive articles for inclusion. Write about what matters to you in Thaxted. We also want to include items such as births, weddings, etc. We do need to be told about events and interesting happenings, as we do not always know of them. We would be very pleased to hear from you. The views expressed are those of the individual writers. Please send any contributions to the editor before the deadline date above.

We try to print everything we receive by the copy date

- we can not print items we are NOT sent!

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

All colour and monochrome adverts are charged at the same rate.

These 2024 rates have risen to reflect the current printing costs.

Full page portrait - £140 for 3 issues - £50 for a single issue

Half page landscape - £80 for 3 issues - £30 for a single issue

Quarter page landscape - £43 for 3 issues - £15 for a single issue

Quarter page portrait - £47 for 3 issues - £17 for a single issue

Please apply to Emma for all information. Contact details as above.

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The menu is on our Facebook page and website or available from the pub.

The Christmas menu must be booked and pre-ordered in advance

EVENTS IN DECEMBER

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Wednesday 20th – Christmas Dinner with Bubl 

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