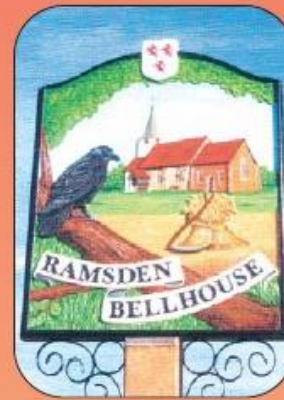


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Village Magazine Summer 2017



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A Word from the Editor

Thank you to the residents who have given us the pleasure of their displays of crocuses, primroses and daffodils during the Spring months. To see their cheerful beauty gives hope that perhaps the rural character of our village has not quite disappeared.

More next year please!

Over the past sixty four years, the Village Hall has organised the Village Charity, supported also by St Mary's Church and the Baptist Church. In 1953, terrible floods devastated Canvey Island with many, many people drowned. The Village Charity was started then. At first a Charity week was held each year. Each section organised a fund raising event, which not only benefitted the Appeal, but provided an enjoyable event for the Village.

This principle has carried on, but the events take place over a year rather than a week. We should all feel proud at the amount that has been raised over the past sixty four years.

There is always a "but."

Today most of the Village Hall support comes from "the surrounding areas," and very welcome it is. But why do they find our Village Hall more attractive than the residents? This year's charity is the Basildon Hospital Dementia Unit. Most of us know someone with this heart rending disease. My sister a kind gentle lady has become aggressive, unhappy and totally confused.

Please help these tragic sufferers.

This magazine is financed by the advertisements, so please, when you use one, tell them where you saw it.

Thank you to all those connected with the production, publication and delivery of this magazine, as well as the advertisers. Copy for the next issue by September 20th either to me or preferably to bryan.diggory@sky.com.

Isabel Johnson

Advertising Rates

Coloured Half pages - limited	£33.00
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Chairmans Report

I am sitting at home looking out at the back lawn doing my usual thing at this time of the year, that is contemplating on whether I should be getting the lawn mower out to cut the lawn. I decide to leave it until tomorrow. I know that I will regret this decision as the grass has a habit of suddenly shooting up. The daffodils are out and the trees are just sprouting. The phone rings, and it's Isabel, reminding me I am late with my article for the Village Magazine, I kick myself but it's too late now. 'O' how I wish I could go back to my day dreaming but reality is here, I must put pen to paper and get on with it. Tomorrow, I must mow the lawn, dig the vegi patch, plant some seeds and do all the other things you have to do in a garden as 2017 is with us, what will it bring. The government will have to worry about Brexit and I wish them luck, I will have my own little worries, what will I be cooking for meals, will Isabel ring me again for the next magazine article. Will the Village Hall be able to find the money to repair the old hall floor and the heating system. Will all the Hall events this year starting with Music on the Green and the Bazaar be a success. I hope this year goes well for the Hall

C Jeffree Chairman RBVH
chairman@ramsdensbellhouse.info

♦♦♦♦♦ Alan Pegrum

After the village AGM on Sunday 29th January a plaque was unveiled by Clive Jeffree in the entrance hall at the new hall in memory of Alan Pegrum who died last October

Alan had lived in this village for over 57 years. He served on the Village Hall Committee for over 25 years during which time he became Chairman for several years. It was while he was Chairman that he was approached by Basildon Council to see if he would like to try out two mats for Short Mat Bowls. He decided at that time that there were enough retired people in the Village to give it a go and as they say the rest is history and we now have a thriving Bowls Club.

He was also a Trustee of the Village Hall and very involved as Editor and the setting up of our Village Magazine in the 1960s and worked tirelessly fundraising for the Village and St. Mary's Church. He taxed all of our brains in the quizzes he organised and was always to be found behind his Greeting cards and stationery stall at Fetes and Bazaars.

Alan just loved this Village and will be sadly missed by many.

Ramsden Bellhouse Village Website

www.ramsdenbellhouse.info

Have you looked at our website recently? If not, we urge you to do so.

Apart from listing all events and organisations which take part in the Village Hall itself, there is a comprehensive guide to the village, including St Mary's Church and the Baptist Church.

There are also pages giving links to the Parish Council, the Police, Ramsden Pre-School and a full bus timetable.

We are constantly striving to bring new topics to include on the website and have recently introduced a section incorporating the History of Ramsden, including articles and photographs.

This is, of course, work in progress but it is our aim to keep adding to these pages as we gain more information.

We are also in the process of creating a Facebook page linked to the website to promote village events more widely.

We would like to start a Feedback section where we would like your comments on village events you have been to, topics of interest you want to comment on, or just things in the village that you like or dislike.

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In order to keep a website topical it needs to be updated with the latest news and events and we ask those of you running events or clubs to send us information on these which will be added to the website.

Linked to the website is a photo gallery of events taken place over past years and this can be seen by going into the photo gallery page and choosing a year or event. Have a look; you will probably be surprised to see yourself in some of them.

Have a look now on the front page, click on the video taken last August at St. Mary's Church Flower Festival open air evening concert and watch the swallows flying over the Church at sunset to the sound of the band playing 'Autumn Leaves'.

To contact the website team and to include news, feedback, articles or photographs, please

email: mailing@ramsdensbellhouse.info.



Dancing

Here we are again, another 6 months has passed us by.

The Dance Section's Annual Charity square Dance has moved to June. we will now be holding this event on Saturday 17th June at the Village Hall between 8pm and 11pm. TICKETS will shortly be available. See our Posters.

We held our Annual Ball on 12th February combining with a Valentines Dance. A full 3 course meal was supplied by Lambourne Catering.

We have celebrated 2 significant birthdays one being Michael becoming an octogenarian and Julie joining the over 65's club. Unfortunately Michael has now left the club but we welcome back Ernie who was a past member.

See you all again in another 6 months.

Barry Gardiner



If you have a story to tell contact the Editor

Cream Jelly Dessert

Ingredients

Jelly

2 Jellies of your choice (red jelly looks good), 24 fluid oz of boiling water, 300g of berries

Cream

300 ml double cream, whipped, 4 fluid oz of condensed milk
5 table spoons lemon juice

Decoration

Grated chocolate

Method

Make up the jellies with the boiling water. Stir in the berries. Pour into a suitable serving bowl and leave to set in the fridge. Mix the whipped cream, condensed milk and lemon juice together carefully. Spread on top of set jelly and fork up the surface. Sprinkle grated chocolate on top to decorate. Place back in fridge until ready to serve.

Joan Wright

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Your Baptist Church in the Village

Well we are now enjoying some lovely spring weather and looking forward to hopefully a good summer. We at R.B.B.C. have planned events for the summer months and extend a very warm welcome to people from the village and beyond to join in these.

Looking back over the autumn and winter months we held our Harvest Service on Sunday 2nd October 2016, the church was as always beautifully decorated, and the produce from this service was then donated to St Luke's Hospice, who expressed their appreciation for all the gifts of food.

We celebrated Christmas 2016 with two special services. The first was a "Toys and Tins Service", held on 11th December; which was well attended, with an abundance of items being donated, including toiletries, toys, tinned food, books and games. These donations were given to The Resource Centre in Basildon to be distributed to needy families and to those who found themselves homeless. The "Carols by Candlelight" Service held on 18th December was a great success and well attended, including by many visitors to our church.

So now RBBC has commenced its 2017 season. Our first event has been "Les Miserable's", held at RBBC on Saturday 25th of March at 7:00 pm. In addition we are planning to hold a further "Tea at the Ritz" event on 24th June; an afternoon tea with excellent waiter service, and an ambiance which reflects the famous name. This has become a regular annual event, and tickets are always very much in demand. Look out for the posters advertising this at the village shop and village hall.

Also please note our continuing Monday morning Coffee break, held every Monday morning between 10:30 am and 12:00 noon, with guest speakers on alternative weeks, and the very successful Saturday Morning Breakfast, held on the first Saturday morning of each month in the Emmanuel Hall.

Please feel free to read more about RBBC in our church magazine, produced quarterly and which is available free in the village shops in Ramsden Bellhouse and Crays Hill or at RBBC.

Our Sunday services are held at 10.30 am each week. Please do come along and give us a try. You will be very welcome.

Val Rook, Church Secretary



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Blackthorn and Hawthorn:

Simple Beauty in a Village Hedgerow

How do you describe blackthorn and hawthorn blossom in the spring, when these familiar, native, hedgerow trees seemingly burst into life? Their lovely blossom has been described by writers in so many ways, from dazzling, delicate, white crystals to a creamy foam, while their first leaves are a fresh, vibrant green. Blackthorn and hawthorn are truly part of the natural history of our village - planted, mainly, for a practical purpose, but always providing us with a beautiful display in the spring.

Blackthorn

Blackthorn grows into a thick, impenetrable hedge, and has long been planted to keep livestock in (and thieves out!) Blackthorn flowers from February to April, (although in last year's mild winter, I saw blackthorn blossom in January) and the flowers appear slightly before the leaves. These are an early source of food for bees.

Blackthorn's latin name is 'Prunus spinosa' - Prunus meaning plum, and it's likely to be an ancestor of the cultivated plum. Blackthorn produces sloes in the autumn (and if you only ever make one country drink, make sloe gin, it's simple to do and so delicious) and it tolerates most soils, although it's less happy in an acid soil.

Blackthorn has a terrific value for wildlife. It hosts several butterflies and moths, and provides a nesting site for birds, most notably the nightingale, a bird of our area of the country (although it's sadly becoming less common here).

Blackthorn wood is used for walking sticks and (Harry Potter fans note!) it was said to be used for witches' staffs and wands. It's also said that Christ's crown of thorns was made from blackthorn.

Hawthorn

In folklore and tradition, hawthorn is strongly associated with the month of May. It's also known as the May-tree, because this is the month it flowers (it's known as whitethorn, too, because of its white blossom). Hawthorn symbolises the joy of summer's return; maypoles were made of hawthorn and it was said to be the wreath of the Green Man. The traditional saying 'ne'er cast a clout til Mey's oot' is advice not to remove warm, winter clothing until the time of year the hawthorn flowers.

Unlike blackthorn, hawthorn leaves come out before the flowers. Older folk may remember these leaves as 'bread and cheese'; they can be

eaten, and in fact often were, in times when food wasn't plentiful. Hawthorn berries (haws) appearing in the autumn, can be turned into jellies, wines and ketchups. Haws are also loved by birds, especially migrating birds such as fieldfares and redwings, and by small mammals (like blackthorn, a hawthorn is rich in wildlife; providing nesting sites, cover and food for birds, insects and small mammals, like dormice).

Hawthorn also provides a dense hedge and is easy to grow and keep; it's tolerant of all soils. When buying hawthorn, native hawthorn plants (rather than European imports) are more robust in British soil.

Blackthorn and hawthorn are two wonderful hedgerow trees; full of beauty and tradition and usefulness, with so much to love and appreciate and adding so much to our village gardens and fields.

Wendy Swift



Teddies for Tragedies Essex Branch

Not many teddies have gone out during the winter months as I have been concentrating on blankets, jumpers, cardigans, hats and toiletry boxes as they are in such demand. Only 300 teddies went to Zambia and Kosovo making a grand total of 293,702 distributed.

Many sacks of blankets, sleeping bags, duvets, duvet covers and pillowcases, and jumpers etc. have recently left me bound for the refugee camps in Greece and Eastern Europe.

In November I had 100 Christmas shoeboxes collected from me destined for Serbia and Romania. Having seen first-hand the poor in both of these countries it must be wonderful to receive a lovely colourful box filled with much needed goodies, and know that someone far away is thinking of them. Thank you to everybody who helped in this project and I hope it gave you all a good feeling on Christmas Day when you opened your presents that you had given joy to a child or adult who but for you wouldn't have received anything. If you would like to get involved I can always give you a covered shoebox and a list of items to go in it ready for next Christmas

Looking forward to a good summer. God bless.

Audrey Pegrum MBE, Essex Branch Organiser



Bowls Club

Our friendly club continues to have enjoyable roll up sessions on Monday nights, Wednesday Mornings and Friday Afternoons. It's difficult to remember now just how cold it was without the heating - many layers were worn and visitors for matches warned!



Our league season is now nearing the end. The Ravens and Robins are near the top of Division 6 and 7 and the Rooks are hoping to stay in Division 2 following promotion last year. As well as club nights and league matches we have had a few friendly matches, more friendly matches are now being arranged for the summer.

Many of our members and friends enjoyed a quiz last Autumn, thanks to Stuart for arranging and being question master. I think some of the younger teams struggled with questions aimed at us older teams!

In November Kay, Emily and Peter, after narrowly beating our other Ramsden team amongst others in the Round Robin stage, won through to the knock out stages and beat 3 other clubs to win a triples competition at East Hanningfield.

Our Christmas Dinner followed by fun bowls was very good. We had been worried as had to change caterers at fairly short notice, but the food was excellent. Presentations were made and Peter had swept the board in all, along with Roy for the Friday afternoon couples and Kay in the pairs. Thanks to Barry and Jane for arranging everything. They did it so well they have the job for the next one!

As usual our cake stall proved very popular at the Bazaar. Thanks to Isabel and her fellow cake makers, and all those who helped on the day. The Bazaar turned out to be a bit unusual having a power cut, but fortunately was soon put right.

Cakes are very popular at bowls and most of our members bring cakes to celebrate birthdays. Special birthdays and Anniversaries are noted with a presentation. Roy and his wife Audrey celebrate their Diamond on 23rd March. We are glad to have Tom Shepard fit and well and back bowling with us after having a pace maker fitted



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Social Secretary's Report

Christmas Bazaar 3rd December 2016

The Bazaar went well again with the arrival of Father Christmas, he then took up residence in his grotto and was visited by more children than we have had before. There were plenty of stalls for everyone to browse around with refreshments, mulled wine and mince pies for those who were peckish. Unfortunately not many children appeared for the fancy dress which was very disappointing again. Please try and support our events at the village hall, lots of hard work goes into the organising and is gratifying when we have a good turnout. See you next year!

Ramsden Bellhouse Music Festival 24th June 2017

Again we are hoping for a good turnout this year, the ticket price is still the same £20.00 adult, 12 and under £10.00. and below 5 free. Tickets include BBQ, sausages and burgers / full vegetarian option The gate opens at 2.30 p.m. and the event starts at 4 p.m. until midnight. Our acts include Tumbleweed London's Top Country Band, Charlotte Inglis Fabulous Smooth Soul, Greg. Dorrelly as 'Rocking with Rod' the Rod Stuart Tribute act and our Fantastic Soul Finale with The Baby Devilles. and all acts will be linked by Seany B our DJ. who will end proceeding with his laser show. Bring your own chairs, drink and nibbles. There will be cover, tables and chairs under the marquees but most people, weather permitting like to spread out on the grass. There will be face painting and festival goodies for the children to buy. We are desperate for help in setting up the event so if anyone could spare a few hours this would be greatly appreciated.

Please come and support our Music Festival I am sure you will have a great time.

Lots of other things happening during the year including The Strawberry Tea on the 17th June, check on the website for dates and events.

We desperately need help to make any of these events take place, please telephone either of the nos. below if you would like to give a hand especially the Music Festival and join in the fun and camaraderie

Ann Wellborn, Social Secretary

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Bygone Years

Bert wrote this poem for the first magazine I edited in 1990. He is now 96, and unable to play bowls. He is however mentally fit, but almost blind.

On the Carpet

I truly very much enjoy, my weekly game of bowls,
I've got too stiff for cricket, and never could score goals.
My shots are quite erratic, though one or two are fair,
Now and then I touch the jack, I don't care how or where.
It seems that if I get the line, then I misjudge the strength,
Whilst if my aim is wayward, I get a perfect length.
If I say myself as shouldn't, my drivings pretty hot,
True I seldom hit the target, but I give it all I got.
Oh! I'm poetry in motion, of that there is no doubt,
But despite my graceful action, the rotten bowls go out.
Still I wouldn't miss it I may not win an end,
But if I were unbeatable, I'd never have a friend!

Bert Edwards 1990



Bowls Club Trophy Winners 1994

Dog Training

Firstly I'm sorry to have to report that our Secretary Rita Barber has had a severe stroke and is in Southend Hospital. We wish you well Rita, you are sorely missed and we are all thinking of you. Also our President Len Petty has had a stay in hospital twice in the last month. We wish you both a speedy recovery.



On a lighter note, we have just enjoyed 'Crufts' and two of our Members who showed their dogs came 4th in their class. Very well done Fiona & Kim.

Our obedience show season is about to start and we wish everyone who enters good luck. We love to see 'red' rosettes!

Our Show this year is on 5th August and is to be held at Battlesbridge Antique centre.

Valerie Dean, Vice Chairman



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Scouts Report

Last September ten scouts and five leaders took part in an overnight camp at Riffhams, near Danbury. The theme of the camp was the Outdoor Challenge Award, which included pitching tents, back woods cooking, fire lighting and safety, campfire entertainment, axe & knives, lamps & stoves and much more. Dens were built in the woods and in the evening games of run outs. The weather was excellent with only one small shower on Sunday morning. Riffhams is a great secluded camp site with plenty of wood for the campfire, which the scouts will definitely visit again. All the scouts who took part have attained the Outdoor Challenge Award.

There is plenty of variety in our weekly activities, which also includes team games such as basketball, football cricket, newspaper hockey, volleyball, rounders and most recently tug-of-war. Practical skills are learnt: food hygiene/safety in the kitchen and at camp, mapping, knotting, first aid and a various types of cooking - pancakes are as popular as ever and Scottish short bread, on Burns Night, went down well.

The second Wednesday of the month is an outnight with visits to Thrift Scout Activity Centre for Pedal Car Racing, Campfire cooking and run outs, Chelmsford swimming pool for badge work and lots of jumping from the diving boards. Just before Christmas a visit to Base Jump trampoline centre in Rayleigh proved to be very popular. We also did a circular hike around Ramsden Heath.

In February eight scouts and four leaders hiked from Stock to Runwell via Hanningfield Nature Reserve, a distance of 7.7 miles. Were the scouts tired after this? No, they played football when we arrived at our destination! Runwell Scouts kindly let us stay at their HQ overnight, where we had a campfire with crumpets and marsh mallows. The evening finished with a film.

We run a programme of activities that the scouts are unlikely to do elsewhere. The scouts may not bring their mobile phones or other electronic devices on a troop night or to any other scouting event, they don't need to. They have the rest of the week for such things! We like to get outside and I have not yet met a scout who doesn't like campfires.

The Scouts meet on Wednesday evenings during term time at Ramsden Bellhouse Village Hall from 7.30 to 9.30 and the age range is from 10½ to 14½. We are currently low on numbers so new recruits are always welcome and for further information please call Chris on 01277 652337 or 07904 225200.

Chris Maker, Scout Leader

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WEDDING FLOWERS

Cubs Report

Last term the Cubs started work on the Our World challenge badge. There are a lot of sections to these badges so they take a long time to complete. Work on this badge included a visit from an Ambulance man to find out about his work, a visit to the World War 1 memorial garden at Ramsden Heath to plant crocus bulbs, which are in flower at the moment and a visit to the Brentwood Buddhist centre to find out what Buddhism is all about. Also the Cubs planted acorns in pots and took them home to care for them (We haven't heard of any growth yet). On a lighter note Cubs dressed up for Halloween and did apple bobbing, trying to eat doughnuts dangling from a string and played games in the dark. Their end of term Christmas treat was a visit to Base Jump at Rayleigh very tiring just watching them. Our Cubs joined other Cubs from Billericay and Wickford District on 2nd Dec at Partyman World, Basildon, where we all renewed our Promise to celebrate the start of Cub scouting 100 years ago on 16th Dec 1916.

This term Cubs have started work on the Teamwork challenge this involves thinking as a team, working as a team, helping each other and thinking of different types of teams other than the obvious sporting teams. One of the activities was to work out how to direct someone who is blind folded but not be able to speak to them another activity was to have a team of Cubs standing on a sheet, they have to work out how to turn the sheet over completely without moving off the sheet. Cubs are also working on the Musician badge, a lot of the Cubs have done part of this badge at school so should find it easy to complete.

Our nights away this term was a weekend at the Hutch and Den at Belchamps Scout centre, these are heated wooden buildings very snug in late January. On the Saturday Cubs did Archery, Fencing and Climbing and built a roaring fire amongst other things. On the Sunday with lunch packed we set off on a hike through Hockley Woods. While hiking Cubs learnt about railway safety as we had to cross the railway line twice.

Akela



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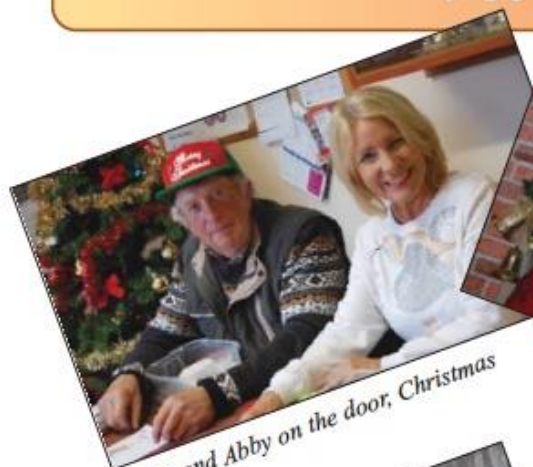
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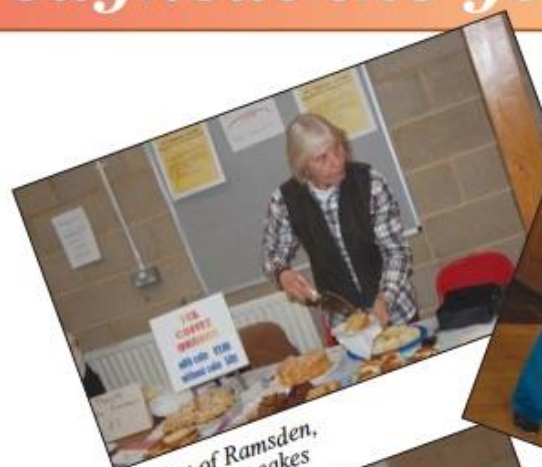
Village Events throughout the year



Ernie and Abby on the door, Christmas Bazaar



Ann and Father Christmas
Christmas Bazaar



History of Ramsden,
Linda serves cakes



Presentation
of flowers to
Isabel



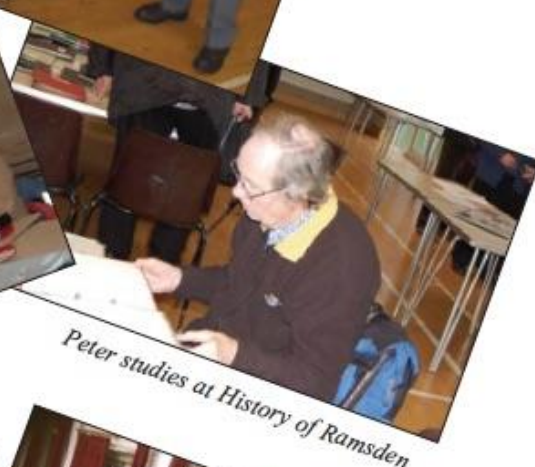
Christmas Bazaar



Dog Club Stall



One Lady came both days



Peter studies at History of Ramsden



Audrey speaks in
memory of Alan
Pegrum



AGM. Nurses explain this years Charity,
Dementia Unit at Basildon Hospital



Start of the Digital History of Ramsden



Horticultural Daffodil Show

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Fun Whist

Fun Whist continues on the second Saturday of the month, starting at 7.15pm. Following Roy's concerns about the low numbers coming to Whist, reported in the last magazine, it is a great pleasure to all of us attendees too and that numbers have now increased. This makes running the Whist sessions more viable. Obviously, it would be exciting to increase numbers even more to ensure Fun Whist continues! Don't be shy! Come along to a session and try it out (if you are a novice to Whist) or just come and play a pleasant, relaxed game in a friendly atmosphere if you are already a player.

Please join us for our next session, you would be most welcome. At £3.00, which includes a cup of tea and biscuit at the interval as well as a free rate, what could be a nicer way to spend an evening!

You can check the events calendar on the Village website too and the dates of the sessions.

Angela Hodivala



Grahame Farley

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References Available

St Mary's Church

Rector: Rev. Stephen Robertson, The Rectory, Castledon Road, Downham, 01268 710370. Contact him with requests for Baptisms, Marriages, and Funerals etc.

Assistant Priests:

Rev. Jean Andrews, 01268 733817

Rev. Miranda Seaman, 01277 841921

Lay Reader: Mrs. Suzy Edmundson, 01245 224181

Churchwarden: Mrs. Beryl Clements, 01245 601298

Services:

1st Sunday: Evening Prayer, 6.30pm Summer

2nd Sunday: Holy Communion 9.30am.

3rd Sunday: Holy Communion 6.30pm Summer

4th Sunday: Family Service, 10.30am.

5th Sunday: Benefice Holy Communion rotating between St. Mary's, St. Margaret's, Downham, and St. Peter's, South Haningfield, usually at 10.00am.

We invite everybody to join us at our Sunday services as above. If you are unfamiliar with church services, try for a start the Family Service on the 4th Sunday of each month at 10.30am – a short 40 minute service for all ages.

We continue to enjoy fellowship with our friends at the Baptist Church. On 3rd March all the local churches met at the Baptist Church for the Women's World Day of Prayer, the service being written by the women of the Philippines. This was followed by a very nice lunch. At the time of writing this we are looking forward to the Palm Sunday celebrations when both churches and the other Anglican churches in our group assemble at the Baptist Church and have a Walk of Witness to St. Mary's for a combined service. Further joint services are scheduled for later in the year but at this time they have not been decided.

The work we had to do during the last six months was firstly the fall of plaster from the ceiling of the chancel as result of rain coming through in 2015. This was eventually repaired in October. We also had to replace one of the high lightbulbs and having replaced it with an LED bulb realised it was much brighter than the rest so decided to replace all of them which has produced a much brighter appearance in the church.

Our Beetle Drive held in November was a lovely fun evening. This

was held in aid of the Village Charity Brainwave. The sum of £276 was raised and together with a donation from the Church resulted in a total of £306.

The Remembrance Day Service held on Sunday, 13th November was, as usual, well attended. The service was planned and led by Suzy Edmundson from St. Mary's with the talk being given by the Baptist Pastor, Jim Hamilton. The collection of £286 was donated to BLESMA (The British Limbless ex-servicemen's Association)

The first event for this year was our annual quiz on 17th March organised by Angela and Steve Tuff (Alan Pegrum's daughter and son-in-law). Everybody enjoyed the evening which was an outstanding success and raised £663 towards Church funds. We are indebted to the Bowls Club members for putting out the tables and chairs for us. It is such a big job and we are very grateful for their help.

St. Mary's church will be open for visitors every Saturday from 10am to 4pm on the 29th April to October provided a Steward is able to be present. If you would be willing to consider this role occasionally (10am to 1pm or 1pm to 4pm) please give Beryl a ring on 01245 601298.



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The first of our monthly Coffee Mornings to raise funds for the Flower Festival in August will be on Saturday, 13th May 10am to 12 noon at the Church and then the second Saturdays in June (10th,) July (8th,) and August (12th.)

There will be a concert by the Church of the Most Holy Redeemer, Billericay, in the Church on Saturday 20th May at 7:30pm. Those who came to hear this talented choir in 2013 will surely want to come again. Tickets at £10 including tea/coffee and cakes are available from Audrey 01268 710757 or Beryl 01245 601298.

Our next fundraising event is our Strawberry Cream Tea at the Village Hall on Saturday, 17th June from 2pm to 4pm. Tickets are £5 each (children under 10 £2.50) available from Audrey 01268 710757.

Our big event is the Flower Festival over the August Bank Holiday, open on Saturday 2 to 5pm with a concert by the Sid Bolan Big Band in the evening at 5pm in the Church grounds (if wet, this will take place in the Village Hall.) Last year the band entertained us on a beautiful hot evening. Some 80 people came bringing picnics and many compliments were made on the evening. Tickets at £10 each will be available nearer the time from Audrey 01268 710757 or Beryl 01245 601298.

On Bank Holiday Sunday the Church will be open from 11 to 4pm with Songs of Praise at 4pm hopefully in the open air weather permitting. Ploughman' lunches and other refreshments will be on sale with various stalls outside and again on Bank Holiday Monday 11 to 4pm.

On Saturday, 30th September we will be holding a Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Care 10am to Noon at the Church.

Saturday 28th October we will be holding our second Barn Dance at 7:30pm in the Village Hall. Tickets will be available nearer the time and on Friday, 10th November we will be holding a charity Beetle Drive at 7:30pm in the Village Hall. This will be St. Mary's contribution towards the Village Charity effort on behalf of the Dementia Team based at Basildon Hospital. Again tickets will be available nearer the time.

Audrey Pegrum MBE



My Best Friend

John lived in a small cottage on the edge of town. He was a bachelor who had given recent years of his life looking after his elderly parents. They have now passed on and he now lived alone.

John had qualified as an accountant, he was trained using pen and ink and working with big ledgers. Modern technology had come along and he had not adapted to the speed required. Now he had lost his job. Fortunately he had found three small part time jobs. The General Store needed some one to keep up with stock control. A nearby farmer needed his financial records kept and the primary school also found him occasional work. This all helped keep the wolf from the door.

John however did need company, his friends told him to look for a best friend. The internet web sites were suggested. This did not meet with his approval; he had worked hard for his money and did not want to see it disappearing with a woman he hardly knew.

Holidays where middle aged single people met up and with a shared interest was suggested by other friends. John thought he would give this a try and so one day he booked a train from London to Windermere for a

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Lake District holiday. He enjoyed the organised activities, there were daily walks in the fells, tutors gave instruction on photography and people taught him bird identification. In the evening the library was used for board games and in the hall there was folk dancing. However John did not find romance or long term companionship. The single females were too fast for him. They wanted to be engaged after day two and hear wedding bells by the end of the week. He decided he would rather remain a bachelor.

Following his holiday experience John settled down to his quiet life. On Mondays if he was free he would rise early and after breakfast walk into town as it was market day. Watching the cattle being unloaded from the lorries and put into pens awaiting the auctioneers hammer was always of great interest to him. This particular morning John got into conversation with a farmer. This chap had a young border collie on a short lead. The farmer told John that the dog had lost its sight in one eye and would not be any good for farm work so he would have to go. John immediately felt sorry for this likable creature and asked if he could buy the dog. The Farmer gave a broad smile and said if John could give him a good home he could have him for free. John sealed the deal by giving the farmer an old penny and now he owned a dog. On his way home he called at the butchers and got some odds and ends for his new friend. The collie dog soon settled in and found the fireside rug to his liking. John decided he would call him Shep as he remembered the early days of Blue Peter.

Life was to change and when the new friends got to the garden gate Shep would turn left and run down the lane and onto the common. There were trees and bushes, many species of birds and wonderful landscapes. Shep would chase rabbits and hunt out foxes. Walking the dog soon become wild life excursions. John would take his camera and try out the photographic tips he had learnt on holiday. Very often he would take his binoculars and soon he learnt to identify the great number of birds that came to the common. Shep would run off to explore but would always come back for a little bit of affection. John had now found his BEST FRIEND and they will share their future lives together.

Mike Craig

Baptist Church

If you have ever visited the Holy Land you will probably have visited the two seas that form part of the interior of the country. In the north there is the Sea of Galilee and around a hundred miles to the south there is the Dead Sea. Although separated by such a relatively short distance the two seas could hardly be more different. The River Jordan flows from Mount Hermon into the northern edge of the Sea of Galilee and the sea is full of life with fish and all kinds of marine life living in it. The River Jordan continues to flow out of the sea at its southern end and continues down to the Dead Sea which is actually several hundred feet below sea level. The Dead Sea is literally just that - dead! There is literally no life in it, the water is foul smelling and the only good thing about it is that visitors can have their photos taken reading the newspaper while floating effortlessly due to its buoyancy. So why are they so different - one filled with life and the other totally dead?

The answer is of course that the Sea of Galilee has both an inlet and an outlet - the water flows through, whereas the Dead Sea only has an inlet so there is nowhere that the water can flow from, so it becomes stagnant and lifeless.

I think there is an important lesson we can learn from these two seas. The Sea of Galilee takes in and gives out, the Dead Sea only takes in but it never gives out, that is why it is so stagnant. The lesson is that for us to be spiritually, emotionally and physically healthy there needs to be an inflow and an outflow. There must be a balance. If we are always taking in and never giving out there will be stagnancy. On the other hand if we are always giving out and never taking in there will be exhaustion and burn out. For me one of the great things about being a Christian is that life is all about taking in and giving out. We take in all the good things God gives us and then give of our time and energy to help and support and encourage others. That is also why church is important. When we meet together for worship on a Sunday we take in through the prayers, readings, songs and listening to the sermon what God wants us to receive. We get encouraged, challenged and inspired and that gives us the resources to go and give of ourselves in serving and supporting others.

It will soon be Easter when we remember that in dying on the cross and then rising from the dead Jesus made it possible for us to have forgiveness and new life - things that we need to take in - so that we can

then go out to give what we can to make the world a better place. Why not come to church this Easter and find out a bit more for yourself?

Which of the two seas in the Holy Land are you most like? Which do you want to be most like?

May God bless you this Easter and beyond.

Jim Hamilton, Minister, Ramsden Bellhouse Baptist Church



Would you like to be our Friend?

Did you know?

That St Mary's Church is there for everyone who lives in Ramsden Bellhouse, regardless of whether they come to church or not. We are there for the important occasions in your lives - for Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals. If you would like to know more about these, would like a pastoral visit, or for us to pray for any situations you would like prayer for - then contact one of our ministry team. Contact details are on St Mary's Church page.

Did you know?

That the church is open for you to come in and have a look round every Saturday between April and October. There is a service every Sunday. If you felt you would like to find out more about what the Christian faith has to offer, and would like to come along, there is a Family service 10.30 on the 4th Sunday of the month that is very user friendly for those with young children, and those who aren't used to coming to church. Other service times are on the noticeboard

Did you know?

That the church itself is a Grade 2 listed building. If you are interested in historical buildings there is much of interest in the church itself - so why not ask someone to point out the things of interest to you.

Did you know?

The church itself isn't maintained or funded by government or local authority, but by the congregation and others in the village who feel it is important to preserve and maintain the building itself. Being an historic building, maintenance and repair costs are high - these don't include the everyday running costs of the church. If you would be interested in this aspect of the church, then please consider being one of the Friends of St Mary's. To find out more about this contact our churchwarden Beryl Clements. 01245 601298.

Line Dancing

For fifteen years we have been lucky to have our Line Dancing ladies Lyn and Jean taking the class every Monday {except Bank Holidays}. They had started as beginners at the same class three years before they took over and to prove how popular they are we still have some of their original members. We are always looking for new line dancers, men are more than welcome, so please feel free to pop down to the village hall, we are there at 2.30.p.m. until 3.30.p.m. and see for yourselves how much fun we have.

Ann Wellborne



Horticultural

I hope all your gardens survived the winter! I have moved home and I am starting a new garden from scrub land, it's very daunting!

My last report was before the Autumn show, which went very well and our shows should go from strength to strength with our new show secretary Thomas Carpenter, elected at the AGM. It was a rather long AGM, but there seemed to be a lot to discuss!

The January meeting had a talk on growing vegetables, which was both informative and well attended. The talk on Miss Willmott's Garden in February was given by two lady speakers with excellent slides, this was very much enjoyed and well supported.

Our two Open Shows this year are on June 10th and September 9th, anyone can enter or come along to see the display, there will be tea and cake available. See the notice board for further information.

Thank you to all of you who used the Trading Hut last year. Ken has restocked and the hut is open on Sunday mornings until October.

As a member you can buy from the hut, get nine monthly meetings with speakers, two mini shows, 2 open shows plus a garden visit and all for just £5.00 a year!

You are welcome to join us on the third Monday of the month at 8pm.

Happy Gardening!

Marion Shillum

Parish Council

Local Plan

Currently at the time of going to press, it was anticipated that we would have received notification from Basildon Council of the status with regard to timescales for the next stages of the local plan.

It is understood that whilst Basildon's Plan is ahead of many others around the country there have been delays.

Once details of a revised schedule have been received these will be posted on the RBPC Notice Board and website.

Broadband

For almost three years we have been advised by 'Superfast Essex' as to the progress and details of the different stages of the rollout of fast broadband across Essex as it moves towards its target of 97% coverage.

Stage 1. has been completed and Stage 2. is well under way, for Stage 3. (which we understand is the final stage) an assessment of the remaining areas that do not receive fast broadband (including Ramsden Bellhouse) is in progress.

As a number of residents have noticed from the website of Superfast Essex that they have wrongly indicated that there are a number of properties in the village who have access to fast broadband 'when they do not'!

It is important that you check and advise Superfast Essex accordingly if they have wrongly classified your property in order that we are not excluded from the selection process in Stage 3.

If Ramsden Bellhouse is excluded from Superfast Essex's plans, the Parish Council has been looking at alternative solutions/suppliers that could provide fast broadband at different speeds and costs, in order to suit everyone's requirements and needs.

Presentations and meetings are being arranged during the summer (details will be posted on the RBPC Notice Board and w.site) in order that they can be advised of the options open to them together with a Q&A session, which will hopefully resolve and assist them in the decision making process.

Please remember to contact Superfast Essex on www.superfastessex.org/whats happening next in order to check the status of your individual property and advise them if it is incorrect.

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Considerate Parking

If you or any of your contractors working on your property need to park temporally on part of the pavement in the village, can you please ensure in consideration to your neighbours and other residents that there is adequate space for pedestrians to pass including those that may be in wheelchairs or with children and prams.

Blocking or causing an obstruction can lead to a prosecution which I am sure everyone would rather avoid!

Finally I would remind residents to avoid causing an obstruction to cyclists by parking too close to the build outs.

Saving Lives

A number of residents including those that attended the Defibrillator Training Sessions have asked for a reminder on what the procedure is if they are faced with a possible heart attack or life threatening situation with a family member or neighbour.

In the first instance they should of course contact the Emergency Services on 999 and advise them of their location in order that an ambulance can be sent to them.

If you wish to have access to the defibrillator which is located on the side of the village hall facing the shop, you should also advise the Ambulance Service and provide them with the following Postcode "CM11 1RH" in order that they can provide you with the unlock code.

If you are not confident to use the defibrillator and the village hall is open then it is more than likely that a member of the clubs and playschool that attended the training will be able to assist as around 80 people attended the training.

Security and Crime

As you may be aware an increasing number of homes and vehicles in the village have been broken into over the last 12 months including the village shop.

Whilst the police consider Ramsden Bellhouse as a low crime area, we certainly should continue to be vigilant and alert to further potential crime in the area.

Whilst it is up to every resident to assess and implement their own levels of security, professional advice is always useful.

With this in mind the Parish Council is looking to arrange an event in the Village Hall attended by the Police including crime prevention Officers in order that suggested security and best practice methods can be communicated.

An update and details will be provided on the Notice Board when arrangements have been made and if anyone in the village is interested in joining a Neighbourhood Watch Team can they please advise the RBPC Clerk Sally Faulkner (sfc@sally-faulkner.co.uk).

For details of the next Parish Council meeting please see date details posted on the RBPC Notice Board.

Richard Wellborne.

Chairman Ramsden Bellhouse Parish Council

**Please keep
our Village Tidy**



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Personal Page

Congratulations to

Kay and Peter Debenham on the birth of their 4th granddaughter, **Sarah Regan Debenham** on 4th February 2017. Her parents are **Robert and Charlotte Debenham**.

Roy and Audrey Richards of Church Road on their Diamond Wedding on March 23rd.

In Memory of

Alan Pegrum of Glebe Road, who died on October 24th. A tribute to him is printed in this magazine. Our sympathies go out to Audrey and the family.

Len Ferris of Homestead Road who died on December 16th. He had served as Church Warden of St Mary's Church, Chairman of the Parish Council and Chairman of the Horticultural Society. Our sympathies go out to Hilda and family

Wally (Walter) Searle of Ramsden Park Road who died on 22nd December 2016. He had lived in Ramsden Park Road for 60 years. Our sympathies go out to June and family.

If you would like to put a personal message on this page contact the Editor.



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History of Ramsden Exhibition 2017

At the end of February I organised my final Exhibition. For almost 30 years I have enjoyed doing this event, and must here give credit to Frank Fisher, who for most of those years has shared the work load, and on many aspects knows more than I.

I am pleased to report that my last one was a great success.

I came home with immense satisfaction, a beautiful bouquet, lots of hugs and kisses, and the pleasing knowledge that it will be carried on in digital form by a team of dedicated enthusiasts.

Nostalgia, engendered by this reminds me of incidents from past Exhibitions. A very bored teenage couple, obviously dragged along by their parents took refuge behind Frank's display boards to do a spot of courting. They didn't realise that their legs were visible - it added a new dimension to the day!!

An elderly gentleman used to come regularly both days. After a quick look round, he positioned himself to view the entrance, and watched for anyone he had known in his childhood. Every year he came sat with a tear in his eyes, and the day he actually found someone, his tears and gratitude knew no bounds.

In the very early days, the History of Ramsden, was an annual reunion for a group whose childhood was happily spent in this then rural Village. They came from Bristol, Hastings, Chichester and Colchester to view, to sit and enjoy reminiscing with childhood friends, while having the traditional tea and homemade cakes.

Some helpers have been with me for many years. The late Joan Kelly, with her jolly greetings was sadly missed from the door this year. Joan Wright, always there with her famous cream buns, and Ernie Skinner who fetched and carried, and has infinite knowledge of farming in the area. So many more my friends, too numerous to mention, who have put up with my bossy ways - thank you sincerely, without you it would have gathered dust in my cupboard.

Isabel Johnson



Bus Timetable

Timetables for Service No 10 Monday to Friday

10 Basildon to Shotgate

Service No.:	10	10	10	10	10	10
Notes:	ECC	ECC	ECC	ECC	ECC	ECC
Basildon Hospital, Main Entrance [A]	0836	1036	1236	1436	1636	1810
Basildon, Bus Station [M] Arr	0841	1041	1241	1441	1641	1815
Basildon, Bus Station [M] Dep	0843	1043	1243	1443	1643	1817
Miles Gray Road, opp B&Q	0848	1048	1248	1448	1648	1822
Noak Bridge, South Wash Road	0851	1051	1251	1451	1651	1825
Crays Hill, Shepherd & Dog	0856	1056	1256	1456	1657	1831
Ramsden Bellhouse, Glebe Road	0901	1101	1301	1501	1702	1836
Ramsden Heath, White Horse	0906	1106	1306	1506	1707	1841
Brock Hill, Downham Road	0914	1114	1314	1514	1715	1849
Wickford Broadway, The Swans	0918	1118	1318	1518	1720	1854
Westfield Close	0926	1126	1326	1526	----	----
Beauchamps School	0928	1128	1328	1528	----	----
Shotgate, Post Office	0931	1131	1331	1531	----	----
Hodgson Way	0933	1133	1333	1533	----	----

Notes:
ECC ECC

10 Shotgate to Basildon

Service No.:	10	10	10	10	10	10
Notes:	ECC	ECC	ECC	ECC	ECC	ECC
Hodgson Way	----	0936	1136	1336	1536	----
Shotgate, Post Office	----	0938	1138	1338	1538	----
Westfield Close	----	0939	1139	1339	1539	----
Beauchamps School	----	0941	1141	1341	1541	----
Wickford Broadway, The Swans	0750	0949	1149	1349	1549	1722
Brock Hill, Downham Road	0754	0953	1153	1353	1553	1727
Ramsden Heath, White Horse	0802	1001	1201	1401	1601	1735
Ramsden Bellhouse, Glebe Road	0806	1005	1205	1405	1605	1739
Crays Hill, Shepherd & Dog	0811	1010	1210	1410	1610	1745
Noak Bridge, South Wash Road	0816	1015	1215	1415	1615	1750
Miles Gray Road, opp B&Q	0819	1018	1218	1418	1618	1753
Basildon, Bus Station [F] Arr	0824	1023	1223	1423	1623	1758
Basildon, Bus Station [F] Dep	0826	1025	1225	1425	1625	1800
Basildon Hospital, Main Entrance	0831	1030	1230	1430	1630	1805

Notes:
ECC ECC

Village Events

MAY

Saturday 13th	Coffee Morning	10am - midday	St Mary's Church
Saturday 13th	Fun Whist	7.15pm	Village Hall
Saturday 20th	Concert by "Most Holy Redeemer Church		
	Tickets 710757	7.30pm	St Mary's Church
Saturday 27th	Crunch	9am - midday	Village Hall

JUNE

Saturday 10th	Coffee Morning	10am - midday	St Mary's Church
Saturday 10th	Fun Whist	7.15pm	Village Hall
Saturday 10th	Horticultural Summer Show	2.00pm	Village Hall
	Entries 9am		
Saturday 17th	Strawberry Cream Tea		
	Tickets 710757	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Village Hall
Saturday 17th	Charity Square Dance	8.00pm - 11.00pm	Village Hall
Saturday 24th	Musical Festival		
	Doors open at 2.30pm	4.00pm - midnight	Village Hall

JULY

Saturday 8th	Crunch	9am - midday	Village Hall
Saturday 8th	Coffee Morning	10am - midday	St Mary's Church
Saturday 8th	Fun Whist	7.15pm	Village Hall

AUGUST

Saturday 12th	Coffee Morning	9am - midday	St Mary's Church
Saturday 12th	Fun Whist	7.15pm	Village Hall
Saturday 26th	Crunch	9am - midday	Village Hall
Saturday 26th	Flower Festival	2.00pm - 5.00pm	St Mary's Church
Saturday 26th	Sid Bolan Big Band Concert	5.00pm	
	Tickets 710757		St Mary's Church Open Air
Sunday 27th	Flower Festival	11.00am - 4.00pm	St Mary's Church
Sunday 27th	Songs of Praise	4.00pm	St. Mary's Church
Monday 28th	Flower Festival	11.00am - 4.00pm	St Mary's Church

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 9th	Horticultural Autumn Show	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Village Hall
Saturday 9th	Fun Whist	7.15pm	Village Hall
Saturday 30th	MacMillan Coffee Morning	10.00am - midday	St Mary's Church

OCTOBER

Saturday 14th	Fun Whist	7.15pm	Village Hall
Saturday 28th	Barn Dance Tickets 710757	7.30pm	Village Hall

NOVEMBER

Saturday 4th	Crunch	9am - midday	Village Hall
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Village Directory

Village Hall	Chairman	- Clive Jeffree	710559
	Booking Secretary	- Vivienne Fisher	07772 630513
			01268 531441
	Secretary	- Abby Short	01268 711675
	Treasurer	- Derek Swan	710478
Magazine	Social Secretary	- Ann Wellborne	710250
	Editor	- Isabel Johnson	710428
	Advertising	- Isabel Johnson	710428
	Badminton	Wed 8pm - 10pm - Karen	07884 233242
	Dog Training	Monday (except 3rd in month) 7.15pm - 10pm - Rita Barber	01702 231189
St Mary's Church	Church Wardens	- Beryl Clements	01245 601298
Horticultural	3rd Monday in the month except July, August and December	- Rusi Hodivala	710619
Ladies Medau	Thursday 8pm	- Veronica Greenwood	01702 559914
Cubs	Wed 5.45pm - 7.15pm	- Lin Prince	01268 710143
Scouts	Wed 7.30pm - 9.30pm except 2nd Wed in month	- Chris Maker	01277 652337
Baptist Church	Val Rook		01277 632006
Bowls	Mon 7.30pm Wed 10am Fri 1.30pm	- Hilary Simpson	01268 711118
Dancing Club	Every Sunday 7.30pm - 10.30pm General Dancing	- Barry Gardiner	07702 233898
Whist Drive	Roy Richards (see Village Events)		710669
Line Dancing	Every Monday 2.00pm - 3.00pm	Ken Dobson	710771
Bellhouse Preschool	Mon to Fri 9.30am	-	07881 448686
Website	www.ramsdenbellhouse.info		
Ramsden Parish Council	Sally Faulker (email: SFCOsally-faulker.co.uk)		01245 400628

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