



Christmas kicks off in fine style!

Several thousand people braved the rain and bitter cold on Friday 21 November to see the Christmas lights switched on in Leys Square.



As the pictures show, there was fun for all the family, and attractions included Santa and his huskies, X Factor contestant Anastasia Baker, cast members from the SPADS pantomime, Aladdin, and local band, Pink Champagne. Hertbeat FM provided live coverage of the switch-on and the build up to it. Fairground rides in Leys Avenue added to the party atmosphere.

Typical of the positive feedback from visitors to this growing annual event was the e-mail received the next day from a Station Road resident: "Just a quick note to say how much our family enjoyed the switching on of the

Christmas lights. A lot of effort must have gone into it and it was greatly appreciated."

Town centre manager Martin Fletcher said, "This was the first time that an event on this scale had been attempted, and we will be taking on board comments from traders when we plan next year's switch-on. There were lots of smiling faces in the audience that evening and we are delighted to have brought so much pleasure to the town's customers."

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- Martins, Leys Avenue – keeping it in the family!

Stop press: free parking Saturdays 13 & 20 December

There will be free parking in the council and Heritage Foundation car parks all day on the above dates to encourage shoppers.

Let your customers know about this great concession!



Letchworth Garden City
Town Centre Partnership



Member news: November/ December events at Letchworth Arts Centre Craft Fair

This year's Craft Fair at Letchworth Arts Centre promises to be even bigger and better than last year's highly successful event. The exhibition features work by local and national artists specialising in quality arts and crafts to make Christmas shopping a pleasure, with the added bonus of the fully licensed café serving everything from Fairtrade coffee to excellent home-cooked lunches.

A Christmas Carol

Myriad Productions makes a welcome return with their presentation of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* at the Arts Centre on 17 December. This new adaptation follows Myriad's highly successful *Pride and Prejudice* and guarantees an excellent evening for the whole family.
Tickets: £8 members, £9 non-members.

The exhibition at the Centre, 2 The Arcade, is part of Letchworth Town Centre's Christmas activities, with pottery, pictures, jewellery, textiles, clothing and more. It runs to 20 December, 10.00 to 5.00 Monday to Friday, 10.00 to 3.00 Saturdays.

Federation of Small Businesses

If you are running a small business or just starting one you can profit and save money in many ways from being part of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). With approaching 2 million members, the non profit making Federation of Small Businesses is the largest and most effective business organisation in the UK. Given the buying power of the FSB, a truly comprehensive and cost effective range of services and support are available. These include a highly acclaimed 24 hour legal benefits package, which includes free tax investigation protection, health and safety, employment law and access to over 150 free documents.

The FSB has also negotiated many additional services including:

- **FREE business banking for life**
- **Low cost credit card acceptances and machine rentals (no fee for machine installations)**
- **Great rates for completely mobile credit card machines**
- **Commercial Insurances**
- **Health Care**
- **And much more including lobbying on behalf of businesses and networking events (see www.fsb.org.uk for more details)**

Maree Atkinson is the local business adviser for the FSB and her role is to help solve businesses' queries and guide them through the business advice and savings available through the FSB.



Federation of Small Businesses
The UK's Leading Business Organisation

For more information, contact Maree on
01462 451124 or **077364 71568**
(www.fsb.org.uk or
www.mareeatkinson.com)

Letchworth prepares for the **future**



Update on Heritage Foundation plans

Subject to getting legal agreements in place with Hertfordshire County Council, the Heritage Foundation expects to be on site in January 2009, with its massive 'streetscene' improvements in the town centre.

This message comes from Stuart Kenny, the Heritage Foundation's Director General, who also told *Trading Up*: "In parallel, we will be continuing to work up our Wynd redevelopment proposals, looking to get a partner lined-up and key retail pre-lets in

place. We need to be ready to press ahead with the development as soon as market conditions permit."

The Foundation has been gearing-up for the 'streetscene' on-site start since Planning Permission was granted by North Hertfordshire District Council in March this year. *Trading Up* will keep you informed about the construction programme as soon as more details are available from the Foundation and their contractors.

Partnership's marketing and support initiatives for 2009

Details of our 2009 events programme will be published early in the New Year. It will include a Space and Science Fiction Week in May and, in partnership with Letchworth Arts Centre (LAC), industrial heritage themed events in the summer to coincide with LAC's summer festival. In between these larger scale events, there will be a number of smaller events to keep our visitors entertained.

Next year will also see the launch of our new quarterly magazine, delivered to around 125,000 letterboxes in the surrounding area. With some limited advertising space available for Partnership members, the new publication will be our showcase for what's going on in the town and an opportunity to reach a very wide audience.

We are grateful to Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation for the financial support they are providing for marketing and events over the coming twelve months.

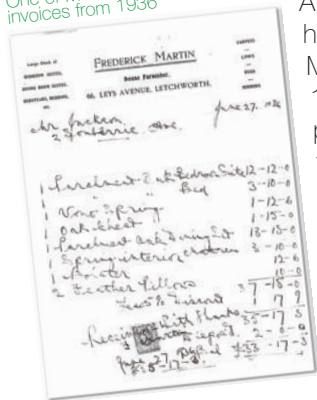


Please contact Martin Fletcher if you wish to become a member of the Partnership. Outstanding subscriptions: if you've received a renewal form, please settle payment with us!

Member news: Leys Avenue dynasty continues at Martins!

Martins, or Frederick Martin as it was first known, has been a fixture on Leys Avenue since 1936, when Maurice Reed started the business of supplying all types of household furniture. Giving great value and friendly customer service to a loyal local customer base, the company grew from strength to strength through both good and challenging economic times – including one World War and a couple of recessions.

One of Martins' earliest invoices from 1936



After 40 years of hard work, Maurice retired in 1976 and passed down the business to two of his sons, Norman and Raymond Reed, who have been at the helm ever since and

expanded the business to where it is today. This month, Norman with his

wife Ruth and Raymond will retire and once again pass the business down to another member of the family – Stephen White, Ruth's younger brother.

Stephen, who worked at Martins on Saturdays and in his school holidays, is joining the firm with over 25 years' business and marketing experience and intends to operate Martins on very much a "Business As Usual" basis, i.e., offering friendly customer service, great value and a one-stop shop for all types of furniture. The store can now supply everything from beds to carpets, three-piece suites to dining furniture, and wardrobes to a fantastic new range of electric lift and recline chairs.

"I am honoured to have been asked to take over the business, and am confident that Martins will continue to serve the local community in the same friendly way that it has over the past 72 years," said Stephen. "At the same time, we will be moving into the cyber age soon with our first website."

Trading Up wishes Norman, Ruth and Raymond a long and happy retirement and looks forward to watching the new chapter in Martins' history as it unfolds.



partnership member?

Got a news item that you want to share?

Contact the town centre manager now!

Town Centre Dates for your diary

December 2 Business Breakfast

Broadway Hotel 7.30am. Our speaker will be Chief Inspector Geoff Camp of Hertfordshire Constabulary, whose topic will be town centre policing.

£6 payable on the day. To book a place, telephone 01462 650266

December 5 Italian Market

Francesco's popular is making a welcome return for one day only. The market,

which will be located in Leys Square, sells a wide range of Italian products from an array of colourful stalls with their distinctive green, white and red awnings. For more information, contact Martin Fletcher on 01462 486999

December 20 Christmas Farmers' Market

Stock up with fresh produce direct from the growers! Leys Square 9.00am to 1.00pm. For details telephone 01462 486999

January 8 Business Breakfast

Broadway Hotel 7.30am. Open forum. £6 payable on the day. To book a place, telephone 01462 650266

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