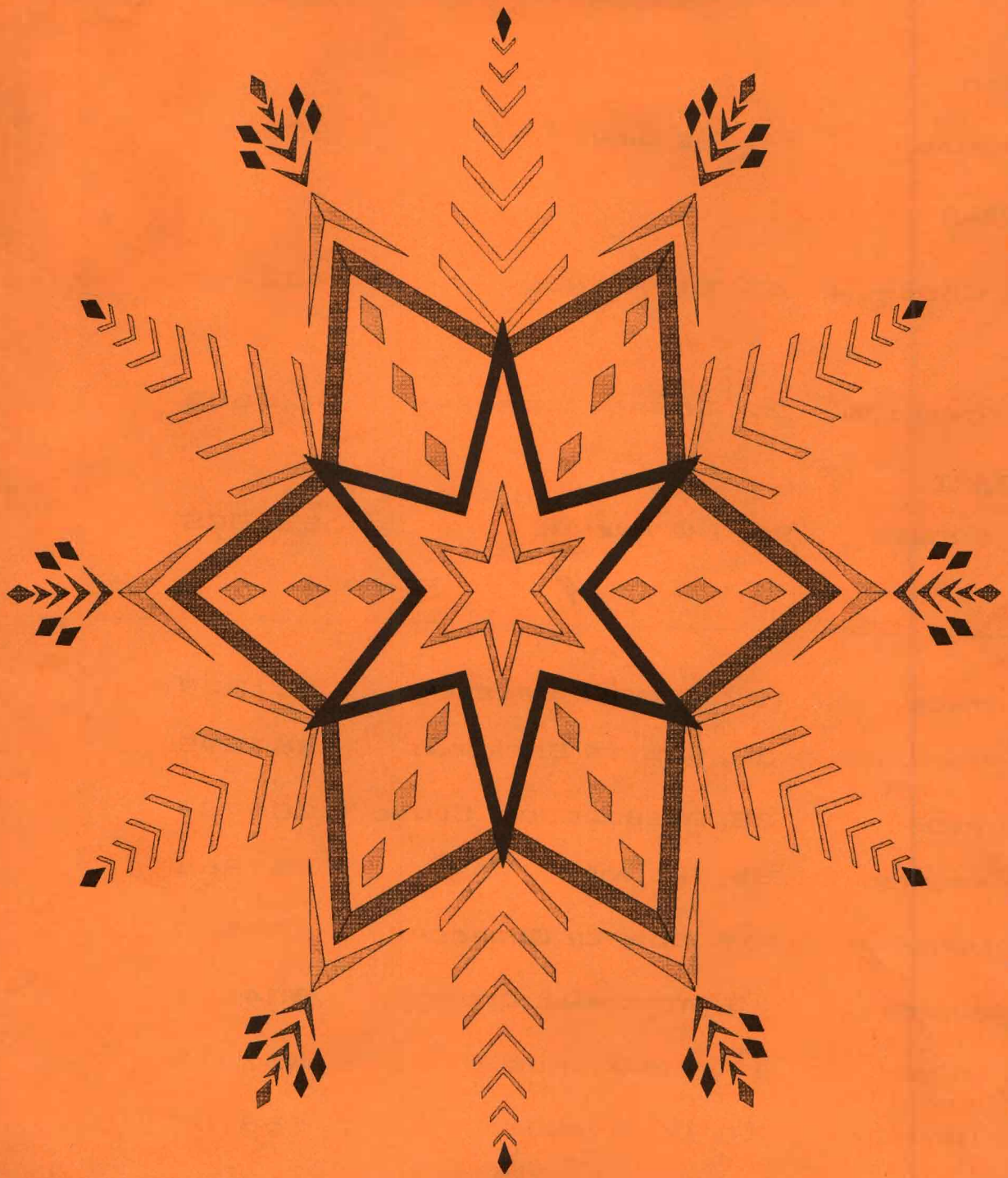
Autumn 2000

MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	ADDRESS	TEL.(ALL HERTFORD)
CHAIRMAN		
GUY THOMAS	14, THE DRIVE	503443
TREASURER		
DENNIS GOODRUM	43, THE AVENUE	422492
EDITOR		
ALLAN STREETON	22, COWPER CRESCENT	423682
SECRETARY		
PENNY ANDREW	96, THE AVENUE	586028
PAM LUTNER	107, COWPER CRESCENT	581329
JOAN MURRELL	38, COWPER CRESCENT	587595
KEN LUPTON	23, DESBOROUGH CLOSE	306723
MARIE ARCHER	55, THE WICK	581965
KATE HARRISON	105, COWPER CRESCENT	558959
JANE COOPER	3, WOODHALL CLOSE	584365
GEOFF CLARK	17, THE AVENUE	552913
HELEN GRAHAM	31, THE AVENUE	558168
JANE CLARK	5, WOODHALL CLOSE	587917
PETER LEVER	125. THE AVENUE	422503

MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK
Autumn 2000

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Grass:
Playing Field Trees,
' Did You Know....?'
Abandoned cars, trolleys etc.
millennium seats
Woodhall Close

Welcome to another edition of MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK. especially to those who have recently joined this happy breed of 'ex-onion patch' dwellers.

On this point we have included a potted history of Molewood including prices which, you may have noticed , have risen slightly from when development took place in the 1950's !

We hope you all enjoyed the summer, not a record one by any means, unless you sought out sunnier climes, although the end of season took on a slight 'Indian' flavour.
We also hope you coped during the petrol and rail crises, the election campaign (US), violent storms and floods, although with an elevation of over 200 feet we are above all that !

The garden competition will be re-commenced in the Spring although, if the superb floral displays and garden layouts this year are anything to go by, the most difficult task will be the judging !

Once more PAM LUTNER was covered in blooming glory in a September issue of The Mercury pictured amongst her Cowper Crescent corner display, having claimed her 10th. first place for her medium garden in the ' Hertford in Bloom 2000 'competition.

Sandie Ford, head teacher of Bengeo County Primary School is leaving.
We wish her luck and thank her for her hard work and contributions to this newsletter.
Her 'goodbyes' appear later.

We were hoping to re-introduce the *Yellow Pages* on the back page following our invitation for Items for Sale on the notice boards from which no response has been received so far. Please send in any items for the next issue: they will cost you .....NOTHING !
With the increase in numbers now attending our monthly committee meetings we are finding it difficult to seat a dozen or more members in one room. If you think you have the space to accommodate us all for one evening only each month, please get in touch with one of the committee.
USE OR LOSE ?
We have mentioned about the problems created with private cars permanently parked outside the shops and shopkeepers have appealed to some drivers by leaving notes on their windscreens.This inhibits deliveries and prevents those wishing to stop a few minutes for purchases thereby losing shopkeepers potential customers, who may well then continue down town to a supermarket.

One car owner from Ware even had the temerity to leave his car in our patch bearing a ' For Sale' notice !
We have a nice little selection of shops in our parade and it would be a pity to lose them.
So please don't prevent others from stopping and shopping and.....
use 'em !

A CUT ABOVE

On the question of grasscutting, now that our Local Councillor has donned the Mayoral robes of office, he has at last come out and openly criticised the poor record of maintenance of our greens.
We can now look forward to a smarter estate in 2001.....can't we ?????
Those houses backing the school playing field perimeter fence where seeded trees have grown to almost 20-30 feet in places can look forward to the school - who is responsible for maintenance - keeping the growth down to reasonable levels in future.
The large trimming machine is due round in November.
At least - and at last -the re-surfacing of the pavements has begun in The Wick!

MOLEWOOD HISTORY

(Where are they now ?)

We still have ' Outlooks' going back over 20 years and we take a peek into the past at one dated OCTOBER 1980.

1. Elaborate seasonal cover drawn by Steven Vinton of 110, Cowper Crescent, showing Mr. Mole walking up The Avenue towards the Water Tower - presumably observing the aerials (things do not change much !)

2. Chairman - David Black
Secretary - Nancy Scott
Treasurer - Christain Cox
Editor - Andrew Stevenson One of the committee members is still a member (Yes, you've guessed - Pam Lutner *!)*

3. Items included:-

Social Evening in the River Room at the Casle Hall with a talk on Antiques from Beckwiths.

Notice of the AGM of the Bengeo Youth Club in Duncombe Church Hall.
(not quite so *youthful* by now ?)

Public meeting to discuss the extension of Stansted Airport.
Surprise, surprise.... GRAVEL !
Objections to proposals for more gravel extractions.

Countryside Management Meeting. What officers could do to help preserve the Molewood Woodland area.

Court Homes Development: Applications refused by Council for proposed development in Molewood Area.

POLICE NOTICE: - Police intend to mount another campaign against illegal parking, including facing the wrong way, parking too near a road junction, etc.
(Bring back the old Bobbie, we say !!)

Appeal to members to pay outstanding subs of.....50 P !!!!!!

(We hope to delve into some more archives of our bit of history in future issues, but if you have any special memories of interesting events, please let us know.)

From the ARCHIVES:-

With house demand outstripping the supply prices were "rocketing" in 1960 when approval was given for 195 houses and 65 bungalows to be built by Hubert C. Leach Ltd. of Chestnut on land near Bengeo Infants' School.
The owners of the allotments, Bengeo Working Mens' Club were to become
" The richest working mens' club in the UK" with the sale to Leach. The club had bought the land seven years before at £100 an acre !
At an auction in The Salisbury the hammer went down for £98,000 for ten and a half acres of building land.
The club were able to purchase the spacious building they still have in Bengeo Street.
The purchase was in addition to about 25 adjoining acres already being developed by Leach and known as ' The Molewood Estate'.
Such was the demand that more than 100 people queued *all night* for the 59 houses.
These particular ones were semi-detached fetching the *outrageous* price of.....£3675 !
Since then prices have risen slightly !!
(more fascinating local history later....)

SCHOOL MATTERS !

LEA VALLEY SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROJECT

Meeting at Bengeo Primary School -Wednesday 27th September 2000

The first meeting of this committee was held to introduce the way forward on this Project. The Association was represented by Ken Lupton.

The issues introduced were:

1.Background to the Project
- a. National Prospective
- b. Local Prospective
- c. Selection of the Schools
- d. Other support to the project

2.What is expected from the schools
- a. A commitment to make a change and the ideals of the project
- b. Enthusiasm
- c. Promotion of the project through:
  - Newsletters
  - Prospectus
  - PTA/Governors
  - School council meetings
- d. Curriculum work
- e. Development of a School Travel Plan and continued monitoring against the objectives
- f. Regular Working Groups meetings at the school

3. What can be expected from the Officers
- a. A commitment to help work with you to solve the problems
- b. Enthusiasm
- c. Access to other departments and professionals to help to come up with solutions

4. Funding for the project
- a. Is there any funding?
- b. What can it be spent on?

5. Work undertaken so far
- a. Travel Pattern Questionnaires
- b. Feedback

6. The Programme (preliminary ideas)

This term
- a. Work with school council
- b. Inclusion of feedback in to parents newsletters
- c. Identify the key routes to school, and problem areas
- d. Create ideas
- e. Investigate the problems
- f. Get the pupils involved
- g. Have an exhibition for parents and residents

After Christmas until the summer holidays
- a. Develop the solutions
- b. Implementation of changes
- c. Complete the school travel plan6. Continued
- d. Display the evolution of the ideas and public consultation
- e. Produce contract drawings (MTSC)

School holidays and next school year
- a. Construction work
- b. Maintain enthusiasm and continue to promote Walking/Bus/Cycling/ skills
- c. Monitor Travel Patterns

1. Development of the Working Group

Following a review of the Plan a general discussion took place in which reference was made to the provision of a 'Walking Bus' whereby children would be assembled at a designated point and then would proceed to school under the supervision of volunteer parents (the number of supervision would depend on the number of children in the 'Walking Bus'). It was hoped that many parents would use this form of getting children to school rather than using the car. The Plan is a Government initiative and funding to make the plan viable will be available from the Government.

Safety was a prime mover in the Plan and ways were being looked at to improve safety in recognised routes to and around the School. Already some work has been carried out in Bengeo Street. Traffic calming is also being considered in areas adjacent to the school and speed and traffic volume registering equipment has already been installed in the Avenue and Sacombe Road. Residents will have to ensure safety by removing overhanging shrubs etc that have encroached on to pathways. Problems associated with

general parking of vehicles in roads close to the school was highlighted and the fact that in Sacombe road especially problems existed due to parking and mothers loading vehicles on the roadside of the car instead of using the pavement. If the pavement is obstructed by overgrowing hedgerow then the Council will have to ensure it is cut back.

It was interesting to learn that schemes such as planned were being used internationally. It was suggested that the committee should contact our twinned towns to see what initiatives they were planning.

SANDIE FORD

After five years as Headteacher at our local school Sandie will be missed by parents, children and teachers alike when she leaves at the end of the winter term.

Her responsibilities include maintenance of the site, health and safety, staffing and the learning and welfare of the pupils as well as carrying out classroom observations and covering the odd lesson.

With all this responsibility she feels that she can no longer devote enough time for the most important function in life - that of working with staff and children.

Sandie Ford writes her fond farewells later in the Outlook.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Crime Report

During the period 09 - 05 - 00 to 18 - 09 - 00 there were no reported crimes in Desborough Close, Lyshill Gardens, Lodge Close, Cowper Crescent, The Orchard, Cumberland Close and Woodhall Close.

There was a theft from a motor vehicle in the Drive.

There was a theft from a motor vehicle in The Wick.

There were two house burglaries in the Avenue where property and a car was stolen. Fortunately the police were nearby and stopped the vehicle and property was recovered.

In general we are lucky that we do not have a lot of crime in the area but as you see from the above it does happen and therefore we must all take the necessary precautions as far as is possible to safeguard our property by ensuring sheds garages and houses are made secure before we leave them. In addition we should also be vigilant not only for ourselves but for everyone else in the area especially where the elderly are concerned. If there is something suspicious going on in the area that you are not happy about then call the police. It is better that they have the information to act on immediately rather than later when because of the delay it may be impossible to have a successful outcome.

In the last 'Outlook' you were updated on the 'Voicemail' unfortunately that facility is no longer available to us. This means that if there was a serious occurrence in the area we would only be made aware of the situation through Neighbourhood Co-ordinators as they are the only ones still on the police computer. This then presents a major problem in the area since as you will have seen in the last issue that there are only a handful of Co-ordinators to cover the 550 houses in the 'Watch'.

Ideally there should be a Co-ordinator to say every 20 or so houses to make the system really effective. Therefore a plea is going out to get more Co-ordinators. The number of calls that are received from the police are few and often it would be left to the Co-ordinator to decide whether or not this is vital information which needs to be given to their particular members. If it is not vital but for general information then it will appear on the notice boards and will not normally require actioning by the Co-ordinator.

We must not be complacent because crime is low in the area. One of these days something really serious might happen that would affect all or part of the area so WE MUST BE PREPARED. Volunteers should contact Ken Lupton address and telephone number is on the Residents Committee listing on the reverse of the cover.

WATERFORD HEATH UPDATE

Concern has been raised recently at Heath meetings and in the last one or two Mercury issues about the growing amount of misuse of the Heath.

Concerns have been expressed by walker and parents with children about the failure of persons using both the north and south Heaths to keep to the permitted footpaths as requested in the notices outside the site entrances.

Not only does the unrestricted roaming of people and dogs disturb the wildlife beginning to return to the land, but in certain circumstances, it can prove positively dangerous.

There are still quicksands in some parts of the Heath and already there have been instances of people and dogs becoming stuck in the ponds by wading in. The ponds have only recently been lined so as to retain the water to attract wildlife and wading birds in the winter and spring, and therefore are very soft and dangerous as a result.

PLEASE do keep to the waymarked paths and make sure that neither you, or your children or dogs go near the ponds, or worse, actually in them.

Warning notices will shortly be put in place.

There have been many complaints and concern about the steady increase of the Heath being used as doggy toilets. Whilst not wishing to spoil dog walkers the use of the permitted and lovely views, PLEASE keep dogs under restricted control and show consideration to other users of this beautiful

area and carry ' pooper scoops' and plastic bags with you to clear up any mess at all times.

The Heaths are now part of Four Schools Curriculum and many visits are made, it is very distressing for the children and teachers alike to constantly watch where they are walking, not to mention the mess on shoes being trodden into schools and houses, and being a DANGEROUS HEALTH HAZARD.

In fact the whole of East Herts Council area is designated for the purpose of the dogs (fouling of land) act 1996 making it an *offence* not to clear up your dog's faeces.

INFORMATION ON THE HEATH CAN BE OBTAINED FROM :-

George Sandell H 500422

Pam Lutner H. 581329

HOUNDED OUT.....Dog Owners' Lament

There are many dedicated dog walkers on this estate who use the Heath once or twice *every* day to keep their dogs well exercised, healthy and able to socialise with canine buddies. In fact, almost the *only p*eople to be seen in this delightful setting over the darker winter months are the dog walkers who, in spite of criticisms to the contrary, appreciate more than most the natural beauty of this lovely area. Although, owing to their numbers, dogs are the main *culprits* of mess making, deposits from numerous other species are to be found and, indeed ....are not dogs just as much a part of nature? Whilst most owners do try to keep the footpaths clear it is often difficult to trace every inch of a dog's tracks when it is *running free* and faeces left in deep fauna soon compost back into the earth with rain etc.

HOWEVER ——if we wish to continue to enjoy walking our beloved pooches in this lovely setting -*let's at least keep the paths clear.!*

SACOMBE ROAD GARDEN CENTRE

Maybe you are wondering what is - or isn't - happening at the Garden Centre. It appears that Country Gardens had an application to rework the Centre back in May 1995. Work would have to have started by May 2000 for the application to remain valid. The demolition that took place earlier this year will have been classed as work commencing. We must watch this space to see what happens next!!

PELICAN CROSSING - BENGEO STREET

The Council have agreed the site for the new Pelican crossing in Bengeo Street. This will be adjacent to the White Lion Public House. Installation will take place during November 2000.

BRYAN THURSTON

Sadly Bryan Thurston of 125 The Avenue passed away on Monday 25th. September 2000.

Bryan, who was 72, was a very active member of the local community having served on this committee and was also Chairman for a while.
He was also a very active member of CAGE during the critical times a few years ago.

Bryan was an experienced sailor with his own boat moored at Burnham-on-Crouch where he spent much of his free time.

On behalf of the committee and local residents we offer our sincere condolences to his wife Maureen, relatives and many local friends.

CAR SHARING..... SPEEDING.....and.....DUMPING !

If, in the interest of economy, cleaner environment and better ' neighbourliness', you would like to be involved in being a passenger or a driver in an anticipated CAR SHARING SCHEME please let us know via:-
Geoff. Clark's e/mail address viz.
gbnuhL3g@ibmmail.com (17, The Avenue)
Details required:- Name, address, contact no. , journey to/from, leave/return times and frequency of journey (weekly, daily etc.)
This would be strictly on a *friendly* basis avoiding any commercial implications with NO money changing hands, to avoid problems arising which might invalidate motor insurance policies, etc.

Once again, pedestrians have complained about some drivers' excessive speed around the estate roads, in particular The Avenue.

PLEASE.....Kill your speed before *your speed kills !*

With more and more older cars having little or no value DUMPING is becoming a problem. Last year alone 200 vehicles had to be removed from roadsides although arrangements can be made for these to be collected and disposed of.
If you suspect a car of being dumped please make a note of its location, colour, make, registration and whether taxed and 'phone the Council on (01279)655261.

More on.....NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Recently you may have seen a letter from a local resident in the local press relating to a message from the police concerning the presence of travellers in the area. An article in ' Streetwise' the Watermill Estate Residents Association and Neighbourhood Watch newsletter by Police Chief Inspector Vic Botterill who since retirement heads their Neighbourhood Watch puts the situation in perspective:-

TRAVELLERS

Since the early part of this year we have received reports from the police of Travellers, which has been passed on to you, often with well meant advice such as ''crime expected to rise'' and '' be vigilant''.

At the last circulation as a result of a police message, I received correspondence from a resident who was critical of my actions. At first I was angry and hurt, because I felt my intentions were honourable and in the interests of the community. However, having re-read the letter and thought about the contents, I have to say that the writer has a point.

It is very difficult sometimes to separate the anecdotal evidence from prejudice. I would be the first to admit that my experience of travellers has not been good. Perhaps I have been in a position where it would be surprising if it were not otherwise. The difficulty is that as soon as you say that '' all members of a particular minority group are...'' then you are in trouble, because the moment you find one that doesn't do what you assert all members do the injustice can be the result.
I know because there are some people who have a stereotype of the police which says that *all* are racist, sexist and what ever other *ist you care to conceive.
However Travellers present enormous challenges to local communities, because some of them *do* steal;, cause damage and leave rubbish. That is why it is hard to criticise the police for alerting the fixed community of their presence.
However, to condemn the lot places us all on the first step of Allports Scale of Prejudice with all the terrible consequences that we have seen not only in this country but in other parts of the world.

What is Allports Scale of Prejudice ? It begins where a community holds an opinion about a particular minority group whether negative or positive,but usually negative, which nobody questions. Routine insults are passed and not challenged, malicious jokes are the order of the day and comments even in the presence of children are made so that dislike and distrust of the minority group become endemic. As a result a climate (antilocution) exists within that community which enables some of them to state that they always avoid dealing with "those" people because they are one of that group and only because they are a member of that group. If anyone criticises their avoidance, they will say - "how dare you criticise me I've heard you go on about them too". Once their position is established , then some will go a step further and discriminate

against those who have been demonised. Challenges to their behaviour are dismissed because antilocution paralyses rational discussion.
The next step is legitimate physical assault of the minority. In some cases you will be able to put labels (actual) on them so you can see who they are. And the final step is genocide, when the only way to deal with such a minority is to kill them. All this held together by the majority who to remain consistent with their prejudice, maintain the antilocution that enables the prejudice to flourish.
Now I am not suggesting we are anywhere near that, but it is always difficult for the critic to be heard in such cases. I like to think that I know where my own prejudices lie so that I can deal with them and to think about alternatives in a forward looking way. Yes, we should be aware that *some* travellers are dishonest, but it is worth reminding ourselves not to condemn all because of the few.

ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION BATTLE OF BRITAIN - WINGS WEEK APPEAL

On behalf of the Hertford and District Branch I would like to thank all those in the local area for the tremendous support they gave in contributing to the house to house collection during the two weeks prior to Battle of Britain Sunday 17th September 2000. The sum collected was £307.53. Thanks also to those who contributed elsewhere in the town, Tesco or Van Hage Garden Centre etc. The total collected for this appeal amounted to £3295 which once again exceeded the amount collected in previous years.
Ken Lupton - Vice President. .

OFF THEIR TROLLEY ?

If you see any abandoned trolleys littering the landscape then Freephone Tesco's recovery service 0800 505555.

MILLENNIUM SEATS

The first of the proposed seats we hope will be installed in The Wick, play area.

WOODHALL CLOSE

Sadly the campaigning which has been vigorously pursued for some years to provide more off road parking facilities has ground to a halt. The 100% support requiring financial input from all housholders was not forthcoming.

WATER TOWER

Many will have read in the Mercury of a planning application for a new aerial. The Association has objected to this on the grounds of:-

Impairing the visual look, unknown quantities of radiation and inconsistent notification of the application to local residents.

FIREWORKS

Memories of Guy Fawkes night fun are but a few remaining empty shells lying around,but fireworks are becoming popular for other celebratory events such as birthdays and especially Christmas.
So, if you plan your festive season to go with a bang...have fun BUT remember kiddies safety and spare a thought for our domestic pets who do not understand what is going on.

GAP YEAR

Keith Newman tells us about his exciting plans:-

My Year in Guyana

About: Me

My name is Keith Newman I am 17 years old. I live at 8 Desborough Close and am an ex-pupil from Bengeo County Primary School. I am currently studying Maths, Physics and Chemistry A levels at Simon Balle School.

For my gap year from August 2001 to 2002 I am going to teach Maths and Science in a secondary school in Guyana, South America. I was selected for this by the organisation "Project Trust" after a week long selection course on the Hebridean island of Coll.

Project Trust is a non profit making educational charity that places volunteers in a developing country for twelve months prior to university.

Over 3000 volunteers have been sent in the last 33 years to over 40 different countries. The Project I am going on is providing science education to the children in Guyana. There are two aims to Project Trust: firstly it gives something valuable to the communities of developing countries and it also provides the chance for the volunteers to learn about a different culture. It is important to understand that the project doesn't take work from the local people. The volunteers live in the local communities and receive the same wage as the locals.

About: Guyana

Guyana means 'Land of Many Waters' in Amerindian, the language of Guyana's indigenous population but Guyana is made up of much more than just numerous rivers. Its geography includes swathes of virgin rainforest, vast mountain ranges and dry Savannah, as well a huge variety of flora and fauna.

Guyana is a country which for the last thirty years has suffered from neglect. It has a population of Africans and Indians, plus some others including ethnic Indians in the interior.

Guyana is a beautiful and tropically lush country. However Guyana suffers from a large crime problem and the Capital Georgetown competes with Bogota as the most violent capital city in South America.

The Project.

The school I may be working in is run down and in need of repair. The schools have around four hundred students and the majority of the staff are totally untrained.

I will be using my A-level subjects to help me teach maths and science to classes as large as sixty students.

One of the projects is close to the Brazilian border in an area called Letham which is only accessible by a sixteen hour truck journey.

What Can I Do To Help?

Guyana is a nation that has been struggling with a brain drain towards Brazil and Canada. This is a problem that can only be helped by the support that organisations such as Project Trust can provide

However as Project Trust is a non-profit making charity they ask their volunteers to raise the £3,350 that is required to live abroad for a year. I was selected during the summer holidays and have already broken the £500 mark with a sponsored walk and some car boot sales.

As I intend to do further car boot sales and raffles I would ask that if anyone has anything that might be useful please contact me on · 01992 586456.

MORE LOCAL HISTORY——' WATERFORD IN TIMES PAST'

Heather Fogg of Silver Birches in High Molewood has edited a second edition of her book first published in 1986, with contributions from over thirty people. The latest edition has even more contributors, more pictures and an index of personal names.

Waterford was part of Bengeo until early in the nineteenth century when it became a Parish in its own right. The appearance of the village and the area as we now know is largely due to the Smith family of Goldings. It was they who moved the main Stevenage road to its present alignment, increased the number of dwellings, rebuilt the mansion, founded the school and built the beautiful little church with its wonderful windows.

All profits from the sale of WATERFORD IN TIMES PAST (second edition) go towards the upkeep of Waterford church. The book costs £5 and is available from Methvens or from Heather Fogg (Tel. 581092)

From Sandie Ford

As this is my last letter before I leave at the end of term it is good to be able to include some positive initiatives which tackle the problem of pedestrian safety near the school.

We are currently involved in the Safer Routes to School project. Mrs Salina Somers and Ms Candy Whittome , both parents of children at the school, were instrumental in launching this initiative. This term we have sent out questionnaires and are holding meetings involving local residents' representatives, parents, staff and governors and the school Council.The aim is to look at safer ways for children to come to school and also some practical solutions to parking and pedestrian safety.If you would like to know more, Ms. Whittome is a Parent Governor and can be contacted through the school.

GROUNDS ISSUES

I would like to mention our on-going problem with access to the school site. Although we have notices warning the public not to come onto the site, we are regularly finding evidence that dogs are being brought into the grounds. It would be heart-breaking if a child were to pick up a parasite. Please do not exercise dogs in our grounds.If you do take your dogs into the woods, please make sure that you take any deposits away with you!

I am sorry the boundary fence has caused some problems to residents this year. The wet spring caused an unusual growth spurt and we only have contractual arrangements for one hedge trim per year, in November. Our gardener has come to the rescue and is clearing the worst of the brambles and has trimmed the taller hedge. I hope this will solve the problem.

I have enjoyed working at the school over the past five years and the opportunities I have had to meet local residents. I hope the links we have established will continue with my successor (Mrs Deborah Purrett, our current Deputy Head, will be Acting Head until an appointment is made).

Mrs Sandy Ford

SAFETY in the HOME

During the long dark days of winter , many non-dog walking residents *hibernate* shutting their doors to the world and weather.

It is then that many accidents happen, especially amongst ' high risk groups' such as:-

- **Elderly living on their own.**
- **Occupants who smoke.**
- **Occupants with alcohol problems.**

These may seem obvious but, general safety measures include:-

- **Keep candles away from flammable materials.**
- **Do not leave candles unattended.**
- **Keep matches and lighter out of reach of children.**

DO YOU have a correctly fitted and maintained smoke alarm ?

WATCH OUT for:

- **Plugs hot to the touch.**
- **Fuses that blow regularly for no apparent reason.**
- **Evidence of brown scorch marks on plugs and sockets.**
- **Lights that flicker when switched on.**

EVERY room in the house holds hidden hazards with such things as electric blankets and fat pans etc. in the kitchen.

As a rule Herts Fire and Rescue Service recommend that all doors are closed at night to prevent rapid spread of any fires, all electrical plugs to be removed and any ash trays emptied and washed out.

All these may seem obvious to you, but you may know an elderly or infirm neighbour who would appreciate you checking these things out for them.

For further information tel. 01438 737399

DID YOU KNOW.....??????????.....

.....*THAT* YOU CAN GET A REFUND OF PART OF YOUR WATER BILL ?

.....Resident George Marvin (tel. 586027) writes:-

' Tucked away in the small print of the Three Valleys Water account I spotted - *Surface Water and Drainage Rebate. If you believe that rainwater from your property does not drain in to the sewerage system you can ring either Thames Water or Anglian Water for an application form to claim a rebate.*

The rebate is £15 p.a and you should ring Thames Water on 0845 300 2234 for a form.

(you don't have a customer number, when they ask, because they do not supply your water, only deal with the sewerage).You need to say that your surface water drainage goes to soakaways and not to sewer - I expect this applies to *all* houses on the Molewood Estate.'

(Well, may be the Water Company will be *deluged* with about 500-plus claims in the near future !)

Also.....THAT

We have a garden on the estate that is open to the public Yes, really - in Cowper Crescent, no less !

Not quite up to the standard of Highgrove or like the Hanging Gardens of Babylon perhaps but the garden is usually open to the public once a year for a small fee which goes to the local Hospice.(Last year £472 was raised)

Tea and delicious home-made cakes, Bring and Buy stall and a raffle with prizes were all provided by friends, neighbours and local shops.

It was all organised by Audrey Mann and Sid. and Maureen Rowley. We are asked to express special thanks to Sid. who's garden gave so much pleasure in spite of the fact that he was recovering from surgery at the time.

Stand by and keep an eye out in Summer 2001 !

And.....THAT

There is a service on the estate where repairs and alterations to clothes etc. can be carried out ?

This is at 127, The Avenue. - Sylvia Karim tel. 551135

CHEERFULNESS....

Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never happen

LOWELL

REMEMBER, the shortest day is upon us which means the winter is half over with another half to face.

Depressed ? It depends whether you consider the glass half empty - or half *full !*

STOP PRESS -SAFER ROUTE TO SCHOOL

Proposals aimed at improving safety of children attending Bengeo School and promoting walking and cycling as alternatives to the car are to be displayed as part of the Christmas Fayre at the school on Sunday 10th. Decmber from 12 noon until 4 pm

We want your views so please come along !

Finally.....

We wish all residents a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a happy and prosperous New Year