

Molewood Outlook

By the Molewood Residents' Association.

Representing the Molewood estate in Bengeo.

Editor: Allan Streeton

Autumn Edition

Molewood Residents' Association Committee are:

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
Chairman Brian Laming	49, Cowper Crescent	583512	blaming@hotmail.com
Treasurer Nick Gough	11, Lys Hill Gardens	423723	Ndgough@ntlworld.com
Editor Allan Streeton	22, Cowper Crescent	423682	allboye@btinternet.com
Secretary Joan Murrell	38, Cowper Crescent	587595	Jem.molewood@tiscalli.co.uk
Marie Archer	55, The Wick	581965	
Janet Moy	15, Desborough Close	586645	
John Edwards	8, The Wick	558247	j.suttill@yahoo.co.uk
Bryan Ayres	5, Cowper Crescent	586512	

Editor's comments

Another year is nearing closure, the nights are drawing in and, with Christmas looming up, we all get ready to head for the Great Indoors and to leave behind us the 'noughties' into 2010!

We hope you enjoyed "the long hot summer" the experts promised and which, eventually, turned out to be a cool inclement one, just when we wanted the former to lift us from the recessionary gloom, keeping more of us at home rather than the Mediterranean and other hot spots.

But fortune eventually smiled warmly on the onion patch when we enjoyed a lovely Indian summer during September and October whilst some of the so-called hot spots were deluged with rain!

We thank you all once again for paying your £2 annual sub's with a smile and thanks also to those unsung non-committee helpers who pounded Molewood streets helping out with the collections.

We also extend a very warm welcome to new committee members John Edwards and Brian Ayres.

Also, many thanks to Nick Gough and ex-committee member Cary Portas for her professional help with this edition. Others have left for various reasons and we thank them for all their help, including Helen Graham who will continue to work diligently in the background keeping all the member lists up to date.

Our Membership database

We have been trying to obtain email addresses of members in order that we could send out urgent information in between 'Outlook' issues. The database may also be used to announce any future social occasions or canvas opinions on local issues.

Thanks to all who have already supplied their addresses.

If anyone else would like to participate, please send your email address to blaming@hotmail.com.



What's in a name? By Councillor Peter Ruffles

Peter is currently working on episode 2 of his excellent DVD on Hertford, which many enjoyed seeing part one of at the last AGM. The second installment features the town's watery links and features our very own Hertford born-and-bred Brian Ayres who is shown by the river in Hartham where he and his young mates used to spend time fishing and camping on Joe's Island.

Some time ago Bettany, a young school girl of Cowper Crescent wrote an interesting letter to the Mercury asking about the exact location of BENGEO. We asked PETER RUFFLES an expert on Hertford and its history what his thoughts on this were, to which he replied:-.

The boundaries have moved many times. And there are boundaries and boundaries. The first distinction is between ecclesiastical boundaries and the civil variety. Port Vale was the characteristic heart of the Christ Church parish. But that was only formed in the building boom of Victorian times and funded largely by Abel Smith at Goldings. Waterford (ecclesiastical) parish was also late on the map, Goldings and Waterford being part of Bengeo (ecclesiastical). Church Road in Bengeo is fairly loosely founded on that connection, Church Road being on a reasonably convenient line from Waterford to St Leonards. Tonwell is still in Bengeo (ecclesiastical) I believe.

The changes in civil boundaries are just as many. There's an interesting surviving marker which readers may like to find. It illustrates the point about how there is a need to make boundary revisions really quite often if boundaries are to reflect the 'community of interest' criterion which the present day Boundary Commissioners like to employ. It is in Port Vale close against the wall at the high numbers end opposite the row of houses which is numbered 100 – 112, against the garden wall of Mr and Mrs Woodcock of 87 Port Vale. This it proclaims, is where Hertford ended and Bengeo began.

A modern day bearing on life for some is the boundary of Hertford as it was in the time of Charles II. Applicants for funds from the present day distribution of Grass Money must still qualify by living within the Hertford boundary. Living outside in Bengeo counted you out when the charity was set up and still stands today. So, today living in the Cattle Pens 1 – 23 Port Hill (i.e. up to the old railway line) counts you in. Living in Port Vale counts you out. In this context, there may be irritation for the resident at 6 Sele Road, should they happen to qualify in other respects, because only 2 and 4 Sele Road have geographical qualification. Not far away from this location, but not relevant to your Bengeo scene, the Town Boundary passes through the drawing room and kitchen at Epcombs in Hertingfordbury; and today, still, despite the suggestion of all the family memorials at St Mary's Church, Hertingfordbury, the estate of Panshanger is part of the ecclesiastical parish of St Andrew.

The Bengeo ward which I so love representing at District Council level, has an ecclesiastical boundary. You have St Andrew's Church. The boundary is the Lea around here, so Old Cross and St Andrew Street, and then just one side of North Road is yours. Oddly the County Hospital new homes are yours. Beyond the North Station bridge everything is Sele, except for the Bengeo bit of Molewood (High and Great). You get a little bit of Vicarage Lane Waterford and Sacombe Road houses opposite the Iron Fields turning. You get Temple Fields, but not the Crouchfield estate (You do get the confusingly named Crouchfield Street!). The boundary is then Watermill Lane, Rib Vale, a sweep out to enclose within Hertford (Bengeo ward) Ware Park and of course Ware Park Farm (which roots Sally Newton and Kim Darby in their county town and not Ware!). St Leonard's, Church End and across Hartham are included in Bengeo, then Folly Island and Old Cross, again.

If you think that sounds vast and varied, it's got nothing on my other area, the one I currently represent at County. Here Sele ward and Castle combine to make one division (that's the County name for a constituency). I get from Waters garage to Waterford, Mangrove, London Road, all of Ware road to Rainham Street and Beechfield Close, Marshgate Drive and Mead Lane, Bircheley Court and the town centre to Mill Bridge. So you can see why I love the nicely rounded Bengeo.

There will be 'What about?' questions, I'm sure. Please ask me, Sally Newton, Kim Darby or Graham Lawrence. We all live with our lines of demarcation maps permanently open on the breakfast table.

Our thanks to Peter for contributing to this newsletter and his continuing support for this Association.

FLY TIPPING at Sacombe Road

It was suggested at a committee meeting that we might ask the District Council if solar powered cameras could be installed at strategic sites in Sacombe Road with a view to helping to indentify people dumping hazardous waste, especially in an area of natural beauty and one where our children frequently play and many of us walk our dogs.

One of your committee members, John Edwards, is worried about rubbish being dumped in the lanes north of Bengeo where we go for walks to exercise our dogs. He brought it up at a committee meeting and wondered if the MRA could buy a solar powered CCTV camera to watch over the worst spots on Byway 22 off the Sacombe Road and Bullsmill Lane.

We contacted East Herts District Council and Nick Kirby, the manager of their Environmental Inspection Team, wrote back saying: We have limited resources but do have a CCTV camera which we use to catch fly tippers in hot spot locations. This is something that is best done by us or the Police to make sure that the evidence is good enough.

This site is one of our fly tipping hotspots and in the past we have put a hidden camera there. The good news is that we have some evidence and are waiting for this case to be heard at the Magistrates Court. Once we have a result, this will hopefully prevent the main offender for continuing to dump here and we will publicise this to put off other potential fly tippers.

John suggests that we can all help counter this threat to our environment, and possibly bring these people to justice by following these steps:

- Do not allow anyone to dispose of your waste material without asking to see their registration documents to dispose of waste. If you have any doubts contact the Environmental Inspection Team at East Herts District Council, for advice.
- Remember if you pay someone to take away waste material, which subsequently gets dumped illegally, and it is traced back to yourself, prepare for a large fine, as it is your responsibility to ensure it is disposed of properly.
- If you witness an incident of fly tipping make a note of the following:
    - A description of the vehicle including the registration number, colour, and make.
    - A description of the driver and any passengers.
    - Make a note of the time.
- If you come across waste dumped illegally, e-mail or phone the District Council, giving location and brief details of waste, so that it can be removed as quickly as possible. (email enquiries@eastherts.gov.uk or phone 01279 655261).

NOTICE BOARD renewals – a request for help

Public-spirited help has been kindly given on repair and renewal of our dozen or so notice boards over the years and we once again appeal to any handymen or women who can wield a hammer and saw.

We would be quite prepared to pay for any 'out of pocket' expenses.

Please contact the Editor or one of the committee if you are interested in helping out.

Neighbourhood Watch update

A message recently received from the Police warned people NOT to give credit card details over the phone to anyone unless making a purchase from a reputable trader. A well-spoken man, purporting to be a BT official, called people in East Anglia saying that a small amount was outstanding on their BT account which would be cut off if they didn't give him their credit card details in order that this amount could be paid. Sadly, some people fell for this con trick.

There could be any number of incidents, some too small to cause concern, although they all get reported to the individual co-ordinators which will give them an overall picture of local petty crime.

There have been a few local break-ins and in view of the worsening financial situation, we cannot stress too strongly the need to be vigilant and make sure your home is secure at all times.

New virtual house helps against burglaries

Jill Dockley, Watch Liaison Officer, Hertfordshire Constabulary sent this information.

As part of Operation Guardian, the force's burglary prevention and reduction initiative, an online crime prevention tool for the public has been developed - a virtual 'house' which residents can explore to get advice on how to keep safe and secure.

Developed in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, the interactive house is also being used to help train officers as part of the crime prevention knowledge check. The 'house' can be accessed at http://www.herts.police.uk/op_guardian/tool.php.

For more details email jill.dockley@herts.pnn.police.uk

BLOOMING GOOD!

Once again Cowper Crescent comes up smelling roses with resident Joyce Woods winning the Mercury's Best Kept Front Garden – Riverside Bowl.

Congratulations Joyce!

‘HIDDEN GEMS’ at the Avenue

Hidden Gems is how The Mercury described our local shops, although we are sure that our shopkeepers would blush at the thought!

They are all there - Alison and Jo of The Secret Garden, Corrine and Jackie of The Pantry, Ashwin Shah of ‘Good News’, and Sue and Charlotte of ‘Headlines’. They are “tucked away, but still worth exploring” states the local paper. As we’ve said many times, “Use ‘em or lose ‘em”.

Fred and Olive Church

Our congratulations to The Avenue residents Fred and Olive Church, who celebrated 60 years of married bliss a month or so ago.

Fred, 84 was a pilot in the RAF during the last war, whilst Olive worked at County Hall and volunteered with the Civil Defence during air raids.

Olive was active with the Molewood Resident’s Association for a few years and they are now members of Hertford Friends of Evron, the twinning society with the French town.

New Recycling Schedules

We have all been sent information by East Herts District Council on ARC (Alternative Refuse Collection) their new household rubbish collection service.

The wheelie bins which stand sentinel in our drives every week have increased in number in the interests of recycling. The latest young recruit is a blue box for your plastic bottles and cans, and a green kitchen caddy in which you can use to collect food waste, before emptying it into your brown bin. Green boxes still are for papers, etc, brown bins for raw and cooked food waste and black bins, collections on alternate weeks, for your non-recyclable waste.

Does the emblem, an arc of a rainbow, mean that we’ve got quite a few more colours to get through yet? Details of the additional arrangements are explained in the Council’s colourful brochure which also gives various websites and telephone numbers for further details.

We hope that by now you are now fully acquainted with the new boxes and procedure. We now have stickers for the brown box detailing what is and isn’t acceptable.

We hope that you can remember what goes where and that, in the long run, reducing waste is going to be worth all the change for the sake of the next generation.

EAST HERTS PEOPLE

We are pleased to print the following by this local organisation but wish to point out that the MRA cannot enter into any political discussions or disputes, as we enjoy a good relationship with councillors of all political persuasions, even though we might not always agree with their decisions on specific matters!

Re-engaging the Public with Local Government

East Herts People is a non-profit organisation that provides support for Independent Councillors and those who wish to stand as Independent candidates in local elections.

But our remit also includes establishing a dialogue on local issues with residents and engaging ordinary people with local government. Our informative website is regularly updated, with a blog and articles on the latest debates and information on upcoming events. We welcome members of the public to contribute to our website.

Researcher Livia Oldland discusses the benefits of the website, 'The general attitude towards local government is that it's dull and boring, but the decisions they make are huge. For instance, the East of England Assembly aims to build thousands of homes in Hertfordshire over the next twenty years. Our website is there to inform members of the public on local council issues and hopefully get them involved'.

We're also working on new methods to end political disillusionment in young people and provide them with clear facts on local government. The recent Climate Camp in London shows that young people are passionate about current affairs, but many young people are unaware that local councils can be influential in lowering carbon emissions. We'd love to see some younger faces in our councils and we currently have successful Twitter and Facebook pages.

- East Herts People was founded in 2006 in response to disillusionment with the current system of local government in East Hertfordshire. We felt that existing local politics was alienating the vast majority of the public. We aim to re-engage local people with local authorities.
- You can find out further information about East Herts People on our website: www.ehpeople.org
- We have a successful Twitter page at twitter.com/easthertspeople
- You can also find us on Facebook atwww.facebook.com/pages/Hertford-United-Kingdom/East-Herts-People/136361250452

Find out more about our work at www.ehpeople.org

WILLIAM the CONQUERER?



Maybe with the exception of our friend Dave the postman William had acquired many canine friends and owners being taken walkies by their pets over the ten years that he 'socialised' together around the lovely open spaces of Waterford Heath.

Many others know only too well the great sense of loss when their pet passes on, especially those home alone who rely solely on their four-legged friends for companionship.

William, like many of your other canine brother hood, you *conquered* many hearts locally as other faithful pooches have done, all of whom will always remain firmly in the hearts of their owners!

It's always sad to have to say Good-bye old friend!



THE COW IN COWPER CRESCENT!

For some time after we moved to Bengeo in 1961, I gave acquaintances credit (when giving them my new address) for being able to distinguish between the Poet William and the craft of a mere barrel maker; but in the end, I was obliged to submit to the inevitable and own to living in COWper Crescent. And if I am ever tempted to forget this defeat in the face of the Philistines, I am reminded of it by a piece of Cine Film which my family loves to see projected, which I shot, one morning, when in the mid-Sixties, a "real live" COW rampaged along our road, trampling newly laid front gardens and contemptuous of intervening fences; until confronted by a householder, (whose name is immortalised in the sound track of my film as Mr Bristowe), who succeeded in turning the animal back (not without himself being obliged to take to his heels; or so it seems in my film).

My camera continued to roll as the bovine beast lumbered over garden fences, this time trampling gardens on the opposite side of Cowper Crescent, with me, with camera, in pursuit at a respectful distance, until a whiff of open country air, wafting out of Desborough Close, drew it away to escape past Janet Moy's house into the green fields beyond!

Our thanks to Brian Laming for recounting this 'a-MOO-sing' story (sorry... had to be done!)

POSTMAN DAVE – our local postie gets the thumbs up from us!



A while ago an MRA member wrote expressing gratitude for the helpful and cheery service from David our local 'postie' in the north of the estate and we thought it time that he got a commendation in our newsletter.

Everybody knows Dave and what is more surprising, David knows *everyone*, including the names of their partners, their dog—cat—children and almost everything else about them.

His bright personality sets the day off right and he is *so* helpful if, for instance, if he has to leave a parcel in a resident's absence. Nothing is too much trouble for David and most of us on his round would commend him for a cheerful service award.

So spare a thought for Dave as the days get colder, darker and the post bag heavier on the run up to Christmas and give him a smile and a wave to cheer up his day too!

A reminder of STROKE IDENTIFICATION

We apologise for bringing up a rather morbid subject but for every 10 people who read this the chances are that at least one life could be saved due to the correct action being taken immediately! Apparently the effects of a stroke may be *reversed* if the victim can be treated within 3 hours.

Identifying a suspected stroke victim by

1. Asking the person to SMILE.
2. Asking the person to TALK -say a simple sentence.
3. Asking them to RAISE both arms.

If the person has any difficulty with any one of these tasks, call 999 immediately.

INSIDE THE BENGEO CLUB



Founded in 1878 as the Bengeo Working Men's Club, the Bengeo Club has since then been one of the mainstays of the local community. There has been a bowling green on the site since 1879 and the present clubhouse was built and opened in 1963 thanks to the proceeds of the sale of The Onion Patch on which part of the Molewood estate now stands.

The Club was originally for men only, with lady guests allowed restricted admission at weekends. All that changed in 2003 when the Working Men's was dropped from the title and women were admitted to full membership. There are currently 73 female members from a total of 532.



Nowadays the Club provides both social and sporting facilities. On the social side the bar is open every lunchtime and evening. There is professional entertainment or bingo every Saturday evening and bingo on Tuesdays. In addition there are occasional quizzes and race nights. For sports there is a snooker room with a full size table, the bowls green, a pool table and a dartboard. The bowls section has a full fixture list of friendly matches throughout the summer season plus two teams in the East Herts league. There are pool teams in both summer and winter leagues and a darts team in the winter league.

Members of the Club can book the upstairs bar for functions such as anniversaries, christening parties etc and non-members can have temporary membership to allow them to book the facility.

If you are interested in either joining as a full member or making a booking, call in to the Club in person or phone 01992 583665.

PARKING.....parking.....parking....parking.....

Where would this magazine be without the problems that owning so many cars brings us all? It seems we cannot escape this hoary old chestnut as it is a constant matter of concern to all.

One, who signed herself "neighbour, car driver, grandmother and friend" in The Avenue voiced her concern over the rush hour 'rat run' traffic driving along the Avenue "…much too fast". This includes commercial vehicles which are even more threatening especially to the youngest and oldest amongst us. Also, she adds, some drivers leave their cars parked, which makes it difficult for buses or emergency vehicles to get through, even though they could have left their cars safely in their own driveways.

We have raised these issues in almost every issue of MO and we urge yet again for drivers to think when they leave their cars whether they could cause an accident or at least a problem for other drivers or pedestrians walking past on the pavement. Other than the school run, there are also times when one could be forgiven for thinking that no houses on this estate have a garage or room on their drive for their cars.

If anyone has any additional ideas on how to make our estate safer, we should be very interested to publish them in the next MO.



Bengeo Primary School - Update

As we start back at school this autumn, we have had time to reflect on a very successful summer term, especially in terms of academic and sporting achievements. Our SATs results were the best to date. We were once again winners of the Hertford and Ware Large Schools' District Sports and winners of the Netball tournament. We also became County Kwik Cricket champions. The team of year 6 pupils went on to win the Eastern Region finals and travelled to Headingley in Leeds to take part in the national final. They remained unbeaten, were crowned the UK Kwik Cricket champions and were featured on Sky News. They were accompanied by one of our teachers and their families, who were all very proud of their achievement and their wonderful sportsmanship. This worthwhile event is sponsored by ASDA.

Bengeo councillor Dr Radford was so impressed by their achievement that she arranged for a small celebration with the Mayor of Hertford and local councillors. The team was presented with a beautiful trophy in recognition of their victory and sportsmanship.

Our school has had some major refurbishment over the school holidays, with several of toilets being replaced, much to the delight of pupils and teachers!

We are now looking forward to the busy Christmas period, with all the fun and enjoyment that that time brings. We have chosen to be involved with the local Rotary Shoebox Scheme and feel hopeful that our parents and children will support this scheme and help those less fortunate than ourselves.

Mrs K R Hallahan - Headteacher

School Border Hawthorn Hedge

The school governors kindly agreed to have the hawthorn hedge backing on to those Cowper Crescent rear gardens behind the school's nature reserve trimmed to the same height as the existing border hedge inside the gardens. This has brought the height down sufficiently so as to not limit the light enjoyed by those few householders

Many thanks to them for their consideration

BENGEO DAY

Mid summer it certainly was, more like a Mediterranean summer, on the day of the school fete when we had 'wall-to-wall' sunshine for the locals to come and bathe in.

It was a day when an event like this HAS to be successful because of the weather alone, although hard work and good organisation of Clare Blackman and others added to this.

Your committee decided to have a presence at this year's annual event when some of us were able to mingle with other residents and join in all the fun at different stalls on one of those infrequent hot cloudless days.

We felt it was a wonderful family day out for all. Well done to Clare and her team for her efforts in making this a success for everyone involved.

Campaign Against Gravel Extraction (C A G E) update

We desperately need someone to represent this Association by attending the occasional meetings held by the Campaign Against Gravel Extraction. As can seen by George Sandell's latest report which follows, the situation needs very close monitoring!

He hopes that it will help to energise the MRA to be involved fully with CAGE and the Rickneys Coordinating Group in their future endeavours.

Rickneys Quarry Update – by George Sandell

Over two years have gone by since the County Council agreed to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and legal agreements, for a small extension (1.2 million tonnes of sand and gravel) at Rickneys Quarry. The formal notice, giving effect to the decision, has still not been issued, but after protracted negotiations we now finally have an agreed set of conditions, that do as much as possible to protect local amenity, including, for example, tight restrictions on Saturday morning working and on noise levels, and a legal agreement that provides for, amongst other things, for a right-hand-turn junction on Wadesmill Road for pit traffic; for major improvements to the local rights of way; and for measures to protect Hertford's drinking water. The present processing plant will be removed and replaced with a smaller, quieter and less obtrusive one.

The interests of residents have been represented by a coordinating group representing the Town and Parish Councils, the Civic Society, CAGE and various local residents' associations, including Molewood. In the next phase, the emphasis will be on making the new conditions and undertakings have full effect, so that we can all live as peaceably as possible with a working pit. Immediately, Hanson, the operating company, has undertaken to improve the deplorable and dangerous state of the site. The early removal of the processing plant will help. Some of the agreed improvements to the footpaths and bridleways have already been made or are in progress.

Don't expect anything dramatic. It may well be several years before gravel-digging begins, not least because, at present, there simply is no local demand for gravel that cannot be easily met from existing sources. You may soon see trial bores for the next phases, for which planning permission will be sought sooner or later. They will amount in total to about a further 6 million tonnes. Gravel digging is likely to be with us for 30 years or more. So it has been important that we establish both a strong set of ground rules and what we believe is a good and positive working relationship with the Company. At least, the present permission will allow us to see whether we and the Company really can live together as good neighbours. If not, then we have evidence to fight future applications.

George Sandell

If you are interested in representing Molewood Resident's Association at CAGE meetings, please contact one of the Committee members. All of our details are at the beginning of this newsletter.

Maintenance of local trees and shrubs

One of the joys of living on the Molewood estate is the greenery that has built up since it was built in the 1960s. However to look its best it all needs a bit of TLC every now and then. Sometimes the Care isn't so tender and loving. A case in point was the tree outside 17 Lodge Close that had started to worry residents because of the cracks in its trunk. Tom Busby from number 19 and MRA treasurer Nick Gough met Manie Ogedengbe who is our Area Engineer from Hertfordshire Highways. Manie agreed that the tree looked dangerous, had it checked by a tree surgeon, and arranged for its removal.

While we had him to ourselves we asked him about the odd branch that overhangs the pavement from some of the trees and shrubs around the estate. If they are in someone's garden the owner is responsible. But if they are growing in the verge then Manie said that residents can do a little pruning themselves as long as this involves no more than secateurs and they tidy away any cuttings.

Then we took Manie round to The Avenue. We showed him the trees on the green opposite the shops. He agreed that two of the trees there are getting a bit big and said he would try and get a tree expert to look at them and then get back to us. We still haven't heard from him.

If you have any concerns about trees on roadside verges you can report them to Hertfordshire Highways by calling 01438 737320 or going online at http://www.hertsdirect.org/actweb/hfr/. Remember to tell them the road it's on and the number of the house it is outside.

Nick Gough

Finally, we wish you all a safe and pleasant Winter.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL and A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

