MOLEWOOD OUTLOOK - A.G.M. ISSUE - JUNE 1991

As the profusion of colours burst from Molewood gardens, in spite of a country start to summer, we hope this special issue of 'Outlook' catches you before you pop over to Provence .... tour Tuscany .... trek through the Trossachs .... laze in the Luberon .... or - even - browse around Bengeo!

Special? Well, C.A.G.E. has won some battles in the campaign: NOW, with our help, it is going all out to win the WAR. We, in the M.R.A., have fired our first salvo with the highly popular '500 Club'. The response has been overwhelming, and with other events 'in the can' we hope that November will see us all emerging triumphant, at the same time maybe helping YOU to win some money for that Provencial .... Tuscany holiday!

The students of Bengeo Infants' school found drawing this collection of pictures for our cover, child's play! These skilful graphics reflect THEIR feelings on the BIG issue of the moment, and we thank them and the teachers who helped organise it. We hope to have more contributions from both the schools from time to time.

ONCE again it is A.G.M. time - or was - on the 7th May at Bengeo Junior School. Appropriately, the venue was different from our normal haunt, Duncombe Hall, which was just as well with over one hundred turning up - a record - otherwise we would have been eating our cheese like sardines! The meeting turned out to be a lively one, with plenty of feedback from 'the floor' ending with music and song by the talented 'Harry's Band' led by Dr. Harry Robertson and his versatile group playing a variety of instruments. The multitude were fed and watered, thanks to the unstinting work of our team and over £70 was collected for Dr. Robertson who donated it all to his favourite charity - the "Trevor Mason Challenge". An update on C.A.G.E. was given by the Chairman George Sandell and one on Neighbourhood Watch by P.C. John Baldwin.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It has been a very rewarding year with many achievements and many objectives well on the way to being achieved.

At long last a school crossing over Bengeo Street has been installed, which we helpdd to press for. The 'KEEP CLEAR' signs which we asked to have painted at both ends of the lane that runs behind The Avenue shops seem to be working well. People whose garages are round there are no longer finding their entrances or exits blocked.

We continue to receive complaints about the usual concerns. These have been mentioned many times in the 'Molewood Outlook' and I am sure most of them can be remedied by the very few 'culprits' giving just a little more thought to others. The problems include such matters as:- parking on grass verges, footpaths and across driveways, outside the shops for long periods of time, double parking, dogs fouling pavements, over hanging trees and shrubs etc.

My thanks go to all the committee who have worked so hard to try to make the Estate a more pleasant place for all of us to enjoy and especially to Dorothy Bradley who normally acts as hostess to the

committee at most of our monthly meetings. Many thanks also to Dennis Goodrum and Ruth Harrison who work as Treasurer and Secretary respectively, and also to Allan Streeton for compiling and editing this Newsletter.

We will now all be very much more involved in organising the 'funding' of our C.A.G.E. fight, the initial response to our '500 + Club' being magnificant. For this we thank you all!

Apart from the threat of the dreaded pits we often have to decide whether the issue is of a 'personal' nature, or reflects the MAJORITY view i.e. most of the members of the Association - about 500 households. If we only have a minority who wish to campaign on a particular matter it is difficult for the Association to write on BEHALF of Molewood residents. It is then a matter for individuals to write to the relevant authority expressing their views, indeed a personal letter on ANY issue carries far more weight.

We welcome Heidi Scott and Valerie Underwood to the committee and invite any other potential members who will always be welcome!

SPRING GARDEN COMPETITION WINNERS

Well done! to our well deserved gardeners on the Estate, who won the above. They are as follows:

1st. Miss Ison and Miss Jolly, 128 The Avenue

2nd. Mrs Howard, 59 Peel Crescent

3rd. Mr and Mrs Eves, 134 Cowper Crescent

4th. Mrs Digweed, 31 Lodge Close

5th. Mrs Singers, 136 Cowper Crescent

6th. Mr and Mrs Proctor, 40 The Wick

This year's Spring Competition was the hardest to judge, with many gardens having lovely displays. The Wallflowers, bluebells, lilac and all the Spring bulbs seem to have done really well, and with all the rockery plants flowering at the same time the Estate looked very beautiful.

With the exception of a few, we are very lucky to have so many colourful gardens. I hope the summer displays will look as good, as we will be judged as an area for the Britain in Bloom Competition, and hopefully we may help Hertford to win a prize again. Keep the good work up!

The following gardens were commended:-

Lodge Close	The Drive
23	9
53 Highly Commended	7
	26
	28

The Wick

30
16 Highly Commended
39
65

Cowper Crescent

4 Highly Commended
11
13
30
38 Highly Commended
46
51 Highly Commended
55
72
76
79
80
83
116
126
138

Desborough Close

1

The Avenue

34 Highly Commended
44

Peel Crescent

3 Highly Commended
5 Highly Commended
10
22
24
55

Pam Lutner

With the cover and the venue for our A.G.M. we are reminded of the sad death of Mr Don Harris who was our local Head for many years. Our Association has made a donation of £50 to the Memorial Fund set up by the Parents' Association.

There follows a tribute to him by Valerie Sutton a committee member and one time Editor of the 'Outlook'.

A TRIBUTE TO DON HARRIS

On Sunday the 14th April the telephone rang and I heard that Don Harris, Headmaster of Bengeo Junior School for many years had died. I was shocked, not only because one does not expect to hear of the death of a man only fifty eight years old with no history of illness, but also because he was so dependable it was quite inconceivable that he should not be there anymore.

The 'reforms' of the past few years put an enormously increased load on to a man who had always worked with total dedication for his school, yet he kept the strain to himself and always had time for the children and their problems.

Through the years, as a parent, I have attended many class assemblies and always, when they were over, he found just the right words of appreciation, sending the children away justly pleased with their efforts and keen to do more.

He was also able to mix with his pupils on a very different level, on 'Bengeo Day', there he was in the stocks being cheerfully pelted

with wet sponges. You can't do that unless you have your relationships right.

Don's influence on the school was established in the best possible way, it was all pervasive and never over-powering. He had those qualities of leadership which brought out the best in people. He knew that you get much more through encouragement than criticism and his success in motivating the children to produce work of a high standard was obvious.

This is not to say that he was 'soft'. Every school has its share of 'rogues' and he was quite capable of dealing fairly and firmly with them when the need arose.

We all, parents and non-parents alike, benefited in so many ways from having such a good school as part of our community.

It was the combination of ability, integrity and sheer love for 'his' children that made Don Harris such a respected and valued Head.

He will be sadly missed.

Valerie Sutton

Hertfordshire County Council

BENGEO INFANTS' SCHOOL

The Avenue, Bengeo, Hertford, Herts. SG14 3DX

Telephone:
0992 582765

Headteacher
Mrs S J Patey

17 April, 1991

Dear Molewood Residents

I am writing this at a time of great sadness for the staff, parents and pupils of both schools. The death of Don Harris, the Headteacher of the Junior School for many years, came as a great shock to us all.

Mrs Alison Witchell (Deputy Head) will now take over as Acting Head until the Governors have been able to appoint a replacement. Thus school life goes on.

Many changes to the education systems are taking place which are far-reaching in effect. We hope that these changes will not have a detrimental effect upon the life of the schools.

I have great concerns about the problems of parking and litter. Parents are frequently reminded of these problems and we trust that they strive to ease the situation; however, with so many mothers now using cars to bring children to and from school, parking is an inevitable problem.

Litter is another issue which causes concern to myself and the

residents of the estate. We do not allow our children to bring sweets or crisps to school (except in packed lunches) and each morning sees the patrol of the litters collectors collecting rubbish from the Infant play areas.

Of greatest concern to us is the excrement left by dogs on our playing areas. This is, of course, dangerous and distasteful, caused by inconsiderate dog owners exercising their dogs on premises which are private. I should point out that it is an offence to trepass on the schools' grounds and I would be very grateful if residents adjacent to the school could inform the police if they see such offences being committed.

To enable the children to study History more effectively we are setting up a small museum of artefacts dating from the First World War. We would really appreciate the loan of any such articles (clothing, household goods, books etc.) and would also welcome older members of the community into school to share their memories with the children.

We really enjoy having pairs of hands helping in school. If you have any skills which you feel would be beneficial, then please contact me (Hertford 582765). I am sure that we can put them to good use.

Finally, I should say how much we appreciate the support which the community shows to the schools and I hope that we can continue to rely upon them in the future.

Yours sincerely
Shirley Patey
Headteacher

CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN

Preparation for the Public Inquiry in November, following Redland's Appeal has dominated your Committee's activities recently. There are, however, some other matters affecting residents which have come to our attention.

We have reminded Mr. Meadows, the Assistant Director of Technical Services, that we are still concerned about the condition of pavements and roads in Cowper Crescent and parts of The Avenue. We hope their "routine inspection" will result in some action being taken.

It was agreed that a public notice board erected on the grass facing the shops would be a useful facility, and have requested that this should be provided, or permission granted for us to erect one.

We are supporting our local police in their representations for cross hatching markings to facilitate the emergence of traffic from The Avenue into Bengeo Street when the crossing lights are red. Attention has also been drawn to traffic congestion from Bengeo Street to North Street in the hope that action can be taken to ease this problem.

Please remember that the Suggestion Boxes available in Helen's and the Avenue Stores are provided for the use of residents.

Dorothy Bradley

GREETINGS ALL!

Those of you who attended the Molewood Residents' Association A.G.M. would have heard a short talk from me relating to crime statistics for Bengeo, and how they relate to your area in particular. For those who did not attend I will summarise the facts as follows.

1. Total crime in Bengeo from the first of January to the seventh of May totalled 137. Of those, 62 relate to auto thefts, from and of cars, and 40 relate to burglary.

2. In the Molewood area itself a total of 14 crimes were committed during that time, of which 7 were burglaries, 5 were motor vehicles related, one cycle was stolen, the other being a shoplifting offence.

Please do not say, "Oh well, there were only 14 crimes, therefore the chances of something happening to me are remote". Keep vigilant, report suspicious sightings, and, above all, do not become complacent, and we will keep the crime rate as low as this on a regular basis.

P.C. John Baldwin

On the further theme of local schools, the following article is yet another from the pen of Malcolm Moulding, who has given us a great insight into our past in previous issues. This time he looks at ...

HERTFORD'S LOST SCHOOLS By Malcolm Moulding

When I count the number of schools in Hertford today, I can match almost each one with a school that has vanished.

For example, Bengeo Junior and Bengeo Infant Schools are modern schools which replaced the Old Bengeo Schools about twenty two years or so ago. Originally, the Bengeo Schools stood opposite the "White Lion" Public House in Bengeo Street, and the playground ran across the site of Mansfield Court flats. There were railings right along the frontage with iron swing gates let into them leading into the playgrounds from Bengeo Street. When those old schools were pulled down, their chimney-pots were kept as flower pots outside the White Lion and they are still there today.

Simon Balle School began life as a Secondary Modern Senior School under the old system, and replaced the Cowper Testimonial School, which was a turretted old Victorian building which stood in London Road on the present-day site of Gwynne's Walk. A little bit of the old flint boundary playground wall is still standing at the top of Gwynnes Walk on the London Road pathway as it turns the corner into Greencoates, the other end of this stretch of flint wall vanished recently under the development in London Road. It was the boundary wall of the old Green Coat School opposite the Fire Station which was pulled down to make way for the huge new office block now completed in London Road opposite the Fire Headquarters. When I, and many other older Hertford residents attended Abel Smith's Junior School in Churchfields shortly after the Second World War in 1947, we were walked in a crocodile down London Road to have our school dinners at the Green Coat School

which by then was used as a school canteen only. Here we were given POM, which was dehydrated potato from packets, a comparatively new dish at that time, but more common today, and several other utilitarian meals of the time. At the other end of the scale we received food parcels in class from the colonies and under the Marshall Aid Plan - each child was given two or three different tins of either peach halves, mandarin oranges, evaporated milk or fruit, which was a rare luxury in those days of food rationing.

Abel Smith's Junior Mixed School is a very old-established school of the older generation of Hertford's schools as is Mill Mead School at the other end of the town, in Port Vale. When the children of my generation attended Abel Smith's it consisted of the old Victorian Schoolhouse which is now the Kindergarden only. All the other buildings are modern, but - just down the road of Churchfields stood the old Infant School, now vanished, which was originally the Church School called All Saints Infant School, later as Faudel Phillips after a Victorian Lord Mayor of London who lived at Balls Park. One red-brick house remains standing of this old red-brick Victorian school, and in it is still part of the old school hall with its pretty "Ogee" rafter trusses still intact in the roof space, and a bit of the old school playground with the remains of a great dead elm trunk lying for children to play on. Many generations of children romped around this great tree in the past century or so, indeed the sound of children's voices was heard in Churchfields for about the same length of time and more. In my childhood the tree towered above the school playground.

Not far away across the road is the present-day school's library centre which was Hales Old Grammar School, founded by Richard Hale, a wealthy London merchant, in 1613. And not far away from that at the end of Church Street, the last house in fact, was the old National School, now a private house, and at one time a mortuary for the town. The concentration of all these schools in the town reflects the concentration of the town population which at that time did not live on the outskirts as they do now, but in the centre. Hales Grammar School had twisted chimneys and a large garden with orchard, with a big portrait of the founder Richard Hale, over the classroom mantelpiece. The headmaster's house was in Fore Street and was reached by a pathway from the school across what is now the main dual carriage way of Gascoyne Way. In 1931 the new Grammar School opened at Pegs Lane and the old studded oak door was moved from the Old Grammar School to the foyer of the new one, where it remains to this day. During the Second World War bombs fell on Hales Old Grammar School causing severe damage and destroying one wing of the building completely. It was rebuilt afterwards, but was never the same again, and still bears the scars in some of the walls. The terrific blast from the high explosive shook the ornamental vases and the statue of the goddess of corn, ceres off the Corn Exchange in Fore Street where they toppled, smashed and they have never been replaced.

At the opposite end of the town stands Mill Mead School, which was previously called Port Vale School, another Victorian red-brick school of the older generation. Also in that area in Cowbridge or Dimsdale Street to be precise, stood and still stands in fact in a state of complete dereliction, the old "Cowbridge School", last used for evening classes and as a handicraft centre in the 1960s. Over in Hertingfordbury Road stood Old St. Andrew's School, now replaced in Sele Farm by one of the same name for infants, as the old one was. The playground is occupied by caravan residents, but the three trees

around which children played are still there miraculously, but for how long one wonders? The Roman Catholic School in North Road replaced the Old Convent School in St. John's Street, and there was a Ragged School in Bircherley Street which later became the Salvation Army Citadel, which was the forerunner of the present Baker Street Citadel and was demolished a few years ago. Hertford Castle also boasted schools in buildings under its walls, Haileybury was here for some time when the East India Company was of note, and later there was a National School.

Greatest of all Hertford's vanished schools was Christ's Hospital, now Bluecoats Office Estate aptly named after the blue coats of both the boys and girls of the school. This was a very large and influential institution with royal patronage and a long history dating from the destruction of the school in the Great Fire of London which forced it to look elsewhere for temporary accommodation; Hertford was already used as a foster area so it was choosen for a new school eventually, and its prestigious buildings, still standing and commendably preserved today, grew up with it. It had its own gallery in All Saints Church as I mentioned in a previous article, which was totally destroyed by fire in 1891. The great gates were endowed by Dr Dimsdale, the smallpox vaccination pioneer. The school dominated theeastern end of the town, with at first the gaol opposite, and the first railway station of 1843 not far away in Railway Place. In fact the present Great Eastern Railway terminus of today, built in 1888, was extended 300 yards from the original terminus to get closer to the school. Originally the school was built on Meager's Farm site, which was purchased through the offices and influence of Sir Henry Chauncey the lawyer, recorder and historian who lived at Lombard House in the 1700s. Before that the land was part of Hertford Priory Foundation which dated from the middle ages and earlier to the conquest when Ralph de Limesey held the land as "Limesey Fee". At the dissolution of the monasteries it passed to all the successors who owned the Balls Park Estate which was heir to Hertford Priory Estates, as did all land North of Balls Park including parts of the King's Meads also owned by the Priory Estate. So from the reign of Edward VI that part of Hertford which was Priory land was earmarked for the Christ's Hospital Foundation, which makes it a very early one. Happily the scene in the school quadrangle has been tastefully preserved and a new building which has risen opposite has been nicely built in similar style to the old dormitories of 1906. The writing school facade, although now only the front of modern apartments concealed behind it, preserves the bell cupola and clock and doorway. The main gates of Dr Dimsdale, although wooden figures have replaced the leaden boys, remain as they always have been, not that many people will notice the difference between lead and wooden figures - the essential element is preservation, conservation and continuity as far as possible, and the whole development of Christs Hospital site is a creditable one in this direction. It is worth noting the old legend attached to the statutes on the gates - in the seventeenth century a boy killed a schoolmate, who was buried in All Saints Churchyard. The murderer was tried and hanged at Hertford Gaol opposite the school. This is why one figure faces the gaol site and the other faces the church.

Perhaps there is some truth in the story. Anyway the old schools of Hertford have their stories and would fill a volume. One worth reading is Len Green's "Hertford Green Coat School and the Newton Exhibition Foundation" available in Hertford Museum, which gives a good description of an old Hertford School.

Malcolm Moulding

'NOUVEAU RICH'?

The first of the '500 Club' draws took place on Sunday 2nd June outside The Avenue shops and we are delighted to announce the first of the 'millionaires':-

1st. prize of £100 was won by Mrs Taylor
of 22, The Drive

2nd. prize of £60 was won by Mr. & Mrs Noble
of 28, Desborough Close

3rd. prize of £40 was won by Mr. & Mrs Sharp
of 11, The Drive
(Who generously donated their winnings back into the C.A.G.E. coffers)

4th. (Extra) went to Mr. & Mrs Marvin of
2, Woodhall Close who won £20
(No begging letters, please!)

Congratulations to all!

It is gratifying to know that nearly £4,000 has been donated by way of tickets to the C.A.G.E. campaign, with still more to come. (For new 'recruits', The Drive are showing us up!)

DIRTY DISHES?

Some residents have expressed concern over the communication dishes being erected on the water tower.

We understand that the micro waves emitted from these are infinitesimally weak, in fact far weaker and more harmless than many other radio waves in the ether in which we come into daily contact.

A report on this will appear in a later issue.

NOTES FOR YOUR DIARIES

1. 29th June. Quiz Night and Supper at Bengeo Junior School. 7.30 for 8 p.m. start. £4.50

2. 5th July (evening) in aid of C.A.G.E. Walk and subsequent refreshments and entertainment at Stoneyhills (organised by Stoneyhills and Dimmings Action Group in aid of C.A.G.E.) For further details contact Michael McMullen on 0920-463430. (With horse riding too!) This is likely to be a rather special evening with the Press, T.V. and radio giving us the publicity needed. Details are:-

7.30 - walk led by John Barnes
Also a 'Gentle Amble' led by John Brunige - and Barnie the owl!

7.25 - Horse ride for Bridleways.

9.00 - Satisfy your appetites with strawberries and cream at £2 per head, (bring your own 'booze' if you wish) followed by party, entertainment, raffle, tombola.

(An evening of sheer fun. Don't miss it!)

3. 14th July (Sunday) - International Flower and Rose Show at Hampton Court (subject to there being sufficient response).

It is always nice to get letters of appreciation, such as this one:-

I would like to convey my appreciation to all the hardworking bulb planters. The Spring gardens always help to make the estate look attractive, but this year was exceptional. Every piece of grass had its quota of bulbs, and without actually quoting Wordsworth, I would like to say what great pleasure they gave me. Thank you.

Margaret Brown
2, Cowper Crescent

OAKLANDS (Hertfordshire College of Agriculture and Horticulture) St. Albans.

Open evenings are being arranged at the college for small parties. These will commence at 7 p.m. and will be concerned with glasshouse crops, shrub, flower and demonstration borders, nursery stock and fruit and market garden crops. Tours will normally be completed by 9 p.m.

Details: please telephone (0727) 50651

The following is a copy of a letter received by a resident of Cowper Crescent which we feel will be of interest to any 'live wires'.

Lee Valley Water Plc

Dear Sir/Madam,

USE OF WATER SERVICE PIPES FOR ELECTRICAL EARTHING

Earthing of electrical installations is the sole responsibility of the owner of the installation and it is essential for his safety and that of any other occupants of the property.

At one time it was common practice to use buried metal water pipes as the sole means of earthing. Water undertakers had never intended to supply any form of earthing for electrical systems and are generally totally unaware of where individual connections are made. They recognise no legal liability (expressly or by implication) for their use. Since 1966 the Institution of Electrical Engineers' Wiring Regulations have prohibited the practice.