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THE **BIRCHINGTON ROUNDABOUT**
 YOUR VILLAGE MAGAZINE

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Email: theroundabout.tiscali.co.uk

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Published every other month for the people of Birchington.

February 2007

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ERLEBACH LEGACY COULD BECOME FOCUS FOR VILLAGE HEALTH AND RECREATION

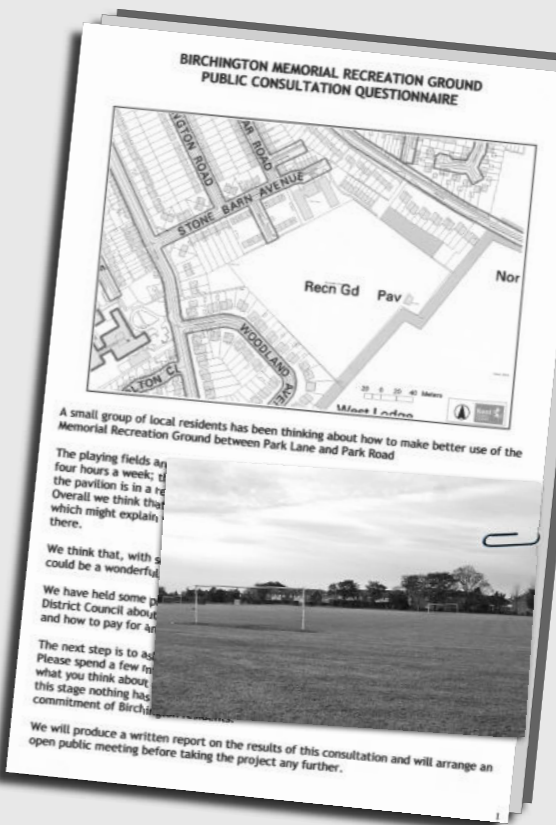
"Anything is possible with village support and commitment"

Public consultation is being carried out on possible improvements to the George V Memorial Recreation Ground between Park Lane and Park Road. The large green area was given to the people of Birchington by Henry Erlebach, one time headmaster of Woodford Court School, in memory of his three sons who were killed in the First World War.

Birchington residents Phil Pittock and Dawn Edmead are leading the work, and a questionnaire will be delivered to every household in Birchington with the free Adscene newspaper very shortly.

"A large green space right in the heart of the community is a wonderful asset," said Phil, resident in Birchington for more than 40 years, a governor at Birchington Primary School and active in local sport and other community issues. "But it is only used for football for about four hours each week and many people don't even know it is there. There is great potential to provide a range of fun and healthy activities for the whole community."

Dawn, who moved to Birchington from London in 1994, is also a governor at the primary school and is the leader of Birchington Youth Club. "With some imagina-



tion and some money the recreation ground could be fantastic," she said. "Our ideas include a new pavilion, which would be about the size of an average bungalow, with some meeting rooms and a café. There could be computers with free Internet access, and perhaps an office for the Community Warden.

"The playground equipment could be improved and a "trim trail" with exercise equipment could be provided. The recreation ground could easily become something for everybody, from 0 to 99 years old."

Phil added, "These ideas have been developed with a small group of interested people. We have discussed them with the Parish and District Councils and we think we might be able to find some money. Now we would like to know what the rest of the village thinks."

Copies of the questionnaire will be available from Birchington Library, Birchington Primary School, Premier Stores (Canterbury Road, corner of King Edward Road) and Minnis Bay Post Office & Stores. Completed questionnaires must be returned by Saturday 3 March 2007. Phil Pittock and Dawn Edmead have promised an open public meeting to give the results of the public consultation before taking the project any further.

Please complete your questionnaire
 A written report on the results of this consultation will be produced and an open public meeting will be held before taking this project further

WELL SUNG!
 During the Christmas period a group of youngsters from Birchington raised £65 for the Breast Cancer Care Unit at Margate Hospital by Carol singing in the Minnis Bay area. The group was lead by veteran singer/ fund raiser, Abbie Harrison, accompanied by Olivia, Hannah, Kirby and Rea. The girls would like to thank all those who gave so generously.

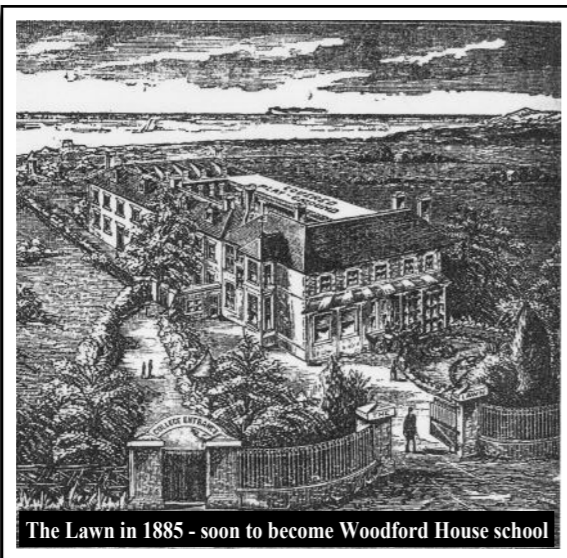
FOOT NOTES
DYSLEXIC? YOU HAVE FRIENDS.
 The Friends of Birchington Library are offering to organize a support session for those suffering from dyslexia. The Kent Library service have resources available. The sessions are only subject to sufficient interest being expressed. Sessions in other areas have already been run with great success. Please feel free to call 841456.

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A brief history of our recreation ground

In 1886, Mr Erlebach and his brother moved the Woodford House School to Birchington from Woodford in Essex. The house they moved into was originally called 'The Lawn' and in an early advertisement for the school, the name can clearly be seen on the gateposts. The house stood about halfway down Station Road on the north-east side. In 1885, it was the only building on this side, apart from the two blocks of cottages at the corner of Albion Road, known as Bath Cottages. It had been built somewhere between 1852 and 1880.

2nd Lieut. 57th Royal flying Corps, and born in 1894. He was killed in action on 5th July 1917, aged 23, and buried at St Omer, Pas de Calais, in France; and Edward Eustace Erlebach, 2nd Lieut. 45th Royal flying Corps who was born in 1898 and killed in action on 7th February 1917, aged 19. He was buried at Linselles cemetery, Nord, in France.



The Lawn in 1885 - soon to become Woodford House school

On the 15th July 1922, Mr H. A. Erlebach signed a deed of conveyance with Percy C. H. Powell-Cotton, in which he bought a section of Quex Park. Within the deed was the addition of a plot of two thirds of an acre, which was the gift of Mr Powell-Cotton to help make the shape of the land less irregular. The ground lies between Park Lane and Park Road in Birchington and abuts the northern edge of Quex Park. Sometime in 1923, the ground was fenced and mowed at Mr Erlebach's expense and was in use before the end of that year. It was already being called the Memorial Recreation or Sports Ground. Mr Erlebach gave it to the people of Birchington with the specific statement that it was for all kinds of sport, not just for cricket (as some people had initially thought.) He made the donation in memory of three of his sons who were killed in the First World War. The three sons of H. Arthur and Annie E. Erlebach were: Henry Woodland Erlebach, Rifleman in London Regt (Queen's Westminster rifles), was born in 1886. He died of wounds on 24th October 1915, aged 29 and was buried at Leper, West-Vlaanderen, in Belgium; Arthur Woodland Erlebach, who was

and founder of Grenham House School, Birchington), William John Gardner (owner of the large corn merchant's on the corner of Station and Albion Rd) and Dave Dallas (heavily involved with the Cricket and Football teams in the village).

When Mr Erlebach died in 1926, the gate that now forms the lych-gate at All Saints Churchyard, was erected in his memory at the entrance to the Woodford House playing fields.

The grounds were used extensively in the ensuing years and a pavilion was erected from funds raised by local people. On the 1 April 1935, the Parish of Birchington was incorporated into the Borough of Margate, instead of remaining a Limb of the Cinque Port of Dover. On 31st December 1938, the current Trustees of the Memorial Recreation Ground conveyed the care and maintenance of the ground to the Margate Borough Council, under the public Recreation Section of the 'Open Spaces Act' of 1906. As the Ground was set up as memorial gift, it came under the oversight of the Charity Commissioners, so that any change of use for the ground would have to be vetted by this body, who would then, among other procedures, seek the local community's opinion. Thanet District Council now hold the deeds to the Memorial Ground at Birchington. In the deeds it states that the grounds were provided for the use of the people of Birchington for the enjoyment of sports and recreation.

These brief historical notes are from the Birchington Heritage Trust and some information was originally supplied by Barry Maplebeck of the Legal Department of Thanet District Council.

On 11th February 1925 a Trust Fund was set up, with the following named Trustees : Mr P. C. H. Powell-Cotton (Owner of Quex Park) Henry Haversham Godwin-Austen (a solicitor acting on behalf of Mr Powell-Cotton), Gerald McCloud Powell-Cotton, Francis Errington (Solicitor), H.Arthur Erlebach (Headmaster and co-founder of Woodford House School, Birchington), Stanley Alfred Erlebach, Albert Hodges (who married Winifred Erlebach and later became Headmaster of Woodford House School), Donald Eustace Erlebach, Hubert Collard (a local business man) Henry Etough Eyre Jeston (Headmaster

was completed in February 1935 at a cost of £400. The troop at this time was known as 7th Margate and 1st Birchington but by 1948 7th Margate was dropped and the Group became just 1st Birchington.

1st Birchington have been at these premises ever since that date, a period spanning 70 years, and are still going strong. In 1986 under the then Group Scout Leader Mr N Smith, the Group became Air Scouts and started learning about planes and flying, which at the time seemed a good idea with Manston on our doorstep. They trained in the traditional Scouting skills and added the air training to this.

In 1986 Scouting started training boys of 6 to 8 years. These were called Beaver Scouts and very soon Birchington had their own colony of Beavers, and today still operate with a Beaver Colony, a Cub Pack and a Scout Troop.

In 2007 it will be 100 years since that first camp on Brownsea Island when Baden Powell first formed Boy Scouts.

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Emails to the Editor

Dear Birchington Roundabout, Thank you for publishing the junk mail stopper! I have sent my form off in the post and now await a reduction in rubbish through my letter box. I would like to pass the form on to my friend who lives in Broadstairs, so could you print it again so I can photocopy it this time and pass it on to her and to my other friends at my club? Thank you again. Mrs B from Birchington. No problem Mrs B please feel free to photocopy the form and pass it about, it is not copyrighted in any way. Ed. Why not email your thoughts and comments to: theroundabout@tiscali.co.uk

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I set out to record the history of the group some time ago by writing to Scout Records at Gilwell, appealing to local residents who may have been members of the Group in the past, and enlisting the help of Miss Jennie Burgess, to whom I am grateful.

There is documentary evidence that there were Scouts in Birchington as early as 1910, three years after Lord Baden Powell formed the First Scout Camp on Brownsea Island in 1907. This evidence has come to light even though the first official record I have is of 1916, supplied to me by The Scout Association. The first scout troop was called 7th Margate Scout Troop and in 1916 had a Membership of 29 boys. The Scout Master was a Mr E J Gallup. The 7th Margate Scout Troop used to meet in the Primitive Methodist Church in Albion Road, (now Taplin Court) and this is where they met until 1934.

Further evidence shows that by 1925 7th Margate had started a Cub pack under the leadership of a Miss Rollings of Woodford House with the Assistance of Miss Fright. In that year there were 22 Scouts and 16 Cubs - quite a strong group. An interesting article appeared in the *Woodfordian* of December 1941. Mr A

Scouting in Birchington since 1910

by David V Stone

Chairman of 1st Birchington Air Scout Group



Scouts in Westfield Road Birchington

Hodges of Woodford House had been awarded the Scout Association's Medal of Merit whilst in his time of being Scoutmaster to the 7th Margate Troop where he had been involved since 1916. He was also Commissioner of the Margate District. Mr Hodges held the position of Scoutmaster until the Great War when a Mr J C Elmer of Grenham House School took over. Mr Hodges left 7th Margate to take on 2nd Birchington Scout Troop, based at Woodford House.

The 7th Margate Troop moved to brand new premises in Prospect Road in 1934/35. The land was donated by Alderman G B Farrar, an ex-Mayor, and the first stone was laid by Mrs Farrar. The building



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