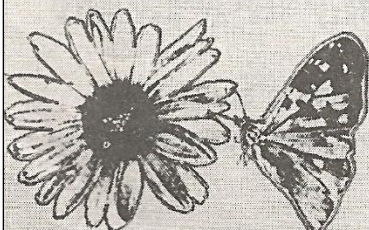


CONTACT

Leavesden Hospital Newsheet



Summer



Edition



Goodbye &

Good Luck....

Mrs Margaret Brockbank, who retired on May 17 has been a member of staff at Leavesden for nineteen years. Since joining Miss Monica Diplock's team in the Occupational Therapy Department in 1972 as a Technical Instructor she has seen and been part of many changes during this time.

Margaret, who lives in Bedmond looks forward to spending more time with her husband, Alan, who has been unwell for some considerable time while pursuing her favourite hobby, gardening.

Margaret's reliable, professional and caring approach to her work will be a loss to both her clients and colleagues.

We hope she enjoys a happy and healthy retirement for many years to come.

C.Henderson

Goodbye to Vera Watson

On March 24th Vera Watson, Ward Manager, retired from service at Leavesden Hospital. Vera had started work in 1944 and except for a short break to raise a family had worked continuously since then.

It is unlikely that anyone else will achieve so many years of service for people with learning difficulties.

Everyone on Bryony Ward enjoyed a celebration party including a welcome return of her colleague and friend, Sylvia Ansell.

We all wish Vera good luck and many, many years of happy retirement from her friends and colleagues at Leavesden.

Richard Dobson
Service Manager

'I love men not because they are men but because they are not women'

Queen Christina (1626-1689)

Editorial Team

	Ext Tel Nos
Mrs M May (Editor)	18
Mrs K McLoughlin (Chairwoman)	43
Mrs C Henderson	72
Mr J Edwards	113
Mr P Stevens	75
Mr R Dobson	161
Rev C Smith	4
Mrs T Mills	Bleep
Mrs C Seymour (Secretary)	75

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The views printed in this magazine are not necessarily the opinions of the Editors.

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Letters are welcomed on all subjects, particularly local issues, but can be printed only if a name and address are supplied. Requests for anonymity are respected.

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The Editors can accept no responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine.

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Letters or articles of a libellous, slanderous or obscene nature will not be published.

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The Editors will endeavour to print all letters received by them for publication but reserve the right to edit.

* * * * *

Cover by P Stevens

'What is woman? Only one of nature's agreeable blunders'

Hannah Cowley (1743-1809) dramatist

The Rules

1. The FEMALE always makes the Rules.
2. The Rules are subject to change at any time *without* prior notification.
3. No MALE can possibly know all the Rules.
4. If the FEMALE suspects the MALE knows all the Rules, she must immediately change some or all of them.
5. The FEMALE is never wrong.
6. If the FEMALE is wrong, it is due to a misunderstanding which was a direct result of something the MALE did or said wrong.
7. If Rule 6 applies, the MALE must apologise immediately for causing the misunderstanding.
8. The FEMALE may change her mind at any time.
9. The MALE must never change his mind without the expressed written consent of the FEMALE.
10. The FEMALE has every right to be angry or upset at any time.
11. The MALE must remain calm at all times, unless the FEMALE wants him to be angry or upset.
12. The FEMALE must under no circumstances let the MALE know whether or not she wants him to be angry or upset.
13. The MALE is expected to be a mind-reader at all times.
14. The MALE who doesn't abide by the Rules, can't take the heat, lacks backbone, and is a wimp.
15. Any attempt to document the RULES could result in bodily harm.
16. If the FEMALE has PMT, all the Rules are null and void.
17. The FEMALE is ready when she is ready.
18. The MALE must be ready at all times.



ENERGY MATTERS

IDEAS ON PUBLICITY

It is a difficult thing to write about saving energy. The subject can be repetitive and uninteresting. A writer can easily be criticised for saying the same old thing under a new disguise. Fortunately, I cannot be accused of this. I merely say the same old things without any disguise. Please turn off all lights when a room is not being used.

Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.

George Bernard Shaw

Electricity bills are mounting, so now I'm a regular bore
About switching off heating and lights,
But of one thing I'm not quite sure:
Does the light in the fridge remain alight
Even after I've closed the door?

Thank you.....

Thank you very much to everyone in the January '91 Student Group. They managed to raise £281.74 to enable us to enhance the environment and the quality of life for the women living in Bluebell.

Thanks again for a job well done!!

From the women and care team on Bluebell

It is with deep regret that we report the departure of Maura Boakes, Head of the Occupational Therapy Special Care Unit.

I know this reads like an obituary and I have to say that this is what it felt like to her clients and her staff. Despite exploring every avenue available it was decided by Maura and the District Occupational Therapist that the Unit could not be run on the budget allocated.

Maura had worked so hard to try and save the Unit and the jobs of her staff that she made herself ill. I am sure we all wish her every success in her new career.

Doreen Mallows

STARS

Aries: Mar 21-April 20

This summer could prove a turning point in your career. Don't let work and no play make your life dull routine. Take a risk and do the unexpected - the results will amaze you.

Taurus: April 21-May 21

If a new job is on offer don't let lack of confidence prevent you from applying. If you feel that romance has passed you by, take heart as Cupid is heading in your direction.

Gemini: May 22-June 22

Holidays are in the air for you, beware of too much sun though. Pets feature in your life at this time and give you great pleasure. A partner may need your comfort or support - be generous.

Cancer: June 23-July 23

Appearances play an important role in your life just now so don't be afraid to spend on a new outfit or hairstyle - you will feel a different person with capabilities beyond your wildest dreams.

Leo: July 24-Aug 23

You may need to evaluate a relationship - don't let your heart rule your head as long term decisions may have to be made. Don't be afraid to confide in a friend. There will be light at the end of the tunnel.

Virgo: Aug 24-Sept 23

A member of the opposite sex will come back into your life after many years absence. This will lift your spirits and put you on a more positive course. A creative period for Virgoans just now.

Scorpio: Oct 24-Nov 22

An important meeting could put you in a new league - business-wise. You may be required to complete a course of study. This could be of considerable benefit and lead to a loving permanent relationship.

Sagittarius: Nov 23-Dec 21

Unexpected changes in your working life lead to new responsibilities. Don't let stress get the upper hand - take time off to relax. This will give you the strength to confront a personal problem.

Capricorn: Dec 22-Jan 20

A dream is about to be realized and a period of great happiness is on the cards. Your whole life could be res-haped by the Spring if you are prepared to take the initiative.

Aquarius: Jan 21-Feb 19

Don't feel that you must keep up with the latest trends. Old and trusted ideas can still be the best. Adapt and prosper are key words just now. Treat yourself to a whim - you deserve it.

Pisces: Feb 20-Mar 20

Your budget appears to be out of control - take time to review your whole financial situation and adjust to your means. You look good and feel good just now so make new plans and fulfil latent ambitions.

Libra: Sept 24-Oct 23

Don't be afraid to take a chance if opportunity knocks - remember, nothing ventured, nothing gained. You will be surrounded by people for a while and may need to retreat to a sanctuary to recharge your emotional batteries.

ALSO KNOWN AS 'OLIVE'

In April 1983 my life changed. It was not a sudden religious conversion, or the birth of another child in our family but rather an inspiration to improve myself and also to help some other people.

For some time I realised that I had become

rather unfit and even more overweight than usual yet somehow, I seemed unable to do anything about it. Then like millions of others, I watched the start of the 1983 London Marathon; the sight of the mass start I found quite moving. I had to go over to

Church (I was then a curate in Cheshunt) to prepare for the main morning service and whilst talking to some others before the service, the little inkling in my mind became a firm ambition. My wife had said casually whilst reading an article about the Marathon a few days earlier, "Why don't you go in for it?" but I had shrugged off the idea though the seed was planted. My mind was made up, I would run in the London Marathon. That evening, under cover of darkness, wearing a very old pair of shorts and some trainers, I somehow managed to run round the block in a grand total of 8 minutes! I was tired, sweaty and completely out of breath - but I had taken my first steps.

My initial hope was to run in the 1984 Marathon but clearly I was not the only one who had been inspired and with thousands of other hopefuls my application was rejected. It was also rejected for 1985 and 1986 and 1987 but not for 1988! Then a cruel twist. I managed to hurt my back about two months before the 1988 Marathon but as I had to withdraw, my place was "saved" for the 1989 race. So, on St. George's Day 1989 (23rd April), I found myself in Greenwich Park along with 20,000 or so other runners and joggers, six years after my initial inspiration to run the London Marathon. My plan was run - well, jog slowly - at about 12 minute mile pace which, with having to queue at the start, would have me finishing in about 5½ hours.

Things went according to plan at first. I saw my sister and her family at the 8 mile mark and carried on round the Docks but felt I was slowing a little. At about the halfway mark (13 miles) a now famous incident happened. I had my name "CLIVE" printed on my tee shirt. This meant that many onlookers were giving me encouragement. However, someone mis-read my name and shouted out "Come on OLIVE!" at which point I almost stopped dead in my tracks whilst a group of onlookers collapsed in laughter. The person who thought I was Olive quickly realised his mistake and I managed to compose myself and continue on my way.

My right hip was feeling rather stiff now

and I found I had to carry on with a mixture of walking and jogging but although I was falling behind my schedule, I was never in doubt that I would finish, which I did in a few minutes over 6 hours, but very pleased with myself even if my children thought I should have gone a bit faster! If that wasn't enough, by hard work from the members of the local branch and the generosity of many people, I managed to raise in sponsorship for the South West Herts Branch of the Smaritans, the grand sum of £1,143. I know that money isn't everything - but it did make the effort worthwhile.

For some strange reason I still wanted to have another go and try and improve my time. So again, this year, I found myself lined up in Greenwich Park. The story is much the same as before with three important differences.

- (1) No one called me "OLIVE".
- (2) I was actually slightly slower this time - I put this down to it being slightly colder and there being a westerly wind which meant the last 7 miles were hard, cold, work (and I'm now technically a "veteran").
- (3) The cause I was running for was to help offset some of the costs of our trip to Lourdes in June. As I write, I have raised just over £950 with more to come.

So, now I have to decide whether or not my marathon days are over but I still intend to do some jogging and enter some shorter runs. My eyes are on the Bushey Quarter Marathon (a mere 6½ miles) in July.

However, I feel I am a fitter and somehow more fulfilled person for my participation in the London Marathon, an ambition has been achieved and some other people helped. So my dream of now eight years ago, was no passing fantasy but a spur to something better.

Clive Smith
Hospital Chaplain

Leavesden Two Way Team Talk

T.W.T.T. is held every third week of the month, starting with Jane Reynolds (Level 1) communicating information to T.W.T.T. Talkers at Level 2 on Tuesday 11.00a.m. By Friday afternoon everyone in the hospital

should have attended a T.W.T.T. session.

T.W.T.T. is not the sole means of communicating information across the whole of the hospital. So, T.W.T.T. is there to enhance

and complement and is not instead of current communication vehicles. If taken to its full potential it will ensure increased communication at a time when it is most vital, i.e. when so many changes are taking place in the NHS, Care in the Community, Long Stay Hospital closure, Leavesden contraction.

T.W.T.T. is now an established part of everyone's working life at Leavesden but is often criticised for not being Two Way. The opportunity to make the communication has always been there.

Following, if you like, the cascade of information at each session there is, and always should be, a time for questions and discussion. If your T.W.T.T. Talker cannot answer your question he/she is obligated to get answers (if available) as soon as possible. Also, if an individual has a piece of information he/she wishes to share with colleagues across the hospital or an item of news, etc. then it should be written and signed and put into the T.W.T.T. suggestion boxes. These items collected from the suggestion boxes are then seen and if appro-

priate put into the next T.W.T.T. There are several examples of this happening.

Sometimes people complain that the information has nothing to do with them. This was an early criticism so we now allow time in each session for Team Talkers to give information that particularly applies only to his/her department.

Communication is the life blood of Leavesden, T.W.T.T. is important enough to be given its own slot in the timetable, if T.W.T.T. precedes or follows another meeting it clouds the issues and it is difficult to remember from which meeting the information came.

Finally, T.W.T.T. is regularly reviewed to improve its effectiveness and presentation. Please do not hesitate to give suggestions for improving our unique communications system, through using T.W.T.T. suggestion boxes, passing information to your Team Talker or writing to me.

Richard Dobson
Service Manager
Sector 3

The following story was submitted by the Rev. George Mead who recently met Joyce Broderick at Plumstead where Ronnie was a patient

THE BOY RONNIE

A Short Story by Joyce Broderick

Just about everyone liked the boy Ronnie. A big boy he was - much bigger than most. A giant you might call him - but a gentle giant.

He started off big. His mother had a bad time when he was born, and the midwife could not weigh him. She tried, but her scales only went up to fourteen pounds, and she bragged about him being the biggest and strongest baby ever born in Norwich. The other children in that family were big, but Ronnie was the biggest of them all.

He was a handsome boy. It was only when you looked at his china-blue eyes that you realised something was wrong. They had that vague and bewildered look that told you he was mentally deficient. Brain-damaged, and perhaps this was responsible for the terrible epileptic fits he suffered.

When we kids were playing out in the street, Ronnie would be with us - tagging along behind or just standing there watching.

He went everywhere with us whenever possible. When we went to the cinema or the park, he'd come. Or when we went to the river, he'd be there. The river was a place of enchantment, and Ronnie was completely under its spell. He didn't say much or do much, but he could swim like a fish by the time he was seven. He hadn't the sense to know how to dress or undress himself at that time, but someone would help him. Never did learn how to tie up his shoes.

It didn't pay to tease or torment him. One of his sisters or brothers would come tearing after you if you tried any tricks. Protective they were, and almost as big. Not that anyone really wanted to upset Ronnie. He trusted everyone. That's why we all watched him. There were too many dangers about for an innocent like Ronnie to cope with alone.

He didn't go to an ordinary school with the rest of us, and couldn't learn to read or write - so there was no hope of him ever being able to earn a living when he grew up. By the time he was eight there was talk of him going into an institution. It was the size of him that caused as much worry as anything. On the rare occasions he flew into a tantrum he'd lash out with feet and fists, and it took a man to control him.

His parents struggled on, though. They knew that he would have to leave them eventually,

but they deferred this for as long as they could.

Anyway, when he was nine, he was recovering from yet another bout of epileptic fits. Each day he was getting better, and soon would go back to his special school. It was boring for him whilst we others were at school, as he wasn't allowed out alone. A piece of rope tying the tall gate was the only things that kept him in, and he hadn't the faintest idea of how to untie it. But then he noticed a gap in the fence, and pushed his way through to freedom. His mother - busy with her chores - didn't notice him go.

He headed straight down Old Palace Road to the river. The nearest point to the river was by the Dolphin footpath, but, as it happened, he walked further along to the causeway by the Gibraltar public-house.

The water at the edge there was quite shallow, but a yard or so more and the river bed shelved quite steeply. A dangerous place to play - we children were frequently warned away from it. But there was no adult about to warn Ronnie away on that afternoon. Nor to answer the cries of another boy who was flundering about in the river. Another escapee had made his way there and had paddled out of his depth.

By the time Ronnie reached the water's edge the child had stopped struggling and was floating face downward. It didn't seem right to Ronnie. He called to him. The child took no notice, but started to sink. Ronnie knew you had to undress before bathing - but he didn't pause to fling off his shoes. The child must be pulled out - he must!

He dragged the child out on to the bank. Perhaps the little fellow was asleep - his eyes were closed. They were both soaking wet and Ronnie began to feel cold. There was nothing else for it - Ronnie would take the child to his mother. He knew she would dry them both and perhaps wake up the child. With this thought in mind he heaved the toddler on to his shoulder and started to run off home.

As soon as the pair turned the corner into Heigham Street they attracted a crowd. Among them was a policeman on his beat. In double quick time he was applying respiration to the poor little mite. Someone called an ambulance. The child's mother came scurrying along - frantic with worry.

At last, with the water pumped out of his lungs, the child started breathing again and in no time at all was howling his head

off. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief. The child and his mother went off in the ambulance and the crowd dispersed.

Ronnie was half-way home and shivering with cold when his mother met him. She guessed he would head for the river. So worried had she been when she found he was missing that she had clawed up her baby and came running to find him.

We didn't believe his story at first. It wasn't till the boy's mother came to the house later to thank him, that we realised he had been telling the truth. Nothing reached the newspapers, but there is a man, now in his forties and living in Norwich, who had a great escape that day.

Ronnie had eventually to be taken into care. We would see him from time to time, but he regarded the institution as his home.

He lived only only twenty-one years, and when he died, he was well over six feet tall and broad and heavy with it.

Heavy? No, he wasn't heavy: he was my brother.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN...

A brief history of Leavesden Hospital
by Paddy London

Prior to 1867 there was no refuge for the mentally defective in the London area, other than workhouses and similar institutions where they were housed with inmates of all types. They were the responsibility of thirty separate Boards of Guardians of the Poor who, being unco-ordinated and with varying needs and resources, could not cope adequately with London as a whole.

The Metropolitan Poor Act was passed in 1867. "An Act for the Establishment in the Metropolis of Asylums for the Sick, Insane and other classes of the Poor, and of Dispensaries; and for the Distribution over the Metropolis of Portions of the Charge for Poor Relief; and for other purposes relating to Poor Relief in the Metropolis."

The Act was introduced by Gathorne Hardy, First Earl of Cranbrook (1814-1906), when he was President of the Poor Law Board. This pilot scheme proved to be the most important poor law measure for London between 1834 and 1929 and a significant step towards the socialisation of a medical care in this country.

This Act brought into being the Metropolitan Asylums Board, M.A.B., who were advised that the asylums would be required each to house 1,500 patients. The particular patients would come from the mentally afflicted - the "idiotic, chronic and harmless patients" for whom the only refuge available were the London workhouses.

A Sub-Committee was set up by the Board and their first meeting was held at Westminster Chambers on 31st July 1867. The members were Dr Brewer, Dr Cortes, Dr Griffiths, Mr Turner, Mr Wilkinson, Mr Talbot and Mr Wyatt, who was elected Chairman. This Committee dealt with the planning of the asylums and later were responsible for the running of them when they opened.

They were charged to report to the Board the number of insane patients for whom accommodation was required and the mode, in the opinion of the Committee, by which accommodation could be most efficiently provided.

Prompt action followed. It was recommended to the Board that two sites be obtained for the erection of asylums, one on the north side of the Thames and one on the south side, and that the sites were of not less than 20 acres and should be within a radius of 20 miles from Charing Cross and near a railway station.

Sites were advertised for and the report on the Leavesden site is recorded as follows: "Situated 3 miles from Watford and 1½ miles from Kings Langley Stations to both of which are numerous trains. This site appears to us in many respects eligible. The land lies high on a mixed soil of gravel and chalk. The shape of the land being very suitable for the erection of an asylum, etc." It then goes on to say that the price asked for the land was £120 per acre and they thought about 65 acres should be bought.

Eventually, 76 acres were purchased from Mr Trotter for £7,600; the sum of £219.12.6d. was also paid to him, being the amount payable for the tenants' tillages.

The architects selected from those who applied and submitted estimates were Messrs Giles and Birvan whose estimate was £67,700 but in committee on 22nd April 1868 they reported on suggestions and alterations put forward by the Board which increased this figure.

Draft estimates covering the proposed building, furniture, bedding, clothing, etc were considered and we find recorded in the minutes that it was resolved "That

having under consideration the probable cost of the proposed asylum, from the best information the Committee have been able to obtain, the estimates are:

	£
Building	85,000
Well and Chimney	3,000
Fixtures and Fittings	4,000
Furniture and Bedding	15,000
Clothing	3,000
Drainage, Water Tanks, etc	2,500
Gas House, etc	1,000
Laying out, Planting and Stocking Grounds	2,500
Farm Buildings	1,500
	<u>£117,500</u>
Add Architects' Fees	3,000
Clerk of Works	500
	<u>500</u>
Making a total of ...	£121,000

Prices which were proposed for the making up of Linen, Clothing, etc for the Asylum were:-

	£	s.d.
Linen and Bedding for inmates	8,471.	12.2.
" " " " attendants	538.	2.6.
Linen and Clothing Male inmates	2,020.	10.0.
" " " Female inmates	2,740.	6.9.
	<u>£13,770.</u>	<u>11.5.</u>

On 25th September 1868 it was agreed by the Committee "That the Foundation Stone of the Asylum be laid on Saturday, 31st October 1868 and that the Chairman of the Board be invited to perform the ceremony and that the following be invited to be present:-

- The Bishop of the Diocese
- The President and Secretary of the Poor Law Board
- The Poor Law Inspector and Mr Hugh Owen
- The Vicar and Rural Dean, Leavesden and Abbots Langley
- Ten or Twelve of the principal inhabitants of the neighbourhood of the Asylum
- The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works
- The Engineer, Contractor, Architects and Officers
- Six reporters

The cost of Lithographing the Building for the use of the visitors on the laying of the stone cost £2.12.6d. for 150 copies. Other expenses were:-

	£ s.d.
Brooke & Son for trowel, mallet, etc.	10.10.0.
L.N.W.R. Special train	36.18.0.
Wiffen for conveyances from London	17.15.0.
Morgan for conveyances from Watford	17.3.0.
Wyman & Co - other sundries	5. 4.0.

The actual construction of the Asylum was carried out by a contractor, Mr Henshaw, who apparently ran into some trouble early on as was minuted, on 2nd December 1868, "That it was reported that the contractor had assigned his property to Trustees for the benefit of his creditors and that the works had been entirely stopped, a Deed of Assignment having been exhibited to the Committee by Messrs. Ashhurst."

It was also in the same minutes that it was desirable to take out a fire insurance to cover damage during construction.

At a meeting of the Committee, 17th March 1869, it was reported that there were only 18 bricklayers employed that week which was 50 less than the previous week and other men had been reduced in proportion. The total number of men employed that week was only 159 against 258 the previous week. It was considered that the falling off in the supply of bricks was the cause, as nearly all the bricks had been used up.

On 21st May 1870, the Committee examined the progress made with the several works under contract and reported that they were proceeding fairly well.

Despite these setbacks, on 4th January 1871 Messrs. Giles and Birvan, the Architects, wrote to the Committee enclosing the account of Mr Henshaw for the Building Contract which they had carefully examined and certified as correct. The letter stated that the entire excess in the contract was £187.14s.7d. "which, they trust, the Committee will think satisfactory".

The second Asylum, to be built on the south side of the Thames, was being erected at the same time, at Caterham, Surrey. It was virtually identical to the one at Leavesden and is now known as St. Lawrence's Hospital.

The Leavesden Asylum comprised four blocks for males, known up to recently as 4's, 6's, 8's and 10's, and five blocks for females, 3's, 5's, 7's, 9's and 11's, and built in such a way that on either side

at a distance of more than 100 feet were the long corridors as we now know them extending north and south giving access to the blocks. The Infirmarys were placed at the southern extremities of each corridor and became 1's block for females and 2's block for males.

The blocks, other than the Infirmarys, were constructed on precisely the same plan in every respect and each block comprised three storeys, as today. Each block was intended for 160 inmates. The ground floors had a large dayroom, 105 feet long, 36 feet wide and 14 feet high. Near the entrances and conveniently arranged were the sculleries, store-rooms, lavatories and closets, dry earth being used in the closets on the ground floor and water on the upper storeys. The lavatories measured 20 feet by 7 feet.

The first and second floors were divided in the centre by dwarf iron partitions and iron columns, which formed four long dormitories in each block, each containing 40 beds. Also on each floor were rooms for the attendants, lavatories, closets, etc and a single room. The 'attendants' room measured 16½ feet by 7 feet.

The Infirmary rooms were constructed narrower than in the other blocks but were the same length. Each floor formed a separate ward and the rooms were used for living in as well as sleeping in and contained 30 beds. They had two rooms for attendants, four single rooms, kitchen, bathroom, scullery, water closets.

Open fireplaces in the centre of the day rooms formed the only means of heating the larger rooms, but the single rooms in the Infirmarys were artificially heated. The bathrooms and washing places were said to be extremely cold in winter.

There were baths in the Infirmarys but no baths in the ordinary blocks. The inmates, both male and female, used general bath houses, each containing 10 copper baths and were, in fact, the buildings now used by the Finance Office on the Female side and the Industrial Painter and Industrial Carpenters on the Male side. It was soon found that these bath houses were too small and the dressing rooms attached inadequate and inconvenient.

The Laundry too was considered not well arranged and in some departments provision for the washing and drying of clothes inadequate. Improvements were made subsequently.

There was no general dining and recreation

room provided but the Laundry was occasionally used for purposes of associated amusement. One of the female wards was used for a weekly dance at which about 160 inmates of each sex generally attended.

Each block had its own airing court, being considered of ample size. They were neatly laid out and enclosed by oak park paling fences.

The Sunday services in the Chapel were attended by 200 men and 250 women and about half this number attended weekday services. There was held a special weekday service for epileptic inmates, organised by the Chaplain, to prevent the interruption and disturbance which was feared might arise due to the occurrence of fits during the ordinary services.

Staff were interviewed and appointed and, without giving the individual names, included Medical Superintendent, Assistant Medical Officers, Matron, Assistant Matrons, Inspector, Steward, Head Attendants, Male and Female, Attendants Man and Wife. Ordinary attendants, Male and Female, 1st and 2nd Class. Also Chaplain, Resident Engineer, Gate Porter, Hall Porter, Clerks.

Restrictions on the staff would not be tolerated today. For instance "Gas to be turned off in the Attendants' sitting rooms at 10.30p.m. and in their bedrooms at 10.40p.m." If found lighted after that time a fine of 6d. was imposed.

The uniform provided for the male Attendants was prison made in light brown double twill and remained the property of the Asylum until it had had twelve months use when, minus the buttons and badge, it was the property of the wearer. Overcoats remained the property of the Asylum. Officials received certain allowances of coal, milk and potatoes.

Subordinate officers were allowed to have one day off every four weeks with seven days leave per annum after one year's service. They were allowed no visitors into the Asylum. Later, however, it was agreed "that married attendants and other servants employed be allowed to introduce their wives but no other stranger on any account to be permitted to be present" for which strict orders were given by the Steward to the Gate Porter. Incidentally, the Steward was instructed to provide a supper for those invited to be present, allowing a "reasonable quantity of Wine and Beer, but no Spirits".

It was also agreed that supper be provided

for the Attendants who played in the band on the night of the Ball given to the Attendants and Servants and on other occasions, also that "The band be allowed one pint of beer per man when playing for the patients and on one night a week when practising".

Female Attendants were allowed half day extra leave per month from 2-8p.m. Apparently, bonnets and shawls were worn by the Female Attendants in the very early days for, in the Minutes of October 1870 is an entry "That bonnet strings for the inmates, bonnets and shawls for the nurses and inmates be obtained".

On one occasion some of the Attendants had brought pet birds into the Asylum when it was ordered "that no birds or animals be kept by the Attendants and Servants in the Asylum".

When first opened, a large proportion of the inmates were imbecile or demented from birth and as many as 325 were epileptic and included were 75 idiotic children. It would appear that however suitable the accommodation may have been for the classes for whom, by law, it had been provided, neither the building nor the staff were calculated for any but the most harmless and quiet cases and so an examination of individual patients was carried out to decide whether they were proper cases for detention and treatment in the Asylum. As a result of this examination it was concluded that there were some patients who were dangerous, violent or troublesome. It was evident that no proper care or security could be afforded either to the staff or the inmates in wards where the staff ratio was one to forty inmates.

It was considered that in a ward of 160 with only 4 Attendants, a single troublesome or dangerous inmate would monopolize the care of one Attendant throwing the charge of the other 159 inmates upon the other three.

After due consideration, orders were made for the removal of these patients, the men to Colney Hatch - now Friern - and the women to Camberwell House.

Regarding the power of detention of inmates, it was the practice of the Medical Superintendent after examination of the inmate to sign a certificate in accordance with Article 16, Poor Law Board dated

6th October 1870, stating that the inmate was not in a proper state to leave the Asylum without danger to himself.

The foundation stone of the Recreation Hall was laid in 1891 and presumably opened shortly afterwards.

In 1905, a new departure from the rules came into operation when resident staff were allowed to live out. About twenty nurses received this permission and the Medical Superintendent reported to the effect "that it was very favourable upon the health of the female staff who had this permission to live out".

There had been several epidemics of disease, including Smallpox, Enteric Fever and Typhoid, which necessitated a reduction of numbers, better sanitation and hygiene and, eventually, in 1907, the provision of an Isolation Hospital which has now been converted to Orchard View after being known for a long while as 18's.

In 1909, the wards had glass screens created to allow one part for the day room and the other part for the dormitory so, presumably, the ward system as we now know it came into being then.

In 1913, the bridges linking the blocks in pairs were constructed but it appears that there was opposition from the Local Government Board to the expense and an alternative scheme was discussed, but not adopted, whereby the bridges were placed near the corridor ends where the distance to be traversed was least. Also, twenty-two cottages were built for the staff, the estimated cost being £654 a pair, but they were ultimately erected at a cost of £630 a pair.

This history of Leavesden Asylum, the pilot scheme, is of necessity only brief. The dissolution of the Metropolitan Asylums Board and the rebirth of Leavesden as Leavesden Hospital and the history of the care and nursing of the patients make further interesting reading for the future.

OH AND...

Few know the origin of popular myths. I did trace the beginning of one, however. It concerns the wife who is paint-stripping the outside loo of a weekend cottage. Her husband goes out for a quiet sit-down session and drops his cigarette stub into the bin beneath. Whoosh! A painfully singeing sheet of flame shoots up between his legs.

He wasn't to know, of course, that his wife had thrown the dregs of the highly-volatile paint-stripper into the bucket.

An old soldier told me that something very similar had happened in Burma, with many witnesses, during the War. Everyone wrote home about it.

But a rather more obscure and certainly more comical outside loo tale concerns the man with two wooden legs who was also sitting quietly in the darkness.

Suddenly a figure came along, opened the bog door, grabbed the poor chap by the legs and pulled him roughly into the daylight.

It was the new gardener who thought he had found the wheelbarrow.

THE OPTIMISM
OF THE ACTION
IS BETTER THAN
THE PESSIMISM
OF THE THOUGHT

HARALD ZINDLER ACTIONS CO-ORDINATOR, GREENPEACE

The Golden Eagle

A man found an eagle's egg and put it in the nest of a back-yard hen. The eaglet hatched with the brood of chicks and grew up with them.

All his life the eagle did what the back-yard chickens did, thinking he was a back-yard chicken. He scratched the earth for worms and insects. He clucked and cackled. And he would thrash his wings and fly a few feet into the air.

Years passed and the eagle grew very old. One day he saw a magnificent bird far above him in the cloudless sky. It glided in graceful majesty among the powerful wind currents, with scarcely a beat of its strong golden wings.

The old eagle looked up in awe. 'Who is that?' he asked.

'That's the eagle, the king of the birds,' said his neighbour. 'He belongs to the sky. We belong to the earth - we're chickens.'

So the eagle lived and died a chicken, for that's what he thought he was.

(from Anthony de Mello's 'The Song of the Bird')

CT Scanner Appeal

The CT Scanner Appeal was launched on 19 February 1991 at BP House in the presence of Princess Michael of Kent, who is the President of the Appeal.

We need to raise the sum of £1.5 million to cover the running costs of the Scanner so that the community can benefit from the advantages which the Scanner can bring without having to cut back on other vital services being offered.

The Appeal has the support of local industry, including Erroll Yates, who is the Chairman and Managing Director of Kodak Limited and also the Chairman of the Appeal Committee.

The Scanner is scheduled to be installed at Hemel Hempstead General Hospital at the end of April 1991. Each scan for a patient costs £250 so it is vital that monies are raised to support the running of the Scanner.

I have now taken over managing the Appeal from John Bennett and I would certainly welcome your support and suggestions for fund-raising events. If you have any ideas or would like further information on the Scanner then please contact me at the Appeals Office at Hemel Hempstead General Hospital on extension 2569.

Sue Arnold
Campaign Manager

EASTER TREAT TO RESIDENTS AND STAFF OF LARK WARD IN THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE BOX W.F.C.

I am writing to show our appreciation following a request to W.F.C. to watch a Football Match. To our surprise we were invited to take six Residents and two Staff to watch an Easter Monday football match - Watford against Leicester City in the comfort of Elton John's eight seater executive box.

What a marvellous opportunity! We arrived at the W.F.C. Grounds at about 11.30 hours according to their suggested itinerary, with the Resid-

ents and Staff looking excited and cheerful as they awaited a full afternoon programme of fun and leisure.

On arrival at the Club, we were greeted by the Marketing Manager who showed us to Elton John's Suite, where we were briefed about the afternoon. To make you more envious, here follows the Itinerary Programme.

THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE BOX

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

Your itinerary on a matchday would be as follows:

Afternoon Kick-Off:

11.30a.m.

Arrive at the stadium and park your car in a specially reserved car park immediately adjacent to the executive box holders' entrance.

Make your way to the executive box reception area where you and your guests will be greeted and escorted to your box.

11.45a.m.

Tour the stadium and inspect the pitch with our club expert and guide.

12.30p.m.

Return to your box for drinks from your own private bar.

1.00p.m.

Enjoy a superb buffet. All of the food is prepared in our own kitchens to an exceptionally high standard. The buffet is followed by coffee.

3.00p.m.

Watch the match from the outside private balcony or from the warmth and comfort of your own box.

3.45p.m.

Discuss the first half over refreshments and catch up on the match highlights via our own closed circuit TV then return to your seats for the second half.

4.45p.m.

After the match there will certainly be plenty to discuss and we will be serving coffee and biscuits.

5.15p.m.

Return to your cars, by which time most of the traffic will have disappeared.

As you can imagine from the Programme, we had a most enjoyable afternoon and also greeted by a member of the Board of Directors.

During the tour, we were told the history of the Club, their endeavour to involve the family, the Community and of Elton John's own involvement and dedication to the Club. We were also escorted to

the family room where families can leave their children to the security of the Club's Staff or watch the game in warmth and comfort with their children on closed circuit TV. We also visited the W.F.C. dressing room and told about their discipline and treatment before and after the game. All in all, it was a very interesting and learning experience to us.

After the tour of the Grounds, we had a superb buffet followed by cream cakes, percolated coffee, nothing was spared - except for me, I was fasting. The Residents thoroughly enjoyed their meals and with vigour - afterwards cheered Watford all the way to victory (1-0) against Leicester City. As the Club was in a sombre state with possible relegation, I have no doubt we brought in 'Luck' for the day as we were informed by various people.

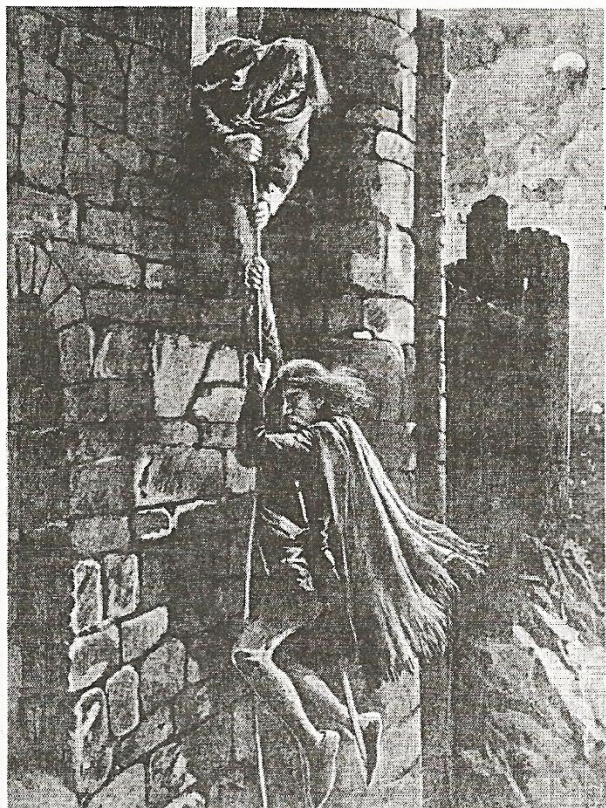
During the match **"WELCOME TO THE RESIDENTS OF LARK WARD - LEAVESDEN HOSPITAL IN THE PRESIDENT'S SUITE"** was displayed on several occasions on the electronic board to remind us of the privilege because on the opposite side to us on the family enclosure was Elton John who had just flown home, on the same day, from New York to support Watford. 'PRIVILEGED' certainly we felt it for the afternoon after learning the season's booking for the Suites in the new Stand, cost about £7000 to £11,000, not including meals and I reckoned the "PRESIDENT'S SUITE" must be the Top.

What more can I say! But to applaud the Watford Football Club's generosity and their thought for the less privileged. The visit will certainly be most memorable to our Residents and Staff and something to talk about.

I hope and wish that similar experiences can be extended to the other people of Leavesden.

R.Goolam Hossen
Ward Manager
Lark Ward

COMPETITION



Two members of the Leavesden Hospital staff trying out the new fire escape system.

£50 Prize Voucher

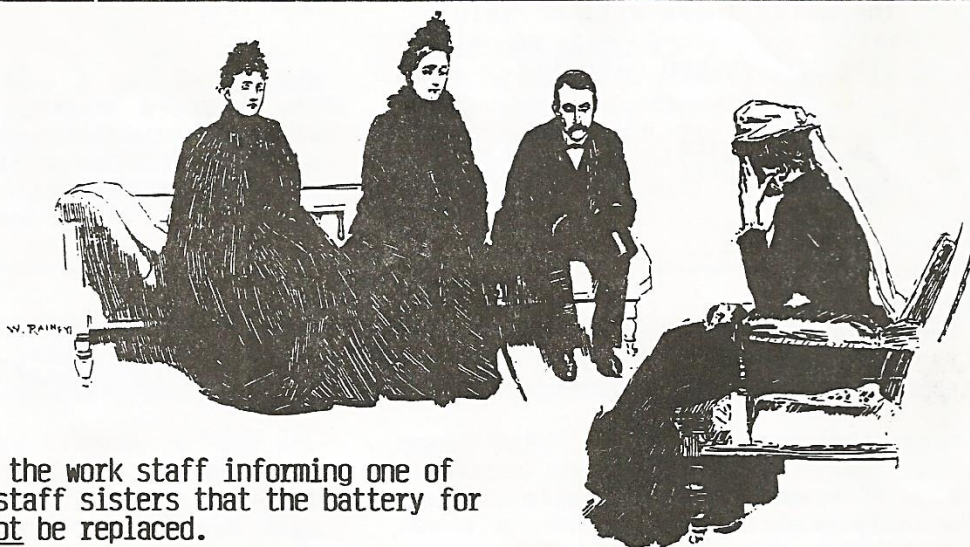
to be spent in the hospital

For the best alternative Leavesden-related caption to the following pictures:

Entries to be submitted to the Editor by Wednesday 31 July 1991.

Each entry will be judged by an independent panel and their decision is final.

All staff are eligible except members of the Editorial Committee.



Three members of the work staff informing one of Leavesden night staff sisters that the battery for her torch will not be replaced.

L.O.T.

LIFE OPPORTUNITIES TRUST

By the time you read this, LOT's first home, in Ladbroke Grove, should be open, enabling eight of Leavesden's residents to start a new life in the community.

Staffing in the home is of the ratio of three per shift, so there will be ample opportunity for the residents to develop their skills, helped by the staff who are proving enthusiastic and caring, some of whom you may have seen around the hospital over the past few months.

One of LOT's main aims has been to involve the residents in as much choice as possible in all aspects of their new life, and it is has been really encouraging to see their confidence develop, even down to making the decision as to whether to have their drinks inside the pub or in its garden.

Slight problems were caused by the change in funding arrangements for community care, which made certain aspects of the commissioning process somewhat traumatic, but with a little help from our funds, and a lot of extra work for the staff, things eventually came together. LOT's next project is in Tring, a home for six people, and the process is going relatively smoothly, with the house due to be occupied in August, with a good deal of local community support already.

We were also working on some projects in Hillingdon, and the possibility of another house in Riverside, so after a quiet beginning, LOT is getting up steam, and should start to become better known.

LOT's Project Officer, Ralph Verlander, will be doing a cycle race on 4th August, a race which will last twelve hours, and he hopes to cover between 230 and 250 miles, depending on weather conditions. All proceeds from sponsorship will be divided between LOT and Leavesden Hospital, although there has been no decision as to what to provide for either party yet. It was felt appropriate to include

Leavesden, since the idea was first thought of whilst Ralph was enjoying working there in the development of facilities, and because LOT is committed to helping Leavesden, not only by resettling the residents, but also by providing employment and helping with training where appropriate.

So, all contributions will be welcomed, with sponsorship forms coming around soon.

FROM THE HOSPITAL MANAGER

As work continues in making proposals to stop admitting people to Leavesden, and to transfer some of our specialist services to Harperbury, I know that there is much speculation, and many rumours, about what will happen and the impact it will have on staff here.

Please be reassured that nothing is going to happen quickly about either of these issues. Once we have got a little further in drawing up proposals, information will be made known widely.

Management and staffside representatives continue to meet regularly to talk about topics of shared interest. As we are all concerned about the future opportunities for staff, we are having meetings in addition to the monthly Joint Staff Committee ones, to focus on staffing issues. Together, we will be deciding on the best ways to ensure that you are kept fully aware of what the future is going to bring.

I would like to emphasise how valuable it is, to have staffside representatives working closely with management. This working together is neither management being ruled by the staffside organisations, nor the staffside organisations "living in management's pocket". It is, however, an immensely useful way of both sides keeping in close touch about what is going on, and a way to try to ensure that no concern is overlooked as the Hospital inches towards its eventual closure.

People matter at Leavesden - residents matter, each and every staff member matters. We are doing all we can to work effectively, sensitively and responsively to lessen people's anxieties about the changes that lie ahead.

Jane Reynolds Hospital Manager

WELCOME THE HANDICAPPED

With so many Mentally Handicapped people now living in our communities, may I appeal to those who are responsible among our clergy for their spiritual lives, to make every effort to see that these particular people are kept in touch with the Church and God.

The Mentally Handicapped people may differ from the so called "normal" population but this difference is one of degree, not of kind. They are developing people who are more similar to than different from us. They are just as human as you or I, limited, finite, and mortal. We are each imperfect variations on the theme of being human. The Handicapped person has his limitations and I have mine. Mostly he is limited in terms of

abstract thinking. He thinks in a more concrete way than I do. He has his world, his perceptions, his ideas, his experiences, which are as precious to him as mine are to me. In fact the Handicapped person is often more gifted than I am in terms of emotional and effective expression and in his ability to appreciate and to enjoy the little things of life. He is much more spontaneous than I am, and in an intuitive way he is capable of contemplation, and of bringing me with him into the world of the sacred. Whether he develops concepts of right or wrong, whether he strives responsibility or exploits others, whether he trusts others or becomes isolated from them depends mainly on the kind of environment and

formation provided for him by family and Church.

The Handicapped have the right to hear the Good News as members of the Church. They have a right to the sacraments and to develop their spiritual life.

Our mission to these people is to be witnesses to the coming of God into the life of each one of them and their companions. So the church, which to our Mentally Handicapped people will be their friends, parents, priests, will be where they are welcomed, loved and treated like others, because of our Lord who gives value to all.

Please welcome them into your Churches, into your Parishes with love and understanding.

George Mead. Chaplain, Little Plumstead Hospital

