



The property where a builder was killed by a falling wall

Builder is killed after wall collapses

A BUILDER died last Wednesday, January 30, after a wall collapsed on him in St Albans.

Police shut off Mile House Lane at around 2pm just after the incident happened at the rear of a house.

The 26-year-old man from Welwyn Garden City was working for Linley Developments Ltd, also based in Welwyn.

The tenant of the house, in his 80s, was apparently not at home when the accident occurred. Ambulance crews from St Albans, Welwyn Garden City and the hazardous area response team (HART) were at the scene along with fire crews and the

Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Due to the nature of the call Herts Air Ambulance were also in attendance.

A passer-by said he thought builders had been working at the house in question since before Christmas.

The name of the victim has not been released but Sarbjit Bisla, a solicitor speaking on behalf of Linley Developments, said: "The company are obviously devastated about the accident."

"They are assisting the HSE in their investigation and it would be inappropriate for the company to comment further whilst that investigation is on-going."

Seat belt could have saved life of death crash driver

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A MILLIONAIRE property developer could have survived a fatal sports car crash had he been wearing a seat belt, an inquest was told on Tuesday.

William Mackenzie, otherwise known as William Baranos, died on Sunday, August 19, last year from multiple traumatic injuries after losing control of his car in Watford.

The black Pagani Zonda left the road at the junction of Hartspring Lane and Berry Grove Lane and crashed into a fence.

An inquest heard that the doors of the car came off and the 52 year old was ejected out of the car onto the pathway, causing head injuries, three fractured ribs and a fractured spine.

His passenger, Jack Harper, a friend of his sons, only suffered minor injuries as he was wearing a seat belt.

Assistant Deputy Herts Coroner Alison Grief read out Mr Harper's statement given to the police just after the accident, in which he referred to the car driving at "full throttle" on the day of the incident and "the quickest thing" he had ever been in.

At the inquest Mr Harper, in his 20s, spoke of getting in the car with Mr Mackenzie, who lived in a wing of Wall Hall Mansion, Aldenham, with his wife and child, following a barbecue at the family home.

They drove for "about a minute" before losing control and crashing. Mr Harper said there was a "sudden acceleration" shortly before the accident.

He added Mr Mackenzie "very rarely" wore a seatbelt, and said: "I wouldn't be surprised to see him not with one on."

Tamara Tallentire, an eyewitness to the incident, was driving behind Mr Mackenzie with her husband, three children and dog. She said Mr Mackenzie "floored it" on the road and they lost sight of him.

The witness added: "My husband and I looked at each other and actually commented on how fast he was driving on that stretch of road."



The crashed Pagani Zonda - Picture by Leszek Lewandowski, courtesy of The Sun

It was only a couple of minutes until they caught up with the car, by which time Mr Mackenzie had crashed and Ms Tallentire got out to assist him and the passenger.

Pc Robert Jackson, from Hitchin's collision investigation unit, described very narrow tyre marks which curved and indicated the rear tyres swerving sideways.

According to his calculations, Mr Jackson suggested the car would have been doing 60mph at the very least in a 30mph speed zone.

He explained the car collided with several concrete fence posts before hitting the fence, which left parts of the car including the bonnet and the doors scattered across the road.

He said: "It's likely Mr Mackenzie would have survived if he'd had a seatbelt on. Someone who is ejected from a vehicle is far more likely to suffer injuries."

"Mr Mackenzie was travelling at the same speed as the vehicle. As the vehicle starts to turn and hits the fence, if you're wearing a seat belt

you slow down with the vehicle.

"If you're not connected to the vehicle you leave, so as the vehicle came sideways he came out through the side door."

He added that no defect was found in the high-performance car, which retails at around £900,000.

The assistant deputy coroner summarised by saying Mr Mackenzie had no distractions while driving and there was nothing about the road environment that would have contributed to the accident, bar a very slight dip.

She said: "The reason that this collision occurred is because Mr Mackenzie decided to accelerate the car at a point, at a time and at a place which was unsafe to do so."

"It's a tragedy because it was highly likely that if Mr Mackenzie had been wearing a seat belt we wouldn't be having this inquest today."

"If you do not wear a seat belt you are literally taking your life in your own hands."

She ruled that the death was accidental.

£5,000 benefit cheat is fined

A ST ALBANS woman who admitted to falsely claiming more than £5,000 in incapacity benefit has been fined.

Shirley Ansell, 53, of Marshall Avenue, continued to receive welfare payments between April 1, 2010, and May 6, 2011, despite taking up employment as a care assistant.

She failed to notify the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of her change of circumstances, which would have affected her entitlement to the money.

Ansell, who until that period had been claiming incapacity benefit correctly since July 1998, pleaded guilty to the offence when she appeared at St Albans Magistrates' Court last Thursday.

Anne Woodcock, defending, told the court Ansell had written to the Jobcentre in Watford to tell them about her new job, but she accepted she should have contacted the DWP.

She said: "It is not a case where the claim is fraudulent from the outset; there is a long period of time where benefits are claimed perfectly correctly. After a long period of time she tried to get out of benefits by trying to get back into work. It was a job and clearly it goes terribly wrong which is what brings her before the court today."

Ansell was fined £210 and ordered to pay a £15 victim surcharge and costs of £150.

Fundraising concert for HIV charity

FORMER BBC *Eggheads* star CJ de Mooi is just one of the acts who is set to perform at a concert in aid of a St Albans HIV charity on Friday, February 22.

The evening, which has been organised by members from the Hertfordshire Chamber Ensemble, will also feature a wind instrument ensemble, barbershop group and saxophone quartet.

All money raised from the event, taking place at St Saviours Church, in Sandpit Lane, will be donated to The Crescent where CJ de Mooi is a patron.

The charity, based in Russell Avenue, provides support for people living with HIV.

Iain Murtagh, head of operations, said: "We would like to thank everyone involved for their kind generosity as everything, including the venue, has been donated free of charge."

Tickets cost £12 for adults and



CJ de Mooi

£10 for concessions and can be reserved in advance by calling 01727 842532 or emailing info@thecrescent.org.uk

Arsenal charity squad looking for more matches

THE Arsenal Charity Team, which recently played at London Colney, is looking to organise more matches in Hertfordshire and north London this year.

The team, which includes ex-Arsenal players and celebrities, play matches from March to October.

It wants charitable organisations, clubs and schools to contact the team and arrange a match to raise money for local

organisations.

Players including *The Royle Family*'s Ralf Little and Lucien Laviscount of *Waterloo Road*, *Coronation Street* and *Big Brother*, featured in the *Herts Advertiser* last year when they played a celebrity match in aid of the Bailey Sarwa Appeal.

Call Beverley Nicholas on 0207 704 4142 or email bnicholas@arsenal.co.uk for information or to book a match.

■ Don't miss our coverage of the annual St Albans pancake race in next week's **Herts Advertiser**, plus our regular Food and Drink, Wine and Chamber of Commerce columns, competitions, pages of readers' letters and more local news, sport and leisure than any other media serving the St Albans district. Do you really need to read anything else?

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