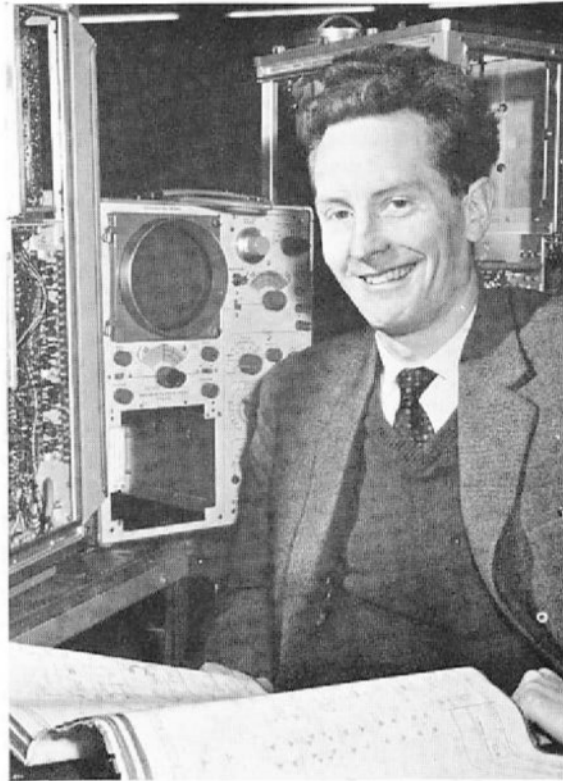


Man of Many Ideas

Many people think of ideas to improve their homes but somehow never get round to putting them into action. John Middleton, an M.I. Engineering Project Leader, both has the ideas and carries them out. During the time he has been spending his working hours developing the new TF 2200 oscilloscope, at home he has almost single-handed put in oil-fired central heating and constructed a brick-built 18 ft. by 10 ft. 6 in. garage.

The central heating installation, which worked extremely well in the recent cold spell, was finished in 1961, but there is one episode which both he and his neighbours will remember. The 600-gallon oil tank arrived with one small man in charge, and the only way of getting it off the lorry was to drop it on to the concrete road. The resounding clang is still talked about in Cuffley. Believe it or not, no damage was done. The tank was moved eighty-five feet into position on wooden railway lines.

John considered that he could improve on the garages normally supplied with his type of bungalow so he decided to build his own. In March 1962 he got round to drawing plans, a work of art in themselves, which the Council approved within a week. As soon as weather conditions allowed he encased the sewer, running five feet under the site, in concrete, dug the foundations and a 14-ft. long inspection pit and started laying the 4,200 bricks. He economized by first using the roofing timbers as scaffolding. The roof was of concrete tiles, the same as used on his bungalow, in fact the bricks, windows and side door were all the same as in the main building, making the garage a smaller version of the bungalow.



John Middleton, a Project Leader in M.I. Engineering Department, a man of ideas on central heating, garage construction and burglar alarms

As the floor was made of quick-setting ready-mixed cement, colleague Brian Higgs, of Engineering, came along with his shovel to lend a hand. Apart from help by his wife, Beryl, in holding things, John did all the other work. The building was finished in September, just leaving the electrical work to complete.

As the peak of the roof runs across the garage there is ample room under the roof for storage and for the roll-up door. This door, which is made of wood and weighs 140 lb., is raised by electric motor. The final stage of the garage, not yet completed, will be the automatic raising of the door by means of a radio link from the 1957 Anglia which the building was put up to house. This radio link will not be the only electronic equipment in the car for it is already fitted with a Middleton burglar alarm—but that is another story.