

# The Croxley Green Resident

Published by

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

No. 134

Editor: Bob Hampson

Spring 1978.

## EDITORIAL

Some readers may have detected in the last issue, a certain trace of "provocation" encouraging readers to pick up a pen in retaliation and so produce this issue. Or, in other words, an encouragement to *participate*. Which is an introduction to this issue's theme — PARTICIPATION — participation between individuals and neighbours; participation between individuals in groups within Croxley; participation between enthusiasts for a cause outside Croxley and of course, participation in producing this magazine.

### NEIGHBOURLY PARTICIPATION

I like an idea from Norwich. Their "Share a Garden and Cultivate a Friendship" scheme is an idea for bringing together those with large gardens, which they cannot manage, and those who are either without gardens or who would like to have a little extra garden to grow some vegetables, to their mutual benefit. By letting the keen and able gardeners have a portion or even all of an otherwise wilderness, the owners of large gardens can come to some agreement whereby, say, the garden is kept tidy and productive or they have a share of the vegetable produce, arrangements being on a purely private basis depending on the size of garden, individual requirements etc.

It works in Norwich, why not in Croxley?

One of the fruits of such an idea may be a new friendship. So if you have too much garden, or would like some more, please let me know and I will try to bring you together.

### NEIGHBOURLY PARTICIPATION

We are all aware that many old people need some help from those of us who are still able-bodied, but the image often takes the form of visiting for a chat, assistance in moving from a bed to a chair or such other aids usually associated with womens voluntary societies. But there are plenty of other jobs, not often mentioned, which men and young people might be more adept at . . . mending a fuse, fixing a plug or mending an iron; cleaning windows, decorating, clearing the path of snow, moving furniture, taking them for a car ride or shopping, even — may I mention it? — helping to fill in forms. Ever thought of giving a hand? Anybody thought of forming a local group to help? Who would like to compile a list of volunteers and their talents, together with people in need of help and their needs — your vicar will know lots of deserving cases — and get a scheme going? Let me know in time for the next issue and you can be assured of all the advertisement you need. Remember the Resident goes into nearly 5,000 homes.

But whether organised or not, please make sure that old people or people living on their own, are not left outside your neighbourly orbit — a watchful eye for tell-tale signs that all is not well, could save a life.

### PARTICIPATION OUTSIDE CROXLEY

Under the 1968 Transport Act, 1,400 miles of our waterways were saved for amenity purposes. But this still left many hundreds of miles of some of our most beautiful heritage abandoned and forgotten — at least, by Officialdom. Waterways like the Thames and Severn Canal, linking London with the non-tidal part of the Severn, the Basingstoke through lovely Surrey and Hampshire, the beautiful Montgomery in Wales etc. etc. But they are far from forgotten by the voluntary Waterway Recovery Group and numerous other canal societies. Every weekend parties of volunteers visit various parts of the country to clear undergrowth, shift rubbish, remove mud, repair lock gates, replace and repair brickwork, cut new channels, working steadily towards the day when another waterway, like the Stratford Canal and the Lower Avon, is returned to the network. Periodically as many as 600—800 volunteers go on a "Big Dig" to tackle perhaps a mile long stretch. Equipment is provided, though personal tools are welcome — for large operations the groups have their own excavators, dumpers, vans etc. Accommodation and food is provided at minimum charges. All ages (over 16, for insurance purposes), are welcome, lads and lasses, no skill is required, but as re-construction advances, skills are more than welcome. Transport can be provided at cost — if you can go by car and take someone, even better. This is an ideal way of taking the steam out of vandalism, a way to be destructive in a constructive manner. If anyone would like more details, please drop me a line or give me a ring on Watford 28418.

### GROUP PARTICIPATION

"Reports Action" (I.T.V.) has shown the size of the reservoir of people willing and anxious to help their fellow beings, once their talents are tabulated and channelled towards a recognisable goal. One of these goals was Bulk Buying, a scheme whereby neighbours form themselves into a group to buy goods in bulk from, say, a local shop at a discount by arrangement. It means team organisation, some storage space, transport etc., but considerable savings can be achieved. I shall be pleased to pass on all the details as supplied by "Reports Action" to anyone interested in forming a group.

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without obligation.*

It has **NOT HAPPENED YET**, but these **COULD** be the headlines in our local papers some time in the future:—

#### THE MET LINE TO CLOSE

"The D.O.E. today published the findings of the Public Enquiry into the proposed closure of the Moor Park — Watford spur of the MET line. The Minister confirmed the Inspector's findings that despite swingeing fare increases, revenue has fallen to such an extent that the branch is uneconomic to run. It must therefore be closed.

The Minister was satisfied that alternative services are provided by buses to Rickmansworth or by British Rail from Watford.

#### PLANS TO WIDEN A.412?

Following the closure of the MET line last year, coupled with the virtual collapse of the local bus service, commuters have had to take to their cars. Morning and evening traffic has now built up to such proportions that already traffic surveys are being carried out and consideration is being given to linking the existing dual carriageways at Scotts Hill, and Cassiobridge and hence to Tolpitts Lane. Initial estimates at today's prices are in excess of £5 million".

I repeat — **THIS HAS NOT HAPPENED YET** — but it **COULD!** Our biggest defence is by an informed membership of an organisation elected to represent all those directly or indirectly affected.

This organisation is already in existence, backed by M.P.s of all parties. It is the Rickmansworth and Croxley Green Farepayers Association. But to thrive it **MUST** have your support even if, as a non-active member, you just join to make your protest. It is a regrettable fact that however good an organisation may be, its effect on the powers-that-be is, in general, proportional to the size of its membership — a committee and small membership can be dismissed as unrepresentative cranks, but that same committee backed by a membership of a few thousand — which Croxley and Watford commuters can produce — is something to be reckoned with.

So, having read Howard Smith's article below — please contact him — and join!

#### RICKMANSWORTH AND CROXLEY GREEN FAREPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

The last issue of the *RESIDENT* ended on an optimistic note with the announcement by London Transport that there would be no further fare increases in 1977, but late in December, London Transport announced that fare increases of 10% would be implemented in June, 1978. Correspondence with London Transport suggested that the refusal of Herts C.C. to apply to Central Government for a Transport Grant would lead to discrimination against those areas outside the G.L.C. boundary. However news that Herts C.C. have agreed to apply for the Transport Grant removes the threat of two-tier pricing in 1978. (We now know that this does not cover the Watford spur and the threat is back — *Ed.*)

The initial pressure applied by the "Farepayers" has begun to have an effect with direct contact established with L.T., Herts C.C., the Price Commission, the Ministry of Transport and other bodies. One notable success has been the meeting arranged — see below — with the Ministry of Transport when the complex issues of transport in West Herts will be discussed. So things are a little better.

The main cloud at the moment is membership. The fact that over 800 people travel from Croxley every day and that less than 50 people have contacted the Association, means that apathy prevails. It should not be forgotten that the cost of commuting is only one aspect of the problem. There is still a threat of closure hanging over the Watford spur line and to be effective in its lobbying, the RICKMANSWORTH AND CROXLEY GREEN FAREPAYERS' ASSOCIATION *must* represent local commuters.

All enquiries should be addressed to:

HOWARD SMITH,  
107 FRANKLAND ROAD,  
CROXLEY GREEN.  
Tel: Rickmansworth 74960.

#### THE METROPOLITAN LINE

London Transport has asked Herts C.C. for a subsidy of over half a million pounds for the Watford branch and the County has refused to comply, although the major part of the subsidy would come from the government in Whitehall. Herts C.C., together with Bucks and Essex C.C. maintain that commuter services run by L.T. should be subsidised by the central government as, indeed, those run by British Rail are.

This Association has now obtained figures from L.T. for the cost of working this line and the number of passengers who use it. L.T. estimates that, each year, £600,000 is received in the booking offices against costs of £648,000. (See doubts expressed under postscript — *Ed.*) It considers, however, that we should be served quite adequately by four trains an hour at peak periods and two at other times. This would roughly halve the number of trains and reduce the costs of working the line to £484,000. Thus the line would show a profit. This profit could be used, in part, to reduce fares and so attract people back to the railway. L.T. however, regards the income from the Watford Spur, in isolation, as £92,000 a year, this being the portion of the fares paid which covers the cost of the journey to and from the main line. (It assumes that the main line would still carry the same number of passengers if the Watford branch were closed. This is far from reality — cut the branches off a tree and the trunk dies — *Ed.*)

We prepared a document showing these figures and other relevant matters and sent it to those we felt were interested. London Transport seems to have taken some notice of it at a meeting with the Herts C.C. as, while the idea of apportioning revenue to sections of the line is mentioned in the report, it is also mentioned that L.T. would now be willing to accept less than the full subsidy it previously demanded. A copy was sent to the M.P.

Geoffrey Dodsworth, who sent on a copy to the Price Commission, which has replied saying that it has noted our observations. The prospective Labour candidate, Tony Colman, arranged a conference with the Under-Secretary of State for Transport, John Horam M.P. at which there were present two representatives of the Rickmansworth and Croxley Green Farepayers Association, one from Chiltern District Council and one from this Association. Mr. Colman is a member of the Price Commission and we hope that, if L.T. attempts to raise fares again, we have given him some figures which will enable the increase to be opposed. So, the future of our L.T. line is uncertain. There may be an application to close it. Watford, we understand, will not oppose. Are we strong enough to have it kept open or will it be closed?

Lewis Fry — Secretary.

### R & C.G.F.A. — Postscript

The meeting at the Ministry of Transport went well, with Mr. John Horam promising a further meeting if conventional channels failed to provide a satisfactory result. Mr. Lewis Fry represented Croxley Green at this meeting

On the day following the meeting London Transport announced that it intended to introduce an extension to its policy of disproportionate fare increases. In the opinion of L.T. the transport grant applied for by Herts C.C. specifically excluded the Watford spur. Thus the view of the Ministry of Transport that the grant applied for by Herts C.C. should result in the withdrawal of the July 1977 surcharge on fares, may well apply to the main line only and *not* to the spur.

Another piece of news has been provided by London Transport Passengers Consultative Committee. The Committee's Chairman, Mr. Fred Sturch, has stated that they are not satisfied that the losses on the Watford spur, estimated at £643,000 are correct. The "Farepayers" also disagree with the figures, but while being instrumental in their publication, we have not been able to obtain from London Transport sufficient information regarding the assumptions made to enable a detailed examination.

Howard Smith.

### NEW YEAR'S WALK

The weather for Roger King's walk to start the year did not quite follow my long range forecast — even the Bracknell computers can forecast only what the weather should have been if only it hadn't rained! — but for the material part of the day, it *was* quite pleasant. About 40 people translated their New Year resolutions into physical action and completed the hours circuit — without your editor I must confess! Strangely, most enthusiasts came from Hastings Way. Is this because of Roger's personality, or is Hastings Way peopled with those possessing muscular calves?

Roger has decided not to organise a walk for this issue, but no doubt he will have something up his sleeve next time.

*For anybody to be anybody, they must be somebody to somebody.*

### SOFTLY, SOFTLY, CATCHEE MONKEY

Heathrow, Luton, Stanstead — all a long way from Croxley Green. 1988 is ten years away — at least a decade away. Nothing to worry about. But is distance and time so far away? Heathrow and Luton are a bus ride away — minutes from a noisy jet taking off from either. Ten years is little in the life of a family — work on widening Cassiobridge started over 10 years ago, but it seems but a few years.

So let us view with deep concern the Government White Paper on future Airport strategy. Shelved is any mention of a new international airport in the south east, little is mentioned of the greater use of regional airports, at say Birmingham or Manchester — despite the fact that our visitors do not *all* want to go to London. Instead Stanstead now handling 300,000 passengers, is quoted as being capable of rapid expansion to handle 4 million people. Luton, it is said, could be expanded to handle from two to five million — more than 12 for every one now.

Hertfordshire M.P.s and Councillors are very disturbed at the dangers of these proposals, together with the stealthy and relentless way in which these proposals are being pursued. The residents of Croxley also have reason to be disturbed. Such vast expansion will call for more roads — the County already has some of the most heavily trafficked roads in the world — huge housing developments will follow, with strains on schools, rubbish and sewage disposal\*\*, loss of even more farmland etc. etc. Add to this the possibility that flight paths and stacking areas with all the shattering noise which this can mean could well be routed over Croxley.

Let us not dismiss these dangers as being remote from us. Let us not be the monkey caught by creeping Apathy. The problems of Stanstead and Luton are OUR problems. Let us give all our support to those who oppose the Government's proposals NOW before the proposals become plans. Once a plan has germinated it will be too late.

\*\* (West Herts Drainage Authority have already had to build one extra site in face of intense local opposition, and Contract Gulley were given — again against intense opposition — permission to use chalk pits near St. Albans for the disposal of rubbish, with the fears of toxic fluids getting into the River Ver and hence by water to Croxley — distance is no defence).

### EDITOR'S NOTE

Letters/contributions/advertisements, will be gratefully received by Mr. R. Hampson, "Halfway House", Watford Road, Cassiobridge. Tel: Watford 28418.

COPY DATE: 8<sup>th</sup> APRIL 1978

### A WORD OF THANKS

May I thank our Typesetters, Mercury-Scott, St. Albans Road, not only for an excellent job, but for the extra personal service which has made my job so much easier in producing this magazine.

## COUNCIL DOINGS – AND UNDOINGS

1. **THE OLD VICARAGE, CHURCH STREET, RICKMANSWORTH** – this is a building of considerable historical importance, basically a Tudor building of timber frame and brick construction, finished in stucco.

Your Council has made a grant of £1,675 (15% of total cost) towards the renovation and repairs, conditional upon members of the public having access to view by appointment. I think this is the right decision, but when the work is completed, let us not forget this right to view our Heritage.

2. **TREES** – Your Council has given authority for proceedings to be taken against persons unknown who felled one ash and two sycamore trees in Copthorne Road. So remember woodman, spare that tree – and save yourself a nasty fine.
3. **MOOR PARK MANSION.** Completion of restoration work is put at £100,000. Your Council is seeking financial support from such bodies as the Historic Buildings Council, GLC, HCC, Hillingdon, DOE etc. That should spread the load a bit. How about some aid under the Job Creation Scheme, or some other Community Industry Project. Could not some work be done by volunteers?
4. **CESSPOOLS** – Further to comments in the last Resident re the 5–20 times increase in price for emptying of cesspools, the Government is proposing that the Regional Water Authorities should take over responsibility for the service. I cannot see that this will bring down the cost – far from it – but at least we may have an end of the present iniquitous system which favours the wealthy and penalises the poor. In the meantime, no further increases – at the moment. So maybe your Association HAS had some influence.
5. **CIVIL AMENITY SITE AT RIVERSIDE DRIVE,** which roughly translated is a Rubbish Dump for personal disposal of unwanted rubbish and oversize waste – sounds like a new slimming diet! This will continue to be open from 8 am – 4 pm despite requests for hours more practical for the public – it is funny how when a Council official says “at all reasonable times”, he means “convenient to him”. However, things should improve during the summer with more daylight.
6. **GRANTS TO ORGANISATIONS.** Two local organisations – the British Red Cross Society (Welcome Club) and the National Federation of Old Age Pensioners Association, have each received a grant. The Croxley Green Youth Centre was not so lucky – maybe when they are a lot older their luck will change.
7. **ROUSEBARN LANE.** Your Council is looking into designs of “rumble strips” to reduce the speed of some road hogs. This seems a reasonable compromise between motorists, police, horse-riders – let us hope that the latter do not say neigh to this idea.

8. **WINTON DRIVE/GIRTON WAY JUNCTION.** Council members will by now have visited this site and their deliberations will be made known soon.
9. **ADVERTISING ON REFUSE VEHICLES** – This is being experimented with. Will the latest fashions be advertised under the heading of “GARB AGE”?

## OUT AND ABOUT CROXLEY GREEN

### FOOTBALL WITHOUT A PITCH

We have been told that one group of young boys find difficulty in playing football regularly due to the lack of pitches. We would like to know whether this is a widespread problem or not. If in your experience, this situation exists for football or other open air activities, please drop a line to me setting out the details.

John T. Hedges, 44 Ludlow Way.

### CYRIL FENTON MEMORIAL AWARD

Nominations for this award are now invited by the Rickmansworth & Chorleywood Area Youth Committee. The award is made annually to a young person who has done a great deal in the way of service to the community in the Rickmansworth area.

The presentation of a certificate and a grant of approximately £15.00 towards books, study, equipment or similar, will be made at the opening of Rickmansworth Week in May.

Nominations, with an account of the service, and preferably names and addresses of those who would support the nomination to Mrs. J.T. Hedges, 44, Ludlow Way, Croxley Green by 31st March 1978.

### CROXLEY GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH – 1978 “HOLIDAY ADVENTURE”

The Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane, who have had a series of very popular “Holiday Adventure” times over the years, indicate the following intentions for 1978:

*31st July – 4th August . . . Holiday Adventure  
8th – 10th August . . . Junior Adventure*

Full details and enrolment forms will be in the next issue.

### THE CROXLEY GREEN SOCIETY

The gross amount received at the auction organised by the Croxley Green Society in aid of Cystic Fibrosis research, held at Durrants School, on 21st January, was £301. The net amount, after deduction of expenses and percentages to sellers, was £192.

The Society wishes to thank Durrants School and its caretaker, the auctioneer and his clerk from Hetheringtons, the Croxley Scouts with their van, the local press and all who displayed posters to publicise the event, Miriam Karlin and others who assisted in any way to make the event a pleasant and useful occasion.

L.W. Fry, The Orchard, Croxley Green.

## YOUR ASSOCIATION MAKES HISTORY

More than half the money used to finance local government comes from central government. This share is called the Rate Support Grant. It is determined on the basis of needs and resources. In recent years it has been decided that the municipal boroughs have the greatest need, thus the counties have received less and as a consequence of this, the rates in Hertfordshire have risen. If the people of Hertfordshire did nothing about this, the government could assume that they approved on the principle that silence means consent.

The Harpenden and District Ratepayers' Association decided to petition Parliament on the matter and invited other ratepayers' associations to join it. The Croxley Green Residents' and Ratepayers' Association accepted the invitation and the petition shown below was duly prepared. Petitions to the House of Commons must be in longhand or script: printing or typewriting are not allowed!

### The Petition

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COMMONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED,

*The humble petition of the Chairman and members of the Croxley Green Residents' and Ratepayers' Association*

SHEWETH

*that Parliament has, since 1973, ordered the Rate Support Grant be so distributed as to have the effect that Hertfordshire County Council has lost grant to the extent of £30 million, the equivalent of eighteen pence in the pound. Hertfordshire's domestic ratepayers are now second only to Surrey in the burden they carry despite severe economies in the services provided.*

*Wherefore your petitioners pray that your Honourable House do require the Secretary of State in submitting his Rate Support Grant Order for the financial year 1978/9 to consider the inequitable burden placed upon Hertfordshire ratepayers and so frame the Order that further losses of grant do not occur and the burden now suffered by Hertfordshire ratepayers be alleviated.*

*And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray etc.*

*Signed: R.D. Dunderdale, 25 Frankland Close, Chairman.*

On the morning of 11th November, we went up to London and arrived at the St. Stephen's gateway of the House of Commons soon after ten. We were joined by parties from other Hertfordshire ratepayers' associations. At half-past ten, we were allowed to enter the central lobby, collect our tickets from the Admissions Order Office and sign them. Just before eleven, a shout 'Speaker' was heard and a small procession came along a corridor and entered the central lobby. It was led by Black Rod, and there followed the Sergeant-at-Arms with the Mace, the Speaker and his Chaplain and Clerks. The procession turned right

to go along a corridor to the Chamber of the House of Commons. We were then allowed to go upstairs to an ante-chamber, where coats had to be hung up and handbags were inspected, after which we entered the gallery, getting seats in the front row. About 40 M.P.s were present.

As we entered, the Speaker called Mr. Raphael Tuck, Watford's M.P., and he rose, saying that he had a petition from the Garston Ratepayers' Association, which he proceeded to read out. There were 'hear, hears' from parts of the house but derisory cheers from the government front bench. Mr. Geoffrey Dodsworth was then called, he rose and said he had a petition from the Croxley Green Residents' and Ratepayers' Association, signed by its chairman, Mr. Dunderdale, similar to the previous one. Again there were 'hear, hears' and derisory cheers. Petitions were also presented by Mr. Ian Stewart, for the Hitchin R.A., Sir Derek Walker-Smith, for Bishops Stortford R.A., and Mr. Victor Goodhew for Harpenden R.A. The petitions were placed in the petition box behind the Speaker's chair and the House then proceeded with the business of the day, the continuation of sanctions against Rhodesia.

A week later, the arrangements for the Rate Support Grant for the year 1978-9 were announced. Whether our efforts had any influence on what was announced or not, we do not know.

## SOCIAL EVENING FOR COLLECTORS AND DISTRIBUTORS

For some time the committee has wished to thank all those members who selflessly give up their time to distribute this magazine and collect subscriptions. So on 26th November last about a hundred people gathered in St. Oswald's Church Hall for a social evening. With their partners this represented about half those involved in working for the association.

Members of Croxley Camera Club entertained us with a spectacle of sound and colour in a tour of Croxley Green, which was an object lesson in keeping one's eyes open, in appreciating the beauty the unusual and the humorous which surrounds us. A superb buffet supper was then served by the wives of the committee which gave ample time for meeting each other. New friendships were made and many old acquaintances renewed.

After supper, Croxley Camera Club delighted us with the slide show they made for Croxley Green Society of The Revels on the Green and the wonderful Procession through the streets in Jubilee year. Mere words cannot do justice to this fantastic collection of slides, which accompanied by carefully selected music, floated and merged before our eyes to give a better picture of the day than was possible with one pair of eyes at the event itself.

Our thanks to Croxley Green Society, to our friends from the Camera Club and to all those who came for helping to make such an enjoyable evening.

Would you like to come next time? Well we need committee members and collectors. Why not ring Mr. Dunderdale now, the telephone number is Rickmansworth 73599. This is your association, only you can make it worthwhile.

John Hedges.

## YOUR COMMITTEE HAVE DISCUSSED:—

*L.T. Fares* — increases on the Watford spur of the Met. Line.

### Skateboards

#### *Petition re Rate Support Grant*

(For the above items — see separate articles).

*Planning Applications* — your Association is opposed to the building of a three storey block of flats in New Road.

The application for a marina at Cassiobridge for the mooring of boats, operation of a hire cruiser base, parking of cars and construction of a two-storey building for chandlery and caretaker, was not opposed, though concern was expressed at the further draining of water from higher up the Chilterns, which local short-distance cruising will cause. This is in addition to the large quantity of water being abstracted from this pound of the canal by Messrs. J. Dickinson & Son which has to be replaced from the Chilterns. This must further reduce the water table. Time was when the pond in Watford was fed from natural springs!

## HAVE YOU A CLUE?

### Then enter our competition

In order to stimulate an interest in our advertisements, we are running a little Quiz Competition in the next few issues. All you have to do is study the advertisements and answer the following questions. Send your answers to me at Halfway House, Cassiobridge, Watford before the 15th April, 1978, when the first correct answer out of the bag will receive a prize of £2.

1. Who should you be seeing NOW for your future enjoyment?
2. Each issue has a new message — who or what?
3. Does an optician lend glasses free? If not, who does?
4. Which local "service" moves to Watford in the evenings?
5. Surely not the whole family? In the home too! Who is responsible for this mass slaughter.
6. She will keep you in good shape — Who?
7. If you do not need 999, what else would you ring?
8. You would not go for new pottery here. Where?

## ADVANCE NEWS

CROXLEY REVELS on the Green to launch CROXLEY WEEK will commence at 2.30 p.m. on SATURDAY 24 JUNE 1978.

Last year a procession was formed a mile long with over 40 entries:— Flags and bunting decorated your houses and streets — Croxley enjoyed themselves for all the world to see! This year with *your* help, we hope to provide a carnival as good or even better!

Full details are being prepared and entry forms will be available from schools from schools or the Revels Committee (Mrs. J. Luck & Mrs. K. Moss) at 53 Watford Road, Croxley Green.

Help us to show that Croxley Folk do not rest on their laurels but strive to go from strength to strength.

## SKATEBOARDS

Almost as emotive as the National Front! But whichever side of the fence your sympathies lie, skateboards are here to stay — I can see them in the Olympics! This means directing their good points into socially acceptable channels and controlling their undesirable aspects. There is no doubt that they are a wonderful outlet for young people's energies.

Against any cost which the Council would incur in supplying sites, must be set the enormous saving in the cost of vandalism, the noise and annoyance caused to residents and shoppers, the deaths and injuries caused not only to skaters themselves in road accidents, but casualties caused by them.

Credit must also be given for the "invisible" benefits . . . character building and self-discipline achieved by participation in a recognised sport with its inevitable competitive element.

Your Council estimates £5,000 to £10,000 for a basic site and up to £70,000 for a comprehensive site. Fortunately the County Council are being asked to allow school playgrounds to be used during evenings and weekends. A help perhaps, in as much as it will keep some young skaters off the pavements. But what we really need is some waste land with hillocks and hollows concreted over to provide obstacles and challenges to develop skills far beyond skating on the level. Would it really cost £5,000 for this? Could the young people themselves not do a lot towards constructing such a facility — and learn something in the process? Does the Council always have to "provide"? Cannot young people be encouraged to participate in "making things possible?"

Has anyone any ideas for a site, how to make one cheaply, how to raise some money? Our Chairman has suggested a lottery. How about paper, or scrap collection? Please let the ideas flow — even a ridiculous idea can sometimes trigger off a thought in someone else's mind.

## PARTICIPATION AGAIN

Your Association is still in need of more committee members — we need someone to organise a team of subscription collectors, several to be road representatives to keep in touch with your own immediate area; perhaps a legal mind or a specialist in some field like transport. Your association cannot function effectively if it is firing on only a few cylinders. We are a friendly lot but we need a wider circle of friends.

We are desperately in need of more articles for the Resident magazine. I can still go on for another issue or two filling up space with some of my views, but it is not the function of the Resident to provide a platform for one or two people. It is YOUR magazine. So please let me hear from you — anything of local interest, past or present — events affecting us, news of local organisations, even a few jokes — *I promise not to laugh at them!*

## NOT QUITE WHAT THEY MEANT

A New Zealand Airline advertisement encourages us to spread ourselves in their wide bodied Jumbo Jets and arrive in great shape — must trunks be stowed in the luggage compartment?

## MORE ABOUT OLD CROXLEY

I was interested to read Mrs. Leader's note on the Croxley of days gone by. Having been born twelve years earlier, perhaps I can add one or two further items of interest. I was born in one of eight houses in the New Road known as Louise Gardens; when the road was numbered our house became 104.

The first butchers I remember in New Road were Mr. Jackson and Mr. Ernest Wilbee. Both these had their own slaughter house at the rear of their shop. Ernest Wilbee's shop was at the end of four attached premises and at the other end was a grocers kept by Mr. Arthur Wilbee. In between were two private houses set 3 or 4 feet back from the line of the shops. Arthur Wilbee ran a cycle repair business in his back yard.

Mr. Saunders, the butcher, who had for some time worked for Mr. Jackson, started his own business in a shop previously run as a fishmongers by Mr. Garland, who had moved to a double-fronted building he had built almost opposite. In his new shop he sold fish and vegetables. The store Mr. Dimmock ran for some years was originally owned by Mr. Flack and managed by Mr. Wells who, after a time, moved a little higher up the road to start on his own in a shop kept by Mr. Rance for the sale of furniture.

Mr. Rance kept a few cows which he grazed in two fields on one of which Dickinson Avenue was built. The other was on the New Road/Yorke Road corner before there were any houses from the blacksmiths premises in the New Road to the two houses next to the school in Yorke Road. When the Croxley Co-operative Society was first formed they opened a shop in a private house, No. 5 Dickinson Square. After a time they took over a shop in the New Road which had belonged to an old gentleman named Mr. Hearne. They ran this for some years but it was an old building and needed much in the way of repair. They decided to replace it and it was taken down, the present grocery building being erected in its place. Near the bottom of the New Road was a sweetstuff shop kept by Mrs. Barnes and we youngsters, after we had been swimming in the canal, would sometimes, in the summer, if we were in funds call at her shop and invest half our penny a week pocket money on such favourites as gobstoppers and kalibonkers.

When the street lamps were first brought to the village they were of the flame gas type and a lamp-lighter came round carrying a long pole, at the top of which was a perforated metal container and in this container was a lighted wick. With the end of the pole he would push over the lever to turn on the gas and light it from the wick.

Where Winton Crescent and Winton Drive now stand were several small holdings. On one Mr. Darrah kept a few pigs and on another Mr. Drury grew an evergreen shrub, used mostly for flower arrangements and wreaths. Other holdings were used to grow vegetables. The small holdings Society also rented from the County a meadow on the Sarratt Road and known as 2nd Clobbs. This was let to Mr. Sears, a farmer who lived at Lovatts Farm on the green. Mr. Sears sisters kept a grocers shop at Scotts Hill also in that area where Mr. Mitchell the barber,

Mr. Tomkins the butcher, Mr. Mason the grocer, as well as Mr. Dorrell the baker, famous for his pork pies. In the winter, Mr. Dorrell would sometimes send his pies hot round the village for sale.

Another welcome visitor to the village was the Muffin man. He would come along with his wares, covered with a thick cloth, piled on a board which he carried on the top of his head. His head was in a pad fastened to the underside of the board. As he walked he rang a handbell and called out "MUFFINS 'N CRUMPETS". We would sometimes watch the blacksmiths putting new steel tyres on to cart wheels. The tyres which had been made to fit their particular wheels, were heated in a large bonfire. This was to increase the circumference. Nearby was a large iron pad which had a hole in the centre. This hole was to take the hub so that when a wheel was laid on the pad, the rim would rest on the iron. A heated tyre would be brought from the fire and placed round the wheel. It was immediately cooled with buckets of water which would shrink the tyre tight onto the wheel.

Of the Churches, All Saints was there before my time. The Methodist Church was built the same year in which I was born, viz, 1892, and the Gospel Hall a few years later. This, together with two or three houses on either side was destroyed by a German landmine in 1944. When it was possible to recommence building after the war, a new Hall was built in Fuller Way. One of my memories of the Boer War is of the rejoicing at the news of the relief of Mafekin. There was a torch-light procession in the New Road, by the light of which two name places were fixed, one at either end of a row of houses belonging to Dickinsons, and the name? MAFEKIN TERRACE.

W.G. Rogers.

## Now for a different kind of story — at the old Halfway House on Cassiobridge.

Perhaps a year before the demolition of the old house I had frequently been awakened in the small hours by the sound of what seemed like a cart, coming from Croxley, trundling slowly along the main road and swinging right, down the road to Dickinsons. It became so regular that I used to wake and lie waiting for it. So one night I decided to look out of the window to see what it was. I was soon joined by my wife who commented "So you have heard it too!!"

Outside all was bathed in light from the street lights — I frequently used to read by them — and all was silent and still, apart from the rumble of the cart as it came out of the distance. As usual, the noise increased as it crested the bridge and then gathered speed as it swung right, past the house and down the road to Dickinsons. All was exactly as usual and exactly as "normal", except for one thing — there was not a thing or a movement to be seen anywhere!

On several subsequent occasions we tried to identify the source of the disturbance, but never did we ever see any movement, anything tangible, nor even a shadow, not even any gravel disturbed.

Since the old house went we have never heard our "cart" again.

Has anyone any theories, or any other stories please?

Bob Hampson.

## COMPULSORY PURCHASE

When we first took over the old Halfway House at Cassiobridge, the licence had been transferred to the "Two Bridges", the background aroma of old beer and spirits stayed with us for several months until it finally disappeared as the old "public" house gradually became "our home". And for many years all was as any happy household should be as we lovingly converted the old canal hostelry into our dream house.

But then relentless progress and heartless officialdom combined to deprive us of our "castle" under the guise of a compulsory purchase order (C.P.O.). As the years of torment and anguish went by, the old house enfolded us in its history and tried to comfort us. But the planners had to be satiated and the official valuers had to protect public funds by every means available to them, regardless of the injustice and suffering inflicted. But how can a paid official obey the law of "fair compensation" when he also has to "purchase" the property, at the lowest price possible, for his Employer, on whom he depends for, at the very least, his promotion and career? How can he be an impartial arbiter in a dispute between Officialdom and the Individual when he is a representative of that Officialdom, with many of the powers of a dictator backed by all the resources of the public funds which he is supposed to be protecting? How can the Individual stand a chance of "fair compensation" when the only chance of an "impartial" decision is by his going to a Lands Tribunal? A Lands Tribunal is an expensive Legal Court with all the penalties of the loser having to pay legal costs of both sides. (Remember the individual's main evidence, his house, may have been demolished in the waiting time before the case comes up for hearing). How can even this be "fair" when Officialdom has selling price details of every property sold in the County for decades passed, while the Individual has only the limited resources of an estate agent? How can it be "fair" when Officialdom has all the resources which public funds can buy, and which can, if it loses, keep appealing again and again, backed again by public funds, until his opponent is financially exhausted? How can the Individual fight this when his elected representative, whom he virtually has to draw out of a hat, may, but will probably NOT have the experience of his skilled adversary; who may or may NOT be intimately interested; who may, but will probably NOT have the time to devote to a thorough preparation of the case, will certainly NOT have the resources of a department dedicated to winning the case at all costs. How can the Individual keep his health after years of fighting a C.P.O.?

He cannot forget the battle at 5 pm as he leaves the office until the next day — he has to suffer the injustices, the realisation of his impotence gnawing at his mind, not only during the day, but all night long, 24 hours a day, no time off for Xmas, for year after year.

I am writing this to let people know the injustices of the law. In my particular case I was lucky. Both my wife and I have had a reasonable education, with reasonable ability to stick up for ourselves, with a passionate belief in obtaining

justice for the Individual. If we had not been so fortunate, we should probably have lost most of a life-time's savings. As a matter of interest to the tax and ratepayer, if we had been offered a "fair" price at first, the road widening at Cassiobridge scheme, would according to a newspaper report, have cost an estimated £128,000 instead of over £400,000 when it was eventually constructed seven years later. Rather an expensive way of saving a few thousand pounds "legally" stolen from the Individual.

The above are some of the injustices under our present laws. Do not be sedated by such soporific terms as "fair compensation" and "market value". Ask yourself, who decides "Market Value"? Ponder, how can a participant in a dispute possibly give a fair judgment in that dispute or arrive at fair compensation, if he has a vested interest?

Can victimisation be ruled out or prevented? How can the mental agony and physical ill-health be compensated for?

Is it not time that a fundamental change was made in the law, to provide for an impartial body interposed between Officialdom and the Individual to give an unbiased opinion with equal information and equal facilities including legal facilities to both sides? Is it not time that REAL meaning was given to the claim that the seller shall be no worse off after a compulsory purchase?

Remember — it COULD happen to you.

Bob Hampson.

## CROXLEY LIBRARY NEWS

Over the Christmas holidays we had two successful events for children in the Library.

On January 4th we had "Fun and Games" a mixture of Victorian parlour games and more modern competitions such as a sack race. Halfway through the session we all stopped for orange juice and biscuits. This session was attended by fifty 5–12 year olds and a good time was had by all.

Then on January 6th, Watford Palace Theatre in Education Group improvised plays with about sixty children. Our mobile shelf units were pushed over to one side to give additional space. The Actors then appeared in various costumes and proceeded to do a sketch which resulted in each actor taking a group of children, planning and performing their 'play' before the rest of the audience.

Storytime for under fives continues to be held on Fridays from 2.30–3 pm. We shall be having more activities for older children in the Easter holidays — look out for posters nearer the time.

Our story cassettes for children are proving so popular that we hope to add adult titles to stock very soon. Skateboard books are now in stock — please learn how to do it safely.

On behalf of all the Staff, I would like to thank everyone who sent cards and gave us "goodies" at Christmas.

Carole Hudson — Librarian.

**STRONG STUFF — or you'll need a pick-me-up after this! From a sign in a London cafe:**  
*In a Hurry? Have a coffe and roll downstairs!*

# Croxley Green COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

A full report on our building programme will appear in the next RESIDENT, after our A.G.M. on the 17th February, 1978. Actual progress is still a little slow but we can assure you that LOTS OF WORK and talking behind the scenes is being done regarding our future.

It seems appropriate to this New Year publication to thank everyone who has put in so much of their spare time to help us. Without their help this venture would have died long ago.

Don't forget — any queries etc. can be made at 224 New Road, any Saturday 10 am—12.30 pm except Bank Holiday weekends. We shall be very pleased to see you. The "200" club draw takes place at the shop every week at noon. This is a very good fund raiser but we feel that, at the moment, we cannot undertake to run a second one owing to shortage of helpers. It is the usual problem — those who are willing to do things are already committed! We are still looking for people willing to help in a variety of ways. If you are a newcomer to the district, participating in the Community Centre Project will be an idea way of meeting people and getting involved in local activities. So please come forward and help.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

*"I would like to thank the many people in and around Croxley Green who have bought cards throughout the year and Christmas cards from me. As a result of their continued support, a cheque for £100 was given to the Welcome Club,*

**Margaret Wise (Mrs.)  
28 Kenilworth Drive.**

## WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR COLOUR SLIDES?

Then come along to CROXLEY CAMERA CLUB where persons of all ages, beginners or experts are always welcome.

Meetings are held on Wednesdays at 8.0 pm in St. Oswalds Hall, Malvern Way, Croxley Green.

## Talks for Organisations

If the Secretary of a local organisation would like a speaker to talk on Inland Waterways, please contact me on Watford 28418 — Bob Hampson.

Secretary: Dr. D. Miller, 126, Kenilworth Drive.  
Telephone: Rickmansworth 72183.

Chairman: M. Watkins, 123, Winton Drive,  
Telephone: Watford 35190.

## FUTURE EVENTS

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 25th February | <i>All family Party Night —<br/>All Saints.</i> |
| 29th April    | <i>200 Club Dance —<br/>Durrants School.</i>    |
| 12th May      | <i>Barn Dance — Watersmeet.</i>                 |

Since the last publication we have had several successful dances, one of which was a TRAMPS' DANCE at which 90% turned up dressed for the part! But, as with the enjoyable Xmas dance, only the minimum of tickets were sold. Greater response and hence greater profits, would no doubt have followed if we had risked booking Watersmeet or Watford Town Hall, with band and refreshments to suit, instead of Durrants School. But unless members and non-members will undertake to support an undertaking on such a scale, we dare not speculate on an ordinary dance with money which was allotted with one aim in mind, our Community Centre. Give us the guarantee and we will see what we can do.

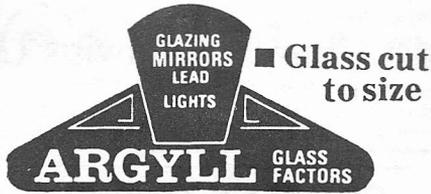
However, all tickets for our Barn Dance on January 26th at Watersmeet were sold long before the event. In fact so many people were disappointed that, by way of apology to them, we will do our utmost to give priority to members and Croxley Residents for the next Barn Dance on 12th May at Watersmeet. It shows that, with a specialised dance, it can be done. Give us your support and we may be able to run an ordinary dance at Watersmeet and even beat the competition which attended our Xmas Dance.

## ERRATA IN THE LAST ISSUE

1. I am afraid I made a few "wee errors" with the time of Council meetings. They all start at 7.30 and not 8 p.m. My apologies to all those citizens who went along but arrived late.
2. My apologies to our Chairman for moving him to Frankland Road. His address should have been 25 Frankland Close. I hope the resident in Frankland Road was not inconvenienced by my error.
3. I inadvertently increased our committee by including Mrs. Turbull with Malcolm Turbull. Malcolm IS with us but unfortunately we do not have the pleasure of her company. Oh well, I did try! Which pinpoints a weakness in our committee — all the ladies deserted us at the last A.G.M. We have no desire to be a sort of Masonic Lodge, so please ladies, do come forward to help us to achieve a balanced outlook and representation.

## BUT IT COULD BE WORSE — JUST!

Have you ever considered that one seventh of your life is spent on Mondays? Why not advance the calender by one day so that Sunday's rain would fall on Monday, which is a dead loss anyway.



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*In everything put God first He  
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Proverbs 3, Verse 6.

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