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Croxley Green
Parish Council

The Parish Pump

No 16 December 1999



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The autumn gives us time to reflect over the Council's first full term of meetings. The newly formed committees have already shown their own strengths with valuable input from new council members.

The occasion of the Craft Fair allowed many members to assist in various capacities prior to the event and, of course, during the weekend in particular. This showed clearly the members' commitment to encourage a higher profile for community participation in local affairs and the behind-the-scenes leisure activities.

Besides the importance of having professional stall holders at the fair, one of the main underlying themes of such an event is to encourage our own local home nurtured crafts to be brought to the fair. As for so many other rural communities, our own well established societies and voluntary organisations are now showing some decline in membership and people to assist in running specialised events. Like all things that pass; it is always after the passing that we regret the permanent loss.

One appreciates that, today, business and personal pressures already make large demands on one's available free time, but the heart of the community can only continue to exist by the willingness of its residents to assist in keeping alive the leisure and voluntary services that we have inherited.

As a body, the Parish Council can only encourage awareness of such organisations within our community and their benefit to the residents.

We hear, too often in modern society, the negative feelings towards any new proposals, using vandalism as the main reason in not improving our environment. Too many negative responses will eventually cause social decay within the community, where in many respects such events lie within our own capabilities. The threat of vandalism from our own young community should in part be the responsibility of our own parents but, notwithstanding, the Parish Council have already made enquiries into considering the use of some form of security system within the community to help in controlling these elements of social disturbance.

So with constructive and positive thoughts the community needs to move forward with a cohesion of ideas from the residents of any age group. Within the depth of the community lies a spirit of unity that comes to the fore when our life-style is being threatened. If we can tap some of this energy to assist in the well-being of our leisure and social events within the village then we shall succeed.

In its own small way the Parish Council has shown that small groups of like minded residents can respond to the challenge of activities such as the village Garden Competition. The general opinion of those who participated was that the "taking part" revived community values of involvement.

We have many individuals within the community who give up much of their own personal time to run many of the organisations within Croxley Green but, without our support, all their best intentions will pass unrewarded.

So let Croxley Green look towards the new Century and Millennium with a new resolve to bring a greater meaning of the term "Community involvement" to our younger generation.

Brian Norman - Chairman

Contributions or requests for advertising space will be gratefully received by:-

Lesley Sanders - the Parish Office
01923 710250 (10.00 am - 2.00 pm)

COUNCILLORS

North Ward

John Hedges 222715
**Chairman - Planning
& Development**

Geoffrey Langford 341228

Brian Norman 779331
Chairman - Council

Hazel Seeley 772696

Joe Ekanayake 442210

Croxley Green Ward

Peter Bowers 778428

Gabriel Gallet 771098

Jackie Hughes 443360

Christine Jefford 771769

Margaret Pomfret 720088
**Chairman - Environment
& Amenity**

Adrian Simpson 720041

South Ward

Tim Davis 772918
Vice-Chairman - Council

Jackie Marshall 770336

Judith Turnbull 772798

Cliff Vassiliou 779927

David Wynne-Jones 251905

Clerk to the Council
Derek Fineberg 710250

The Council Offices
Community Way
Croxley Green
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 3SU

Croxley Green Parish Council • Founded 1986

EDITORIAL

I must confess that following an article such as that by our illustrious Chairman is not easy. However, I think that I can safely let the *Pump* speak for itself.

As many of you are aware, I am already the Editor for the Resident and that has, over the years developed its own style and a strong list of regular contributors. This makes editing a doddle and there is little for me to do except to fit it all in. The *Parish Pump* is rather different. Its main purpose is for the Parish Council to keep in touch with its constituents but restricting it to only Council business would make for very boring reading.

Luckily, we have some very able contributors from our own members and, though these change from time to time, once they are established they come up with great articles as can be seen from this issue. But, contributions from the community at large are always welcome.

This issue we have six articles, or displays, from other than Parish Councillors and this is very welcome. However, if you feel a burning desire to put your ideas in print or, if you wish to comment on any aspect of local affairs, please contact Lesley Sanders at the Parish Office. She will be pleased to hear from you. She is really the power behind the throne, as she prepares the lion's share of each *Pump*.

This edition contains articles on the Internet - I share the writer's confusion; Bobbin Lacemaking - a fascinating hobby; ACTivities - a new adventure for children; our own Garden Competition; Pairing Up - with a twist in the tail; the Mummers - a must at Christmas and with a long tradition; Beekeeping - a fascinating hobby pursued by our Chairman; Fungi - but I would still be scared to find my own; Three Rivers Museum - worth a lengthy

visit; Trees - the lungs of our polluted world; an appeal for Special Constables - they are special; and several references to the Millennium.

I happen, along with others, to think that we are a year too early - there was not a year nought and we celebrated the turn of this century in 1901. However, there is a reason to celebrate even if we can't get the date right and I shall join in at the Green.

I strongly recommend that you respond to our article on Dickinson Square, we promised to consult widely and this is the final chance.

Brian White's article concerning the money available for the Croxley Green Forum also warrants your replies. The Parish Council has a current budgetary allowance for planters which is being finalised at this time and, should some projects fail to get sufficient support, there is no reason why we should not consider the ideas further. It is up to you, without your input we don't know what you want.

I, along with my fellow councillors, am very proud and willing to serve my community in any way possible but, we need to know what excites you and what you want from us.

John Hedges - Editor.



CROXLEY GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Community Way,
Croxley Green, Herts., WD3 3PA

This quarter I would like to bring you some exciting news!!

Croxley Green Community Association, registered charity no. 270561, has been awarded a lottery grant of £5,000 for redecoration, both inside and out. We anticipate this work will take place towards the end of December/beginning of January and, when completed, we will hold an Open Evening for all the

residents of Croxley Green to come along and take a look. If you are anticipating holding a family function next year, we would recommend you "look lively" and get your booking in quickly. We will still offer very reasonable rates, and the hall will be available for hire both Friday and Saturday nights. Just contact either Marion Johnson, the Club Secretary on 01923 778607 (most mornings) or Bob Hallett, the Steward on 01923 777647 to check available dates.

If you haven't yet decided how to celebrate the New Millennium, we will be holding a family disco, at £15 for members and £20 for guests. Children under 18 are admitted free of charge. There has never been a better time to become a member!

Cheryl Frost - Chair



HELP US TO SPEND

What an invitation!!!

Three Rivers District Council has allocated £1000 for each Area Forum to spend in 1999/2000 on an item/activity of their choice.

At the recent Croxley Green Forum, five proposals were suggested:

1. Funding to set up additional Neighbourhood Watch schemes;
2. Wooden picnic tables on the Green/near the Canal;
3. Planters at various locations;
4. A wooden/vandal proof seat at the top of Hazelwood Road;
5. An additional light in the footpath between Girton Way and Baldwins Lane.

District Councillors are ready to approve the most favoured of these proposals, so, if you feel strongly in favour of one of these ideas please let Cllr **Brian White** know. He can be contacted at 60 Watford Road (Tel. 720958).

Millennium Celebration It's on the Move!!!!



BIG BEN is *coming* to
CROXLEY GREEN
for the Millennium event to be held on
The Green 31st December 1999

11.30pm – 12.30am (approx times)

Don't miss the **FIREWORKS**

Many families will be wondering or undecided how to celebrate NEW YEAR'S EVE this year and the arrival of the new century. As part of your own celebrations why not join many other Croxley Green residents and their families and friends on The Green.

Programme ►

There will be two main meeting places for the procession
meeting at approx 11.15pm

The Library

Outside the shops at the top of Baldwins Lane

Marshals will guide you to The Green

For safety reasons please cross only by the marked places.

There will be stewards at these points to control the traffic.

**THE POLICE HAVE PARTICULARLY ASKED THAT NO NAKED FLAME
TORCHES BE USED IN THE PROCESSION OR TAKEN TO THE GREEN
BATTERY TORCHES ONLY**

Arrival at The Revels Site 11.30 to 11.45 to the sounds of seasonal music

The Event ►

A mock -up façade of BIG BEN will be mounted on scaffolding. At Midnight the sounds from Westminster will be relayed and you are invited to join in Auld Lang Syne and watch THE FIREWORK DISPLAY.

At the close you will be asked to follow a similar route home or to your place of celebrations.

Parking ►

There will be strictly **NO PARKING ON THE GREEN**. At this time of the year The Green does not allow for vehicles to be parked and will easily damage the surface and would be unsuitable for driving conditions. If you require transport for disabled people to get you nearer to the Green, parking is available close by.

First Aid – Lost Children ►

There will be a First Aid caravan on the site and this is the place where lost children should go and from where they can be claimed.

For further information please contact:

Chris Hillier Tel: 779580

SEE YOU THERE!!!!!!!

Merry Christmas

Christmas is a coming
Forget the Millennium BUG
Support our celebrations
Please buy a Millennium mug!

There are a number of mugs still for sale especially designed with a logo "I'm a Croxley Green Millennium Mug" that the Millennium Celebration Committee has on offer. These were designed to help raise funds towards the festivities. If you would like to purchase one or several for the home or office or send to your long, but not so lost, relatives, they can be delivered to you. Price £2 each.

**Please contact: David Tait
17 The Green Tel: 779408**

**The Millennium is a coming
BIG BEN will surely sound
Support our Celebration**



Help!

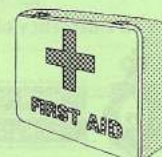
"First Aiders" to be on duty on The Green when the village celebrates the Millennium on 31 December.

We ask you to consider this appeal if you hold a St John Ambulance or Red Cross First Aid Certificate.

This is a request from the Police who are assisting the Millennium Celebration Committee to make this event a memorable village occasion.

Please contact:

Chris Hillier
Tel 779580



THE THREE RIVERS MUSEUM

has been thriving over the last year, thanks to all of our volunteers, many of them from Croxley Green. Thanks to Geoff Paine providing his caravan we had a successful and enjoyable time at the Croxley Revels in June. We also had a successful QUIZ EVENING at the Baptist Church Hall in Rickmansworth on 22 October.

Oliver Phillips of the Watford Observer keeps in touch and borrows photographs for his ongoing history of the 20th Century, many of which he has published.

There was one very interesting enquiry during 1998/9 – a gentleman from Belgium wrote about a Sergeant Self who had lived in Rickmansworth before being killed in a bombing raid in 1943. Having made several enquiries to no avail, I asked Oliver Phillips to put a note in his NOSTALGIA COLUMN. As a result two nieces contacted me, and, this August, three of them

(one now living in Australia), went to Belgium and visited the grave – they have sent photographs and some pieces of the aircraft recovered from the site for the Museum to keep. A result like this is always exciting.

There are always many enquiries from school children in the area in connection with their various historical projects and we have been pleased to help.

Another lady was compiling a "souvenir folder" about William Penn for a relative who was to visit from Pennsylvania.

Our MILLENIUM PROJECT – A Chronology of Rickmansworth (a memorial to Eddy Parrott) is in progress and will be in place as early in the New Year as possible.

We can always use additional helpers so volunteers would be welcome. Please contact me on 01923 710365.

Open: Mon to Fri 2.00 to 4.00pm
& Saturdays 10.00am to 4.00pm

PLEASE VISIT US
BASING HOUSE,
RICKMANSWORTH, BETWEEN
WATERSMEET AND LIBRARY

Joy Thatcher Hon. Secretary

DOG FOULING

This is an appeal to the few dog owners who disregard the environment and health of this beautiful and much loved village of Croxley Green.

The Parish Council have tried very hard to help such people by installing bins in convenient places for the depositing of dog faeces, and hand out little, purpose-made, black bags (free of charge) for collecting the faeces without soiling your hands. These can be obtained from the Council Offices or Library, or if inconvenient to get there, you could use a carrier bag which will be just as good. You have no excuse!

It is very encouraging to see people who make the effort to use the bins, as it is such a health hazard regardless of whether it is private land or verges.

Owners should keep an eye on their dogs when out for a walk and not turn a blind eye to the dog's call of nature.

Come on Croxleyites, rally round to keep Croxley Green free of dog faeces and use the bins provided.

Thank you

Cllr Joe Ekanayake

keep an eye open for...

BOGUS CALLERS

REMEMBER:

Think before you open the door

- Put on the door chain
- If the caller is a workman or official: ask for proof of identity
- If you are not expecting the caller, phone their office to check they are genuine
- If you are in any doubt - don't let them in
- If you are worried - call the police

In an emergency always dial 999



HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY



OPERATION SPIDER
Hertfordshire Constabulary

A WONDERFUL AUTUMN

BY common consent this has been a most wonderful Autumn.

The lack of frosts, the mild temperature, the absence of too much rain have all conspired

to keep the leaves on the trees and bring out tints worthy of New England in the Fall.

Why does Croxley Green look so lovely? The answer is that it has a tremendous variety of mature trees in beautiful locations. The Parish Council works constantly to enhance our area with innovative plantings such as in Stones Orchard.

Three Rivers Council is

relaunching its 'town trees' scheme and hopes that residents will help improve the local environment by planting a tree within their garden where it will contribute to the public amenity of the area. In return the District Council will contribute approximately 50% of the cost of the tree, stake and tie.

Vouchers will be issued once successful applications have been processed and will be redeemable from Wards Nurseries, Sarratt any time between the beginning of November and the end of February 2000.

Application forms are available from: Landscape Officer, Three Rivers District Council, Northway, Rickmansworth WD3 1RL, Telephone 01923 776611.

A PROJECT FOR THE MILLENNIUM Dickinson Square Garden

The Parish Council wished to find a project to commemorate the Millennium.

Several ideas were forthcoming:-

A Village Clock but Where? Outside the Library was suggested but was this a sensible use of funds?

Refurbishing Barton Way Car Park. How does one persuade land-owners to co-operate? Half a job would not achieve the desired object.

What matters to Croxley Green?

John Dickinson was always the central influence in the village. How could we preserve this?

WHAT HAVE WE LOST?

When John Dickinson arrived Croxley Green was a sleepy little hamlet. A few houses at the top of Scots Hill and farms.

His arrival started a growth into a thriving village.

New Road developed to house the influx of people.

He donated the land for our two original schools:-

The School in Yorke Road - later infants and girls and now superseded by Yorke Mead School. The (old) Boys School - now a block of flats.

He provided housing in Dickinson Square - then down the Avenue.

He provided the Institute/Guild-house - for the village - and later the large hall at the rear. Now both gone - flats instead.

WHAT HAVE WE RETAINED?

The houses in the Square remain - now in private hands.

The Garden in the Square is now owned by Three Rivers District Council and maintained to a minimum standard.

Dickinson's Sports Field is also owned by Three Rivers District Council and leased to the Croxley Guild of Sport.

On the closure of the Mill the Sports Field and Stone's Orchard were sold to Three Rivers District

Council for a peppercorn. The Parish Council has an on-going project in Stone's Orchard.

Both the Sports Field and the Orchard were sold to be used for the benefit of the village - all its residents.

WHY DICKINSON SQUARE GARDEN?

From records it can be shown that all projects by John Dickinson were intended for the benefit of all - not just his workers.

Whilst not recorded we have no doubt that this was true of the garden - it was at the centre of the village.

There is scant evidence of its former glory but older residents have spoken fondly of it.

During World War II the railings were stripped and an air-raid shelter built. The gardens were in a sorry state when reclaimed.

Three Rivers District Council were persuaded to reinstate the garden but to a then manageable standard.

WHAT IS PROPOSED?

We decided that the best way to approach this project was to try to restore the garden to a type of Edwardian designed garden - which it probably was.

It should be a pleasant spot in which to walk and sit.

Planting should be all season varieties with low maintenance.

As it has been reported that a bandstand once occupied the centre it would be nice to include a sympathetic feature.

As watering could be a problem to maintain freshness underground irrigation should be included.

Electric cables will be laid underground for possible future lighting - if found desirable.

WHAT WILL IT COST?

Work would be carried out by an award winning company of Landscape gardeners at a total estimated cost of £45,000.

Maintenance would be carried out by professional gardeners at a total estimated annual cost of £3,000.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

These are the arguments which were put before the residents of Dickinson Square in a display at the Parish Office earlier in the year. After some initial enthusiasm from some, further thought and discussion resulted in a big majority against. The reasons given were mainly due to the expected vandalism and noise with undesirable elements invading the privacy of the square.

A later display at the Library produced inconclusive results.

Copies of the designs can be seen at the Parish Office if you wish.

The new Parish Council has not considered the matter in detail but, bearing in mind that the former Council had pledged to put the matter to the whole community, will not make any decision until this is done, which is the purpose of this article.

It is extremely unlikely that the project will be pursued, unless there is an overwhelming wish from the community as a whole for this project. It would be wrong to pursue the idea without such consent and we would then need to consider further the points raised by the local residents.

Perhaps, in retrospect, it would be better to spend the money on a project to allay the fears of vandalism that have been expressed by the local residents. Steps are already being taken to research this matter and we may soon be able to put forward proposals in this respect.

We are here to serve the community which elected us and we can only do so if you help us.

We promised to consult so if you have strong views, either way, please fill in the reply slip and bring/send it to the Parish Office.

Croxley Green Parish Council DICKINSON SQUARE GARDEN

Please delete as appropriate

I would like this project to be considered further.

I am against this project.

Name:

Address:



Once again, there was a good response to the Garden Competition, there being 37 entries

this year, including the local public houses. It was also pleasing to note that a number of gardens were being entered for the first time.

The standard of the gardens was very high and really had to be seen to be believed with such a great variety of styles and interpretation of the word 'garden'. These ranged from a 1930's era garden, pebble gardens with eye catching water features and some with an oriental flavour. Others were a riot of colour with a profusion of flowers, shrubs, window boxes and tubs. Lastly, there were gardens with labour saving cultivation in mind together with the need for water conservation and increasingly higher summer temperatures and global warming.

The preliminary judging was carried out by a panel of Parish Councillors with the final judging made on 31 July by Cllr Ivor Ambrose, Chairman of Three Rivers District Council, Mrs Meg Ambrose together with Harvey Wardell (retired Parks and Woodlands Officer, Three Rivers District Council) and Cllr Tim Davis, Vice Chairman of Croxley Green Parish Council. They were accompanied by Cllrs Margaret Pomfret and Christine Jefford acting as adjudicators.

The 31 July was a beautiful hot sunny day and everyone was in complete agreement that all the gardens were a joy to visit, as were the gardeners themselves who had great pleasure in showing the judges their gardens.

In all, the Garden Competition was most successful and it is an event which is greatly enjoyed by everyone who is involved. I am now looking forward to next years competition!

Cllr Christine Jefford

In gardening terms an annual is a seed that is sown and grows and develops in the same year.

Well, I think the seed that was sown some seven years ago for a garden competition must have been a perennial in disguise because it has flourished year by year.

Croxley Green's gardeners likewise, are like the perennials, their talents and enthusiasm for their hobby is evident.

I am a devotee of BBC TV's Ground Force and should Alan Titchmarsh run out of ideas for these makeovers, there is an abundance of ideas to copy in Croxley Green's gardens to complete many more series'.

This year many of the newly elected Parish Councillors took part in the preliminary judging and comments that they have passed on confirm - *it was a lovely experience.*

Cllr Margaret Pomfret



RESULTS

FRONT GARDEN

Winner

Mrs Hooley, 12 Winton Crescent

Very Highly Commended

Mrs Peerless, 1a Rousebarn Lane

Highly Commended

Mrs Baker, 55 Sherborne Way

Highly Commended

Miss Selley, 74 Frankland Road

Commended

Mrs Lavender, 36 Sherborne Way

Community Garden

Residents, 41-45 Chalmers Court

BACK GARDEN (SMALL)

Winner

Mrs Greenaway, 256 Baldwins Lane

Very Highly Commended

Mr West, 35 Barton Way

Highly Commended

Mr & Mrs Edwards, 3 Lancing Way

Commended

Miss Mitchell, 172a Grove Crescent

BACK GARDEN (LARGE)

Winner

Mr & Mrs Sheriff, 126 Valley Walk

Very Highly Commended

Mr & Mrs McLachlan, 23 Kenilworth Dr

Highly Commended

Mr & Mrs Martin, 54 Harvey Road

Commended

Mr Gladwin, 11 Durrants Drive

PUBLIC HOUSE

Winner The Artichoke, The Green

TAKE A WALK

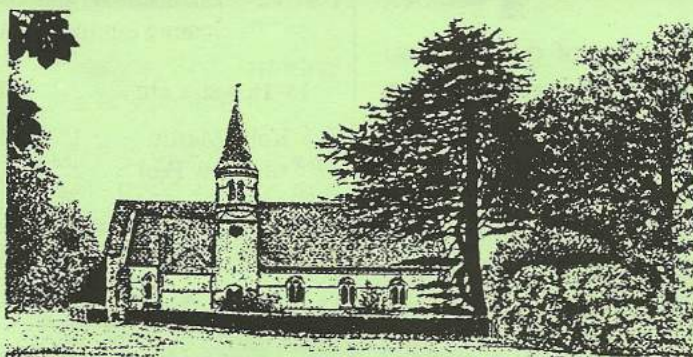
We are being encouraged to get out and about into our countryside, enjoy the fresh air whilst taking in the scenery. Two walks leaflets in **FULL COLOUR** have been produced by the Parish Council in conjunction with the District Council, English Nature and Countryside Management Service.

THE CROXLEY GREEN LOOPS AROUND CROXLEY MOOR

Available **FREE** from Parish Office



A History of Croxley Green through its Street Names



All Saints Church

Just one of the many line drawings to accompany this book which won a prize in 1997 for the Alan Ball Local History Award.

- An ideal present to give your friends, family or relatives this Christmas.
- Enjoy reading about how Croxley Green got their Street names researched by local resident Shirley Greenman.

Past members of the village who have now moved away would enjoy reading this book about the place in which they lived and had happy memories.

Obtainable from

Croxley Green
Parish Council
Community Way

Price
£4

ACTIVITIES

A NEW LEISURE IDEA FOR CHILDREN



*Is run by Joy and Judith and is an exciting venture creating a recreational drama based programme for children mainly between the ages of 6 - 10 years. We both come from a background with experience working in a specialist environment with young children.

*Is a new concept which seeks to provide the chance for children to develop through creative play and fun.

*Is a way of increasing children's creative and general educational growth through story telling ~ games ~ improvisation ~ mime ~ role-play and drama.

*Helps to build children's confidence and can improve communication skills as they learn to express their own ideas.

*Can enhance your child through new friendships and becoming self-reliant, as their confidence grows.

*Participated at the recent Croxley Green Craft Fair - story telling in the arena as well as running a colouring competition. We are pleased to announce prizes were given to Timothy Windward and Nicola Hendrix

*Happens Tuesday afternoon during term time in Croxley Green.

ACTIVITIES - contact:

Joy 01923 720425/Judith 01923 772798

CROXLEY ALARM SYSTEMS

ALARMS ★ LOCKS ★ CCTV
DOOR ENTRY SYSTEMS

FREE ADVICE AND QUOTATIONS FOR ALL
YOUR SECURITY REQUIREMENTS
DOMESTIC OR COMMERCIAL
YOUR LOCAL
NACOSS APPROVED INSTALLER

204a NEW ROAD CROXLEY GREEN HERTS WD3 3HH
Phone 01923 771920 - Fax 01923 772901 - Mobile 0468 274750



Art & Needlecraft Competitions



Following the popularity of our Art Competition as part of the inaugural Craft Fair 1998, many residents' comments were received regarding expanding this event to include all forms of needlecraft.

Our art competition was once again supported by many entries especially from the local schools Rickmansworth, Harvey Road and Yorke Mead.

Batik entries from the senior members of the Rickmansworth School had interesting and vibrant colourful designs. The younger children from both Yorke Mead and Harvey Road Schools who were entered, showed brilliant examples of the imagination and skills that young people have who can express themselves in this form. Many other local children also entered individual pieces. For the 2nd year running Harvey Road School produced a collage based on the Parish Map idea with their own interpretation of their community.

We were overwhelmed with the variety of exhibits from the needleworkers in the community. Once considered a hobby that had lost its popularity it appears many people are returning to this pastime.

Exhibits ranged from huge patchwork quilts, exquisite cushions and beautiful executed pieces of embroidery, needlepoint, lace and cross stitch work. Many pieces of work had been portrayed in picture form.

The judges commented that they had a very difficult task to separate all the many exhibits that had been entered by such accomplished residents.

Cllr Margaret Pomfret

RESULTS

Art

Under 11 years old

- 1st Stephen Smith 6 yrs
- 2nd Elizabeth Wright 10 yrs
- 3rd Joanne Smith-Burchnell 5 yrs

11-16 years old

- 1st Kelly Martin
- 2nd Matthew Peel
- 3rd Nimmi Parikh

Adults

- 1st Janet Wesson
- 2nd Stella Davis
- 3rd Thelma Holly

Best School : Harvey Road JMI

Needlecraft

Embroidery/Cross Stitch etc

11-16 years old

- 1st Megan Jury

Adults

- 1st Jessie Wallis
- 2nd Vera Diment
- 3rd Lois Ceri Circle

Needlework Cushions and Quilts

- 1st Lynn Westcott
- 2nd Sheila Thomas
- 3rd Vera Diment

Judges

Art

Helen Halliday
Jill Jones
Olive Budden
Ian Poulton

Needlecraft

Elaine Norman
Janet Wesson
Rosemary Bamber



Pairing Up

It seems that finding a partner is a new growth industry. Even journals which describe themselves as 'quality newspapers' regularly advertise clubs aimed at those wishing to meet prospective partners and regularly run Kindred Spirits columns, like our own Watford Observer.

To many this seems odd. In the past there was no difficulty in meeting the opposite sex – either at the Church Club, the Youth Club, the Tennis Club, one's place of work or happily for me at the local Mecca dance hall. One could go to a dance on a Saturday night, meet scores of lovely ladies, dance and talk and hopefully meet the love of one's life. Now in these days of unlimited freedom, normal people are reduced to having

to advertise or be matched up by computers at dating agencies.

To enjoy the entries there is a special code:

N/S - non smoker

WLTM – would like to meet

GSOH - good sense of humour

LTR – long term relationship

OHAC – own house and car

(how desperate can you get?)

Both sexes invariably describe themselves as attractive. The women inevitably are slim (is there no market for large ladies?). They are sometimes bubbly and most recently 'tactile' has become popular. I hope that this doesn't mean what I think it does. The men are of course, handsome, tall, sporty and/or professional and quite a number are

blue-eyed. Both sexes are keen to have fun and laughter/games and enjoy the good things of life.

Nearly all offer or require a 'good sense of humour' and how dangerous this can be. Imagine pairing a couple, one of whom enjoys the late Benny Hill and Morecambe and Wise or possibly Rory Bremner, while the other is convulsed by Cilla Black, Eastenders and 'Men Behaving Badly'. Luckily as I approach my Ruby Wedding, to the distant strains of the late Joe Loss and his wonderful band – I am out of this sad race so I will avoid this pitfall in my advertisement – 'mature parish councillor GSOH, N/S, WLTM, pleasant ladies with good outdoor interests for LTR with Croxley Common Moor'.....but does the Common Moor qualify as a Kindred Spirit?

Cllr David Wynne-Jones



What goes around comes around. Nature is greatly underestimated especially when redressing the balance of natural effects in the environment.

There are many examples that can be drawn upon where one or another event has put a natural species in danger of being extinct.

When many of our local food crops depend upon an insect pollinator to assist in their reproduction cycle, and also when one of the insects, that contributed to this cycle has been eradicated by a host parasite. It is gratifying to see that nature has helped to replace that loss; but what is

more important is that some of our own residents have played a minor but vital part in assisting in completing this cycle.

With the loss of Feral Honey Bees, the other species of bees, such as Ground and Bumble bees, have made themselves more apparent in our gardens. What is more important is that, those residents who have discovered their new temporary tenants have been telephoning Beekeepers within the area for advice on how to manage with the new bee colonies. Many of the bees had built nests in compost heaps, hollows in trees or even in gaps in buildings. But the main objective was that if possible

they wanted to be reassured on how to cultivate these colonies. Where it is not practical for the bees to continue their stay, then local beekeepers are more than pleased to assist by finding alternative natural sites for the bees. To resume their important task of keeping things going around that life giving cycle.

Even when colonies are removed many residents are anxious that no harm will come to the bees. This shows that in a small way we are now caring about our natural environment.

Cllr Brian Norman



AUTUMN FUNGAL FORAYS

Autumn has long been my favourite time of the year. One of the main reasons for this is the abundance of fungi, which appear during this most mellow of seasons. Many are edible and are both delicious and nutritious.

Many people are aware of the common field mushroom, which can still be found in many places around the parish, including the Green. The number and variety of species, which may be eaten, is very wide indeed. Care should be taken however as some mushrooms can be toxic. In fact one or two species can be very poisonous indeed. Death caps are not uncommon and there is no antidote to their toxins. It is advisable therefore to pick and eat only those mushrooms of which you are absolutely certain. Before you start, buy a good book on the subject; one with photographs rather than drawings is preferable.

The finest mushrooms to pick are ceps or penny buns (*Boletus edulis*). Sadly I have never picked one in Croxley Green, but one doesn't have to travel too far to find them. Like many mushroom fans, I keep the best spots secret! These large fleshy fungi are prized throughout Europe especially in Italy where they

are known as porcini or little pigs.

Locally there are many marvellous species freely available in woods, hedgerows and meadows. Fairy rings (*Merasmus oreades*), the bane of gardeners produce small beige mushrooms which are very tasty in casseroles. The Parasol Mushroom (*Lepiota procera*) is very easy to spot, growing up to 10 inches across. Discard the stem, which is a bit tough and cut the cap into half-inch slices, dip in beaten egg and lightly fry, delicious!

For food that grows on trees, look no further than Oyster mushrooms, which can be picked from fallen beech trees nearly all year long. They are expensive in the shops but free in the woods. I could not write about wild fungi without mentioning my favourites, the Blewits. The Wood Blewit (*Lepista nuda*) grows in leaf mould in late autumn, while the Meadow Blewit (*L. saeva*) can be found in open meadows, in particular Stones

Orchard. Both species are beautiful to look at, with lovely lilac gills and stems and have a marvellous aromatic flavour.

I have heard recently some people decrying mushrooming as bad for the environment. I would take issue with this. Systematic clearance, as has taken place in areas like the New Forest, will obviously put pressure on some species of fungi. Small scale amateur mushrooming can, in fact, help to increase populations. Always leave one or two behind to produce spores. It has been estimated that if all the spores in one giant puffball germinated, the entire surface of the planet would be covered fifteen deep! Use an open-weave wicker basket to allow spores to escape and be spread along the route of your walk.

If care is taken, both in selecting the correct species and in preserving the local environment, mushrooming is a fascinating and rewarding hobby. Not only does it reward you with mouth-watering delicacies for free, but also it encourages long and interesting walks in the wonderful countryside in which we live.

Cllr Tim Davis



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HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

SPECIAL CONSTABULARY RECRUITMENT APPEAL

A CAMPAIGN to encourage more people living in villages to take an active role in supporting their community by becoming a special constable in Hertfordshire has begun.

Of the many voluntary organisations that exist, there can be few that offer the variety of experience and opportunity available in the Special Constabulary. In Hertfordshire, special constables play an active role in supporting the work of regular officers.

Hertfordshire already has a strong Special Constabulary but in the last 12 months the numbers have depleted. This is largely due to many specials taking up full time careers with Hertfordshire Constabulary or taking retirement.

The need to recruit more volunteers is particularly important in the more rural and remote areas of the county and Hertfordshire Constabulary is

appealing for volunteers to come forward.

County Commandant Peter Mould, who is in overall charge of the Special Constabulary, said: "People living in villages have a real sense of community spirit and tend to take more of an active role. The Special Constabulary is ideally suited to those who care about the quality of life for local people.

"Gone are the days when specials were only seen at garden fêtes or outside polling stations. Special constables now get involved in front line policing working shoulder to shoulder with their regular colleagues. Special constables are also invested with the full powers of a regular police constable."

He added: "Working as a special constable in a village gives the Constabulary a vital link to more rural communities. It would be an enriching experience for any

volunteer and I would urge anyone considering taking up the challenge to contact us."

To become a special you have to be a citizen of Britain, the Commonwealth of the Irish Republic, at least 18½ years old, physically fit and in good health. Special constables are unpaid but are reimbursed for all expenses incurred in carrying out their duties. Uniform is provided free of charge and the full service of the Force Welfare and Occupational Health Unit is available.

As a special constable the minimum time commitment would be 16 hours a month. Anyone wanting to volunteer can obtain an information pack from:

County Commandant Peter Mould
at Watford Central Police Station,
Shady Lane,
Watford WD1 1DD
or contact him direct on
01923 472000 ex 2576

Bobbin Lacemaking

The 1998 Craft Fair in Croxley Green, with its emphasis on the promotion of local crafts, gave me an opportunity to portray what to some people might be classed as a dying craft. Certainly it is difficult to find out about the craft unless you know someone who themselves practise the craft. Ten years ago I was encouraged, by my daughter, to give bobbin lacemaking a try as she had started learning a few years earlier as part of her Baden-Powell badge for the Girl Guides.

I persuaded a few of my lacemaking friends to help demonstrate on the Saturday, having pillows and bobbins

available for people to "give it a try". Our aim was that if enough people were interested then we would set up a group to teach them the basic skills. We were encouraged by the number of ladies who were eager to learn and so in January 1999 we had our first class, with eight ladies learning and four of us helping to pass on the skills necessary to make them into bobbin lacemakers. We met weekly until the summer holidays and continued again in September and now we have 11 ladies who are all, I hope, enjoying their lacemaking. They very quickly, learnt the skills to enjoy this craft and hopefully, will pass on the interest to the next generation. If

there are any other potential lacemakers in Croxley Green please ring me. and I will endeavour to let you try this craft lend equipment until you decide, whether you would like to pursue the craft and then we can help you to purchase equipment for yourselves.

This year's Craft Fair gave us the opportunity to show some of the work that the lace group had achieved in the short time that they had been making bobbin lace, with a few more people showing an interest and many children trying the craft over the weekend of the Craft Fair. Hopefully this can be associated as another living craft within the community.

Elaine Norman

INTERNET!!



Never mind the Dome, the Eye of London or how to celebrate the Millennium – all I am worried about is the Internet, E-mail and what they all mean. I thought I was pretty clued up – after all I know how to use a computer, I even understand a computer printout for heavens sake! I realised how pathetically ignorant I was when I was talking to my daughter sometime in July. I asked the whereabouts of her youngest daughter in Australia and where she was heading next. "She's in Brisbane at the moment" I was told, "I expect she'll go into the cyber Café and send an E-mail", I confess that I was totally bemused by this information and went away, puzzled.

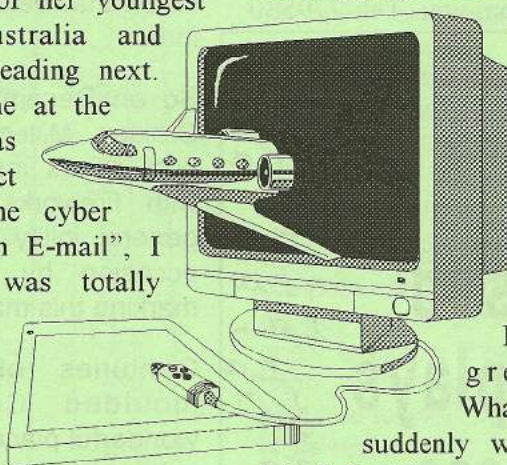
Why didn't I pursue this with daughter? Ask her why on earth should my granddaughter go to a café to send an E-mail? Those of you with adult children might understand --the pitying look, the thought mirrored

immediately on the face. "Oh God! she's lost it – poor old dear" – the slow explanation so that it would penetrate my befuddled mind. Oh no! I wasn't going down that road, thanks very much. So, I found someone else and now I understand, I think.

Now I am told that within a relatively short space of time, we'll all be using the Internet to do our shopping. That's all very well

but what happens if I run out of milk? What will happen to Mick my friendly butcher or Robert the greengrocer? What do I do if I suddenly want fish and chips? I wish someone kind would explain and reassure me about these burning issues. After all, I have only just learned to cope with the video recorder!

Cllr Hazel Seeley



Stones Orchard



More trees planted

by local school children

Tuesday 30 November as

part of the restoration

of this old orchard

over 150 years old



PLEASE HELP TO LOOK AFTER IT

Pet Owners

Please clean up after your dog

There is a bin provided for your use



Litter

Please use the bins provided

The Croxley Green Mummers

A Christmas Tradition

Once again it is time for the Croxley Mummers to -
"Come to show activity upon this Christmas time."



One of the many Christmas traditions of village entertainment is the Mummers Play. These plays formed part of the village way of life in many hamlets throughout England. There are many variants of the play but the basic story line is the same -

Our hero, usually St George, is at first slain by the Dragon, revived by the Doctor, and then proceeds to kill the Dragon, the Turkish Knight and finally the Giant, and by so doing wins the hand of the King of Egypt's daughter.

A version of the play exists in Croxley Green and was written shortly after the First World War, by 'Neggy' Wilson, Headmaster of the first boys' school and a well-known village character. It is a compilation from other plays from around the country.

The play was performed nearly every year from the 1920's until some time in the 1950's. There is a report of a performance in The Watford Observer of 27th July 1956. One of the early mummers John Thomas who emigrated to Australia, wrote to us and believes the last performance was in 1958.

Some years ago a group of Croxley Green residents decided to revive the tradition and this will be the fifth year the *Croxley Mummers* will be performing.

Although raising funds for charity is not the main aim, up to date we have so far raised well over £500 for the Peace Hospice, due to the generosity of our audiences.

Many of the older people of Croxley still remember the Mummers with affection and we feel proud to be able to carry on the tradition.

This year's performances will be on Sunday 19th December. Details are still to be finalized but we anticipate there will be performances at the following times and places.



- 2.00 The Coach and Horses on the Green
- 2.30 Artichoke on the Green
- 3.00 The Sportsman

If you have any memorabilia associated with the Mummers Father Christmas of the Croxley Mummers will be pleased to hear from you. Tel: 779580

Millennium Magic

This is the last edition of the 'Parish Pump' in this millennium! How does that impress you? I can imagine readers yawning and saying 'what' more about that boring millennium'. Yes, it is true a great many people do not have the slightest idea of the magic of an event that happens once in a thousand years. Some will say that this is because we can't even imagine that far back when Croxley was part of a huge forest 'Watford' is Anglo Saxon for the 'ford of the hunter' because it had a shallow area where people could cross in their endless search for game such as deer, wild boar and other food. Wolves roamed the forests and there were still beaver in the rivers of Wales. The average age for a man was 26 and for a woman 23.

We have come a long way since then, even in this present century most major diseases have been conquered and a lot of our time is spent choosing from a variety of undreamed foods and services. We can afford to be 'picky' about meat. Only a few hundred years ago a man was automatically hanged for a killing a deer or even a rabbit that belonged to the local lord.

So on December 31 when the Croxley Millennium Committee puts on its inspired celebration with fireworks, 'Big Ben' and general jollity let us mark this occasion by turning up and marking this magical event.

Centuries of history have moulded Croxley into a wonderful place to live in - let us celebrate this quality of life while always remembering that constant vigilance and hard work is required to maintain it as the little jewel that it is.

Cllr David Wynne-Jones

Croxley Green Parish Council
will present three prizes of
£75, £50 and £25
for the

Best Dressed Window Displays Christmas 1999

To: All Shops in Croxley Green

Parish Councillors will select the winners
week commencing 13 December 1999

