

Published by:
Croxley Green
Parish Council

The Parish Pump

No 18 - November 2000

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EDITORIAL

The Parish Council has been going through a certain amount of difficulties lately. There was an election in October to replace seven Parish Councillors who had resigned. Six Councillors resigned at one time giving a variety of reasons for their departure. The remaining nine Councillors did not feel it incumbent to resign as they had not supported the views of those who took such drastic action and felt that it was their duty to continue to serve their constituents in the positions to which they had been elected. They have now been joined by six others who were successful in the elections or were elected unopposed. The new councillors are very welcome. One vacancy still exists as there was no candidate for the North ward.

It was disappointing that so few people bothered to vote, some 12.6%, when so many had signed the petition that was generated by an ad hoc group.

In response to that petition, and in order to clear the air, an investigation has been ordered by the Parish Council into its workings. The Councillors who stayed, a majority, are fully supportive of this action and will cooperate with the enquiry, being prepared to stand up and be counted. The results of that investigation will be reported in full.

Hopefully, following that investigation, and with new members to complete the full complement of your elected representatives, the matter will be consigned to the archives and the Parish Council will be free to serve the community which they love. It must be remembered that all Councillors are unpaid volunteers and give of their time freely.

It has been alleged that the Parish Council is not open but all our meetings are open to the public, there are no secret meetings except when staff matters are to be discussed, and all minutes/agendas are published and available for inspection at the Library.

I was elected to fill the void left by the resignation of the Chairman and Adrian Simpson was elected as Vice Chairman. We will endeavour to do all within our power to ensure the smooth working of the Council.

This Newsletter is an exercise in letting people know what is happening in the Council and our community. From the comments that I receive, and I have been Editor since its inception, I know that it is appreciated. We can, like the Croxley Green Resident, only print copy that is supplied to us but we try to be as catholic as possible. If you have news that is worth relaying to the public at large we shall be pleased to hear from you.

As a Parish Council, we are limited in our powers, but we genuinely try to serve the community as best we can. We are convinced that Croxley Green is the better for our humble efforts and that value for money is maintained. We are often accused of concentrating our efforts on the Green and we do in fact maintain this important centre of our community. However, a not inconsiderable amount of work is carried out around the village, not least on footpaths and other local amenities. Our Land Rover with its Rangers, can be found at all points around the village working to maintain our environment.

We are not devoid of ideas but, should you have particular concerns with which we can help, please do not hesitate to contact the Parish Office. If we cannot comply with your request, we can usually pass your concern to the relevant body or Local Authority. Remember, some things take time and, more importantly, money. We have to budget ahead and usually this is done in the latter part of the year ready for the next year which starts in April. This is often frustrating for Councillors who would wish to proceed with new initiatives as soon as possible.

Please think of us and wish us well as we try to serve you.

COUNCILLORS

North Ward

Joe Ekanayake 442210

John Hedges 222715
Chairman - Council

Geoffrey Langford 442975

Hazel Seeley 772696
Vice-Chairman P & D

Vacancy

Croxley Green Ward

Phil Brading 492893

Gabriel Gallet 771098
Vice-Chairman E & A

Christine Jefford 771769
Chairman - Environment & Amenity

Doug Pavey 773595

Giles Shaw 229617

Adrian Simpson 720041
Vice-Chairman - Council

South Ward

Jean John 231075

Vallipuram Palan 253688

Robert Ridley 720580

Cliff Vassiliou 779927
Chairman - Planning & Development

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

COMMUNITY LIFE

Do you ever get the feeling that people are not so interested in one another as they used to be? Fewer volunteers to be leaders in the Boy Scouts or Girl Guides, fewer people going to church, fewer people taking part in local affairs.

Of course, we are all so busy surfing the Internet, shopping as if there's no tomorrow, sending e-mail messages here, there and everywhere, and yes, working very long hours. It was all supposed to be so different – the machines would do the work, we would have more leisure time and above all, we would have time to indulge our hobbies, passions and enjoy our community. Alas, things never turn out as one expects and our lives in the twenty first century are no exception.



Our own Croxley Green is an example of this. There are so many able, gifted people living here, yet persuading anyone to be a youth leader, a neighbourhood watch volunteer or even a Parish Councillor is very difficult.

Croxley Green Parish Council recently had an election and one would think that many people would jump at this opportunity of helping to take an active part in decisions that affect their village but that was not the case. It was with the greatest difficulty that one or two people were persuaded to stand and yet quite a few people had strong ideas about how the Council should be run. Why didn't one or two of them come forward with their ideas? We need them.



Less and less people are voting in general elections, particularly young people – this is a serious problem for a democracy like ours. Apathy rules, public servants are seen as irrelevant – it is so much easier to criticise than to be involved. With luck this attitude will change but it would be a good thing to remember the famous phrase 'Strong democratic administrations cannot survive without active positive public interest.'

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Fri 10.30 - 12.00

Contact the Yoga Network for more information or to book a place.

Tel: Geraldine on 01923 775367 or Andrea on 01643 704305

Website: www.yogauk.com/yoga.network

Email: yoga.network@yogauk.com

Yoga and relaxation weekends in Somerset. See website (www.yogauk.com/weekends) or ring 01643 704304 for leaflet.

CROXLEY GREEN

A MILLENNIUM ANTHEM

(sung to the tune of 'Land of Hope & Glory')

Thank you God for Croxley,
Revels on The Green
Lushness of Chess Valley
Nothing bad or mean

Thank you for the sunshine
On a Croxley morn
Waking up to birdsong
Glad that I was born

For contented people
Living in this place
Everyone who lives here
Is imbued with grace.

Woods and moors and rivers
Such a perfect spot
Thee O Lord the Giver
Thanks for what we've got.

THEE O LORD THE GIVER,
PRAISE FOR WHAT WE'VE
GOT.



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The Parish Office

01923 710250 (10.00 am - 2.00 pm)

Copy Date:- 30 March 2001

PLANNING



COMMITTEES

Let's face it – being a member of a Planning Committee is not exactly most people's idea of an interesting way to spend their evening. Nevertheless, it is an important one inasmuch as the decisions taken at these 'dry as dust' meetings are vital for the future appearance of Croxley Green.

Because our area is such a pleasant one and above all, because we are able to offer a country atmosphere combined with superb road networks, train systems and a major airport, many people want to live here. The result of a successful planning application can result in hundreds of thousands, even a million pounds or more, profit for opportunistic individual 'entrepreneurs', not to mention

the huge amounts for building companies, as those defending the OMT site have learned to their cost.

Many aspects of Croxley go back to when it was a quiet country village. The heart of the village around New Road and Dickinson Square go back to the horse and carriage era, which is why it is immensely hard to make any alteration whatsoever to cater for the flood of cars that now clog our streets. That is where your Planning Committee comes in, spending hours working out what is appropriate and what is not, before consulting you.

Again, on the other side of the medal, there are huge gardens attached to small houses, dating back to when the house owner grew all his own food. Today, each of these gardens are dormant goldmines, into which at least half a dozen new, smart buildings can be 'shoehorned'. For the future of our already clogged up streets, the Committee must laboriously discuss each and every one.

Then there are the bus stops, cycle racks, noticeboards, skateboards, Christmas lighting and other innumerable small items that everyone takes for granted – dog bins being one of them. Hard work for a few dedicated Committee Members, expected as part of our famous 'quality of life' by everyone else.

A Parish Councillor is the lowest rung on the ladder of government and yet very many important planning requests start at this level. It's not a glamorous job but it is a responsible one – we welcome constructive criticism but remember, if you value your environment, we need your help and confidence to give us the motivation to do our very best for the privileged community who enjoy the amenities of our village.



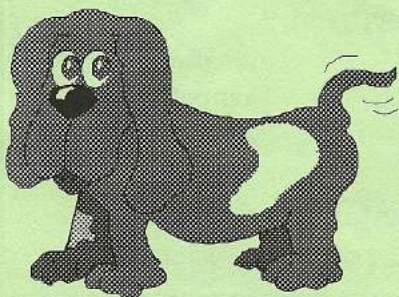
A Dog Behaving Badly



I have read all the manuals and books on dog behaviour in the vain hope that I will one day come across the magic formula that I need.

My dog chases squirrels and is totally obsessed with them, to the extent that she does not return when called, forgets her name and that she has her owner with her.

The experts say that if she doesn't come back when called, I should walk in the opposite direction – my dog would not care if I walked to Timbuctoo! "Give her a treat" they advise – she doesn't like treats. I have lost her three times so far – the last time was in Cassiobury Park for three hours. In fact, I actually left her there, came back home, and had a cup of coffee, picked up some more cigarettes and went back. Eventually she came within grabbing distance, was bundled into the car and spent the evening under a chair in deep disgrace.

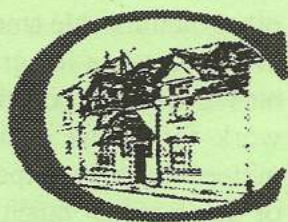


So, walks now have to be on the long lead as I do not dare let her run free which is a shame.

Is there anyone in Croxley who has had this problem and cracked it? If so, I would dearly love to know their secret.

Cllr Hazel Seeley

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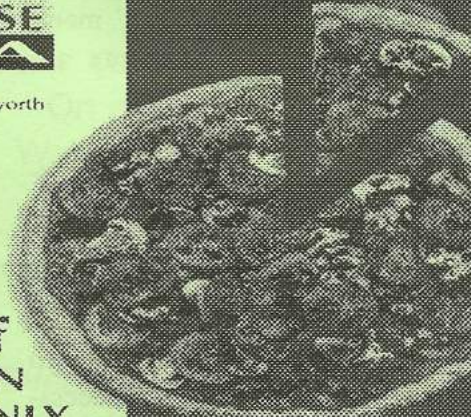
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CROXLEY COMMON MOOR

Although the autumnal shades are merging into the frosts of early winter, something is stirring on Croxley Common Moor.

For years this fascinating area of about one hundred acres on the borders of Croxley South was barely known about by most residents, although the grassy bank along the River Gade is still fondly remembered by many mature men and women as a place where young lads and lasses used to gather on long sunny evenings in the fifties and sixties. Muscular males displayed swimming and even diving skills in front of shapely young female spectators. In short, it was once a very romantic spot, when love life was so much more innocent and simple. I know two couples (still married and living in Croxley) who first met at Canal Lock 79 – the 'Lido' of Croxley Green – and who regularly visit the spot to rekindle their romance.



Things have changed since then, perhaps there is less romance but there are more rambling rural rustics. About five years ago we had the good fortune to have the Moor gazetted as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, managed by the Countryside Management Service.

About a year ago the 'Friends of Croxley Common Moor' were formed to help as volunteers, enhancing its beauty. There were sixty two members present at the first AGM in All Saints Church Hall in May and now we have a thriving active group which sets one Sunday a month aside to help in 'bush bashing', ragwort pulling, monitoring bird migration and generally enjoying ourselves out in the open air. It's a great day out.



Recently, a magnificent interpretation board has been set up at the entrance to the Moor (see photo below) showing the birds, rare plants and mam-

mals that inhabit it and there are many more projects planned with money generously donated.

If you are interested, please contact Matthew Mardling of CMS on 01707 650 041 and ask to be included. You will receive an up-to-date news sheet of news and projects every month. 'Quality of Life' is a comparatively new concept as an environmental term but here in Croxley, as the Old Merchant Taylor Scheme shows, we are in danger all the time of losing the beautiful areas that make this village such a joy to live in.

As a Parish we need all the help we can get from volunteers who value the wonderful 'green spaces' we still have. Let us never forget the price of this beauty is eternal vigilance and support.



David Wynne-Jones



THE CHANTICLEERS



The Chanticleers is a group which for over 30 years has put on regular shows

of songs and sketches at St Oswald's Church Hall, usually twice a year, sometimes in the form of a concert or Music Hall, and sometimes something on the lines of songs from the shows linked to a theme. We are a mixed group – men and women, young and old. Although we are based at St Oswald's, and some of the group are Church members, others are not, and membership of the Chanticleers is open to all who enjoy a bit of singing or acting – or those who do not wish to appear on stage but prefer helping in a backstage capacity.

Although our main object is to enjoy ourselves – and hopefully give enjoyment to those who come to our shows – over the years we have raised significant sums of money for a variety of charities. We also regularly put on concerts for the residents of local sheltered accommodation units, and groups like the Welcome Club, as well as meeting from time to time for social occasions such as rambles or barbecues.

The purpose of this article is to bring ourselves to your attention, so that if you see one of our posters around Croxley (our shows are usually in May and October) you may feel you would like to come and hear us. We would also like to increase our membership, and should you feel drawn to trying out your musical, acting or backstage skills, we would be very pleased to see you at one of our meetings; although we always do our best to put on entertaining shows, you don't have to be Covent Garden standard to join – no audition required! Our meetings take place on most Monday evenings in St Oswald's Church Hall, Malvern Way, from 8.00pm to 10.00pm, or, if you would like further information, please contact Michael, our Chairman on: **01923 776317**



We would love to hear from you!

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French Without Tears



How would you like to 'oui, oui' with a village in France. I know I am in a minority of one on the Parish Council but I am passionate about the idea of Croxley being twinned with a village in France, preferably in the Dordogne or Provence, where the wine is good and the people friendly.

It is an irony about our beloved village that so many people travel all over the world each year, yet the idea of twinning with a group of very similar people from over the Channel fills them with dread. It can't be the language, French is spoken widely on the leafy boulevards of Baldwins Lane and the boulangeries of New Road. I have even heard that there is a strong element of 'café society' on The Green.

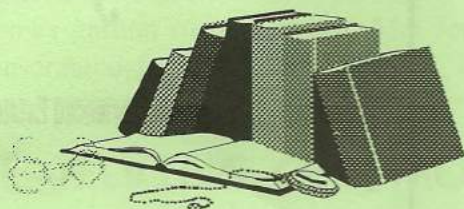
Normally when a twinning society is started, Francophiles contact one another in the area and sit down to work out a plan to the Parish Council. In France the government actually makes a grant to villages and towns who organise twinning, which probably explains the magnificent hospitality one gets when one pops over to France to represent one's village. But there is a fundamental difference as well, the people one meets actually seem to enjoy the experience and take pride in it.

Ah well, I don't think Croxley is ready for it yet BUT MAYBE, JUST MAYBE the fun of it all will filter through. I just hope I am alive to see it.

David Wynne-Jones

BOOKS FOR THE HOUSEBOUND

I have been taking library books and audio tapes to people who are unable to come to the library themselves for the last year. Together with another volunteer,



we spend an hour every other Tuesday visiting two lots of readers. We don't actually choose the books ourselves, the librarians do that, but we can put in requests for a particular book or tape.

Mavis and I derive nearly as much pleasure from our visits as we hope the people we go to do.

I am sure that there must be a few more readers in Croxley who, for one reason or another, cannot come and choose their own books. If you would like to find out more about this scheme, I am sure that the librarians would be only too happy to help with any enquiries.

Hazel Seeley

VANDALISM

There is a disturbing increase in cases of vandalism at the moment and it is bound to increase as the nights get longer.

Bus shelters, telephone boxes and street furniture – all receive the unwelcome attention of mindless anti-social elements.

YOU CAN HELP – if you see acts of vandalism taking place

RING 999 as soon as possible – mobiles make it easier.

The police undertake to be on the spot within a very short time. They may take your name and number but will not use it without your consent and can often catch the vandals in the act.



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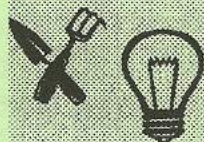
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GARDEN COMPETITION

MILLENNIUM 2000



The gardeners of Croxley Green once

again came up trumps for the Millennium Garden Competition, which also happened to be the eighth year of the contest. There were 31 entries this year, including the local public houses and two community gardens. It was also particularly encouraging to see several gardeners entering the competition for the first time.

Despite the poor summer weather, the standard of the gardens was most impressive and we still continue to be astounded at the wealth of inspiration



and imagination, together with dedication and sheer hard work that is put into the gardens. This year the judges were treated to such diverse varieties of horticulture as a 'secret garden', inspired by the children's book of the same name, a colour themes garden of herbs, etc, a garden created from

their own seeds and plant cuttings, together with topiary in the form of an outsize teddy bear and a garden to enhance a carport, to mention just a few! Lastly, mention must be made of the local public houses, all of which had a profusion of flowers and plants in the form of window boxes, tubs, etc, making the final choice a difficult decision. Similarly, one community garden at Chalmers Court was a perfect picture in a riot of colour and plants – certainly a sight to behold!



The preliminary judging was undertaken over the course of a week by a panel of Parish Councillors, with the final judging held on 29th July. This was undertaken by Cllr Graham Williams, Chairman of Three Rivers District Council, Mrs Jenny Williams, together with Harvey Wardell

(retired Parks & Woodlands Offi-

cer, Three Rivers District Council) and Cllr Tim Davis, Vice Chairman, Croxley Green Parish Council. The judges were then joined by Cllrs Christine Jefford and Hazel Seeley, acting as adjudicators.

The weather was kind to us on judging day, being one of the hottest in July and the judges had much pleasure in both judging the gardens and meeting the gardeners themselves – picking up some valuable gardening tips in the process!



A big 'thank you' must be made to everyone who took part – as without you all there would be no competition! We look forward to visiting you all again next year, together with all the lovely gardens I am sure are still waiting to be discovered!

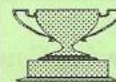
Cllr Christine Jefford



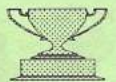
PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY

The prize-giving for the Millennium Garden Competition took place at the Parish Council offices on Friday 20th October. The trophies were presented by Cllr Graham Williams, Chairman of Three Rivers District Council, together with Mrs Jenny Williams and Cllr John Hedges, Chairman of the Parish Council. The prize winners are as below, with a slight alteration being made in the format this year in that the first prize winners were awarded a shield, engraved with their name and the appropriate year. These will be held for a year but a cup was also awarded as a permanent memento of the occasion.

The prize-giving ceremony was followed by light refreshments and everyone had a most pleasant evening, despite the inclement weather conditions.



RESULTS



Large Back Gardens

- | | | |
|----|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Mrs Sheriff | 126 Valley Walk |
| 2. | Mrs Johnson | 36 Claremont Crescent |
| 3. | Miss Selley | 74 Frankland Road |

Small Back Gardens

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Mr Britter | 42 Ludlow Way |
| 2. | Mr & Mrs Edwards | 3 Lancing Way |
| 3. | Mr & Mrs Peerless | 1a Rousebarn Lane |

Front Gardens

- | | | |
|----|-------------|----------------|
| 1. | Mrs Martin | 54 Harvey Road |
| 2. | Mr Crawley | 20 Dulwich Way |
| 3. | Mrs Bawcutt | 30 Yorke Road |

Public House

The Artichoke

Community Garden

Chalmers Court



Christmas Wordsearch



The 20 words listed below are all connected to Christmas and have been hidden in the diagram. They have been printed across (backwards or forwards), or up or down, or diagonally, but always in a straight line without letters being skipped, and you can use letters in the diagram more than once. See how many you can find!

C	S	N	O	W	M	A	N	R	M	Y	A	L	J	K	F	E	Q
F	L	P	I	Z	I	S	M	E	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	S	U
B	E	L	L	S	D	B	I	F	S	I	L	O	S	H	R	A	H
X	I	H	B	U	T	T	T	C	L	A	H	I	U	S	A	N	T
N	G	U	X	W	R	A	U	O	I	F	C	B	S	M	L	T	P
P	H	E	T	I	D	U	R	A	E	F	W	A	V	P	Y	A	N
K	N	S	F	V	R	A	K	O	B	E	N	U	R	L	M	I	B
T	R	E	E	H	S	I	E	V	E	G	K	B	D	O	X	R	C
Y	G	N	U	R	T	G	Y	I	E	X	F	L	A	H	L	P	U
P	T	R	C	M	I	S	T	L	E	T	O	E	C	R	I	S	I
J	H	B	E	D	N	F	E	A	P	M	G	B	A	I	X	W	K
W	I	D	A	J	S	B	I	Y	R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	L
V	S	O	D	N	E	X	P	V	R	C	V	I	T	G	S	Q	U
R	Q	P	H	O	L	L	Y	A	B	D	Y	S	N	O	W	F	H
S	E	I	P	E	C	N	I	M	J	L	A	O	K	V	D	P	N

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. ADVENT | 6. FAIRY | 11. MISTLETOE | 16. SNOWMAN |
| 2. ANGEL | 7. HOLLY | 12. PRESENTS | 17. STAR |
| 3. BAUBLE | 8. IVY | 13. REINDEER | 18. TINSEL |
| 4. BELLS | 9. JESUS | 14. SANTA | 19. TREE |
| 5. CAROLS | 10. MINCE PIES | 15. SLEIGH | 20. TURKEY |



Croxley Green Parish Council will
present 3 prizes of £75, £50 & £25 for the:

Best Dressed Window Displays Christmas 2000

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