

The Croxley Green RESIDENT

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CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

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Editor: Sue Stagg

AUTUMN 1983

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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Croxley Green is an overgrown village which has not grown naturally around a definite centre. At the turn of the century this home of ours consisted of the old road (Watford Road), New Road, Dickinson's Square, a few houses in Baldwins Lane and The Green. Then came the building boom of the thirties when most of the houses were built, followed by some post-war development. More recently came the Windmill estate but this must surely be considered the absolute limit.

Despite the obvious disadvantages of size and unplanned growth, Croxley Green is still a good place to live. The local organisations have created a community spirit and the Green Belt around us will prevent this area from becoming another urban sprawl. Or will it?

Yes, we have come to the purpose of this particular column. It has been suggested that the Green Belt policies which have proved their worth, need some relaxation and the government are to consider revising these policies. The campaign against such relaxation has already begun, and in our view must be pursued diligently. Our M.P. has already, when asked by Don Tilley, a well-known local resident, expressed his concern that there should be no further erosion of the Green Belt in this part of Hertfordshire.

There is an alternative, called Urban Renewal. We have seen what can be done in the imaginative scheme in the Norfolk Road area of Rickmansworth. There is some attempt in parts of London to carry out similar schemes but there is vast scope in our Metropolis for complete redevelopment of many run-down areas. The population of London has diminished in more recent years not because people do not want to live in London but because the available property is no longer desirable or economic.

Of course people must have homes but future building must consider people, not quick profits for developers, which are the most likely outcome of the relaxation of the Green Belt. We cannot win by just being obstructive, preserving our own environment, we must press for viable alternatives. We shall be fighting. Will you?

John Hedges

EDITORIAL

Some of you will notice that this issue is reduced in size — one reason is the expense. We are still, despite perennial appeals, desperately short of subscription collectors. We are grateful for the support of our advertisers, which goes a long way towards helping expenses of publication, but we also need those subscriptions.

We offer 20% commission to our collectors and the collecting amounts to only 2 or 3 evenings' work a year. Please, please volunteer if you can help. Over 20 roads in Croxley remain uncollected and thus get the 'Resident' and the help of the Residents' Association free! These are Watford Road, (nos. 170-336), Ascot Court, Winchester Way, Lancing Way, Sherborne Way, Rugby Way, Repton Way, Fuller Way, Dugdales and The Grove, Lovatts and Little Green, Grove Crescent, Little Green Lane, Dover Way, Lodge End, The Green, Copthorne Road,

All Highfields Estate, Chess Vale Rise and Close, Scots Hill and Scots Hill Close. A long road can be split up into sections, so don't be put off if you feel that you can only do part of one. Polly Burdis (our new Subscriptions Manager) would be pleased to hear from you.

★ ★ ★

The last two issues of the 'Resident' cost over £900 to publish. Some of you may think that we have too high a standard and that we ought to have a duplicated typescript instead. If you feel this way, write and say so. Write anyway.

★ ★ ★

We are also asking for a new treasurer. Could YOU help?

★ ★ ★

This issue contains the first contribution from P.C. Steven Steddy. He attends our monthly Committee meetings when he is able, adding comments and offering assistance with good nature and humour. We are grateful for his interest. If YOU have any comments or problems, please contact him on the extension number given.

★ ★ ★

I would like to thank those of you who responded to the appeal for help for the new Revels Committee, and also to our distributors who carried the extra sheets around! I hope that all those many people who attended the Revels this year enjoyed it as much as the new Committee enjoyed seeing the fruits of their labours. An article, penned by the new secretary John Bolton, appears within.

Sue Stagg

DURRANTS CAMPAIGN NEWS

Hilary Parnell, the present PTA chairman, reports:

The Ombudsman's representative has had meetings over the last few weeks with the six couples who complained on the grounds of maladministration, negation of parental choice, and a lack of provision for children with special educational needs. He has also met with our County Councillor and with County officials.

We understand that this is the first time that a formal investigation of a school closure proposal has been undertaken,

Please send letters, contributions and advertisements to:

**Mrs. S. Stagg
83, Links Way,
Croxley Green, Herts.**

**Telephone: Watford 35059.
by February 1st, if possible.**

and whilst the office of the Commission for Local Administration in England normally takes a long time to pursue its enquiries, we hope for a response within the year.

JOHN CUTTLER

Many people in Croxley were shocked and saddened by John's death early in June. Despite his illness, which became more serious in the last weeks before his death, he remained cheerful and thoughtful of others to the end. John and his wife only moved to Croxley just over two years ago, but in that time he had, as he often put it, 'made his face known' in many facets of Croxley life.

He was not only a thinker but a doer, acting with complete unselfishness in the service of others. He could always spare the time for a friendly word with anybody. He and his wife were involved in helping the British Red Cross and with the Welcome Club — he was also an active member of several other groups in the area.

We knew him best as our Treasurer — a job that he did with efficiency, tact and a pervading sense of humour. He also looked after the interests of his fellow residents in Evans Close and his near neighbours in New Road.

We offer our deepest sympathy to Irene, his widow and his daughter and family, knowing that we speak for many Croxley residents. He was, and is still, sorely missed.

Sue Stagg

COMMUNITY CONSTABLE'S COLUMN

How often have we heard the expression "An Englishman's home is his castle", and yet increasingly our "castles" are at the mercy of criminals whose only thought is gain (his own). And how easy some people make it for these thieves. I've lost count of the number of times I've heard "I was only gone for a few minutes", "We didn't think it would happen in this area" or "I didn't think we had much worth stealing".

I am not asking everybody to fit hundreds of pounds-worth of sophisticated electronic wizardry, or to turn their homes into fortresses, but a few good window locks and a little money spent on sensible security fixtures can make all the difference.

*Blessed is the nation
whose God is the Lord*

Psalm 33, verse 12

You are invited to worship at the

Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane

Morning Worship: 9.30 a.m.
Family Service: 11.30 a.m. Rev. Derek Fraser, B.D.
Evening Praise: 6.30 p.m. Telephone: Watford 31403

We have two excellent Crime Prevention officers, Sergeant D. Walker and Constable G. Smith, both based at Watford Police Station (Tel. Watford 44444 Ext. 221), who will make a mutually convenient appointment to visit you at your homes, discuss security, and give you the best possible advice (and it's totally free), why not ring them?

Please though, don't just rely on other people. As well as securing your own property, be a good neighbour, be nosy. If you know the people next door are normally out during the day, then who is that walking around the back of their house? Whose is the car or van out the front? Remember — we do try hard — but Crime Prevention starts with YOU.

P.C. Steve Steddy
(Watford 44444, Ext. 305)

PAUL ROBINSON MEMORIAL FUND

The position of the fund is rather static at the moment, as the Community Centre is still in the process of negotiating for a new foyer to be built. Once the plans have been accepted, the seat can be ordered.

So far the fund stands at £121 with the promise of more to come from the Community Centre and two more individuals to help cover any shortfall.

Here is a list of contributors so far:
Welcome Club
Sunnyside Club
Residents' and Ratepayers' Association
C.G. Road Safety Committee
B.P. Scout Guild
C.G. Labour Party
C.G. Conservatives
C.G. Liberals

and many individual and anonymous donations. Thank you to you all. It is not too late for anyone else to come forward. The larger the amount collected, the better the memorial to Paul.

Contributions can be handed in to either of the doctors' surgeries at 166 New Road or 268a Baldwins Lane, or by post to 45 Hagden Lane, Watford, addressed to the Paul Robinson Memorial Fund.

THE CHANTICLEERS

For the past sixteen years, this local choir, based on St. Oswalds Church choir and congregation, have been putting on annual shows at St. Oswald's Church Hall, as well as singing to entertain members of the Welcome Club and various residential homes in the area. They have a reputation for staging colourful and tuneful shows suitable for all the family. A charity raffle is always part of the evening.

Over the years, they have performed excerpts from South Pacific, Oliver, Mary Poppins, Cats and various productions of Gilbert and Sullivan and light opera. Concerts with a theme have also been given: Songs through the Ages, a show with Continental music when the UK joined the EEC and songs associated with Kings and Queens for the Jubilee.

This year, the show is entitled 'Clowning Around' and includes songs about circus life and also songs from the Twenties era plus sketches. It is on Thursday, Friday and Saturday 20th, 21st and 22nd October at 7.45 p.m. The shows are usually two hours long, and refreshments are available. Do come along and all enjoy the thrill of seeing a live show. Booking forms are available from Sue Stagg of the 'Resident', any member of the Chanticleers choir or in the church hall after Sunday morning services from:

Mrs. W. Hamblin, 1, Lancing Way
Tel. 779156.

New members are welcome, singers or backstage helpers, 14 years and over!

Oiwyn Dunderdale

WANTED — WARTIME MEMORIES

Do you have any memories of the Home Front in Croxley?

If so, please contact Mrs. Tither of Little Green School. She is doing a continuous project on local history with her fourth year children, and would be grateful for any help you can give them. Mrs. Tither can be reached at the school on Rickmansworth 773861.

Ed.

IAN TURFFREY

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REVELS REPORT

Did you come to the 'Revels' in June? If you were there you had a lot of fun, if you were not, you missed a lot. A beautiful sunny day in June, my birthday and my first attempt as Hon. Sec. of the Croxley Green Society Committee, who dream up, create and co-ordinate all the activities which culminate in Revels Day.

This year we nearly did not have the Revels. In March there was no Committee to organise them. In despair, Algy Hedges, our stalwart chairman, put out a cry for help in the 'Resident'. One dark and damp day in March, a motley crew of strangers assembled in the Library and the new CGS Committee was born. It was then already well into the year and none of us, save Algy and Audrey Middleton, had any idea of what was to be done. However, with much help from Audrey and prodding from Algy, we had the semblance of the Revels by mid-May.

The Revels has been a noted and regular event in Croxley for many years. Algy Hedges has been the chairman of the organising group for as many years and can often be seen pedalling around the district, where he has lived for all his 80+ years. By contrast, Ken Owen, our Draw Organiser, and myself are comparative newcomers to Croxley. We find the natives very friendly and I was amazed on Revels' eve to see a band of 'gnomes' appear at Foster's farm, where under the expert direction of Algy, they unearthed, stacked and transported to the Green all the paraphernalia needed to create the Revels Arena including maypole, stand and car park boundaries, all of which disappeared just as efficiently at the end of the day. It was a real example of local community co-operation. We need more of that. These 'gnomes' are not getting any younger and none of us lasts for ever. A few more helpers for the

strong arm next year please.

For those of you who don't know already, the CGS consists of an affiliation of some 30-odd local organisations. So many in such a small area as Croxley. Revels Day is an opportunity for these organizations to display and sell their wares, raise money and attract new members. Each group donates a small percentage of their takings (as do the ice-cream vendor, the donkey man and fun-fair) to the Society funds, whilst the whole of the profits from the sale of draw tickets and the street collection are donated to one or more local charities, chosen by delegates of the organizations affiliated to CGS each year. This year both Croxley House and the British Red Cross Centre received cheques for just over £100 each. Others will benefit from other excess funds.

The CGS Committee are not resting on their laurels, but are already analysing what went wrong and what could be better for 1984. We would like to see more things to amuse the children — there was not much for them this year. And fewer straw pulling games. What about a Wheel of Fortune, Lucky Dip Bran Tub, Fishing the Ducks? There must be lots more ideas out there. We would also like to hear from any individual or organization with ideas for an arena event. Please contact me on Watford 34399.

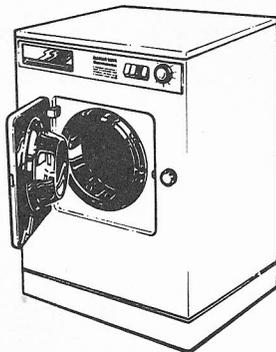
Next year's Revels will be on Saturday 22nd June 1984. I would like to hear again from the lady who phoned me a few weeks ago to say that her friends from New Zealand wanted to be sure they would be in the U.K. when the Revels are on. We've now got world-wide recognition so let's make the next Revels better than ever!!

Best wishes to all Readers.

John Bolton

Hon. Secretary, Croxley Green Society

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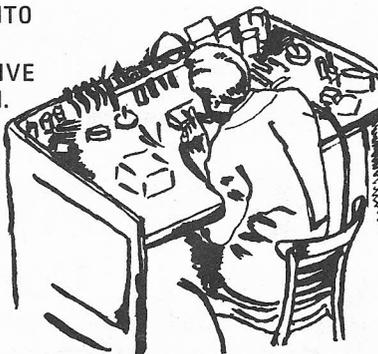
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BOOK LATE: PAY LATER — HEAVILY

We, in Croxley Green, are gifted with an excellent little library: what it lacks in on-site resources is more than compensated for by the resourcefulness and the cheerful, polite and friendly assistance of the staff, whether you want specialised know-how or general information, local knowledge or an obscure book from a remote part of the county or country.

However there are one or two limitations in the system imposed on all County libraries using the photographic method of control. These limitations, combined with a punitive fines scale, can cause worry and even distress to a lot of people.

I refer of course to the long delay — say 5-6 weeks — before notification is given of an overdue book. It must be admitted that, though some of us are allowed by circumstances or training, to have an orderly control over their borrowings, it is quite possible for an elderly person or a harrassed mum to genuinely think that all books have been returned on the due date. Such people can be seriously

distressed when presented with a bill for which they had not budgetted, or which they can ill afford. Some people have actually been in tears. This is not right!

Could it not be possible for a reminder to be sent after, say, two weeks? This should allow time to sort out the laggards who will return offending items without further reminders, from those who have excusably mislaid a book. This way the accidental lapse — old people *do* forget and mums may not have *time* to remember — would not be so heavily penalised.

Associated with this failing in the system is the lack of up-to-date information. If you suddenly have a nasty sneaking feeling that you may *not* have returned a book, but think you *have*, there is no alternative to waiting for the reminder, knowing that the cost is inexorably ticking up. Not even our wonderful Croxley Green library can tell us the position.

If we are to have such penal fines, then it is incumbent on the County to mitigate the consequences of an excusable — and human — error. Particularly for those who can least afford it.

But *do* we have to have such punishing fines? Surely they could level off at say £1 instead of the existing £2? Or could not there be special rates for senior citizens and the unemployed? After all, Three Rivers can do it at Watersmeet, so . . .

Come on you pensioners, both as individuals and as a body! Protest to your County Councillor. Remember you are a powerful group, with a *vote*. Let him know that continuation of the above complaints could influence your decision as to where that vote goes next time.

Bob Hampson

JOGGERS BEWARE

Late last summer, having finally run out of excuses for not doing so, I agreed to redecorate the living room. As is usual practice on these occasions, I removed the door furniture before repainting. I left for night work that evening, smugly proud of my achievement, not realising the drama that was to be enacted in my absence.

My ever-loving has a habit of bathing and changing into night attire before settling down to watch television for the evening if no guests are expected. Having done so on this particular evening, she settled down along with her mother to enjoy a 'peaceful' evening, so she thought.

After a while my wife felt a draught from the open door, and asked Mother to close it. Ma-in-law being elderly and with fading eyesight gave the door a hearty shove, causing it to close completely. Some while later Mother wished to leave the room for a call-of-nature, only to find that she could not open the door, there being no handle.

Not easily given to panic, my wife searched for some implement to insert in

the handle socket to open it. At that time the living room window was of the type which only had a narrow opening at the top, the remainder being a fixed pane. This meant that she was unable to climb out of the window to find something to open the door with, or to get assistance. The only course open to her was to wave an arm through the small opening and shout for help.

After some, what seemed endless, minutes, she noticed a jogger approaching. Thinking that help was at hand, my wife waved and called with increasing vigour. However, instead of coming to the aid of an obviously distressed damsel, this virile shorts-clad hunk of manhood took one look at the dressing-gowned figure at the window, and promptly increased his pace — in the opposite direction. This left my, by now anxious and distraught, wife no option

but to continue waving and shouting. This she did until eventually a neighbour came to investigate what all the rumpus was about and rendered assistance.

This leaves an intriguing question and a moral. The question is, did the jogger think he had stumbled on a domestic dispute and decided not to get involved, or, as my wife laughingly puts it, did he think that his luck had changed, but 'chickened out'?

Oh! the moral? That's easy. 'What comes off, must go back' — THE SAME DAY — as my ever-loving so pointedly remarked the next morning on my homecoming.

A Resident

Melancholy is the pleasure of being sad.

* * *

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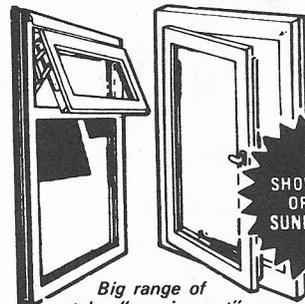
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NEW BAPTIST MINISTER

Welcome to the Rev. Derek Fraser who was inducted into the Pastorate of Croxley Green Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane, on Saturday, 1st October. Mr. Fraser and his wife, Linda, who were brought up in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, have three small children. The family have just moved down from Aberdeen where Mr. Fraser was formerly ministering.

Edward Lambden

RICKMANSWORTH CARE

Last year CARE celebrated its 10th anniversary. CARE has endeavoured since its beginning to fill a need when family and relatives are not available. The majority of jobs which CARE is asked to do are concerned with the old, the lonely and the infirm. Here are some of the jobs which CARE does on a regular basis: driving for hospital visits, for which a mileage allowance is payable; babysitting while a parent visits a relative in hospital; helping in the home in times of difficulty; helping with the mentally handicapped; doing shopping; collecting a prescription from the chemist or manning a telephone by being a Duty Officer.

The CARE area stretches from Mill End to the Two Bridges. Most of the churches from the area have a regular representative on the CARE committee, which meets bi-monthly.

If you think CARE can help you, dial the number 773311 and an ansaphone will put you through to the Duty Officer, who in turn will contact someone who should be able to help. There are about 40 Duty Officers and 200 volunteers. Duty Officers operate on a daily basis and pass on to each other a comprehensive file system, which gives details of assignments which volunteers are prepared to undertake.

CARE seldom cannot help, but we would like more volunteers to come forward and assist in any of the jobs mentioned above. If, for instance, you are newly retired, no doubt you could spare some of your time to help in this

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**Mr. Walford,
Secretary**

DO YOU KNOW SIGN LANGUAGE?

I was recently approached by a Croxley lady and asked if I knew anyone who could help her. Her husband is severely deaf and has been attending classes in sign language in Harrow. Out of the classes he has no communication with anyone except herself and she says that he is in danger of being cut off in his own world. He desperately needs someone either who like himself is severely deaf and also knows sign language or a normal hearing individual who knows it, for occasional company.

Please if you know anyone like this, please contact me at the address on the front page. Thank you.

Sue Stagg

ROUSEBARN LANE

Recently, the Highways, Works and Transport Committee of TRDC encountered several setbacks to their proposed closure of Rousebarn Lane. Neither Watford Borough Council nor the police seem to recognise the inherent dangers of high traffic density in Whippendell Woods. However the Committee will continue with their efforts to find a solution to the problem. This unpublished article, written over two years ago, gives an insight into the problem.

Way back, before the M.1. was built, there was a proposal to destroy the beauties of Rousebarn Lane as it

threaded its way through the sylvan glades of Whippendell Woods, in order to construct the Aylesbury Radial Road. Happily, Mr. Marples, the then Minister of Transport, would not sacrifice such an area of natural beauty to provide a through route for people from other parts.

Unfortunately our summer tunnel through the trees still provides a local through route, in conjunction with Links Way, for commuters morning and night.

Some time ago there was considerable opposition from certain sections of the Equestrian Fraternity against any vehicle using the lane because of the reckless behaviour of a few drivers. Obviously, other interests have a claim – not least Blacketts Nursery, so, as a compromise, the Council installed two "sleeping policemen" – the active police want the lane kept open for emergency reasons. These sleeping policemen are an expensive and elaborate affair, obviously satisfying every safety requirement that could be devised by some remote Civil Servant. It does slow down the traffic admirably – for at least 20 yards on each side, but it does nothing to reduce the average speed through the worst part of the woods and Links Way, or to deter the flow of short cut commuters.

Surely what is required, to knock some sense into those who are not deterred by the inherent dangers of this lane, is a whole series of cheap but vicious ramps at frequent intervals, right through the woods. Anyone going to Cassio College in Langley Road will know what they are like. If people then continue to stream through this little lane, then the next M.O.T. test will take their cars off the road altogether.

Rousebarn Lane must not become a through-route for large numbers of people. It is a precious gem of a lane which should be reserved for those who seek the peaceful enjoyment of our woods. Nor must it be closed for the exclusive use of some sections of the community. More cheap sleeping policemen would provide a compromise solution.

Bob Hampson

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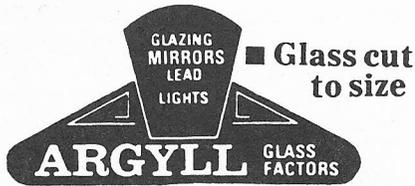
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