

# The Croxley Green RESIDENT

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**CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION**

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Editor: John Hedges

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**Material published in this newsletter does not necessarily represent the views of the Association nor its Committee.**

## EDITORIAL

At the head of this column you will have noticed that the name of the Secretary has been omitted. Yes we need this post filled. We also need new Committee members of all ages. If you think you could help or wish to become involved please contact our Chairman or any committee member now. None of these tasks is onerous. We meet once a month on the third Thursday. The secretary produces minutes, about one or perhaps two pages of type and also writes perhaps four or five letters. To be secretary or a committee member is a worthwhile task of benefit to the community as a whole and from experience, local government officers and officials welcome our views. During the past year we have made many representations to many bodies and our voice has been heard. We have close links with the Parish Council and the Road Safety Committee. All Parish Councillors are our nominees. Our Chairman is also Chairman of the Road Safety Committee. If we are to speak genuinely for all people in Croxley Green we need fresh blood and we need you. Don't think someone else will do it, you are the one we want. Turn up at our Annual General Meeting. Tell us what you want and don't be shy.

Croxley Green Residents and  
Ratepayers Association.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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Friday 27th March 1987

at

8.00pm to be held at  
*The Library, Barton Way,  
Croxley Green.*

*Everybody Welcome, please  
come and air your views.*

## CROXLEY GREEN SOCIETY ANNUAL REVELS 1987

Revels day this year will be on Saturday 20th June. The procession will assemble at 1.00p.m. and after judging will leave to travel round the village at 2.00 p.m. Then the fun on the Green will be in full swing. Preparations are well underway and this will be the best 'Revels' ever. Yes we say this every year and we mean it, let us do it. This year we are arranging more for the arena and hope to carry on until at least 5.00p.m. The arrangements for stalls will be the same as last year, a set space of twelve, eighteen or twenty-four feet will be reserved and marked out for you. Please remember if you want to erect a tent then a twelve foot space is not sufficient. If you were represented last year you will be contacted in due course, if not then contact the stalls organiser, John Hedges on Watford 22715.

The procession grows each year and may we suggest that you contact Don Griffin on Rick 771716 if you wish to be represented, sometime in April will be in plenty of time. Thank you for supporting our Emergency Special General Meeting advertised in the last issue of the 'Resident'.

As a result of this three new officers were appointed they are:-

Chairman - Mike Dix Wat 32739

Vice Chairman - Milson Watkins

Secretary - Jean Dix

The AGM will be on Thursday 26th March at the Library. Delegates have been notified.

John Hedges

Peter Foster

## CROXLEY GREEN ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

This Committee was formed in 1966 at a Public Meeting held in All Saints Church Hall following a fatal accident to a child in Watford Road. There are two founder members still serving on the Committee which, over the years, has acquired useful experience on road safety matters and has been successful in obtaining remedial work to danger spots; installation of Pelican Crossings, etc. and recently the Mini-Roundabout at the junction of The Green and the A412.

We are recognised by Herts County Council as the official Road Safety Committee for our area and are given an Annual grant through Three Rivers District Council to finance our activities. To save expense and enable the Grant to be used as fully as possible on Road Safety matters, our meetings are held in Committee members' homes. These are attended by the Area Road Safety Officer and representatives from the Traffic Police and Three Rivers District Council. At the meetings any particularly dangerous local situations are highlighted for attention and the monthly reports of Road Accidents we receive from County are studied with a view to ascertaining any location of repeated accidents. At the present time there does not appear to be any particular pattern in the accidents reported. New Road and Baldwins Lane are the acknowledged black spots. Officers at TRDC are concentrating on both these roads and, whereas, the danger in New Road would appear to be caused by excessive parking, Baldwins Lane is much more difficult to remedy because of various factors involved eg. the use of a busy residential road as a daily route for fast through traffic. No one has yet been able to find a solution, in spite of much discussion. With regard to the Cassio Bridge end to the Lane the road is not wide enough at the Junction with Winton Drive for a central bollard and a Pelican Crossing is impracticable because of poor sightlines. Would anyone use a bridge? Your ideas are sought, please. The Committee is concerned with the educational aspect of Road Safety and this year we are co-operating in the Annual County Road Safety Quiz for Junior Schools, and to encourage interest locally are giving Certificates to children participating from local schools and a Prize to the local school fielding the winning team.

The Committee has the responsibility of drawing attention to local road hazards with a view to avoiding accidents. Please write and let us know of any item you wish us to look into. Our Chairman is Michael Humphreys, The Weather House, Croxley Hall Woods, Croxley Green and our Hon Secretary is Jennifer Bunce, 57, Beechcroft Avenue, Croxley Green.

Kay Raggett  
Hon Treasurer

*Please send letters, contributions  
and advertisements to:*

**John Hedges**

**44 Ludlow Way**

**Telephone: Watford 22715**

**by September 1st if possible.**

## LIBRARY COLUMN

A belated Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from all at the Library with particular thanks to all those who gave gifts and cards. My last column was almost exclusively concerned with the computer issuing system and it's problems. Since then it has worked continuously with breaks of no longer than 15 minutes, and long may it continue to do so, touch wood etc.! So, I will leave the computer until a new development concerns us all.

We have had many exhibitions of various subjects over the last year in the Library reading room and those concerning local artists have proved particularly popular, so we are looking for more artists to display their work. The room is free to use and we suggest that 12 paintings should be ample. You may also sell your works with no commission taken.

We have been selling the new publication 'Croxley Green - The Way It Used To Be' on behalf of Mr. & Mrs. Frost and have hardly been able to keep up with demand. It just proves yet again that local history is an enormously popular subject. The new GCSE exams and syllabuses also cover local history and the Library is often the first place schools turn to. If you have any memorabilia, however trivial you might feel it is, do not hesitate to bring it to us. We will try to ensure that at least future generations have their local area well documented.

Once again I must cover a subject that seems to be rearing its ugly head - vandalism. In the past few months we have had four broken windows and the letterbox removed, as well as various damage to other parts of the building. Also the telephone boxes outside the Library and at the station seem to be continually out of order. On the latter point I have good news. I wrote to British Telecom, in conjunction with Ken Harris at The Fox & Hounds, to ask if we could 'adopt' the phone or if they could put in a vandal-proof box. I received a 'phone call in early January saying that they are looking at the whole of Croxley Green with a view to putting in new kiosks, so lets hope that this solves the problem. As to vandalism generally, if you see or hear anything do not be afraid to phone Steve Steddy. I keep in touch with him and if we come up with anything in the future I will keep you informed.

Finally, as I write, temperatures are several degrees below freezing, if you cannot return your books to the Library because of the weather, please phone and renew them. You can do this three times now, thanks to the dear computer. If you know of an old person who cannot come out during the winter months, please inform us and we will try to deliver. Like the old Wells Fargo, we nearly always get through!

Bob Sharpe  
Librarian.

## POLICE COLUMN

A long one this time but please don't give up, this is important and unlike the daily newspapers and television, this relates directly to you the residents of the neighbourhood.

It is sometimes said that not much happens in a nice area like Croxley

<p>Let us test and examine our ways and return to the Lord. Lam. 3 Verse 40.</p>	<p>You are invited to worship at the <b>Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane</b> Morning Worship: 9.30 a.m. Family Service: 11.00 a.m. Rev. Derek Fraser, B.D. Evening Praise: 6.30 p.m. Telephone: Watford 31403</p>
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Green. This supposed 'not much' amounted to some 271 reported crimes in 1986 with a total monetary involvement of some £178,433. Yes that's right, One Hundred and Seventy Eight THOUSAND Four hundred and thirty three pounds. Nearly one fifth of a million.

The crimes that affect us most can be broken down into the following categories-

ROBBERY (Not to be confused with Burglary)	2
ATTEMPTED BURGLARY	3
BURGLARY	12
(Not dwelling houses)	
BURGLARY (Dwelling houses)	27
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	50
THEFT (NOT connected with motor vehicles)	54
THEFT (either OF or FROM motor vehicles)	88
Staggering	

Already this year FOUR cars have been stolen and THREE thefts from motor vehicles have occurred. Stolen has been a C.B. aerial, a good quality stereo and a set of wheels and tyres.

The most recent case involves a motor car containing a professional person's entire working tools (I daren't even begin to guess the value of those), a cheque book, cheque guarantee card and driving licence. WILL YOU NEVER LEARN? How many times do you need to be told? The golden rules for vehicles are quite simply this - 1) ALWAYS lock it, even for a few minutes. 2) Fit an extra anti-theft device. 3) Never leave ANYTHING on display in the car, don't even leave things in the boot unless you have no alternative. 4) If you absolutely HAVE to leave your working tools in a vehicle then fit an alarm. No excuses, no ifs or buts, an alarm. It's the only way. On the burglary side of things, the twenty six Neighbourhood Watch schemes Croxley Green now boasts, have dramatically reduced this crime. The two most recent ones both being detected, property recovered and thieves arrested, mainly due to residents putting into effect the crime prevention

advice given to them at the launch of the scheme.

For those of you in the schemes (well over 2000 households), I know you will join me in a big vote of thanks to the twenty six overall co-ordinators and their many helpers. You really are having an effect on crime in your community. Well done all of you. For those of you not yet in such a scheme, why not get together with a few neighbours, give me a ring (44444, extn 2205) and find out how easy it is, what you can do to prevent crime in your area and what 'back-up' services we can offer you.

Parents, why not get the children thinking about crime prevention? Each year a competition is held in this area where slogans, posters and even poems designed by children, are judged and awarded prizes. The two age ranges are 8-9 years and 10-11 years. Maybe the youngsters of Croxley Green will 'sweep the board' in July and even have an entry put forward to national level.

If we can stop thinking like an ostrich and burying our head in the sand we can make a real impact on crime. It CAN happen to you, You DON'T have to sit back and take it, you CAN do something about it. You've got the number, I've got the time, now over to you.

If my tone seems somewhat pedantic, even bordering on the dictatorial then you will have to forgive me and try, please, to see it from my point of view. Can you imagine the frustration of attending so many crimes which, with just a TINY bit of forethought could have been prevented? The thief walking off with the easiest of pickings when most of us work hard for our possessions, the wasted man-hours spent filling in the mountains of paperwork, the upset to the victim. Then multiply that by the number of crimes I deal with annually. Get the picture?

Alright I know. I'll shut up now.  
Steve Steddy

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## THE PARISH COUNCIL

The winter months have been a time of consolidation for your new Parish Council. Out of the deliberations of its various committees a clearer picture has emerged of the local issues on which a Parish voice ought to be heard and plans have been made for the Council to take its first steps in assuming responsibilities for some environmental matters.

A major involvement in the autumn arose out of the controversy about the future of the woodland areas surrounding the Imperial Machine Company's site adjacent to Frankland Road and Harvey Road. This had been sparked when Three Rivers District Council Planning Committee issued a draft planning brief suggesting that the present occupiers of the site might wish to enlarge their factory or move to another site. The brief set out options for the redevelopment of the area which encompassed possible alternative industries; rebuilding on the site; or re-planning for the building of houses. Most of the contents of the brief were speculative because IMC had not given any clear indication of their intentions, but many of the residents in

the area were suspicious that things were being done behind closed doors which could result in a serious loss of rural amenities in the district.

At a packed public meeting on the site the Director of Planning found it hard going against considerable vocal distrust and little was achieved either in the general understanding of the position or in allaying local fears. At a meeting between TRDC Planning Committee's Working Party and your Parish Council representatives we suggested that a better appreciation of the situation might be achieved on all sides if the Parish Council were to send out an explanatory letter asking for each household in the vicinity to give a view of the best way forward. This was agreed and the referendum took place early in November. The outcome showed the continuing concern of local people about the future of the site. Uppermost in their thinking was the implied threat to the Green Belt area whether through increased industrial development or the building of houses. Many worries were expressed about the likely volume and direction of traffic generated by any form of development; the dangers and noise which would result in a relatively quiet residential district; and the hazards for children attending the Harvey Road School. The threat to woodland life was in most peoples' minds and many saw the possibility that the building of houses in one part of the woods would lead to pressures for development on nearby land in Long Valley Tip.

In answer to straight questions about the options offered by the TRDC Planning Committee the response was as follows:-

1. Take no action now but await a formal application from the occupiers for an extension of the existing factory..... 89
  2. Prepare to offer the site for alternative re-development against the possibility that the present owners decide to move..... 70
- 11 householders rejected both the options and wanted, in various ways, a more energetic defence of the Green Belt concept.

The position at present is that the results of this referendum have been sent for the consideration of the TRDC Planning Committee Working Party and the Parish Council looks forward to further consultations with the District Council on this important issue.

In another part of Croxley - The Green itself, the Council is concerned about plans for extension and redevelopment on the adjacent sites of The Artichoke and The Orchard. If present proposals are agreed there is no doubt that the appearance of this part of The Green will undergo a substantial change and the Council is anxious that every aspect of the plans submitted to TRDC should be carefully assessed. At the time of

writing clarification is needed on a number of points and consultations with interested parties are taking place. Suffice to say for the present that this is just the sort of situation on which the Council welcomes the views of as many residents as possible. Several environmental matters have emerged near the top of the Council's action list. The care of The Green itself is often noted by local residents more precisely when standards slip and the Parish Council has therefore decided that from April this year it will take on board from TRDC the job of cutting the grass. The plan for the first year will follow fairly closely that worked out by TRDC but we hope to find out from experience if this should be modified to attune with local requirements. Dog nuisance both on The Green and elsewhere in the Parish is always near the top of our agendas and some Councillors will shortly be visiting Rochester upon Medway City Council to learn about their success in using the Home Office experimental bye-laws to deal with the nuisance. If there has been a big improvement at Rochester our Councillors will be pressing for a similar bye-law in Croxley. Those who cause nuisances of a different order; motor-cycling and flying of model aircraft on Croxley Moor, will soon have no excuse as the prohibitions are soon to be boldly announced on the Moor by the installation of tough new Parish Council sign boards. Although one might think that the introduction of the new Superloos would be welcomed as a vast improvement on the present stinking, graffiti daubed and vandalised 'conveniences' there seem to be a chorus of disapproval in the local press whenever they appear. One is planned by TRDC a site adjacent to the Red House Public House and when it is functioning the convenience in Barton Way Car Park will be converted to use for disabled persons. After representations by your Parish Council TRDC have now agreed to consider with the Allotments Association at Barton Way how part of the building could be converted to a lavatory for the sole use of allotment holders.

To end on a small success - residents in the Sycamore Road area who use a canal side path to get round to the park and Station should find the going a bit easier. Following complaints the Parish Council were able to arrange for a

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NACRO team to clear the waste ground of undergrowth etc. and so make the path more accessible and less daunting particularly to women and children.

Ian Thomas  
Parish Clerk



## CHURCH ARCHIVES

In December of last year I was appointed Archivist of All Saints' Church, Croxley Green. In the not too distant future it is intended to arrange a small exhibition of photographs of the Church to highlight the appeal in connection with repairs to the steeple and restoration of the organ. This will be staged in the Library, Barton Way.

Many of you are aware that the history of Croxley Green is tied up with John Dickinson's Croxley Mill which opened in 1830. Then, as the population had increased to approximately 1,000 and the nearest church was St. Mary's Rickmansworth, a meeting was held in October, 1868 chaired by Lord Ebury and a decision was reached that a Church should be built in Croxley Green. Many further meetings were held and it was finally agreed that it should be built at the south end of the Green. Funds were raised by voluntary subscriptions and Lord Ebury laid the foundation stone September 27th 1870. Then on June 25th the consecration of the finished Church was held by the Bishop of Rochester, in whose diocese the Church was at that date. The first Vicar was the Rev. Ashley Roberts who had been Curate of St. Mary's Rickmansworth.

## OPEN GARDENS BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY

At various houses around  
the Green.

*Sunday 6th September*

The Archives contain many interesting documents and we have quite a number relating to Croxley, we would be pleased and interested to see any photographs, documents, newspaper cuttings, etc. relating to the Church and district. For example, in the archives in connection with the Coronation of King George V there is a ticket inviting the bearer to attend the Aged Villagers Dinner held on June 25th, 1911 in Mr Gurney's garden at 12.30p.m. No name on this one but I wonder if somewhere there is a ticket with a name on it.

Many of you have shown much interest in the History of Croxley and it is intended, later on, to stage further exhibitions at the Library and other venues.

May I make it clear that copies will be made of photographs and the original returned to you unless you wish it to be placed in the archives of the Church. Should an item be offered which cannot be satisfactorily copied then steps will be taken to see it is protected.

My address is: 15 Repton Way,  
Tel: R 720841

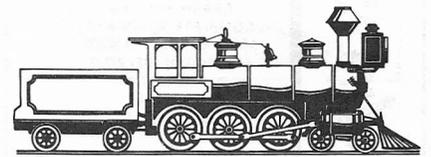
N. Spring

## THE LOCAL WATERCRESS INDUSTRY.

Croxley Hall Farm has been occupied by members of the Sansom Family since about 1880. The house is more than 300 years old and the area surrounding it, with the abundant water supplies, has been used for growing Watercress since 1812. The famous old Tithe Barn adjoins the Farm. My great grandfather moved from Berkshire with a friend named Williams to work at Watford Junction. They had some knowledge of Watercress growing and found that local water supplies adjoining the Grand Union Canal were very suitable for this. They left the Railway with another colleague there by the name of Durrant and began growing Watercress at Boxmoor and following the line of the Canal through Hertfordshire to Uxbridge. Our Watercress business grew from there. My great grandfather's two sons joined the business, extending it considerably, and by 1924 Sansoms were cultivating Cress on a large scale.

The demand for Watercress grew and the peak was reached in the early 1930's. The Railway Service existing at that time was very useful to Sansoms. Watercress being very perishable, depended on reliable transport, and the Railways gave us their close co-operation. We despatched Watercress from Rickmansworth L.M.S. Station by what became known as "The Watercress Express" to destinations all over England and also up to Scotland. The L.M.S. Railway used our Cress in their Dining Cars. When the Royal Family travelled to Balmoral in the Royal Train, we had a

special order for Watercress which was cut and delivered within an hour to ensure its freshness for the Dining Car.



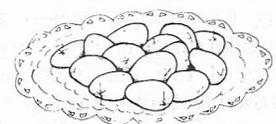
At that time there were eleven members of our family employed in the business which did well and continued to do so during the second World War and for a period after that. But soon things were not so easy. New foods and foreign produce were in strong competition. The Railway Service deteriorated, London markets became overstocked and prices fell. Beds were lost to gravel digging and building developments. The demand for water for industrial purposes increased and some Springs, which are essential for the growing of Watercress, were lost.

Our Watercress is grown to a very high standard of cultivation and our methods have been copied and used throughout the watercress industry. In 1935 in the Lord Mayor's Procession there was a "Pageant of Agriculture and Country Life". Sansoms provided the floats depicting the growing of Watercress. The lorry was decorated with watercress, and carrying "watercress girls", dressed in green who threw bunches of cress to the crowds. Behind it was a trailer filled with two small watercress beds and an Artesian Well which (aided by a hand pump) pumped water around the beds. This spectacle of Watercress seemingly growing in Cheapside received a very good reception from the crowds. Nowadays, in the current trend towards natural foods, Watercress with its beneficial vitamins has again become popular and the demand for it is increasing.

Jack Sansom  
Croxley Hall Farm.

## Elena Watts

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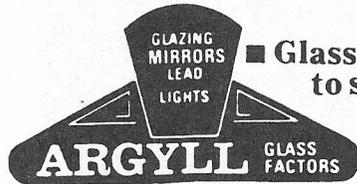
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