



The Croxley Green RESIDENT

Published by

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

Editor: John Hedges
Assisted by: Molly Hedges

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EDITORIAL

Not much space this time but may I just remind you that we are still looking for life members. Fill in the form and return it now.

Gypsies thrive on our waste and then discard it. Don't encourage them, take your waste to the Council Dump in Riverside Drive, don't give it to them. It's really up to you.

REVELS ON THE GREEN

Peter Foster and I with a small but effective group of helpers have run the Revels for 4 years, having taken over as a crisis arose with no one else willing to give up the time required.

I think you will agree that the Revels during that time has been well organised and it has certainly grown in size and attracted more people, and I think I speak for all when I say how grateful we are to all those people who have given so freely of their time to keep this central focus of

our village going strong.

However we have now reached another crisis. Peter has found his involvement in the Revels too costly, coming as it does at his heaviest time on the farm and has reluctantly had to withdraw his services. I myself having had a recurrence of a previous back problem find myself very limited in what I can physically do, though I am willing to carry a desk-bound administrative burden.

Will there be a Revels on 23rd June 1990?

Well that is up to you. We need urgently volunteers to help with organisation. Who do we need? Well we need able-bodied, physically active people who can mark out the pitch, knock in stakes and run about. We need people who can marshal the procession, run the car-park, organise the arena and act as an announcer. We need someone with transport who can collect and return chairs, who can collect and dispose of litter, we need access to a white-liner and someone who can use it. You name it - we need it.

If the Revels is to go ahead, we need all these, so please if you can help, really help - we don't need advice - please contact Mike Dix (32739) or me as soon as possible but before the end of March.

John Hedges (222715)

METHODIST CHURCH New Road, Croxley Green

Our traditions tell us that it was in 1866 that a Mr. Pierce opened his house as a Methodist preaching place. A mere eighteen months later a building was erected on the present site. By 1892 the present premises were built to accommodate the growing congregation.

People are more important than buildings so it is good to be able to tell you of a lively and friendly family of Methodists who still have their home in New Road. Sunday worship is held at 11.00 and 6.30 each week with a Sunday School meeting during the morning service. During the week there are a variety of fellowships that meet both on the premises and in homes. A Women's fellowship meets at the Church on Tuesday at 2.30. For the young people we have a Girls Brigade and a Youth Club.

In addition to these Church based activities our premises are well used by the community. Activities include - Toddlers groups and Play groups, dress making classes, flower arranging and painting classes.

We like to feel that in a variety of ways we make a contribution to the life of the Croxley community and we offer a warm welcome to all who join us.

K.F. Handscomb.

Croxley Green Residents & Ratepayers Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 30th March 1990
at 8.00 p.m. to be held at
The Library,
Barton Way,
Croxley Green

* * *

Guest Speaker
Everybody welcome, please
come and air your views

LIBRARY COLUMN

A belated Happy New Year and thank you for all the cards, presents and good wishes. A cautious welcome to the 1990s as we await the effects of the Poll Tax on our budget. Whatever happens, we hope that we can continue to provide a good service and that libraries will still be going strong in the next century (only 10 years away!!)

Now that the computer is installed in all but our 10 smallest libraries, we can get a good picture of what is happening with request books. The computer has speeded up the process, but you now join the County waiting list rather than Croxley Green's. However, this also means you have access to over 100 copies of the most popular books, rather than 1 or 2.

The top 10 on 1st January 1990 was:-

1. CATHERINE COOKSON
The Black Candle.
616 requests, still the most popular author by far, but apparently she is very ill.
2. PD JAMES
Devices and Desires.
332 requests. Our most "literary" crime author.
3. DICK FRANCIS
Straight.
330 requests. Read by many non-racing crime fans.
4. WILBUR SMITH
A Time to Die
254 requests. Still the most popular thriller writer.

Please send letters, contributions and advertisements to:
John Hedges
44 Ludlow Way (Wat: 222715)
by September 1st if possible

5. DANIELLE STEEL
Daddy.
204 requests. Gets more popular with every book.
The best-selling American author (Barbara Taylor-Bradford was born in England).
6. DENIS HEALEY
The Time of My Life.
169 requests. The only non-fiction title in the list. It must be the eyebrows!
7. NOEL BARBER
Daughters of the Prince.
147 requests. Finished by another author after his untimely demise.
8. EVELYN ANTHONY
Scarlet Thread.
137 requests. One of the few authors who has always been more popular in libraries than bookshops.
9. FREDERICK FORSYTH
The Negotiator.
125 requests. Proving more popular than Le Carre and Deighton of the English thriller writers.
10. ELLIS PETERS
Potters Field.
121 Requests. The 17th "brother Cadfael" novel by another literary crime writer.

So there we have it for another year. If you want to produce a bestseller for libraries, write family stories, crime, or thrillers. The literary prize winners all came within the next 10, as did the bestselling book over Christmas, Michael Palin's "Around the World in 80 Days", which sold a staggering 180,000 copies. Happy reading
Bob Sharpe. Librarian

POLICE COLUMN

Where's Steve Steddy? What's happened to Steve, have they caught him at last? Who are you? Since the 1st November 1989 these are just a few of the questions that I have been asked, I propose to answer them in reverse order.

1. I am PC Harry HALE, and as you may or may not have heard I am now the other Neighbourhood Bobby for Croxley Green, working opposite shifts to PC SIBSON to give you extra Police cover.
I have been a Croxley Green Resident for most of my 32 years so I have a vested interest in the area
2. No they haven't caught him and Steve is currently slaving away over a hot Computer terminal in the Enquiry Office at Rickmansworth Police Station. It would appear that 12 years serving the residents of Croxley Green have taken their toll and he is a sad relic of his former self. Seriously though, he has got a problem with his back and it is impractical for him to carry out all the duties expected of a Neighbourhood and like the professional that he is, he realises that he would be selling you short so he has hung up his cycle clips, fluorescent band and cape, and with a light heart gone on to pastures anew.

I am sure you would all like to echo my thanks to PC STEDDY for his work over the last 12 years and I hope that PC SIBSON and I serve you equally well. I am sure that we will receive your support over the months and years to come.

Every law of God
is right,
whatever it concerns
Psalm 119 verse 128

You are invited to worship at the

Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane

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

Right, on to the nitty gritty.

- (1) BURGLARIES
Once again we are having problems not only at houses but shops and offices. I feel sure that people see strange incidents, or odd people during the day but don't like to telephone the Police because:
 - a) "I will only get that silly music on the telephone if I ring".
 - b) "The Police are very busy with all these burglaries, its probably nothing, I don't like to waste their time".
 - c) "I would feel such a fool if it was alright".

If any of the above statements refer to you please reconsider and make a call. You could prevent or even detect a crime. If your call is made with good intent no Policeman worth his salt will criticise you or make you feel foolish, and the only reason we are so busy with burglaries is because people are not telling us about the strangers hanging about, or the strange car parked at the end of the road, so we implore you make that call.

If statement a) is your prime reason for not calling please reconsider because the system is getting better and in any case if you think it necessary dial 999 to help prevent crime.

- (2) DOG THEFTS
We have received information that gypsy type people are resorting to stealing dogs, so if you have a dog keep an eye on it and don't let it wander the streets.
- (3) NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
In Croxley Green we have a well established efficient Neighbourhood Watch. However, there are gaps in some parts of Croxley Green, so if there is anyone out there that is able to give up a little of their time to act as Co-Ordinator and run a Neighbourhood Watch for their road, please contact us on the telephone number shown at the end of this article or drop us a line at Rickmansworth Police Station and we will contact you.

- (4) I know previously that Steve STEDDY has given out Crime Figures, we intend to do the same but as we have recently gone computerised it is taking us longer to collate our figures, but bear with us and we will give you details in our next column.

- (5) Last but not least a big thank you. In the past mention has been made of the problem of graffiti in the area. We have had two areas of success. Firstly the Library and the Welcome Centre were cleaned up and painted, with the kind assistance of Three Rivers District Council, Mr Derek THOMPSON, the Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator for New Road, Mr Peter GARDNER, a local resident who provided some special cleaner and most importantly of all, those teenagers who gave up their time to help do the work. We are deeply indebted to them because they worked hard and unselfishly.

Given the chance to receive newspaper coverage they declined, so not wishing to name names we would like to thank each and every one of you.

This success prompted an assault on the Baldwins Lane Pavillion. For this we enlisted the help of Three Rivers District Council who provided the materials to do the job. Mr. Steve KYRIAKOU provided much appreciated support to the work force but again the majority of the work was done by local youngsters, and although not yet finished we are slowly getting there. The weather has been against us, but I like to believe that this is a start and on the whole the youngsters of Croxley Green have their hearts in the right place. They could have had the kudu of a newspaper article but they declined and chose to do the job in hand without any fuss.

So once again Gary and I wish to thank these youngsters for their support.

Wishing you all the best for the New Year.

HARRY HALE GARY SIBSON
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Harvey Road
(Imperial Machines)
The Artichoke, The Green
The Weather House,
Lavrock Lane
T.S. Renown
We need you, all of you
to tidy our village and
Keep Croxley Green
beautiful

CHURCH ARCHIVES

In the last issue of the Resident we printed a poem written by G. Revell, soon after publication I was contacted by John Wright of Wright Motors and in an interview with him and his brother Mick learnt a great deal about Geoff Revell.

It must be remembered that they too are Croxley Boys so it would not be fair to report what they got up to as boys except to say they enjoyed life to the full.

During the Second World War Geoff was in the Royal Tank Corps and had an adventurous time but his health began to fail and towards the end of the war he was stationed at Chenies Manor.

I also spent some time with Frank Jackson a life long friend and was able to listen to a recording he had made in the early fifties of Geoff reading his poem, he had a most expressive voice and his poem came alive. He was blind and in the recording he made the following comment and I quote.....

"Poetry provided it is read properly gives to the blind a picture they can appreciate".

Through these conversations I consider it a privilege that I have come to know this man who was so content and his poem has given us a picture of Croxley to treasure and appreciate.

So far I have had no response to my request for any information about the gravel washing equipment which stood near Common Moor Lock or on the Metropolitan Railway, I still hope to find something about the opening of the line in November 1925. Should you do so then please contact me, I should add that I am connected with The Three Rivers Museum. At present Dec. 89 we are staging a small exhibition on Croxley and I hope that some of you may have seen it.

Recently Mr. Nicholson Headmaster of Harvey Road School loaned to me a number of school registers the earliest one is dated 1894, many names are familiar, you can rest easy they do not give any details of standard reached.

Finally may I again repeat my appeal for anything of interest about Croxley for it is only by these means can we try to preserve our heritage.

FARMERS OF CROXLEY GREEN

In the autumn, at Harvest time, when the tractors with their trailers laden with corn make their way along the Green, I am apt to become nostalgic. I look back to the days when Croxley Green was a rural village with a strong farming community. Watford Road was a country road bounded by fields, and only a handful of houses fronting it. Springfield Close was partly a wood - a home for many pheasants.

Killingdown Farm, on the Green, now the property of Joe Foster was originally farmed by Johnny Coxhill. The Farm covered a wide area. The Foster family moved to Killingdown in 1924 and Johnny Coxhill retired and went to live in Fernlea Villa on the Green. The Foster family had previously lived in New Road and from there farmed about 200 acres around Micklefield and Copthorne. They also had a Dairy; and two milk rounds in Watford.

Joe Foster who is well known to us all went to Watford Grammar School. He was a keen footballer. In 1932 he married Lucy Dickins, from Croxley Hall Farm. He has, all his life played an active part in village life here and still assists with the book-work on his Farm. His great grandfather was born at The Sportsman P.H. which his family kept until 1880. In those days a coach ran from Slough to St. Albans and The Sportsman was the halfway house where the two horses were changed on the outward and return journeys. It was also the base for the chain horses. A charge of 2d. was made for pulling a vehicle up Scots Hill.

The Dickins family farmed Croxley Hall Farm, owned by Caius College, which then stretched from Batchworth to Cassiobridge covering a large area including parts of Croxley Green. They moved to Berkhamsted in 1919 when Charles Samson took over the Farm where he had previously grown Watercress. The farm was a successful Dairy and arable farm but eventually gravel digging destroyed the pastures and farming was impossible owing to the lakes which were left. Jack Samson brought the farm surrounds from Caius College in 1971 and Charles retired, leaving Jack to continue the Watercress business and to develop the lakes for fishing.

The Sear family farmed Lovatts on the Green - Harry Sear and his two sons Clem and Terry. Harry died in 1955 and Clem, eleven years ago, but Phyllis Sear, Clem's widow, I am glad to say still lives at Lovatts in part of the original house which has been divided into two. Phyllis came to Croxley as a Land girl in the War in 1942 and worked hard but loved the life. Each morning and afternoon she collected the cows from Redheath where they grazed and she took them down to the Dairy which was at Scots Hill - opposite to Cherry Cottages - where she did the milking. They were collected by Father Harry who drove them back over the Green in order to let them graze there. He frequently carried an umbrella

and was a familiar sight in wet weather following the cows under the shelter of his umbrella. In 1946 Phyllis married Clem. When Terry, Harry's younger son, was old enough he also came on to the Farm. In 1951 The Dairy on Scots Hill was sold and a Farm at Amersham was purchased. Terry and his three sons continue to farm at Amersham.

I am most grateful for all the information I have been given.

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OLD-TIME & SEQUENCE DANCING

THURSDAYS AT
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LETTER FROM DOROTHY GLASSPOLE

Dear Sir,

I had to go to London last week on business - a rare occasion for me now that I am an octogenarian!

I planned to go back to Croxley before it was dark so left Marble Arch for home on a 719 greenline coach at 2.58 p.m. due at Watford at 3.53 p.m. In the event, though, even though we left London punctually we were not at Watford until about 4.30 p.m., so although I just caught a bus for Croxley quite soon, it was dark when I got off at the Baldwins Lane bus stop at the bottom of Winton Drive.

I stood there waiting to cross the road for what seemed forever. One constant stream of car lights just racing towards you.

I was terrified. I suppose I waited about 10 minutes in reality but that seems much longer when you are elderly, alone and very tired.

Then, in spite of having both hip replacements I eventually tried to run across - with success, or I shouldn't be writing this!

But it's not only when it's dark that this place seems a danger and not just to pedestrians either: During the day there are often long delivery vans parked outside the shops, where I believe when they were first built, there was a space at the rear for the vans, and it is probably still there; as it is now it is impossible for anyone - drivers coming out of Winton Drive, and pedestrians alike to see traffic coming from the right so please 3 Rivers Council will you think again about a safe traffic check at this place?

Yours faithfully,
Dorothy Glasspole.

NOTE FROM EDITOR:

This is a matter which has concerned our Association, TRDC, The Parish Council and the Road Safety Committee for some years. The biggest problem is that a pedestrian crossing, sited at the foot of a hill would give a false sense of security with drivers finding it hard to stop. However we are assured that the police will be taking notice of the bad and illegal parking at this junction. Any ideas?

BARTON WAY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

The Power of the Press is amazing! Following the publication of my article in the Autumn edition of *The Resident*, 8 or 9 allotment plots were taken up by new applicants, some of whom were previously unaware of the facilities which existed in Barton Way.

Spring is fast approaching and the main growing season will soon be with us, so if you do not already have an allotment why not try your hand at cultivating your own patch of ground, and eventually eating your very own fresh vegetables.

The rental of a 5 hole plot (45 feet by 30 feet) is only £5 per year (£2.50 for pensioners) and a few vacant plots have again become available due to the recent death of some of our members. Application for plots should be made to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Roger Simmonds, 16, Hastings Way, Croxley Green, (Telephone: Watford 36236).

Most allotment holders are also members of the Croxley Green Horticultural Society (Annual fee £1) and at their Trading Centre at the entrance to the Allotments site, members can purchase at discounted prices their vegetable and flower seeds, seed potatoes, onion sets etc. as well as tools, composts, fertilizers and most garden requisites.

Allotment members will shortly receive details of our Annual General Meeting. Do make a point of attending and airing your views and opinions. It only takes up about an hour of your time, and your comments would be much appreciated.

I hope you all have bumper crops in 1990.
Ben Leigh BWAA Committee Member

PARISH COUNCIL

Efficiency in local government is something we should all like to see but few of us encounter in the day to day management of community affairs. The price of working within democratic systems is nowhere so apparent as at the various levels of the consultation processes set up to ensure that so far as is possible every voice is heard. Delay and confusion seem to be inherent in the work of too many committees, and in the efforts of local government officers to translate their well meant deliberations into action.

The validity of the present structure - County Councils, District Councils and Parish (or Local) Councils is under scrutiny in an attempt to rationalise procedures and reduce waste. At each of these levels there is generally a stout defence of the status quo but a good deal of criticism of the way in which other levels operate. In areas where the political leanings at different levels are at odds there is conflict over the policies to be adopted on local issues, but even when there is no political battle accusations are made about unrealistic attitudes and the torpedoing of cherished local projects.

A less well understood aspect of the existing three tier system is the way in which councils work concurrently on certain responsibilities. What this means in practice is that on an agreed range of matters a

"lower" level council will carry out functions on behalf of the "higher" level authority and will claim back from it the cost of carrying out those functions. Thus the Croxley Green Parish Council now takes charge of cutting the grass on The Green from Three Rivers District Council and the latter reimburses the Parish Council for doing so. (That is only a small example of the way the system works - Three Rivers District Council, for example, take on a number of responsibilities for highways from the County Council and are reimbursed in the same way.)

If that is not confusing enough the situation for us on the cutting of the grass is that in going out to tender we found that the Three Rivers District Council Construction Group was the most competitive and we are now therefore employing TRDC to do the job! District Councils, through their Association, have been campaigning for some time for the reorganisation of the structure of local government in England and Wales based on a single tier of most-purpose Districts. This would be based on removal of the County level of government and the transfer to Districts of their responsibilities. Accepting that this might overload District Councils, the Association have also been discussing with the Association of Local Councils (which includes Parish Councils) what the role of Parishes might be in a simplified structure. A Joint Working Party has now produced a report defining recommended changes and this is under consideration by both Associations.

The recommendations are based on the proposition that civic responsibility should be nurtured by involving people as fully as is practicable in the provision and management of community services, and it identifies Parish Councils as being well placed to meet this growing demand for greater involvement. The need for greater clarity about the role and status of Parish Councils is seen as basic to proposed changes; and the criteria for such changes are the acceptance of abolition of County Councils and the curtailment of "Concurrent" functions wherever possible.

The proposed changes are grouped under 3 headings:-

- i. Encouragement for Parish Councils to develop more effectively as forums for discussion, development and communication with District Councils
- ii. Development of a role in co-ordinating local voluntary effort; and
- iii. Acceptance by Parish Councils of more direct responsibility over a wider range of more direct responsibility over a wider range of defined subjects.

Under (iii) above the present statutory duties of Parish Councils would be greatly augmented. The proposed list includes allotments, baths, cemeteries, clocks, commons, crafts and local entertainments, foot-paths, halls, lighting, litter, museums and markets, open spaces, car parking, playing fields, public lavatories, roadside verges, seats, shelters, signs, street cleaning, sports facilities, tourism, trees, twinning, village greens and war memorials. On some of these subjects Parish Councils presently have limited powers but their resources would obviously have to be increased if they were to have the extended powers proposed.

On a whole range of existing County and District Council responsibilities the proposals recommend that there should be a statutory requirement for consultation with Parish Councils. Under existing structures there is in fact quite often a measure of consultation about suggested changes within Parish boundaries especially where there is a history of friendly co-operation, but again it would be necessary to augment the Parish Council resources if statutory consultation was required.

Whatever the final outcome of these first thoughts on possible structural changes, the debate is bound to give rise to a close examination of the existing arrangements. The thinking behind the abolition of the GLC, with its return to more local levels of responsibilities for a large number of major functions, will be under scrutiny to see if it could be applied at lower levels and the issues will be set against the present background of financial restrictions.

The experience of our own Parish Council in its fairly short life is that much can be achieved if the views of local people can be harnessed to a responsible representation or campaign. The frustrations develop when these are met with a wall of divided responsibility, with its delays and loss of initiative. All of you must have experienced this at one time or another and we should welcome your views on what might be done.

To turn to more immediate matters, there have been two changes in the composition of the Council since the last edition of *The Resident*. Mrs Stella Hayward and Mrs Anric Wynne-Jones both retired for personal reasons and their places have been taken by Mr David Dunderdale and Mrs Alison Wall. Thank you to those retiring and welcome to our new Councillors.

Finally a reminder that the Parish Council Open Meeting will take place in The Library at 8p.m. on Thursday 5th April. This is a good opportunity for you to ask questions about any of our activities and we should be pleased to see you.

Ian R. Thomas Parish Clerk

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENT'S & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

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of, Croxley Green
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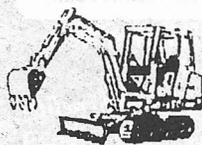
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