



The Croxley Green RESIDENT

Published by
**CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

Editor: John Hedges
Assisted by: Molly Hedges

No. 160
Autumn 1990

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All parish councillors are ex-officio members

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

EDITORIAL

I start with a sad note in reporting the death of one of our vice-presidents. Mr. Warren was the main distributor of the Resident for many years and a keen supporter of our Association. Our sympathies and appreciation are given to his widow and family.

Next May the Parish Council is due for re-election. We will therefore over the next few months be seeking new candidates to augment the present councillors who will be standing again. If you are interested please attend the open meeting advertised on this page. John Larter our Vice-Chairman and also vice-chairman of the Parish Council has written an article to guide you on the 'Pleasures' of being a Parish Councillor, so please read it and think about how you can help.

If we can select a broad range of candidates perhaps we can keep the Parish non-party political and preserve the local nature of our activities.

REPRESENTING CROXLEY GREEN

What does being a Parish Councillor involve?

Firstly it does not mean giving up large amounts of your own time. On average Parish Council work means devoting around four hours per month, split into two hours on each of two Thursday evenings.

Secondly it involves caring about the community we live in, caring about Croxley and all of the people who live here. Although the Parish Council has only limited powers in matters such as planning consents, local bus services and road repairs, it does have a very real voice to use to advise Three Rivers District Council, to lobby various bodies, to pressure groups such as London Country North West.

What sort of things are discussed at Council Meetings? A whole range of subjects - planning applications, litter, local transport, grass cutting, environmental matters - indeed any matter that is of concern. And all Council meetings are open to the public - so if you ever want to see your Parish Council in action just come along to the Library in New Road on the first Thursday of any month at 8.p.m. Are the meetings boring? Not a

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**CROXLEY GREEN
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
INVITE YOU TO AN
OPEN MEETING
TO DISCUSS THE FORTHCOMING
PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS
AND TO FORM A PANEL OF
POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR
ELECTION TO BE HELD AT
THE METHODIST CHURCH HALL
NEW ROAD, CROXLEY GREEN
ON
THURSDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 1990
AT 8.00 PM**

bit - if you care about Croxley Green. The present council is not political in the sense of political parties - and we sincerely hope that it stays that way. All of the present councillors represent the Residents Association, which in turn represents every resident in Croxley Green. Thus our allegiance is to all of the people who live in Croxley Green and we do not waste our time and your money in playing Party political games.

There is a lot to do in this area to protect and improve Croxley Green. If you care about the area you live in, if you want the area to be represented by caring people, if you feel that you could contribute to our efforts and could spare four hours per month, why not give serious thought to becoming a Parish Councillor next year. If you want some further information you are welcome to call Jim Evett (778464), John Hedges (222715) or myself (53806). Or better still come along to the meeting announced on this page.

Many people profess to care about Croxley Green - perhaps you are prepared to show that you do.

John Larter - Vice Chairman
Parish Council and Residents
Association

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and a pair of gloves.
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and support our
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John Hedges
44 Ludlow Way (Wat: 222715)
by January 1st if possible

CRIME LINES

From Pc's Harry HALE & Gary SIBSON

In the Rickmansworth sub-division up to and including Thursday 6th September 1990, there have been 1088 recorded crimes. Croxley Green accounts for 209 of these crimes and of these the most frequent, also the easiest to prevent, is that of 'AUTO CRIME' with 68 offences.

We are certain that there are many more that go unreported, the term 'AUTO CRIME' is used to cover all offences to and from motor vehicles. Both of us are often amazed at the items left in vehicles to tempt the thief, briefcases, cameras, handbags, wallets, purses, expensive clothing and even driving documents. All these items are easily removed from the vehicle and taken indoors or hidden in the boot. Whilst on the subject of thefts from vehicles there has been a significant increase in the theft of tools from vans resulting in large financial losses from the value of the tools and the wasted day's work. We said at the start of this article that this type of crime is easily preventable here are a few measures you can take.

1. LEAVE NOTHING ON DISPLAY, hide it or take it out of the car
2. NEVER LEAVE DRIVING DOCUMENTS IN YOUR VEHICLE, this also applies to credit cards, cheque books, and similar articles.
3. FIT ANTI THEFT DEVICES, contact either of us for information or advice.
4. PARK YOUR VEHICLE IN WELL LIT AREAS.
5. REPORT ANY SUSPICIOUS INCIDENTS TO THE POLICE, at the time please not a day or two later.

We would like to finish on a cautionary note for PARENTS you may recall that recently the POLICE had arrested a boy for supplying DRUGS to his school friends, well sad to say there is still DRUG TAKING activity in the CROXLEY GREEN area. SO BE AWARE OF WHAT YOUR CHILDREN ARE DOING it is very easy for them to get sucked into this habit. OFTEN THE FIRST TIME A PARENT BECOMES AWARE OF THE PROBLEM IS WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVE ON THE DOORSTEP WITH A SEARCH WARRANT.

WE WOULD ASK THAT ANY PARENTS WHO WANT TO KNOW MORE EITHER FOR GENERAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE PLEASE GET IN TOUCH IT MAY SAVE YOUR CHILD.

ST. OSWALDS CHURCH - Malvern Way

Until the 1930's the only Anglican church in Croxley Green was All Saints, but then came a big increase in house building, and it was realised that another church more central to the new houses was needed. Thus, in 1937 a new Anglican church was opened for worship in Malvern Way. Initially it was a church and hall combined - and during the war housed what later became Malvern Way school - but when the new Hall was built in 1960 the original building was used solely for worship.

A number of our founder members still worship regularly at St. Oswald's, but we are also happy to have a strong membership of young people. Sunday services are at 8.a.m. and 9.30.a.m. the

In everything you do,
put God first, and He
will direct you.

Proverbs 2 verse 6

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

latter being very much a family occasion - a creche is provided in the Hall, where the 'Acorns' Sunday School meets at the same time. The 6.p.m. evening services vary through the month from a sung Evensong, a said service, meditation, and a service of prayer for healing.

On the last Sunday of the month there is a Family Praise service at 11.a.m. and this is run specially for (and in part by) younger people. On Tuesdays at 2.p.m. there is a Tiny Tots service for parents and babies and young children the average age is probably a lot nearer three than thirty!

There are various social clubs and other groups at the church, including a Youth Club, the Fellowship (the adult equivalent), the 'Chanticleers' musical group, as well as three Brownie packs plus Guide and Ranger units; for the last ten years the youngsters from groups connected with St. Oswald's have combined to present our 'Youth Revue' - this usually involves over 120 young people (the exact numbers are difficult to assess as they don't stay still long enough to be counted!). The Hall also provides a 'home' for a Play School, a Dancing Class, and the Croxley Camera Club.

Although at the age of 53 our building is approaching 'middle age' the people in it are, or do their best to remain young in spirit.

Jim Hughes

YOUR CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

What do you know about the Citizens Advice Bureau? Do you know what they do and do you know where your local bureau is? Perhaps it would be able to give you help and advice.

The Citizens Advice Bureau Service began in 1939 to give help and advice in time of war. As we begin the last decade of the present century, life and its problems become more and more complex, and this is reflected in the growing amount of work the C.A.B. are tackling today.

The aims of the Citizens Advice Bureau are twofold:

- a. To ensure that individuals do not suffer through ignorance of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available or through an inability to express their needs effectively.

- b. To exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policies both locally and nationally.

The service it offers is free, independent and confidential.

The C.A.B. can deal with a wide range of problems and whatever you tell them is in strictest confidence. If necessary the C.A.B. will make phone calls or write letters on your behalf. If you are housebound an adviser will be able to visit you at home.

Your local Citizens Advice Bureau is at Northway, Rickmansworth. You can call in or telephone on R. 720424.

Last year it dealt with over 6,000 queries ranging from complicated employment problems to help in completing forms.

Employment problems include working conditions, dismissal and redundancy. Family and personal problems have increased steadily and the C.A.B. can give advice on a wide range of family problems such as separation and divorce, caring for the young and elderly, and bereavement. Consumer and debt problems doubled in the 1980s. If you would like advice about debts consult your C.A.B. Or if you are having problems with faulty goods or services check with them what your rights are. One of the largest groups of enquiries is concerned with Social Security benefits. Problems range from claiming Income Support to Attendance Allowance, from Family Credit to Child Benefit. If you think you are eligible for one of these benefits or if you are having problems receiving a benefit, check with the C.A.B.

The C.A.B. also deals with queries about the legal system, education, the health service, taxes, local information etc. If you would like advice on any of the subjects mentioned here or on any other problem consult your C.A.B. Whatever your problem, big or small, they will try to help.

Ninety per cent of C.A.B. advisers are volunteers and it needs more volunteers to continue this level of service to the public. Maybe you think you would like to work as a volunteer. You don't need particular qualifications, full training is given. You do need to be sympathetic and a good listener. If you are interested and able to make a regular commitment



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FREE VALUATIONS

each week contact the manager of Rickmansworth Citizens Advice Bureau, Mrs Jill McCluney on R. 720424. Or come along to an informal meeting to find out more about the work. We will be pleased to welcome you in our new office at Northway Rickmansworth on Wednesday 7th November at 2.00 p.m.

Lesley S. Laughton

LITTER DAY

Sunday 18th November
10.00am - 1.00am

Parties will meet at:-
Mill Lane/Watford Road
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.

CROXLEY GREEN REVELS

On behalf of the Croxley Green Society, I should like to express a very sincere thank you to John Hedges, Graham Judge and all their team for all the time and hard work that they put into making the Croxley Green Revels such a happy family fun day for all concerned.

Particularly gratifying was the response to the appeal that appeared in the Spring issue of the Croxley Green Resident which enabled a new team of helpers to guarantee that the Revels on 23rd June 1990 would take place.

What a pleasure it was to see how the good folk of Croxley entered into the spirit of the occasion in the preparation for the floats for the procession, the entrants for the fancy dress competition, and the amazing variety of stalls on the Green. A word of thanks is also due to all the local shop owners for their support in advertising in the Revels's programme, not forgetting of course the loan of the two M.G. sports cars for transporting the Revel's princess and attendants.

The whole combined to give Croxley an occasion to remember - here's looking forward to June 22nd 1991!

Mike Dix
Chairman
Croxley Green Society.

CHURCH ARCHIVES

John Hedges always reminds me that Publication Day for the "Resident" approaches.

Recently I had taken some extracts about Rickmansworth and Croxley Green from Kelly's Directory and their predecessor "Pigot" so I hope the following might prove of interest.

PIGOT 1839

Rickmansworth and Neighbourhood (Croxley Green not mentioned) but under the heading of Taverns and Public Houses we find the following:

Artichoke - Joseph Austin - Croxley Green
Coach & Horses - Lydia Southam.

Coaches from Rickmansworth

To London the "Accommodation" (from Chesham) calls at The Bell Inn every morning at half-past seven and goes through Watford and Stanmore.

To Watford Railway Station - a "Fly" from the "George" every morning at eight and evening at five to meet the trains.

In the Kelly's of 1855 we see that Mill End and Croxley Green are Hamlets belonging to this parish (i.e. Ricky) no other information.

Under the List of Traders was found:-

Allcock Thomas - Manager for Dickinson
Longman - Croxley Mill

Austin Joseph - "Artichoke" and
Farmer - Croxley Green

Bourne John - Wheelwright - Croxley
Dorrofield Thomas - Watercress Grower -
Croxley Green

Gurney James - Watercress Grower -
Croxley Green

Robinson Davis - Coach & Horses -
Croxley Green

Stone William - Sportsman and Carpenter
Croxley Green

Omnibus starts from the George Inn, Chesham and Kings Arms, Amersham for Watford Station calling at the "George" every morning at quarter to nine to meet the half-past nine train to London and returns with passengers by the quarter to six p.m. train.

Carriers to London

William Brown's Wagon - Monday, Wednesday & Friday to "Bell" Warwick Lane returning following day.

William Try from Fox & Hounds Inn to Saracens Head, Skinner Street every Tuesday and Friday returning following day.

Kelly's 1882

Croxley Green, about 3 miles from Watford half a mile from Rickmansworth is a Hamlet and Ecclesiastical Parish formed in October 1872. The Church of "All Saints" opened 25th June 1872.

Henry C. Finch Esq. J.P. and W.R. Woolrych Esq. J.P. are the Principal Landowners. The Master & Fellows of Caius College Cambridge are Lords of The Manor. The Population in 1881 was 1148.

Post Office Receiving House. William Stone, Receiver, received from Rickmansworth at 6.35 a.m. - Dispatched to Rickmansworth 6.25 p.m.

National School (mixed) erected 1875. For 120 children - average attendance 110. Supported by Government Grant, Voluntary Contributions and School Fees.

Miss Arice Clarke - Schoolmistress.

Commercial

Banting George - Beer Retailer and
Shop-Keeper, New Road.

Coxhill David - Coach & Horses

Dorrofield James - Watercress Grower

Hollidge Robert - Red House

Holloway Ephraim - Miller and Baker
(Windmill)

James M.A. Mrs. - Coffee House Keeper

Revell Henry - Builder - New Road

Rhodes C. - Marine Store Dealer
- New Road

Rowland John - Coach & Horses - Scots Hill
Todman George - Sportsman

Kelly's 1895

National School (mixed and Infants) erected in 1875 & enlarged in 1884 & 1889 for 296 children; average attendance 187 girls and 121 infants;

Miss Arice Clarke - mistress;

Miss Emily Haigh - infants' mistress.

Private Residents

Roberts John Henry - FRCS Eng.

The Hawthorns, New Road

Schafer Edward - FRS - Little Gillions

Commercial

Beer Charles - Sportsman P.H.

Foster Joseph - Cowkeeper, New Road

Gray & Hill - Drapers & Clothiers
- Scots Hill

Ricketts, George - Tortoiseshell

Worker - New Road

Robinson Peter - Artichoke P.H. and

Hurdlemaker

Sansom Charles - Watercress Grower

1899

The School built for 296 children - average attendance 138 boys, 109 girls and 110 infants.

A.W.S. Haines - Master. Miss Arice Cooper - Mistress. Miss Dickinson - Infants Mistress.

Private Residents

Barker Misses - Briery Close

Barton Smith Charles - Lindiswara

Garrett William - Scots Hill

Gurney George - The Laurels.

Stuart Walter Lee M.C.R.S. Eng. L.R.C.P.

Lond. Surgeon - Croxley Villa

Yewlett William Henry - Ivy Cottage.

Commercial

Bailey Charles - Grocer New Road

Banting Geo. - Beer Retailer New Road

Beer Charles - Sportsman P.H.

Garland William - Fishmonger New Road

Gibbs Jesse - Blacksmith New Road

McClew William - Red House Inn

Parsons Ambrose - George & Dragon P.H.
Scots Hill

Robinson Ann (Mrs.) Artichoke P.H.

Siggers John - Carver & Gilder

Ward Benjamin - Grocer

Wilbet Ernest - Butcher New Road

As the years went by New Road must have had many shops and a great number of Beer Retailers.

The occupations are so varied but I must admit I would like to know more about George Ricketts, Tortoiseshell Worker.

I would like to thank those of you who have given me information and documents which I have found most helpful.

Please do not hesitate to contact me either through the library or by telephone.

Norman Spring
Tel Rick 776933

LIBRARY COLUMN

Judging by the number of you using the library this summer, hardly anyone has been on holiday. The main news to those who have been away is that, five years later than promised, we have a new catalogue. This is in the form of a VDU and keyboard and looks just like any computer you might have at home. It sits at the far end of the library between the careers books and the telephone directories. It will show you all the items available in all Hertfordshire libraries, all the items available in Croxley Green and the surrounding area and will even tell you which ones are sitting on a shelf ready to go out. Do not be afraid to use it, you cannot create any problems (famous last words!) and it is what is known in computer jargon as "user friendly". In other words, it helps you to use it, but all the staff will be happy to help you if needed.

In a recent survey on book buying the most popular genre of novels was not what you might expect, romance, but crime. To reflect this interest we have set upon a true crime section which should satisfy the bloodthirsty or just the interested amateur sleuth.

Finally a successful conclusion to an innocent enquiry. When Three Rivers started selling garden refuse bags they proved very popular but difficult to obtain for those who could not get down to Rickmansworth. We asked the Parish Council if we could sell them from here and, a few months later, we have sold hundreds at 40p each. As there are less than a hundred shopping days to Christmas, we suggest Three Rivers find something suitable for the staff or else we will ask for commission!

Bob Sharpe Librarian

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES

Advice on housing problems can be obtained from the Housing Advice Officer every THURSDAY between 2.15pm and 4.15pm at The Library, New Road, Croxley Green.

Advice will be available for:-
Private Sector Tenants
Landlords
Council Tenants
Home Owners
Lodgers

Call or ring Mrs. Diane Nicoll
776611 Ext. 140 for an appointment

CHERRY SUNDAYS

I have been asked to write about Croxley Green's Cherry Sundays. I cannot recall these occasions but I have been asking around. What I do remember is how beautiful the green looked in the Spring surrounded by Cherry Orchards with the trees in full bloom. Parts of the Green were carpeted with Harebells, Trefoil, Thyme and Yellow Bedstraw. The flowers have gradually disappeared and they are unlikely to come back as cows and sheep no longer graze there, and we are dependant on mechanical cutting. However, buttercups and dandelions have replaced them, making a brave show.

I am sometimes concerned when I hear all the talk of "conserving the acid grass" and "do not walk on the triangle at the top of the Green" as I fear that we are in danger of losing our natural beautiful green to a neat Park, which some would seem to prefer.

Returning to my subject of Cherry Sundays I have been speaking to some friends who have lived by the green for most of their lives -

Mrs. Grace Brown, and Mrs. Doris Woods granddaughter of Wally Stone who was the chief purveyor of Cherries on the green. He had splendid orchards and sold several varieties of cherries at Rose Cottage where the family lived.

There were actually three Cherry Sundays, the second, third and fourth Sundays in July. There was no formal organisation but a great many people congregated on the Green outside the Orchards, the children in their Sunday Clothes. They sat around enjoying the cherries and chatting to their friends. The cherries cost only a few pence, the children paying one penny for a handful. The Coach and Horses sold cherries with their drinks.

It might seem a somewhat dull and unexciting occasion in these days of endless entertainment but I am sure that the gathering in their day did not find it so.

Cherry Sundays gradually faded out after the First War, and the Orchards have fallen to the builders, with the exception of part of Stones Orchard which is now a public open space.

Kay Raggett.

DIMOND HIRE

117 New Road, Croxley Green
Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 3EN

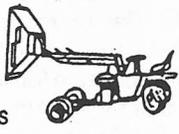
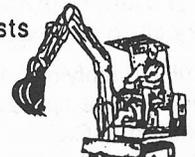


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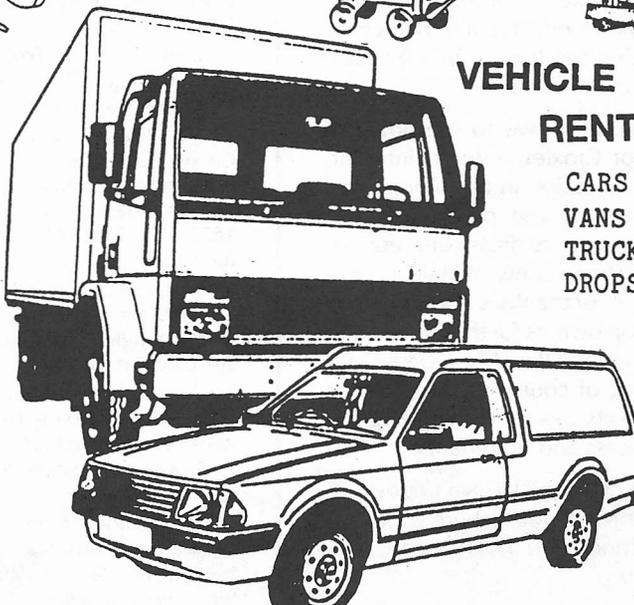
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PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE

What can it do, and what does it do. To answer the first question, Parish Councils have no statutory powers regarding planning matters within its area, in which case you may ask why have a planning committee. As part of an elected body it can and does exert an influence on the planning decisions made by Three Rivers District Council, by liaison with district councillors, and submitting what we believe are reasoned comments or objections, on those planning applications we believe are not in the best interests of Croxley.

How do we operate. There are six of us on the committee, and we meet once a month to consider the planning applications submitted in that month which relate to Croxley the factors we consider as being important are for example, overdevelopment commercial or domestic, backland development, which would result in overdevelopment, we also keep a close watch on the Conservation Area which includes The Green to ensure that its essential character is not damaged.

How do we decide on what we believe is acceptable or not, firstly we have to be mindful of planning legislation, other factors being how does it fit in with the existing environment, would it cause traffic problems, or introduce a potential hazard, is it appropriate for that user etc.

One area where we monitor but very rarely make comment is on house extensions as we believe we do not have the right to be arbiters on how a family decides to change their abode, the only time when we might raise an objection is when an extension is of such a large size that it could be considered as being overdevelopment.

Finally should there be a planning application which will have an adverse effect on you contact the Parish Council and we will take your comments into account when considering the response we should make to it.

Lawrence Mathews
Chairman Planning Committee

THE RED CROSS IN CROXLEY GREEN

Although the older residents of Croxley Green must be aware of the Red Cross Centre behind the library in New Road, there are probably many new residents who do not know of our activities and services to the community.

The British Red Cross have had a unit in Croxley Green for many years. In 1965 the foundation stone of our present building was laid by Mr Wilcox who had founded the Welcome Club for pensioners ten years previously and handed over the Club to the British Red Cross in 1958.

The building has a three-fold-purpose:-

1. Home for the Welcome Club

2. Training Centre for our trained Adult and Youth members.
3. H.Q. for the Red Cross in S.W. Herts

The cost of the building was divided between H.C.C. - the old R.U.D.C. (predecessor to Three Rivers D.C.) and the Red Cross Society who organised an appeal to the Croxley residents who responded generously.

The building is owned and run entirely by the Red Cross - apart from a part-time cook, cleaner and caretaker - everyone is a Red Cross voluntary member.

The building is open 6 days a week for members of the Welcome Club, who enjoy Whist, Bingo and Old Time Dancing sessions plus entertainment on Saturday afternoons.

The S.W. Herts H.Q. office is open every morning for Welfare advice, medical loan (short term loan of nursing equipment aid, aids to living for the disabled) hearing aid batteries and walking stick ferrules. There is chiropody available in the mornings.

Dinners are available for Welcome Club members 3 times a week and we cook for the Meals on Wheels service 5 days a week.

On Monday evenings our trained units meet and Courses in First Aid and Nursing in the Home are given for members of the public.

On Tuesday our Club - the Sunnyside Club - which includes physically and mentally disabled adults meet.

On the 3rd Saturday in each month our Market is held. Numerous stalls and Coffee or Tea make an enjoyable social event. Articles for sale can be accepted between 8.30 - 9.30 a.m. - 25% commission to the Red Cross.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Red Cross in Croxley, as well as Hertfordshire and the rest of the world, do call in any morning to see us.

The maintenance of the buildings and our equipment, and the meals - which have to be subsidised - a total of £7-£8000 a year - all of which we have to find ourselves.

Croxley residents have always supported us most generously and for this we are very grateful - from the donations received, from the efforts of our Saturday Marketeers, from their support of our fund-raising events, in particular the Open Gardens on July 22nd which raised £3,070 - a magnificent result.

Not only do we need all the money your generosity donates - but we desperately need more volunteers - in fact, without more helpers we shall have to end some of our services to the elderly members of the community which would be tragic.

We cannot offer anything very glamorous or exciting, but we do need help in the kitchen preparing the dinners - 3 hours once a week would be wonderful, we also need volunteers to make coffee 10.15 a.m. - 11.45 a.m. and drivers for short or long distances.

The statutory services through their own re-organisation and lack of funding are asking us for more and more support to the elderly, the frail and the disabled. WE appeal to you - Croxley Green residents, to join us in giving that support.

Bill Fenning (720485)

**REMEMBER
LITTER DAY
18th NOVEMBER**

PARISH COUNCIL

Since its creation in 1986, the Parish Council has, to some extent, suffered from a problem of identity. Local people who contact me on some current issue, are often, it seems, confused, about the status of the Council, what it is elected to do, and how it sets about doing it. We must obviously take the responsibility for getting our message (whatever that is) across, and we do try, with limited resources, to publicise our activities through articles such as this, through pieces in the local press and by inviting attendance at our Council meetings. These are, by the way, held on the first Thursday of each month at 8pm in the Library, and everyone is welcome.

The problem, however, really hinges on the lack of a suitable centre which local residents can identify with the existence of the Council. The staff at the Library have been extremely hospitable in providing us with facilities for all our meetings so far, and we are grateful to them, but in some ways, the fact that we use the Library premises seems to add to Local uncertainty about the nature of our organisation. And of course this does not provide a base to which anyone can come for advice and talk over their current pre-occupations.

Researches into the activities of a number of other parish councils confirms our conviction that the acquisition of a suitable centre from which the Council could operate is long overdue. Once established in suitable accommodation, many have found that the community acquires a new sense of purpose and is able to relate to local issues with more energy and imagination. The provision of a meeting place tends to bring together the various strands of the fabric of local life, whether it be in an official capacity, through the activities of local organisations or just for social purposes.

The hope that we could establish such a centre in Croxley was, of course, with us right from the start, but the wish is only the beginning. Ready made, purpose-built accommodation does not, unfortunately come as of right with the acceptance of responsibility by local people through election as councillors, although I believe that there is a sound case for arguing that this should be part of the bargain when central government takes the decision to set up a parish council. In some areas the prospect is improved for new councils by the existence of some local government premises, usually owned by the District Council, through which a start can be made in establishing a permanent home. This is not the case in Croxley, so we have to take it absolutely from scratch.

In assessing the best place for a centre and the type of accommodation it should offer, we have been aware of a good deal of local feeling that since the sad demise by fire of the Croxley Guildhouse, there has been no true focal point in the Parish. A structure which could offer scope for a variety of interests would seem to offer a means of filling the gap, and we have therefore been thinking in terms of a site in the vicinity of the New Road which would be big enough to contain a largish hall, and some small rooms for offices and special activities.

Discussions with representatives of the excellently renovated Community Centre behind Barton Way, have been taking place for some time, with the object of finding a way in which the Parish Centre could develop on vacant land there. There has been a good deal of goodwill from the Community Association, it being recognised that the two Centres could be complimentary and mutually beneficial. These discussions have now been given a more realistic touch with the possibility that a TRDC building formerly used on the Basing House site in Rickmansworth might be available for re-erection by the Parish Council on this site. The prefabricated building is of good proportions - roughly 100 ft long by 30ft wide, and it is capable of internal styling to suit our particular requirements. It could easily provide an all purpose hall with toilets, kitchen and some small rooms.

The attraction of this prospect is that at a time of financial restraints it could, for the most part, be afforded within the Parish Council's existing budget limitations. It would offer the basic facilities for a more efficient management of the Parish Council's business, and it would make a valuable addition to the general amenities in our community. Pressure for the hire of existing accommodation for functions, meetings and events is high and we believe that extra space in close proximity to the socially orientated Community Centre would be welcomed by many local organisations and individuals.

By the time this article appears in print, our discussions will no doubt have added a sharper definition to these considerations. If the project flourishes, we should want to consult with as many local repre-

sentatives as possible to ensure that whatever modifications that can be made to the Centre are likely to meet their needs. We would hope to give wide coverage to any consultation processes and would welcome your responses if and when the time comes.

On another subject, you may have seen reports in the press about a Council project to establish a pictorial record of our Parish. What we have in mind is to build up a photographic guide to the styles and main features which give the Parish its identity, - mainly to help us give due weight to these factors in our consideration of planning applications for developments, extensions, alterations etc.. The problem is that a particular proposal may seem innocuous enough when viewed in isolation, but looked at in the context of the district as a whole, may establish a trend which could have unfortunate consequences.

We approached the Croxley Camera Club, well known locally for their imaginative approach to the art of photography, and found an enthusiastic response to the idea of compiling a series of pictures reflecting the state of the Parish. It was agreed to make a start in the older areas in the vicinity of New Road and Dickinson Square, and then to progress onto The Green to record the look of this much-valued but ever-threatened heart of our community. Visits to other areas will follow in due course, so do not be too perturbed if you see someone taking photographs in your neighbourhood. They will probably be members of the Camera Club, and I am sure will readily identify themselves. We would hope to make the compilation available for anyone to consult when examining copies of planning applications in The Library.

One of the most frequent causes for complaint that we receive each year is the failure of the District Council to clear overgrown hedges, trees and weeds from intrusion on public footpaths. Our representations to TRDC have usually been met with the familiar reply that resources are insufficient to be able to take the necessary action, but even when promises have been made, the cut back has often been so late in the season that it was too late to make life easier for the pedestrian. As you may have seen, TRDC have now set up new contracts which do not lay down specific tasks and timings, but require that the contractors keep the areas for which they are respon-

sible generally clean and tidy. Failure to do so can incur penalties. If you find that standards are not being maintained, the remedy is to report the lapse immediately to the Chief Environmental Health Officer whose responsibility it is to take the matter up with the contractors. We shall be keeping a careful watch on this new system to see how it fares.

Although there have been some differences of opinion about the best way of dealing with the dangerous traffic situation arising from the use of Rousebarn Lane as a major commuter access route, the Parish Council has consistently supported the campaign to close the Lane to through traffic. Initial hesitations at County Council level and in surrounding areas have now given way to what we believe is a sensible decision to close the route for an experimental period. When this decision is implemented, the residents of the Links Way area will find a welcome relief, but there will be a need to keep a close watch on the situation. There will undoubtedly be counter campaigns to have the route reinstated and all evidence of the benefits from closure will need to be collected and assessed.

Dog nuisance in public places continues to annoy many people. Local efforts to persuade owners to use special bins in our recreation grounds meet with only limited success, while pressures mount for their introduction in more places. Reluctantly, we draw the conclusion that any noticeable improvement is only likely when the rules have some teeth in the form of additional bye-laws plus some realistic enforcement. The recent appointment of a Dog Warden by TRDC is a step in the right direction, and we are hoping that his activities in the District will herald a new determination to tackle this unpleasant problem. Meanwhile, we can only continue to urge all dog owners to use maximum consideration for others when they take their animals for a walk, and to clean up whatever mess they leave en route.

As always, you will be welcome at our Council meetings on the first Thursday of each month - at 8 pm in The Library.

Ian R Thomas
Parish Clerk

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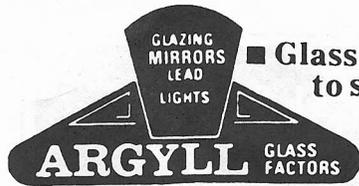
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