



The Croxley Green RESIDENT

Published by
**CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

Editor: John Hedges
Assisted by: Molly Hedges

No. 165
Spring 1993

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

20% COMMISSION

Would you like to become a collector of annual subscriptions for the Croxley Green Residents' Association? It need involve no more than one or two evenings a year and could earn you enough to buy yourself a small present - perhaps a bottle of sherry, a plant for your home or garden, maybe a paperback or bag of toffees.

We have a small, ever diminishing team of collectors, many of whom have given loyal support for years, but now for various reasons, can no longer do so. If you are interested, and are aged 18 or over, please give me a call, without obligation, and I will explain what is involved. If you would like to have a go but feel a little shy, I could arrange for someone to accompany you. All the revenue collected, less your 20% of course, goes to support the Residents' Association who publish this Newsletter.

May I thank all our collectors, past and present, for all the much appreciated help and support they have given over the years. If you would like to join them, put on your walking shoes and a big smile and go out to meet the lovely people of Croxley Green, please contact me.

POLLY BURDIS - 770599

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
at The Methodist Church
New Road at 8.00 pm on
Wednesday 31st March
* * * * *

Come and air your views
* * * * *

Katherine Howard LRPS
will present an
illustrated talk
IN SEARCH OF 3 RIVERS

CRIME LINES

Another year has passed by and thankfully the Crime in Croxley Green has not seen any significant rise in the number of reported incidents. There were a total number of 461 crimes covering all classifications recorded for the Croxley Green area in 1992, against that of 439 for the year 1991.

The largest crime increase recorded was that of theft of pedal cycles, that rose from 26 in 1991 to 43 in 1992, an increase of 60%. In a lot of cases, the thefts could have been avoided if the owners had been more security minded i.e. taking the trouble to **lock** their cycles when leaving them unattended, even for the shortest period, like popping into a shop. I would again mention at this point that a cycle post coding system is offered by the Police and is available **FREE** at Rickmansworth Police Station between 10am and 12 noon on a Sunday but, please try and telephone first, to make sure that the officer on duty is not too busy at the time.

Burglary of dwelling houses amounted to 58 in total, an average of just one a week. There appears to be the same old interest in the theft from motor vehicles, mainly of radio cassettes, a good number of which were of the removable type, so if you can take your radio out easily, then please do so otherwise you could find yourselves faced with quite a hefty bill for the repair of the damage caused by the offender. There were 23 vehicles stolen from Croxley Green, so if you can immobilize your vehicle, or can afford to fit an alarm, then it is advisable to do so. I am regularly finding cars parked outside shops and houses, where the owners have left them insecure, **doors not locked or windows left open**, and in quite a number of instances, the **keys in the ignition**

just waiting for the thief to drive it away; a practice that should cease immediately if you are to find your car on your return.

During the past year, Croxley Green has again been plagued by the **BOGUS OFFICIAL** preying mainly on the frail and aged citizens. I cannot reiterate more strongly that you must **all** be more cautious when opening the door to strangers. **ALWAYS check their identity**, be sure you are satisfied that they are genuine, before you allow them into your home. The persons engaged in this type of offence travel from great distances to commit these crimes, like Nottingham, Scarborough, Southend, Worthing and Portsmouth, to name but a few. I would ask you all, please be on your guard when these callers knock on your door, be it to sell you something, offer to do a job of work, or purporting to represent one of the essential services namely Gas, Electric or Water. Remember to **CHECK THEIR IDENTITY**. I would like to ask you all to report any thing or person you consider to be suspicious, either to the Police or your own Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and then, perhaps, we will lessen the chances of a crime being committed and hopefully detect a few of those that already have.

Thank you for all your support and efforts over the past year and it only leaves me now, to wish you all a **Happy and Healthy New Year**.

Pc 1047 Bob Cobey

VILLAGE MAP PROJECT

The Parish Council has agreed to sponsor and underwrite the costs of producing a Village Map for Croxley Green and work began in November 1992.

First of all 500 letters and questionnaires were distributed, across a broad section of people and places, asking what features should be included on the map. An example of a Village Map was also displayed in the Library. Response to the questionnaires were collated during December. Not surprisingly, the most popular places were the Green, Croxley Hall Woods, the Canal,

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John Hedges
44 Ludlow Way (0923-222715)
by September 1st if possible

All Saints Church and the older houses such as Providence Hall. Hollow Tree House, cottages and Public Houses on the Green and Killingdown Farm. Buildings which have disappeared were also mentioned e.g. Durrants School and the Guildhouse. People's favourite clubs and organisations were also listed. Local animals, birds and wild flowers were also mentioned.

We have two local water colour artists Daphne Simmons and Jan Wesson, who are busy making pictures of as many of the above features that we can fit in and which will form an outer framework for the map. Norma Stubbington from the Library, is researching some of the background information regarding statistics and dates. We will be including footpaths and rights-of-way. We have received some very encouraging comments about the map and offers of help, we are very grateful for this support.

The map will be on display in the Parish Office and the Library and copies (probably 30" x 24") will be on sale at a reasonable price, probably by early summer and in time for **Croxley Revels** on 19th June. We very much hope that the map will reflect the best of the village for present and future generations and that you will wish to purchase a copy. Any surplus monies, after covering our costs, will be used to advance other local projects.

**ERNEST BURDIS AND
MARGARET POMFRET**

YOUR HEALTH CHALLENGE

What can you, the Croxley Resident reader, do **yourself** to stay healthy and cut down the risk of illness? I thought this might be a question worth trying to answer in these columns, especially now as spring produces its refreshing surge of energy - in our gardens at least!

Like most doctors, I see a lot of people who are worried about their health but are not suffering from anything in particular. They want a check-up, and probably some reassurance. Should they go for an expensive screening examination at the nearest private hospital? Certainly check-ups can be reassuring, and most GP surgeries now offer well person clinics, run by nurses or doctors, where the factors that affect health can be looked into and health screening examinations carried out. These should be well worth a visit, especially if you have not had any kind of health check for several years, and they have the advantage of being local and free.

Well woman clinics, for example, were begun to carry out cervical smear tests (which are recommended every 3 years from 18 to 65, not every 5 years as it used to be), but their role has expanded. Women can be shown how to examine their breasts correctly, and have the chance to talk about diet, weight, exercise,

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3 v 5.)

You are warmly invited to the
Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane
Morning Worship: 9.15am
11.15am Rev Derek Fraser B.D.
Evening Worship: 6.30pm Telephone: 231403

smoking and alcohol consumption, or any other health worries. Any family history of serious illnesses can be gone into, blood pressure measured (do you know what yours is?) and a blood test taken to measure cholesterol level if necessary. Men's health clinics cover similar topics (with one or two obvious exceptions!). The emphasis is on prevention of illness and promoting a healthy lifestyle, and as I said before, a clinic visit is particularly worthwhile if you have not needed to be a regular visitor to the surgery.

But the answer to the opening question may lie one step further back even than health check-ups and screening. I suspect the fundamental answer is concerned with each of us taking responsibility for her or his own health and taking an active interest in it (I fear I'm getting onto my hobbyhorse here - sorry!).

Traditionally in this country we as citizens have had a casual approach to health, and tend to think about it only when something goes wrong. But why not take a few minutes to think before it does? There can't be many people left in Croxley (or in the whole country come to that) who don't know what the risk factors are for heart disease, and how to cut down the chance of having a heart attack. You can list them on the fingers of one hand:

1. **Take some regular exercise.**
2. **Don't smoke, or at least cut down.**
3. **Eat a low animal fat diet with plenty of fibre.**

4. **Get your blood pressure checked.**
5. **Have your cholesterol checked if there's a history of heart disease or strokes in the family.**

Everyone may be aware of these things, but not so many people (and that includes doctors!) put the principles into practice. It comes down to the choices we each make every day. Do I really want to buy another packet of cigarettes? Have I worked out my weekly alcohol consumption to see if it's safe? Could I buy and eat more vegetables and cut down on animal fat? How can I make time in the day or the week for a little regular exercise? Do I know if my blood pressure is okay (there are no symptoms of high blood pressure, it just needs to be measured)? The answers to these little questions about the everyday choices we make may give the answer to the big question, how do I beat the system to stay healthier longer?

In other words, each individual one of us has his or her health challenge to meet, and it can be tackled in the same way as life's other hurdles. Become interested and make health a priority. Find out the facts, and take the responsibility. Think about the everyday decisions that affect your health. Use the professionals and doctors at your surgery, to get the information. Put **yourself** in charge of your own health. It will make a difference.

Have a happy, healthy summer!

**NIGEL CORP
GENERAL PRACTITIONER**

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENT'S ASSOCIATION

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ENVIRONMENTAL VANDALISM

When we moved to Croxley Green, some 20 years ago, we considered the area a pleasant place to live being, as it is, very adjacent to the open country and yet convenient for both good road and rail transport with complementary shopping facilities at Watford and Rickmansworth.

Over the years we have come to appreciate even more the privileges and benefits of living in the village and in particular, the close proximity of the open country, which from our abode is available either by a 2 minute walk through the properties opposite or 5 minutes to the end of the road.

In the early 70s it was still possible to see the lanes and woodlands spoilt by domestic *fly-tipping* of mattresses and other household detritus. Change in the law and the setting up of domestic waste tips should have eliminated this form of desecration of the countryside.

Regrettably, this is not so! To be sure the large, unsightly dumpings have mainly disappeared but the local perpetrators continue with their unsightly and unnecessary dumping. It is totally incomprehensible why, those who are fortunate to adjoin open space or woodlands, persist in fouling their doorsteps by dumping garden waste in adjacent hedgerows etc., even having bonfires in places.

Admittedly there are a number of unsightly and untidy areas in the village and hopefully either or both the District and Parish Councils can be persuaded to clean them up, where private land is not involved. One would like to think that those in Croxley Green, who continue to dump on their own (and possibly, in some cases, on other's doorstep) can be persuaded to change their habits and clear up past debris.

A final criticism is reserved for the Cinnamon site. One wonders what it is that the residents of Croxley Green have done to offend this company, that they have felt justified in turning a fairly pleasant office location into an industrial dump and destroyed what was, and can be, a pleasant approach to the village.

If the management of this company is so intent on creating an eyesore, could they have the courtesy to screen it with a substantial, well maintained and concealing hedge.

JOE WESSON

POSTBAG

Dear John

Hope you are in good health, it is many years since we last met. I am still keeping active, excavating with the Colchester Archaeological Trust.

Bas Boden sent me a copy of the *Resident*, it's nice to have news of the area where I spent so many happy years.

I should like to comment on the article *Historic Facts of Croxley Green*, taken from the *Croxley Argus 1939*. In one paragraph it states that primitive man only hunted in Croxley Green. Gravel extraction, earlier this century, revealed large quantities of worked flints attributed to the Acheulean Culture some 100,000 years ago. This surely points to a nearby settlement and not just passing hunters. Examples of these flints are in Croxley Library, Three Rivers Museum and the Watford Museum.

I stress that these comments in no way reflect on the contributor of the article.

LEN LEACH - COLCHESTER

Editor's Footnote.

Forgive the personal references but Len did much to set up the local museum and is well remembered by many of us.

Dear Editor

I enjoy your newsletter and appreciate the work done by the Association. I would like to use your columns to raise the issue of the style and character of Croxley Green.

Anyone who read the newsletter without visiting the area would think that we were another Ambridge whose inhabitants are pre-occupied with litter on the Green when not reflecting nostalgically on the golden age of the previous century. You would never know that Croxley Green was transformed by the building of the Metropolitan Railway and that it was developed into an essentially suburban landscape of mainly semi detached houses. You would never imagine that this all took place around the two wars when great changes were taking place in the national way of life. You would not dream that the suburban scene had an abundance of interesting architectural features and a style and character all of its own. You would certainly have no idea that a great deal that is special has been destroyed by unsympathetic home 'improvements' and that the process continues still.

Wouldn't it be a good idea if the Resident's Association endeavoured to foster as much interest in what we have as in what has gone before. We are not another stereotyped English Village, we are part of Metroland and we should be proud of it.

Yours sincerely

MARTIN HUMPHREY - LINKS WAY

Editor's Footnote.

This letter is very welcome, but in my defence may I say that I can only print what I receive - what about it?

Incidentally Norman Spring's article in the Spring 1992 edition of the Resident included reference to the coming of Metroland and the building of the majority of houses. We do try!

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CHURCH ARCHIVES

Very soon I know that the Editor, John Hedges, will be reminding me about an article for the *Resident*. Recently I have been reading about John Dickinson, it then came to mind that I would give You some information about him.

John Dickinson was born on 29th March 1772, the eldest son of Capt. Thomas Dickinson, R.N. His mother was Frances de Brissac of Huguenot descent. Little is known of their early days but when John Dickinson was nearly 15 he was apprenticed to Thomas Harrison, Leadenhall Street, London - Stationer, to learn the business.

On 6th March 1804, he took up his freedom and was admitted to the Livery of the Stationers' Company. However, three years before this he had gone into business on his own account, at first making money by discounting bills. By 1804 he was trading as a stationer in the City and in the following year moved to Ludgate Street (now Ludgate Hill).

His parents knew many dignitaries of the East India Company and this was to prove a useful connection, for by 1806 he was supplying the East India Company with paper on a large scale. So far he had traded as a middle man selling paper made by others, the craft of paper making in England had been in the hands of descendants of the Huguenot refugees. Little had changed for many years since the first mill in England had been set up in Hertford by John Tate in 1490. To give the full story would fill the *Resident* for some considerable time.

A Frenchman named Robert interested another one of his countrymen, Didot, who had knowledge of paper and so a machine was built. Didot had a brother-in-law, John Gamble, an English paper maker. John Gamble then interested the two London stationers, Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier in a scheme to make a

machine. The engineer, Bryan Donkin, built one which was not successful but the second, erected at Frogmore Mills near Hemel Hempstead, was more successful, this happened at the end of 1803. In the following year another machine was set up at Two Waters by which time the Fourdriniers had spent some £60,000. They continued but by 1810 they went bankrupt.

Some time before this, John Dickinson had been experimenting in making a rival machine, his books record payments to George Dodd - an engineer. Over the next few years many patents were taken out and paper was being made continuously by 1809. There is no doubt that John Dickinson was an inventor and his foresight, and the skill of the engineers he used, was to have a great effect on paper making in this country and still does today.

He had for a long time bought paper from George Stafford of Apsley Mill, Hemel Hempstead; he acquired the mill in May 1809. The site of the mill was important, for the Grand Union Canal ran alongside, providing easy access to London. He put in everything he had and a good deal he had borrowed.

He met Ann Ehret in 1810, proposed to her and shortly after they were married. Soon he bought Nash Mills and they started their married life in the Mill House. Ann loved her husband but in her journal she records - 'quarrelled with my husband for his harsh language to me'. It is said that his temper and capacity for strong language became a legend.

Ann had a good mind and it appears that she was a great help to him. They had a happy life but the tragedy was that over the years they lost four children, but John born in 1815, two daughters - Frances and Elizabeth - born in 1814,

and Harriet Ann born in 1823, survived.

The company prospered but there were setbacks - for example in October 1813 a serious fire took place at Nash Mills, nevertheless improvements were being made to the machinery and the raising of capital became very important.

Despite all the problems, the company progressed and in 1826 John Dickinson was in touch with Caius College, Cambridge, to purchase a site on the Moor at Croxley Green. A private Act of Parliament had to be obtained to permit this purchase but by the Autumn of 1828 building had begun. The foundations of the mill proved difficult because of the water; this was overcome and the work went ahead. Lord Ebury, who lived at Moor Park, objected and to meet this objection, an Egyptian front with two massive columns, topped with a crosspiece was erected.

On 10th August 1829, Dickinson was able to give a grand dinner, to his friends and relations, at the new mill and by the next year the mill was in production. He built two rows of four cottages, to let to his work people at the usual rental of half-a-crown a week. By 1838 the mill was producing 14 tons of paper a week.

Croxley Mill continued to expand and was still having many new ideas, which were patented and introduced into the mills. Another effect was from Rowland Hill of the Post Office. Now, without going into the whole history of stamps and envelopes, one can say that envelope making commenced at Nash Mills but there is some confusion about this. However, it would appear that envelope making was concentrated at Apsley and, following the introduction of new machines, were producing some 18,000 envelopes a day, from one machine in 1850, but by 1851 eleven machines were working.



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John Dickinson died in January 1869, just before his 87th birthday; he refused to call in his doctor on the grounds that he was too ill to see anyone. His wife died on 28th December 1874.

There is no doubt that he was a man of great determination - very skilful and very hard working - probably a very hard master, we learnt that he was hot tempered and that his language was strong but, I have the feeling that he was very fair. He certainly helped Croxley to grow and his name lives on - e.g. Dickinson Square and Dickinson Avenue.

There is a book "The Endless Web" by John Evans, which unfortunately is now out of print - I believe that the reference section of the Library had a copy. (Now sadly lost). You may think it strange for me to write about him, but John Dickinson & Co. of Croxley Mills were, over the years, very generous not only to the Church but to the area as a whole.

I would like you to keep in mind that on 19th, 20th & 21st June this year there will be a Flower Festival at All Saints Church and at the same time in the Church Hall, I hope to stage some of the Church Archives and other items of local interest.

On 19th June, on the Green there will be the Revels - they have been going on for some time now, in fact we have records of a celebration in 1887. The Croxley Green Society organises this event upon which they work very hard and, on your behalf, I would like to thank them for their efforts.

N. SPRING - ARCHIVIST
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WANTED

The Croxley Green Road Safety Committee is in urgent need of a new secretary. The work is not particularly onerous and a small honorarium is payable. Any one interested should contact Mike Humphreys on 0923 778544. At the same time the committee would welcome some additional members. Meetings are held every two months and the committee participates in the Revels.

The purpose of the Committee is to advise the District and County Councils on local road safety problems and possible solutions, as and when they arise. If anyone is listening, even before they arise.

The Annual General Meeting of the committee will be held at The Weather House, Lavrock Lane, Croxley Hall Woods on Monday 15th March at 8.00 pm. If you would like to join the committee, please advise Mike Humphreys and turn up.

JOE WESSON

* . . . * . . . * . . . * . . . *

LIBRARY COLUMN

The original Library Column for this copy of the *Resident* went up in smoke in the early hours of 29th December 1992, together with the rest of the Library!

We'd like to thank you for your support and best wishes, since the fire. It has helped us tremendously as we try to pick up the pieces and rebuild the service. As many of you know, we had a mobile Library Service available on the forecourt on the Monday following the fire, so that the service wasn't disrupted for too long. Our housebound borrowers only lost one week's service, thanks to our volunteers and colleagues at Rickmansworth Library.

We'll probably be in our temporary home, in the former premises of Barclays Bank, for about 18 months while the new Library is being built. The temporary site is much smaller than the old Library and we can't carry as much stock as previously but you can be sure you'll get the same friendly service and help that we've always tried to give.

Please continue to support us. Meanwhile watch this space for fuller news!

SUE DURHAM
COMMUNITY LIBRARIAN

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SW HERTS LOCAL LIBRARY
ADVISORY GROUP

Some 18 months ago, the South West Herts Local Library Advisory Group was set up by Herts County Council to cover the three Libraries in our area - Rickmansworth, Chorleywood and Croxley Green.

Two of the primary aims of the Group are to:-

1. advise on ways to ensure that the Library Service is used increasingly by all sections of the community and
2. to advise on activities which will link the Libraries to the cultural life of the community.

With regard to the aims, residents in Chorleywood have established a group known as *Friends of Chorleywood Library*. The group has succeeded in raising the awareness of the Library Service in Chorleywood, by organising a popular series of *Evenings with Friends* at the Library. Speakers have included Claire Rayner, John Timpson, Maeve Binchy and Michael Palin. There have also been practical evenings on word-processing and floral art. Fairly modest membership fees and entry charges have raised money which has been spent on new library fittings and housebound readers' services. At a recent meeting of the Advisory Group, on which Croxley Green is represented by Sue Durham (our Community Librarian) and Cllrs Williams, Lloyd, Withers and Burdis, we agreed to consider the merit of setting up a similar Friends Group in Croxley Green. Such a group would need a number of committed and energetic people to organise and run it, long term. If you are interested in joining or helping to organise a group in Croxley Green, please speak to Sue Durham in the Library or contact: **Ernest Burdis - 0923 770599.**

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**RICKMANSWORTH CANAL
FESTIVAL
21st - 23rd MAY 1993**

On 30th April 1793 Parliament passed The Grand Junction Canal Act. This led to the construction of what was to become the M1 of the Nineteenth Century, providing an important transport link between London and Birmingham. Before it was built, loads of only a few hundredweight could be transported on the back of pack horses or in crude carts. At a stroke, the new canals enabled the same animal to move 25 tons at a time. This laid the foundation for the industrial revolution many years before the railways arrived. The Grand Junction Canal was just one of 56 Canal Acts that were passed during 1793- the height of 'Canal Mania'. As part of British Waterway's CANAL 200 national celebrations, The Rickmansworth Waterways Trust is launching a major Festival on Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd. May 1993. The Festival will be centred around Batchworth Lock and throughout the adjacent Aquadrome. The Festival has five major themes which will be reflected in the range of activities available. These are:

The Canal
The Environment
Education
The Community
Music

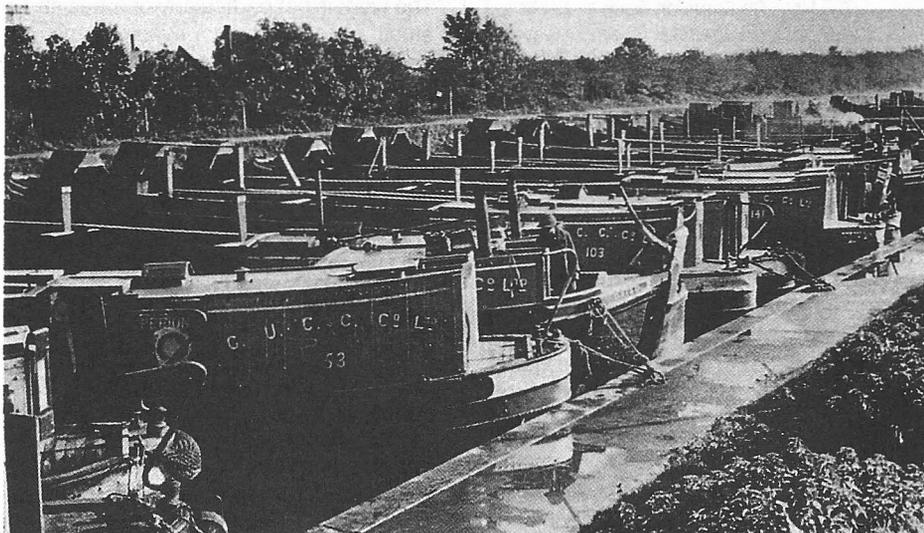
HERE COME THE BOATS

As part of the bicentenary celebrations, the largest fleet of narrowboats seen since the Second World War will move cargo throughout Britain's canal system during the first three weeks of May 1993. Boats will start from Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and London. Expected to attract wide media coverage, the boats will climax their journeys at Rickmansworth where they will unload over the Festival weekend.

**A UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY**

Festival Friday will be 'Education Day' with a special programme of teaching material arranged for school parties. Field studies have been devised to cover national curriculum topics in geography, history, science, English and physical education. The extensive programme will be developed around the canal and its history, local water systems and the environment. Information packs are available from the Festival Office.

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**MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT
FOR ALL**

The Festival will include a continuous programme of music and entertainment. Friday night will see a concert by Terry Lightfoot and his Jazz Band and the World Premier of its 1993 season performed by the Mikron Theatre Company. Music will continue throughout Saturday climaxing with a concert by The Bushey Symphony Orchestra followed by a spectacular firework display at 9.30. Local schools and groups will perform throughout the three days.

BRING YOUR BOAT!

If you have your own boat and you would like to bring it to the Festival phone 0923 778382 for details.

..... OR COME BY TRAIN

Throughout the weekend the Metropolitan Line will operate a unique steam rail service from Watford to Amersham to connect with open top buses from Rickmansworth. These will be the first steam trains to stop at Rickmansworth since 1961.

If you are going to come by car please look out for the special park-and-ride car parks.

WATERSPORTS

The Festival will provide the opportunity for young or old to have a free trial of a wide range of water sports including sailing, canoeing, wind surfing etc. If you have never tried these sports before we would suggest that you bring a towel!

**LARGEST LOCAL TRADE AND
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Four giant marquees will house the largest trade and craft market to be held locally in 1993. Over 100 exhibitions will be taking display space with products and services ranging from cars to basket making and holidays to wet suits.

If you are a local trader or a craftsman and would like to exhibit, phone the Festival Office for an information pack.

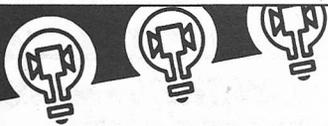


TICKETS

The cost of the Festival will be £4 per person (£2 per child) for a 'run of the Festival' weekend ticket. Tickets for the Terry Lightfoot and Bushey Symphony Concerts are also available at £6 and £4. All tickets are available from:

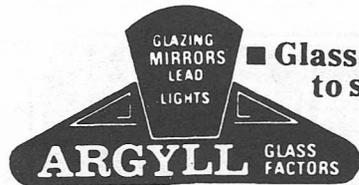
Festival Office
Batchworth Lock Canal Centre
99 Church Street
Rickmansworth
Hertfordshire
WD3 1JD
Tel: 0923 778382

If you would like to know more about the Festival or would like to offer to assist in any way, please phone the Festival Office



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