



The Croxley Green RESIDENT

Published by
CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

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Assisted by: Molly Hedges

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

EDITORIAL

Another year, another *Resident* and, I hope, a welcome from you. We know, from comments received, that there are many of you that look forward to our twice-yearly invasion of your homes.

Although it is not the responsibility of the committee, as a whole, to produce the *Resident*, without them it would not be possible. We are of course grateful to our correspondents who meet the deadline (well, almost!) each time and it is always hard to find room for all contributions. Some copy has been offered late this time and could not be included.

My reason for mentioning the committee is that they are up for re-election at our Annual General Meeting and need your support. Perhaps some of you would

like to join us. We hold our meetings about six times a year and they are always interesting.

One of the subjects exercising the committee, as usual, is how to ensure that we can find enough collectors to seek out subscriptions. Whilst the *Resident* is self-supporting, it is only so due to voluntary effort and that cannot always be guaranteed or expected. Your subscriptions pay for all the mundane matters such as correspondence, insurance, meetings etc. Members of the committee seldom, or even never, seek reimbursement of expenses and *Honorary* means just that.

How about some offers, either for the committee or as subscription collectors - it is not onerous - two or three evenings a year is more than sufficient.

You can simplify the task of collecting subscriptions by paying a life subscription. Just complete the form inside and return to Polly Burdis.

The rate is small but we think that the *Resident* alone is worth this small contribution, though delivery to you does not depend on your being members. We have been advised to raise our subscription rate but this is not important. We are far more interested in covering the whole of Croxley Green and that's where you come in. Make a start by attending our Annual General Meeting. Business takes up little time and the illustrated talk will occupy most of the evening. However there should be time to discuss your concerns with the committee.

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 25th MARCH 1997
8.00 PM
METHODIST CHURCH HALL
NEW ROAD.

Patty Briggs of the Herts &
Middlesex Bat Group will give
a talk
"Basically Bats"
with live subjects.

Please come and air your views.

DON'T FORGET

REVELS DAY Saturday 21st June 1997.

We don't often appeal for help but there is always the exception. In this age of the motor car, it is becoming more and more of a problem to deal with the invasion of motor vehicles at each year's *Revels*. A few volunteers are needed to act as Car Park attendants - for about an hour - it will leave you plenty of time to enjoy all the fun of the fair.

Please ring Ian McLachlan

01923 236163

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

One purpose of the Residents' Association is to act as a lobby and pressure group, and this role is particularly important, at this time, in planning matters. In our area of Hertfordshire there is great pressure for new housing: during the past year we have seen several contentious planning applications put forward for new housing. The largest was for 500+ houses on the Marconi site fronting the canal, but there were many other smaller schemes such as a site stretching from Valley Walk to the canal and several plans for 'backland' development. Your committee works closely with our sponsored Parish Councillors to ensure that the views of residents are fairly represented. Although Three Rivers District Council is the statutory planning authority, the views of the Residents' Association are taken fully into account, as are those of the Croxley Green Parish Council.

During 1997, no doubt, many other applications for new housing will be put forward, several of which may be of real concern to residents. If you wish to put your views forward, please contact us, as well as the Parish Council. Our views are put forward separately, so you have two opportunities to voice your concerns.

Please send advertisements to:
Rosemary Hanscomb
22 Dickinson Avenue 449945
and letters and contributions to:
John Hedges
44 Ludlow Way (01923) 222715
by September 1st if possible.

The Churches in Croxley Green warmly invite you to share in our Sunday Worship:

All Saints (C OF E), The Green.

08.00 am Holy Communion.
 09.40 am Junior Church.
 09.45 am Parish Eucharist.
 11.30 am Family Service (3rd Sun in month)
 06.00 pm Evensong.
 Revd Luke Lee - 772109.

The Baptist Church, Baldwins Lane.

09.15 am Morning Worship.
 11.00am Family Service.
 06.30 pm Evening Worship.
 Revd David Walker - 231403.

The Methodist Church, New Road.

10.30am Morning Worship
 with creche/Sunday School.
 06.30 pm. Evening Service.
 Revd Conrad Hicks - 263248.
 Bookings: Frank Haines - 230088.

St Bede's (R C), Baldwins Lane.

Saturday 06.00 pm Vigil Mass.
 Sunday 10.00 am Mass.
 06.00 pm Mass.

Father Bert Haines - 231969

St Oswald's (C of E), Malvern Way.

08.00 am Holy Communion.
 10.00 am Family Service (1st Sun in month).
 Family Eucharist & Sunday School (others).
 06.00 pm Choral Evensong (1st Sunday in month).
 Revd Anne Lovegrove - 232387.

WILDLIFE FROM MY WINDOW

As far as I am concerned, the only thing about cold miserable winter days is that they bring more birds into my garden to feed. In Croxley Green, we are fortunate in being close to open countryside and woodlands which encourage wildlife to the area.

Over the last few years, I have seen over forty different species of birds from my window. There are the regulars, who stay all the year, and those who are passing through. Amongst the regulars are the tits - blue great and coal - who are feeding on fat balls. Occasionally, I have seen long-tailed tits, which are always in a group and pass through the garden quickly, feeding as they go. The usual visitors, such as sparrows, dunnocks, bossy blackbirds, who are so territorial, and noisy starlings in their gangs, the *yobbos* of the bird world! Sometimes, timid thrushes appear to snatch some food, I am never quite sure whether they are mistle or song, perhaps I am lucky and they are both.

Magpies get a bad press and I know that they attack other nests, but they thrive because they are resourceful, feeding on almost anything. They always nest in my garden and I have seen them attacked and harassed by crows or battling with inquisitive squirrels. The most beautiful bullfinch is a common sight along with chaffinches and greenfinches. The attractive Jay, searching for acorns, and noisy jackdaws sometimes call in. I am not a keen gardener and the best part of working in the garden, for me, is the company of a cheeky robin or, in summer, finding a frog or toad, despite

the fright that I always get when they suddenly appear.

In winter, I have seen redwings, blackcaps, goldcrests and bramblings. Last week a heron stood on top of a nearby pine tree, looking most out of place, as crows tried to move in him on, with their dive-bomb antics. I have also glimpsed a green woodpecker and, more recently, a great spotted woodpecker. Pigeons are a pest and, while I sometimes feel sorry for them, I wish they would go somewhere else!

During the year, my bird table was attacked by sudden and violent visits from, what I later identified as, a sparrow hawk. So quick and gone in a flash, scattering the sparrows and causing panic amongst them. Fortunately, I have not seen him recently as, although I love to watch birds of prey in the wild, I do not want one taking one of *my birds*.

Squirrels are never far away and I have never yet been able to outwit them - no matter where I hang nuts or fat balls, they always succeed in robbing the birds, burying what they do not need all over my garden. They are fun to watch, especially the youngster who play like young lambs chasing and jumping about, but I can see how too many could become a pest.

In summer, at night, the frequent snuffling in a flower bed, heralds the nightly visit of the hedgehogs - wandering across the lawn, looking for titbits. One day in May, whilst having breakfast, I spotted a young hedgehog on the lawn, out in daylight - always a sign that something is wrong. As I

watched, I could see that he appeared to have only three legs. I made a quick decision to interfere, and gathering him into a cardboard box, we set off for *St Tiggywinkle's Hospital*, near Aylesbury. A quick examination showed that he was in need of help and would be unable to survive in the wild, so he is now spending his time with other injured hedgehogs at *St Tiggy's*.

Night-time is when Croxley Green's fox population is out and about; frequently seen in gardens or running across the road; quite often setting off security lights and peering out from garden gates. I have seen two out in daylight on quiet Sundays - one at my front door. I have not yet seen a deer in my garden but I know of others who have.

Although our local wildlife is not as spectacular as seeing a golden eagle fly across a Scottish moor, or black bears foraging for berries in Canada, much pleasure can be gained from feeding and watching the wildlife on our doorstep.

I now look forward to Summer when butterflies will brighten my garden again!
Shirley Greenman.

Shirley's family, and my own, are members of RSPB. For those interested the Watford Members' Group meets on the second Wednesday of each month at St. Thomas' Hall, Langley Road at 8.00 pm. A variety of interesting, illustrated talks is given and there are also field trips arranged, often on a Sunday. Admission is £1.60 (including coffee/tea and a biscuit) and you do not need to be a member. Why not try it!

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CHURCHES TOGETHER

ST. OSWALD'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

In 1937, the Bishop of Bedford dedicated the newly built St. Oswald's Church Hall "to the service and worship of Almighty God and to the fellowship and goodwill of man". Well, we felt that our sixtieth birthday was something to celebrate, so several special events have been planned during the course of this year.

The launch of the celebrations takes place in January, as we welcome Rev Bruce Driver, our Rural Dean, to the Consecration Service. We are also looking forward to the visit of Canon Patience Purchase, who is joining us in our Easter Day worship. In addition, there is a medley of social events in store, including shows (by our youth organisations and the Chanticleers), a choir concert, barn dance, picnic, barbecue and quiz supper.

Other highlights will include a flower and craft festival to be held on 5th - 7th September. This culminates in a *Songs of Praise* service when we shall be joined by the present Bishop of Bedford, Rt Rev John Richardson, whom we count as an old friend of St. Oswald's from the days when he was Vicar at Rickmansworth and our Rural Dean.

The day of the anniversary of the dedication is 12th October and, during that weekend, we will be holding our Diamond Jubilee party and Thanksgiving Service. We are pleased that the Rt Rev Christopher Herbert, Bishop of St Albans, will also be sharing in our anniversary when he joins us for our Harvest Festival and harvest lunch he previous weekend.

Celebrations are, of course, essentially for sharing with friends, so do come and join us; we hope that there will be something in our programme for everyone. We look forward to welcoming friends, both old and new, together with our neighbours in the community of Croxley Green. If you would like more information about any of our events, please contact:-

Jane Brading - 01923 492893.

WATFORD HOSPITAL RADIO

WHR began playing back pre-recorded Watford FC football commentaries, from a broom cupboard in the old Peace Memorial Hospital, way back in 1955.

This operation was so popular with patients that a land line was installed, by the station's technical boys, to enable live coverage of the team's home matches to be relayed direct to the Hospital. During the 1960s, services recorded at two local churches were added to the programming and, in 1968, it was decided by the enthusiasts producing these programmes, that they should form the Watford Hospital Broadcasting Service. This was registered as a charity, so they set up a studio, from which live programmes could be produced, in an office previously occupied by the kitchen manager. With the building of the new Watford General Hospital, in 1985, a long-standing dream was realised when a new studio was opened by Noel Edmunds.

On 16th October 1996, Graham Taylor - the General Manager of Watford Football Club - opened a brand-new studio which was built, after years of hard work and fund-raising, in order to provide an even better service to the hospital patients. All of our WHR programmes, along with four others from the BBC and commercial stations, are received by them through headsets at the bedside. Ultimately WHR hope to broadcast on their own FM frequency, thus eliminating the need for hospital supplied headphones which are continuously having to be renewed and repaired, a costly and time-consuming exercise.

Presenters visit the wards, and talk about Hospital Radio and its programmes as well as, collecting requests and dedications. Transmissions include audience participation programmes in the form of chat shows and bingo, local and national news and weather, as well as all types of music including classical, jazz, country, big band and current pop. The volunteer presenters of these shows come from all walks of life, e.g. television sound engineers, a chef, students, office workers, shopkeepers and many more trades. There is a well-stocked music library in the studio complex although most members have their own record and compact disc collections. All have the unifying bonds of a liking for music, a willingness to work hard to share what they like with other people and, a commitment to raise funds to purchase and maintain equipment to bring the

WHR service to the patients of Watford General Hospital.

WHR also provide public address facilities at various local events, including the Watford Show, the Watford Carnival, the North Watford Show and, of course, *the Revels*. In addition to providing announcements at Watford's Vicarage Road Football Ground, we also relay live commentary of home matches to blind supporters in the ground as well as the hospital patients. Over the past five years, WHR has grown enough to warrant launching its own identity with an easily recognised logo, which appears on mugs, car-stickers and members' clothing. In the Olympian League it has its own football team. WHR also provides funds for the purchase of much needed hospital equipment. In recent years this includes the purchase of ripple-mattresses for the elderly, foetal heart monitors for the Maternity Unit, wheel chairs and four baby cots.

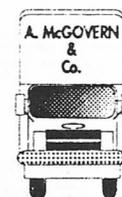
Watford are proud to have won Hospital Radio awards, sponsored by BT, for their entries in 1995 and 1996, on both occasions receiving £500 prize money for their efforts. These sums, along with other donations and cash raised through the past year, will be put to good use refurbishing the original studio, which was taken out of service following the opening of the new area in October 1996. So, a great deal of hard work and effort lies ahead for all the engineers and helpers of Watford Hospital Radio.

If any readers feel that they would like to help WHR by presenting a specialist programme on any specific subject, such as gardening, cookery etc., please contact the Station Manager, Peter Wernham - Watford Hospital Radio, Watford General Hospital, Vicarage Road, Watford, Herts WD1 8HB.

Daphne Wernham - External Publicity Officer - Watford Hospital Radio.

CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENT'S ASSOCIATION

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of, Croxley Green
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LIBRARY USER GROUP SURVEY
Held In Croxley Green Library On
Saturday 28th September 1996.

Sixteen regular users of the Library were interviewed, and the following is a summary of the main points raised about the Library service. Comments have been added in places by Sue Durham, the Librarian at Croxley Green.

STAFF

- Users said that staff were helpful and friendly and did a very good job

STOCK

- Most said that the stock was excellent or that they were satisfied with the range offered.
- The request system was used when necessary and found to be effective.
- Some found problems with getting books for school projects.
- It was suggested that a list of newly published books be introduced.

Comments:

Library staff have recognised the problem which some borrowers have in finding books for school projects. Collections of books on certain key topics have been placed on short term loan which means that they can only be borrowed for one week and cannot be renewed.

The possibility of producing a regular list of newly published books is currently being considered.

OPENING HOURS

- Generally users were satisfied with the opening hours although there were requests for Wednesday and Saturday afternoon opening.

Comments:

It would only be possible to open on Wednesdays and Saturday afternoons by closing at some other time.

LAYOUT AND BUILDING

- Most were satisfied with the layout but some found the bottom shelves too low for tall people and for those with poor eyesight.
- It was suggested that a map showing the layout of the building would be useful.

Comments:

A map showing the layout is a good idea and we will try to do something about it.

GUIDING

- Everyone who commented found the guiding good or satisfactory, or were helped by staff to find what they wanted.

POLICY

- The majority had concerns about the current staff review; cuts in funding; possible reductions in the book fund and the lack of consultation through Library User Groups to staff and users.
- Other comments mentioned the need to encourage children to read more

and to ensure the purchase of more books for this purpose.

- Independently elected members of Library User Group Committees and the involvement of school representatives would be beneficial.

OTHER COMMENTS

- The Library is an important part of the community; is a useful source of information and its continuance should be protected long term.
- Some users expressed appreciation for the computer, especially as children were encouraged to use it, but others said that books should come first if funding was reduced or not increased.
- The lack of car parking and toilet facilities were mentioned.

Comments:

There is a very large car park by the community centre less than 100 yards from the Library.

Although we have no public toilet we always allow parents with young children to use our staff toilet which is also available and equipped for disabled users.

THE FUTURE

- This survey was a pilot study to find out users' views and needs concerning the Library service and to increase the awareness of the Library User Group.
- It will be useful in determining the style and format needed for future surveys.
- It is planned to hold another survey during the next three months.

Our thanks to everyone who took part and expressed their support in our efforts to ensure the continuance of a much needed and appreciated Library service.

Ernest Burdis,
Library User Group C'ttee Member

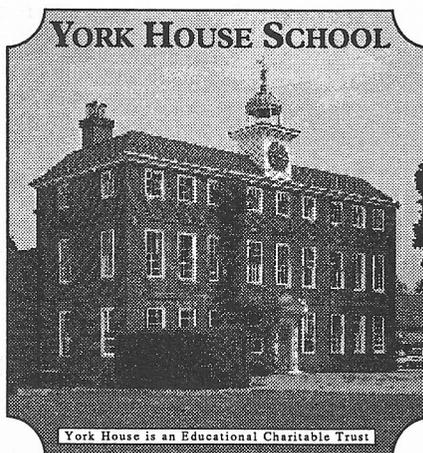
PORTLY PETS

As our thoughts turn to slimming down for the summer season, so that we can squeeze into lighter outfits, play summer sports or merely walk further to enjoy our lovely countryside, should we also look twice at our expanding pets?

The answer is yes, because many of the long-term health risks associated with obesity in humans also affects pets: heart disease, diabetes, liver disease and general lethargy. Just as it is hard to discipline ourselves to stick to a moderate and balanced diet, it is often even more difficult to close the refrigerator to a pleading pet. Pet owners in the UK obviously find it particularly difficult as a recent survey, conducted by Hill's Pet Nutrition, has revealed that British dogs and cats are fatter than their continental counterparts!

So, why are some pets so portly? Is it lack of exercise, *snacking* between meals, being overfed or that pet food is just so darned tasty these days? Well, all of these things apply in differing importance to each case of obesity. Certainly pet foods have become very palatable and a large part of the flavour is due to animal fat content. Add to this the plethora of snack/biscuit products on the market, and our tendency to reward good behaviour with treats, and you have a higher input of calories than is really necessary. Appealing for food is a pet's way of attracting constant attention and interaction with its owner. Next time this happens, when it is not a meal time, try distracting your pet with a game instead, and notice how they often seem just as happy as if they had been given a snack. Lethargy is the result of being overweight, which then perpetuates the obesity. Many pet owners comment on how much more playful and active their

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New Kindergarten for boys and girls opened September 1995.

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You are warmly invited to contact the Headmaster, Patrick Moore to see all that the School has to offer.
Telephone 01923 772395

York House School, Redheath,
 Sarratt Road, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth,
 Hertfordshire WD3 4LW

dogs and cats become after shedding excess weight ("more like his old self" and "just like a kitten again" are common comments). This increased activity then helps to ensure that the excess weight does not return and that your pet becomes more interested and more interesting! Sometimes increased exercise, or cutting back on feeding quantities/ snacks, is not enough to trim waist lines; we know that some breeds of dog have a particular propensity to gain weight, in spite of all efforts to maintain moderation. Hormonal changes, associated with spaying and neutering in some breeds, can exacerbate the problem. In these cases, more drastic measures are necessary and two pet food companies in particular, Hills' and Waltham, have developed prescription reducing diets which are calorie restricted, yet balanced for nutrients, proteins and carbohydrates. Usually 8-12 weeks on this diet is enough to lose the required amount of weight and we monitor weight-changes, frequently over this period, to ensure desirable results. Once reduced, the cats and dogs seem happier. Then moderation and activity is usually enough to keep them in shape - so, shape them up for summer!

April Rumsey - Veterinary Surgeon.

LOTTERY & TENNIS

Croxley Tennis Club, which is situated at The Guild of Sport opposite the Artichoke has received a massive cash boost from the National Lottery. The Members-owned club was awarded a Provisional Grant of £35,577 towards the costs of carrying out improvements. The overall cost of the project will be £57,742 and the club has already received grants from the Parish Council and TRDC towards improving existing flood-lighting. The management costs of the project are £1,035 and will be undertaken, free-of-charge, by Mr D Trimmer of Matrix Project Management. This leaves a balance of £13,300 needed and the Lottery Grant is dependant on the members raising this amount. It is hoped that, by the time you read this, cash will have been pledged by either the Foundation for Sport & the Arts or TRDC, maybe a local firm would be interested in sponsorship. When the project is complete the club will have 5 all-weather courts, three with good floodlighting. Over the past two years, membership has risen consistently, there are now 90 members of all ages and ability. The club has recently started a training programme with Paul Dent, LTA coach, to co-ordinate junior tennis development in the district. It has three teams in local leagues and organises frequent tournaments as well as plenty of social play throughout the week. Anyone interested in playing is welcome to come along on Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon and have a game.

Pat Allen - Secretary - 01923 772617.

ARTS FOR EVERYONE

We have been advised that the Eastern Arts Board is looking for applicants for grant aid under the Arts For Everyone (A4E) scheme. Nationally there are one-off grants available from £500 to £500,000 to run projects and not just for buildings and equipment.

Their publicity asks:-

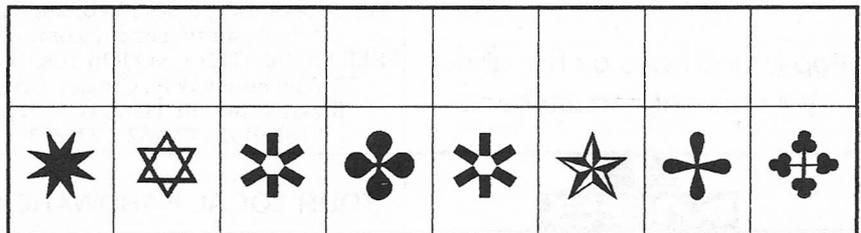
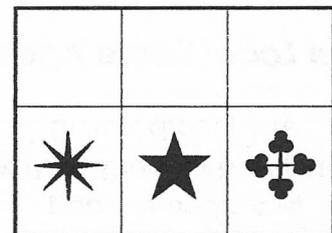
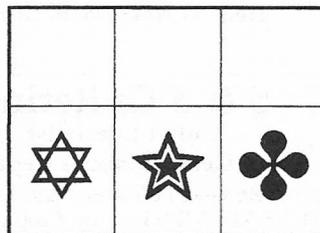
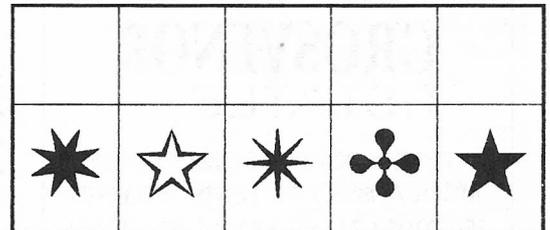
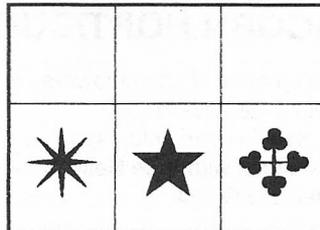
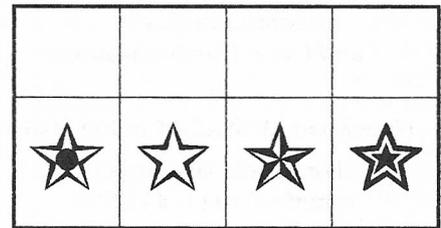
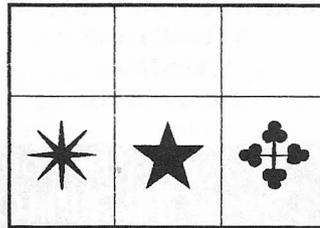
Is there a group of young people in your village who are interested in painting a mural or playing in a concert, are you keen to work with a professional theatre company to put on a play in the village hall? Have you ever wanted to improve your circus skills, rap dancing, take up photography or perform in a steel band? If you have any ideas for new local projects now is the time to apply for A4E funding. A4E is open to just about every group in England - in particular young people, voluntary and amateur groups in our community.

Eastern Arts Board is very keen to assist artists and organisations to obtain project funding and would welcome the support of community groups, committees and councils. They would be very grateful for any initiatives to spread the word about the schemes. You can ring Eastern Arts Board for further information and guidance on 01223 249456 or you can ring the National Hotline, 0990 100344, for an application form.

How about a village Arts Festival? If this fires your imagination then please contact the Parish Clerk, 01923 210750. He has been asked to investigate and find out more. Perhaps the Parish Council could co-ordinate our efforts and, should the support be forthcoming, will consider setting up such an occasion. Artists, performers, singers - all are welcome and what about the schools?

FOR OUR YOUNGER READERS

Can you decipher this code to find the name of a famous book?



KEY:-

A	B	C	D	E	H	I	L	N	O	R	T	W
☆	✿	✿	✿	✿	★	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

The title is animal, magical and wooden.

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MEMORIES OF CROXLEY GREEN

Your memories of Croxley Green - such wonderful recollections of this village - have been written so fondly by you, the residents who have responded to this project. Likewise photographs, that have been loaned for copying, have captured rare moments of the village history, kindly taken from family albums etc.. Contributions, from residents who have moved away and have been contacted by family and friends, have added to building up this history of memories of Croxley Green.

What's happening now?

All these memories are being typed (progressing from one to two fingers, already!) into the various subject headings e.g. Schooldays, childhood days, John Dickinson, wartime activities, shops etc. etc.. Many residents have kept in touch to encourage its progress and I hope, through the *Resident* and *Parish Pump*, to keep up a progress report.

I hope, when it is complete, that it will complement our Parish Map and the recent History of Croxley Green through its Street Names - by Shirley Greenman and illustrated with superb drawings by John Kirkham. It will, I hope, provide a nostalgic journey into the recent past, not only for residents now but, for our future generations who are interested to find out more about the place in which they live.

Just to give you one area where these memories have focused did you know that the grassy banks of the River Gade/canal, during summer days, were packed and overflowing with families having a day out - children learning to swim in the warm waters of the Gade as it emerged from its journey through John Dickinson's Mill and under the footbridge close by the time-office; older children diving off the canal bridge, swimming to Lot Mead lock and racing back along the towpath.

Margaret Pomfret - 01923 720088

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OF GPs, BALLS AND CO-OPS

I don't play golf, but I think I must be missing out. Striding out in pursuit of a well-struck ball, combining fresh air, exercise, competition and conversation. An escape from the chores of the house and garden. Even today I still occasionally hear about medical colleagues who play. But how do they do it? I don't mean *how* do they contrive to hit the ball in a sensible direction. There are surely many medics who can co-ordinate their hands and (golf) balls more finely than I. But *when*?

Now if you're still with me, you're probably thinking, *I know where he's going with this*. Another doctor whingeing on about how busy he is. You may think to yourself that if he doesn't like being busy he ought to get another job (as a caddie perhaps). But I'm not complaining. It is certainly true that my life as a GP is busy, and the chance of getting in a round of golf between morning and evening surgeries is about the same as hitting eighteen holes-in-one in a force ten gale with my eyes closed! To be busy in a society in which so many people have lost the chance to work is a privilege. And I enjoy it. But where does the time go?

In my practice, morning surgery starts at 8.30. I go on seeing patients until 10, when there is a break for an hour to check and sign a basket of repeat prescriptions, deal with phone calls, paperwork or an urgent home visit. But as I have never learnt the skill of answering all of a patient's concerns in the ten minute slot available (and sometimes there can be an intimidatingly long list!), the theoretical hour usually shrinks, and surgery starts again at 11 o'clock until midday. After that we fit in as many urgent appointments as patients require, so more often than not that takes me up to about 1 o'clock.

Before shooting off to lunch, my partners and I look at the day's new visit requests and try to divide them between us so that patients usually see the doctor they know best, but also trying to share the workload equally - a sometimes impossible process! Then it's home for a quick bite and the *World at One* (or more probably *The Archers*), unless it's a Monday when we have a practice meeting. So the bulk of the routine home visiting gets done in the afternoon, which is why we introduced the 10 am break some time ago to build in a little time to deal with any urgent visit request that could not safely wait.

The afternoon visits vary enormously. At the time of writing this (middle January) we have just been through a wave of flu and other flu-like viruses and these have dominated the time available. Many of the home visits are to the elderly who are too frail to come to the surgery or who dare not brave the snow and ice. Most other people come to the

surgery if they can because they will usually be seen earlier (in one of the late morning emergency appointments) and it leaves us free in the afternoon to visit the truly house bound. Children with high temperatures for example, contrary to popular belief, can be safely taken out on a cold day - in fact cooling them down is positively helpful whereas wrapping them up can push up their temperature to a dangerous level. (As I've lapsed into propaganda at this point, could I take a moment to recommend the three vital steps for bringing down a young child's high temperature, which I call the three S's: Spoonful of paracetamol to lower the body's thermostat - following the exact dose on the bottle of course, Stripping off clothes down to nappy or pants, and if the child is still running a fever, Sponging down with tepid water. This last one is not even remotely popular with the child on the receiving end, and produces wails of indignation, but it can prevent a febrile fit which is one of the most frightening things a parent can have to cope with. But that's enough of the digression).

Evening surgery starts for me at 4.30 and goes on until just after six. But, as in the morning, somebody's law (also beginning with S!) operates to extend the time needed, and I usually get off home at about 7 o'clock. And that brings me on to GPs' out of hours work.

You may well have heard the odd muttering from time to time in the news about changes the government introduced to the rules covering family doctors' provision of out-of-hours emergency care to their patients. It seems that, nationwide, GPs had noticed an increasing demand for evening, night or weekend visits, and were finding it hard to cope. The medical press abounded with tales of overwrought doctors, demoralised by being called out for less than urgent problems. Negotiations took place and the government rewrote GPs' terms of service to allow them more flexibility in the way they responded to patients' requests for home visits. In comparison with the problems that were echoing around the country, Croxley Green always seemed like a little haven of common sense. I can honestly say, without wishing to make any readers who are still with me blush, that Croxley Green patients that I know have generally been fair and sensible in requesting out-of-hours visits. Not so elsewhere apparently, and a mini-revolution took place.

So general practice has been changing. More and more doctors have employed commercial deputising companies to take over part or even all of their out-of-hours work. In the Rickmansworth and Watford area a company called *Healthcall*, based in Luton, is used to some extent by most GP practices. At the time of writing, the doctors of the two practices in Croxley Green share an

out-of-hours rota between them, but all but one (I'm afraid you may still encounter yours truly in the middle of the night!) use *Healthcall* to cover the nights from about 11 pm until 7 am. There is no doubt that the use of deputising doctors at night leads to fresher GPs at work the next day! Many doctors say that it's not the getting out of bed to visit a sick patient that's hard (it can be very rewarding), it's being on edge waiting to be called that prevents sleep and affects the following day's energy level.

And the changes have continued. Towards the end of last year, a group of GPs in Watford joined together to form a co-op to provide out-of-hours care for all their patients. There are many successful co-ops throughout the country (and in Europe) but this was the first one close to us. The Watford co-op (imaginatively called *Watdoc!*), is based in an emergency medical centre behind the old Peace Memorial hospital, and has a receptionist, a doctor and a driver to take the doctor on house calls. But the main benefit to patients is the provision of the emergency medical centre. This means that if they have a medical problem that cannot wait until their own surgery opens the following day, they can be examined in a properly equipped medical centre, and don't have to call the doctor out unless they are bed-bound. But if they do need a home visit, the doctor should be delivered to their door safely and efficiently, and won't get lost!

Again, at the time of writing, one Rickmansworth practice has already joined *Watdoc*, and I understand the feedback from patients and doctors is favourable. At the moment there are not enough doctors in the co-op to cover the night shifts, and the 11 pm to 7 am shift is still being covered by the *Healthcall* deputies. Complicated, isn't it! But I know from talking to several of the GPs in *Watdoc* that it is their hope to develop the service to provide emergency patient care right through the night, a return to the situation where it is local doctors, albeit in a larger co-op, who provide a 24 hour service.

It remains to be seen whether this will happen. The GP co-op is still young. It may not be there by the time the *Resident* is published. But I hope so. I know that doctors in both Croxley Green practices are looking into the possibility of joining the co-op for a trial period. If it happens, no doubt there will be publicity in their waiting rooms... Whatever transpires, rest assured you will *always* be able to contact a doctor day and night by ringing your own surgery number.

But I have gone on too long. The Editor's red pen will already have struck. But if any Croxley Green *Resident* readers have borne with me to the bitter end, they will now know a bit of the story

of the days and nights of general practice, and why my golfing handicap is likely to remain one of complete lack of ability. Which is a pity, because it might have helped me shed the spare tyre I acquired last year!

Nigel Corp, General Practitioner.

CHURCH ARCHIVES

Usually I write about some aspect of the past in Croxley Green. However, this time, I am looking to the future for, on June 22nd 1997 All Saints Church will be celebrating its 125th Anniversary.

This, inevitably, takes a lot of planning but I have been able to find out about some of the items on the programme.

- Sunday 1st June - Songs of Praise.
- Saturday 21st June - Flower Festival commences.
- Sunday 22nd June - Dedication Service.
- October - It is hoped that the Mainz Choir (Watford's twin town in Germany) will be able to give a concert in the Church.
- November - Victorian Evening.

There are many other plans in hand and they will be well publicised. One idea is to hold a service for all those who were married in All Saints Church. I wonder how far back we can go! Every effort will be made to let you all know of the activities but meantime please note the dates. On *Revels Day*, as usual, I shall be pleased to see you at the Church to view an exhibition of Church Archives and photographs. This is of course on June 21st. - the longest day.

Whenever I sit down to write an article for the *Resident*, somehow or other, one thinks of the past. I came to live in Croxley Green at the end of 1951 though I was working at John Dickinson's in 1936 but, as you know, there was an interruption in all our lives. Must not think of those days but I remember, most clearly, catching the 385 bus at the top of Repton Way. Am I right that they ran every 15 minutes?

The reason for this reminiscing is to, perhaps, stir up your thoughts of old Croxley Green and maybe to find that old photograph that you have tucked away. Enough of that. Do not forget the dates and to find us remember, that in giving directions one always says "Go up to the top of the hill and turn right (or left) at the Church". So, you know where to find us and we look forward to seeing you at any time.

Norman Spring - 01923 776933
Archivist - All Saints Church.

REVELS DAY

Saturday 21st June 1997.

If you were represented last year then you will receive an application form automatically. However, if you did not take part last year and would like to join us, please contact:-
John Hedges, 44 Ludlow Way, 01923 222715.

LIBRARY COLUMN

During the last year or so we have gradually built up our Parents' Collection which is now very well used. The collection contains books on pregnancy and childbirth, looking after new babies and older children, coping with teenagers as well as ideas for children's parties and books of baby names. It also contains 'situation books' which parents/carers can use with young children to help them overcome anxiety about a new baby in the home, going to the doctor or the dentist and starting playgroup or school.

In late September members of the Library User Group which covers Croxley Green, Rickmansworth and Chorleywood Libraries held 'surgeries' in each of the three libraries on a Saturday morning. The comments received at Croxley Green Library have been summarised into a brief report by LUG member Ernest Burdis. This is displayed on one of the notice boards in the Library (see below). Among the comments received is one suggesting that booklists containing details of newly published books should be available from the Library. I think this is a good idea and will try to do something about producing one, bearing in mind that the money needed to pay for booklists would have to come from the Library's material fund i.e. the money allocated to me to buy books for the Library.

Meanwhile here are a few handy hints.

The Library receives copies of 'The Bookseller' twice a year. 'The Bookseller' contains details of books due to be published during the following few months. Some of our borrowers already know about this useful publication and browse through it regularly to find out what to look out for in the Library or to decide what to request. Copies of 'The Bookseller' are shelved in the Reference Section near the enquiry desk and are available for anyone to look at.

Shelved near 'The Bookseller' are 'Sequels' and 'Who Else Writes Like....', two very useful books. If you have read the first few books in a series and want to find out which title follows on 'Sequels' is the book for you. It lists series of books such as Ellis Peters' Brother Cadfael novels and the Morland Dynasty sagas of Cynthia Harrod Eagles. 'Who Else Writes Like...' can be used to track down authors who write in the same style or about similar topics e.g. sea stories, family sagas, adventure stories etc. Many readers enjoy stories set in London but may only be aware of Harry Bowling. This book may suggest that they also try Mary Jane Staples, Pamela Evans or some of Beryl Kingston's novels. 'Who Else Writes Like...' also contains lists of major book awards and their winners during the last few years.

Sue Durham, Librarian Croxley Green



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