

The Croxley Green Resident

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF CROXLEY GREEN RESIDENTS' AND RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

No. 88

Editor—Mr. F. N. CHERRILL

No. 1—January 1966

A LETTER FROM THE EX-CHAIRMAN

I would like to wish every reader of this journal a prosperous and happy New Year for 1966, although I am writing this at the end of November, 1965.

During November I had put through my letter-box a copy of the "Key", part of which I wish to comment upon. For the benefit of those of you who did not receive a copy or think it worth keeping for reference if they did, I reproduce verbatim the article to which I would direct your attention:—

NONPLUSSED!

W. R. F. JOHNSON, writing in the "Croxley Green Resident", sees fit to criticise your Councillors concerning the erection of boundary signs.

If Mr. Johnson took greater care to establish the facts, rather than to "knock" the Councillors who give up almost the whole of their time to running the local Council for no return, even gratitude, he would discover that this subject has been raised at least ten times over the last five years and on the last occasion that Croxley Councillor and Chairman of the Highways Committee, Mr. N. C. Young, succeeded in persuading the Council to put aside £300 for the erection of six boundary signs during 1965/66.

Do not forget that one of the Vice Presidents of the Residents and Ratepayers Association, Mr. Armonson and the Vice Chairman, Mr. Cherrill, were Croxley Councillors for three years and their terms of office did not even produce the smell of a sign.

No doubt Mr. Johnson complains each time the rates go up. Does he think an expenditure of £50 per sign (which is what they cost) justified for the erection of boundary signs on all roads entering and leaving Croxley Green, Maple Cross, Mill End, West Hyde and Rickmansworth Town.

The Editor of the "Key" (who does not deign to pub-

lish his or her name and address) advises Mr. Johnson to take greater care to establish the facts. He or she should have known as facts that Mr. Cherrill is not a Vice President of this Association, neither has he at any time been a Councillor in this or any other district. Further the signs are stated to cost £50 each. I have a recent quotation from a West Watford firm, Bergo Ltd., who will make a sign worded "Croxley Green" in four inch letters on a 12 inch double line plate with stove enamel finish at 2s. 4d. a letter which comes out at £1 8s. This leaves no less than £48 12s. for the fixing brackets, pole and erection. Not even in these days will I swallow that—neither will any other thinking person. It does pay to get your facts right.

Councillors of whatever party or group who put up for election to a Council must realise that criticism will be directed at them whether they like it or not. Knocking Councillors is bad, but the "Key" on the opposite page to the article under review is knocking the present Government as hard as it can. Strange reasoning.

The article states the question of boundary signs has been raised frequently during the last five years which period covers the whole time this Association had representation at Basing House and they seem surprised two Councillors out of 19 could not get their own way. Had their Councillors voted for the signs with our two they would have been up long ago. Instead because Mr. Young gets an appropriation instead of us it is good. Strange reasoning again, although the effect on the rates is the same either way.

In conclusion this Association has pressed for these indications to motorists because we believe they would serve a useful purpose if put up. This is based on the large number of enquiries received by our members on the A.412. There was such a sign on the ramp at Cassio Bridge until the outbreak of the last war. If it was needed then, how much more is it needed to-day with the larger volume of traffic using this road.

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And now to end on a personal note, which for me is a very sad one. By the time this "Resident" reaches you it is most unlikely I shall still be living in Croxley Green. After living all my life within a few miles of my birth-place in West Watford it is a great wrench to sever all local connections and start life afresh in East Anglia. I leave behind many happy memories of Croxley Green and am glad the Association is in good heart and financially strong. I wish the officers of the Association and the Members every success in the future to keep Croxley Green on the "map" and make it an even better place to live in. It is worth fighting for, don't let apathy defeat you.

Yours sincerely, for the last time,
B. W. GARDNER,
Ex-Chairman.

CROXLEY GREEN WELCOME CLUB

We are pleased to record that so far £1,440 has been raised towards the target of nearly £3,000 which the Local Appeal set out to attain. We believe there are many residents who have not contributed to the Appeal and to these we would say that the Appeal Fund is still open and that the Treasurer is Mr. A. E. Jeffery of 7, Old Barn Lane.

At the Association's A.G.M. it was decided to donate 25 guineas to the Appeal Fund. Some members suggested that consideration should be given to a tangible gift to the Club when the needs of its new premises are clearer.

BRANCH POST OFFICE

Your Committee foresees the danger of the Branch Post Office at 154/156, Watford Road being hived off into a sub-office within an existing shop. We have attempted to handle this matter at local level with the District Postmaster with no avail because it is contended the turnover does not justify the provision of such an office. Many of our readers will know that the spare land at the junction of New Road/Watford Road/Winton Drive (which needs improvement) is Crown Land, and the last we heard of its future was that the Clerk of the Council was in consultation as to its prospective use. The existing B.P.O. is in a temporary building with limited usage under the Planning By-laws. Your Committee therefore decided to submit this matter to the Postmaster General and this has been done, to which a personally written acknowledgement has been received. A transfer of the B.P.O. into the existing Public Library (when it moves to its new premises in Barton Way) has been put forward as a suggestion.

FAREWELL

To Mr. D. D. L. Thomas, the Deputy Clerk of the Council, who is moving to a fresh appointment. Several other members of the Council's staff are leaving, including the Chief Engineering Assistant, and it is no wonder that Rickmansworth Council cannot get so many jobs done as we know they ought to do. Even a street name-plate seems to take years to replace.

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MAKING UP WATFORD ROAD

For the past several years the condition of Watford Road between Scots Hill and the Met. Station has been dangerous to both pedestrians and to road-users. Many spots along the footpath had been excavated and not made up—some had been like this since the time the new lamps were put in. On the road there have been many cases of cars skidding, even when the road was slightly wet let alone in icy weather. And in the part of the summer when the sun melted the tar there was another hazard.

Now, however, by our pressure and with the guidance of the Engineer and Surveyor the Council has undertaken to re-surface the road with rolled macadam which should prevent skidding, and the consequence of this work has been to raise the kerbs. The latter has brought with it a complete re-surfacing of the footpaths and we are grateful for the expeditious manner in which this part of the work has been carried out, especially to have a new "apron" in front of the shops where puddles have been the order of the wet days for a long time. We do not venture to suggest how the work of dealing with the road-surface is to be carried out—this will be a problem for the Engineer and Surveyor. What with the frequent hold ups of traffic for a long distance in this stretch of road the major renovation will be a big job. Similar work has been done in Watford High Street without interfering too much with the flow of traffic; we shall be most interested to see what happens in Watford Road, or will there be a diversion?

MR. B. W. GARDNER

It is with very real regret that many residents will learn of the imminent departure of Mr. and Mrs. Gardner of Repton from Croxley Green to the East Coast. Mr. Gardner has been Chairman of the Association's Committee for nearly five years and during that time has brought to local affairs a wealth of knowledge. Both Mr. and Mrs. Gardner have lived locally all their lives and they have seen many changes over the years. The Gardners are well-known in Scouting and Guiding circles although their other activities are in a wide variety. Unfortunately Mr. Gardner's employers decided to move their offices away from London.

Mr. and Mrs. Gardner send their kindest regards to all their friends in and around Croxley Green. The Association made a presentation of a set of Door Chimes to Mr. Gardner (for his new home) and a bouquet to Mrs. Gardner.

BANK AND SUPERMARKET

We would like to know what is holding up the installation of a new branch of Barclays Bank in the new shop premises in New Road. The building itself was finished ages ago. It seems the lighting has been installed in the Supermarket premises. Oh! why are we waiting?

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WE HEAR . . .

FIRE

Sunday afternoon, October 3rd, brought excitement to Croxley Green when a disastrous fire ruined the assembly hall of Dickinson Guildhouse. Tribute is hereby paid to the efficient attention of the Fire Brigade but alas their efforts were of no avail. This is a bitter blow to many organisations who have regularly relied on the use of the hall for plays and shows. This rather pin-points the need for a public hall in Croxley Green.

GALLUP POLL

A local organisation (who shall be nameless for the time being) has instigated a Gallup poll among neighbours to ascertain general feelings regarding: politics in local government; the desire for the diversion of traffic from Watford Road (probably to the expected north orbital road); trains to London; and the education costs in the rates. We hope to be able to publish the results in due course, but it shows we're not all asleep!

BUS SHELTER: NEW ROAD

Two years ago the bus shelter was damaged during the severe weather at the time. We now hear the Council has voted £75 for its *immediate* repair.

TREES

The Council has a sum of money to provide three "instant" mature trees on a housing site, but has decided it would be more worthwhile to provide young trees in Frankland Road and Harvey Road.

THE TITHE BARN

We stirred something up by mentioning the Tithe Barn in our last issue, and would make the correction that Rickmansworth Council is not actually responsible for its upkeep. It is still the property of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. It is true that we, the ratepayers, must sometime decide on the future of this ancient monument as to whether a charge will show in the local rates. A most unusual suggestion has been made that it should be turned into a theatre.

SYCAMORE ROAD

It is gratifying to note that the original part of this road will shortly be made up, and although this work has been a private matter between the householders and the builder(s), the Council are now in the picture to exercise authority in dealing with the matter.

FIRE DISASTER FUND

Realising the losses sustained in the Guildhouse fire by the Welcome Club a small group of enthusiastic helpers decided to sponsor a Raffle. Thanks are recorded to all the Firms and Friends who donated prizes which resulted in raising £219 19s. Tribute is paid to Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Grain and their band of helpers for the vast amount of work they put in to this effort; thanks too for all who bought tickets. The 17 prizewinners (not all local!) were notified immediately. This venture is distinct from the Appeal Fund (mentioned elsewhere) and will be used to replace crockery and other property which the Welcome Club lost in the fire which will be most useful when they get their new premises.

... AND OBSERVE

RATES REBATE FOR PENSIONERS

The efforts from all parts of the country during many years has resulted in a Government scheme to ease the burden of the payment of rates by pensioners. So far as is known the easement will depend on personal income and we shall be loathe to see any kind of means test. From the financial viewpoint the Government grant will be 75 per cent while the local authority (the ratepayers) will bear 25 per cent of the total rebates. Thus in a locality like Bournemouth or Eastbourne or Croxley Green where there are many retired people the number of pensioners eligible for easement of rates could well outnumber the ordinary ratepayers.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING: WATFORD ROAD

The condition of the road surface has again deteriorated to the state of being dangerous and the Engineer's attention has been drawn to the fact.

THINGS WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW

Who pinched 'our' Auto Scythe, the Ransomes Mercury Motor Mower, 2 Typhoon motor mowers, and a chain saw from Scotsbridge Playing Field during the night of October 28th.

WHY

Rickmansworth Council are buying *fifty-five* copies of a Council Diary against the lowest quotation of £95 11s. Bearing in mind that there are only nineteen elected Councillors our readers may draw their own conclusions—and perhaps do a bit of arithmetic.

We quote "Lucky, lucky councils, who can dip into an inexhaustible public purse, jack up the rates when they overspend, and mortgage our futures with excessive interest rates until Kingdom Come" (Watford Observer).

PEEP PEEP

The early-warning whistle has been blowing from several directions. Herts County Council are sure their rates will go up at least 6d. The national press has reported forecasts over the country of increases ranging from 10 per cent upwards. This is the kind of trouble where strong Residents' Associations must take all possible action to guide County and Local Authorities in the best economics of the situation.

OVERDRAWN

A special meeting of Rickmansworth U.D. Council on January 3rd approved a fresh arrangement to allow the borrowing of £750,000 on one, two or three-year periods, substantially to contra the existing shorter-term loans amounting to around £600,000, but 30 per cent of the new arrangement can be borrowed at lesser interest rates.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The formal business of the A.G.M. re-elected Col. C. E. Rothery Moss as President, Mr. C. E. Armson and Mr. J. S. Robinson as Vice-Presidents, Mr. F. N. Cherrill as Hon. Secretary and Mr. J. W. Broome as Hon. Treasurer, with the Committee as before. A hearty vote of thanks was passed to the Hon. Auditors, Mr. W. F. Hadaway and Mr. D. G. Hattersley. The membership had increased due to the endeavours of the Collectors, and the finances were in a healthy state.

During the discussion period which followed particular concern was noted of the dilapidated conditions of the children's playground apparatus in Barton Way Recreation Ground as a result of which the Council has been asked to see that everything previously enjoyed by the youngsters will be operative again by May. The Press noted that many residents are thoroughly disgusted with the Council's inability to deal with the pigeon menace under the railway bridge in Baldwins Lane so this matter is still being pressed. Other matters raised referred to the renovation of Watford Road, and the Old People's Club.

CASSIO BRIDGES

The re-building of these bridges is not likely to commence before mid-1966, and in any case the County Engineer's department has to make new plans to fit in with observations made at the Public Inquiry, in particular to the traffic flow into and from Baldwins Lane.

On January 3rd the Council took note of an accident earlier that day on the river bridge which caused traffic chaos for miles around. Further proof of the need for the North Orbital Road as an alternative route.

WINTON DRIVE AND WINTON CRESCENT

Following the completion of private street works these roads have now been formally adopted by the Local Authority as highways maintainable at the public expense.

DISGRACEFUL

Sir, This actually happened on Sunday evening, December 20th, as my wife and I were walking near 41 Watford Road. A car drew up about 30 yards ahead of us and a junior boy got out and relieved himself on the footpath. Reflecting on this disgusting behaviour I realise there is an absence of public toilets anywhere along the main road apart from the station. Could the Residents' Association bring some pressure to bear on the Local Council to spend some of the money to provide a facility which is so sadly lacking?

Note from Ed.—Yes Sir. The Council are in the process of investigating suitable sites and the Association's Committee has, after lengthy consideration, suggested a site immediately behind the Met. Station in Winton Drive. We think this site would be a facility for those who live in Croxley Green as it would be near the shops, and it ought to be a service to the many drivers who pass along the highway. Furthermore we believe the quality of the new conveniences should be of the highest standard.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY

A reader from Pinner wrote to the "Evening News" to say he had compared a current timetable with that of five years ago and had found that there were now eight trains less entering Baker Street Station between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m., and five less trains leaving town between 4.30 p.m. and 6 p.m. daily.

OBITUARY

We deeply regret to record the passing of several well-known residents. Mrs. Emma Paddick, of Bateman Road, was in her 102nd year. Mr. Joseph Dimmock, a J.P. for over thirty years, was in his 95th year. Mr. G. S. Wilcox, a founder-member of the Old Folks Club and a member of the Association's Committee, was in his 83rd year. Mr. F. A. J. Starkey was in his 72nd year.

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The Association is always appreciative for the help given to distribute "The Croxley Green Resident" quickly to every house in Croxley Green. Changes do occur and our Treasurer, Mr. J. W. Broome, of 114 Links Way, asks for fresh helpers to cover New Road (Red House to Barton Way), Manor Way, Rugby Way, Grove Crescent. If you live in any of these roads and could help in this job about four times a year, will you please volunteer? All helpers are insured against accident whilst doing this job. Additionally, the Association seeks a keen person to help with the collection of subscriptions in the south Croxley Green area.

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THE CHURCHILL TREE

A beautiful sunny afternoon brought a crowd of people to The Green (opposite Dugdales) on November 28th to witness the planting of the Association's commemorative tree in honour of the late Sir Winston Churchill. The 5-year-old tree is a *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* bought from Hillier's of Winchester and planted by Messrs. Denton's of Yorke Road. The commemoration ceremony was ably handled by Dr. A. F. Miller, a founder-president of the Association, who, accompanied by his wife, had flown from Glasgow for the occasion. We were very pleased to see Dr. and Mrs. Miller in the company of many friends.

RATES COLLECTION SUB-OFFICE

The sub-office in The Guildhouse will, in future, be open at changed times because The Guildhouse will be closed in the afternoons until 6 p.m. The new times will be Tuesdays, 6-7.30 p.m.; Thursdays, 9.30-11.30 a.m. and 6-7.30 p.m.; and Fridays, 6-7.30 p.m. In the past this office has closed at 7 p.m.

EASTERN ELECTRICITY CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

The name of Councillor F. J. S. Hall has been nominated to fill a vacancy.

FLOWER GROUP

All interested folk may like to join the Flower Arrangement Group at their meetings in the Guildhouse. Particulars from Miss K. M. Raggett (phone 72205) or Mrs. R. G. Bull (73909).

NORTH ORBITAL ROAD

We must not let an issue of "The Croxley Green Resident" pass without maintaining a mention of the need for this road, especially since the Minister's inspector so strongly supported the views put forward by this Association. There is not, however, much to report, apart from the possibility of a gravel merchant digging up a wide area of the Great Westwood estate, flanked by Grove Mill Lane, over which (the Watford Observer tells us) is part of the proposed route of the North Orbital Road.

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RICKMANSWORTH U.D. COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

We list the next meetings which are open to the public. Council and all Committee meetings commence at 8 p.m. in the Council offices.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Open Spaces ... | ... Jan. 6th, Feb. 10th, March 31st |
| Highways ... | ... Jan. 10th, Feb. 14th, April 4th |
| Road Safety ... | ... Jan. 26th, March 9th, April 27th |
| General Purposes ... | ... Feb. 7th, March 28th |
| COUNCIL ... | ... Jan. 25th, March 8th, April 26th |

CREMATIONS

Although this is a morbid subject it might be of interest to learn from statistics published by The Cremation Society that, in 1964, the proportion of cremations was 43.20 per cent as distinct from 22.29 per cent in 1954.

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