

LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman
Don Cammell
Martins
Ladywood Close
R. 776126

Vice-Chairman
Maurice Escow
Wildwood
Loudwater Heights
R. 771810

Treasurer
Cyril Brine
Arlesey House
Rooks Hill
R. 772508

Correspondence Secretary
Barnaby Lisborne
Larchmead
Trout Rise
R. 772766

Minutes Secretary
Margaret Stratford
High End
Troutstream Way
R. 773959

NEWSLETTER No. 27

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Editor: Mrs. D. Francis, Dovecote, Troutstream Way. Tel: Rickmansworth 770894

Spring!

Well we escaped without much snow didn't we!

As I write this the first warm suns of March have at last penetrated our Loudwater frost pocket at the bottom of the valley and the daffodils are poking out their yellow heads, quickly, to catch up with their relations living in warmer altitudes! How marvellous to have the green buds and leaves unfolding and the first blossoms on the bare branches — reassuring us of the long light days of summer on the way! But earlier in the year, in January, we were treated to a prolonged foretaste of Spring, when lovely mild days caused birds to start mating prematurely and the sharp, rough roar or bark of the muntjac deer was regularly heard in the evenings just as dark was closing in.

It is a privilege in the first light of the morning to see the deer come to feast on the moss in our garden. Their wide eared faces turn startled to see us draw the curtains and after a moment of recognition, with a flash of their white tails and a flick of their hooves, their sleek brown rumps disappear through the hedge.

The muntjac or Asiatic deer are one of the most beautiful of our semi-wild animals, but because they stand only about 20 inches high at the shoulder, they are difficult to see in the countryside and one must wait to see them on a smooth lawn. There is a fascinating book about them by Eileen A. Soper (Pub. Longmans Green and Co. Ltd.) which tells of their habits and social life. She established a colony of them in her garden over a period of eight years and gained their confidence gradually so that they would come near enough for her to sketch them. In Newsletter No. 19, the Editor's note told of escapes from Woburn and Major Pam's Estate sixty years ago which began the acclimatisation of the muntjac to the wild English countryside.

From the Editor's own observations the deer nibbled delicately here and there, not doing any damage, enjoying a tulip or a fallen rose petal or a wasp-chewed apple, and moss!



The Swans

Mrs. Bicknell of Flint Cottage, who has been feeding the swans on the River Chess for more than thirty years, noticed in the middle of February that the cob was having difficulty in eating owing to a swelling on the jaw. A vet from Windsor, who specialises in the diseases of swans, was called and succeeded in capturing the cob and taking it to his surgery. It was feared that the swelling might be due to a fish hook but an X-ray examination did not disclose a hook. It showed that the jaw was badly infected from injury unknown. Ten days treatment by anti-biotics reduced the swelling to a degree that the swan could eat normally again.

Mrs. Bicknell says that when it was returned to the river it saw its mate in the distance and flew down to meet her. They then went through the strange ceremony of bobbing their heads up and down which usually is only used prior to mating. Their evident joy at being reunited and restored to good health was most touching. They are now cruising up and down the river once more.

D. Bicknell.

NOTES FOR YOUR DIARY

The A.G.M. of the L.R.A. is to be on Thursday 19th May, 1983.

The Garden Party will be on Sunday 19th June, 1983.

The A.G.M. will take place as usual at 8.00 p.m. at Chorleywood House on 19th May, at which the guest speaker will be Mr. Charles Mills, the Chairman of the Chiltern Society. He is going to talk about trees. These guardians of our soil are becoming an endangered species not only in the Equatorial forest regions of the world, or even in England as a whole but right here on our own doorstep. The Chiltern escarpment trees are doomed to die out in 15 years and those on the plateau within 30 years. This is not due to indiscriminate felling by man but to a failure of selected felling and replanting, natural old age and the depredations of the grey squirrel, all of which prevent natural regeneration. For all those who are keen on conserving our valuable oxygen producers, and remedying our neglect, the talk should be of great interest.

Do you want to plant some trees in an open place visible to the public, or replace any that have had to be chopped down? Then apply to the Herts. Tree Scheme. They will present you with not less than 25 mixed deciduous trees free, if you plant them yourself, or for half the price of the tree planting and maintenance work in the first year. There is a maximum of a hundred trees per applicant. You might join together with other neighbours to take advantage of this offer.

The trees that are considered to be most suitable because they attract more wild life than exotic species, look more natural, establish more readily and are more suited to local conditions are oak, beech, hornbeam, ash, lime, field maple, wild cherry, birch, hazel and hawthorn, with alder, willows and poplars in damp situations.

The most suitable strubs are, dogwood, blackthorn, buckthorn, spindle, wayfaring tree, guelder rose, dog rose, privet and shrubby willows. But there, don't let me tell you all! Come and listen yourself and ask questions!

The L.R.A. Garden Party for 1983 will be held on Sunday 19th June at Cressy House, Trout Rise, as last year. The generosity of Benny and Chantal King in allowing us the use of their garden for this spectacular event is greatly appreciated. It is a spectacular event because each time it happens, the people of Loudwater come for the sheer pleasure of walking in the sun and greeting and talking to their near or remote neighbours who they find are surprisingly enjoyable to meet even if only once a year. Many people deplore the fact that because of the lack of any other meeting ground, they rarely see even their next door neighbour as they go from house door to car and back again and if they venture out for a walk along our busy roads with no footpaths, they are so busy keeping out of the way of fast cars that they barely have time to wave at the occupants as the cars whip past. So this event on 19th June is our annual get-together.

It is primarily for the benefit of the residents of Loudwater to keep on friendly terms so don't forget that if you bring a relation who does not live here, that it is rather off-putting to new or shy residents who are making the effort to circulate, to find that if they have wandered over to say hello to you, that they are faced with a blank stare from a stranger who is not interested and gives the impression of having only tagged along for a drink. Not that many people do bring strangers though, so come along spread your sparkle and help the occasion to be its usual success.

Tickets will be £2.50 per person. Please send cheques payable to the L.R.A. to Maurice Escow, Wildwood, Loudwater Heights, who will send tickets by return.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

i) From Margaret Jarrett, Martha's Vineyard, Violet Way.

"Dear Editor, you were good enough in a recent issue to appeal to dog owners in Loudwater to keep their pets under better control.

May I now reinforce this appeal with particular reference, not to loose dogs, but to those being walked by owners who happily allow their animals not only to roam freely over but to foul other people's gardens. I am getting very tired of my children stepping in mess left by other people's dogs every time they go out to play in their own garden! I should like, therefore to give notice to these inconsiderate dog-owners that in future, when I see a dog fouling my garden while its owner walks by unheeding, the offending mess will be gathered up and dumped on the said owners doorstep. Perhaps when they have stepped in it themselves a few times they will have a little more consideration for others."

(This is not the only complaint the Editor has received on this score. As most parents well know, it is highly dangerous for children under the age of five to be in contact with faeces of dogs who may - unbeknown to the owner - be suffering from worms, the eggs of which lie dormant until reaching a human child's system where if they hatch out can cause blindness, or worse.)

ii) From Mr. D. A. Lawes, Secretary of the R.C.G.F.A.

The Rickmansworth and Croxley Green Farepayers Association represents users of the Metropolitan Line and London Country Buses in Three Rivers. It has participated since July in the Federation of Metropolitan Line Users Committees which is a joint consortium of the Chesham and District Transport Users Association and the Harrow Public Transport Users Association. The Federation was formed to secure fare reductions and improved services for those who use all sections of the Metropolitan Line and succeeds the Joint Transport Committee of the 1950s and 60s. At present it has about 180 members and is seeking to increase its membership.

I would, therefore be grateful if you could advertise this Association in your Residents Association magazine and mention that the subscription rate is £1.00 per household.

Membership entitles the member to attend our A.G.M. in November and to receive our Newsletter and Annual Report. Prospective members are invited to contact me at 4 Carpenters Wood Drive, Chorleywood. WD3 5RJ.

iii) From June Runney, The Spinney, Kingfisher Lure.

Dear Editor, Just a note to express our thanks to you for a most interesting account of Loudwater history. Certainly some of us would be delighted to see a continuation of such articles.

LOCAL MYSTERIES

There are several questions that have been put to the Editor to which there are no easily available answers. Perhaps some one else can either supply the information or point out where the answers can be found.

1. What is that circle of trees near the lake in Loudwater? They surround a grass square. Could it be a cess pool?

2. Where does the pressure come from for the fountains in the valley? There is a fountain at Flint Cottage which is thought to be eighteenth century, made not of stone but of grit from the bed of the River Thames. Another similar one is to be found at Lord Chesham's place which is now the Defence College at Chenies. In particular, by what mechanism could the water have been forced up before the days of the mechanical pump?

3. There is a mystery about Loudwater sewage! Did you know that the pergola above the road by the new house in Loudwater Lane (opposite Loudwater Farm) is a disguise for the main Loudwater sewage pipe! This goes into the ground near the footpath, sets off in the direction of Glen Chess and into the hill. It comes out in Valley Road, having been in a tunnel for three or four hundred yards. The sewage farm is, as you know, at Mill End. Three Rivers D.C. do not know the exact route. Does anyone else know it.

POSTAL COLLECTION

For those residents who have been worried that the mail has not been regularly collected from the red pillar box at Loudwater garage, the Editor has been reassured that although the number 2 is the only number to be on view after the early morning collection, the mail is in fact regularly removed at the stated times. The head post master said that the number should be changed each time and that this would be seen to be done in the future.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

8/666/82 Erection of single storey side extension for elderly relative, Rasehill, Rase Hill Close, Chorleywood for S.Dicker Esq.

8/667/82 Construction of Estate road and sewers at land between and rear of Loudwater Lodge and Dahillilea, Sarratt Lane for Messrs. Sturman and Kingston.

8/669/82 Erection of replacement double garage at Woodstock, Violet Way, for D.A.A. Longman Esq.

8/690/82G Temporary Radio Repeater tower at junction of Rickmansworth Road and Park Avenue, immediately adjacent to the Westwood access road for the Department of the Environment and Transport. This will be 45 feet high.

8/719/82 Two storey and single storey side extensions at The Croft, Farm Lane for A.F. McGee Esq.

8/59/83 Erection of attached garage and single storey rear extension at Woodend, Whisper Wood, Loudwater for L.S. Glanfield Esq.

8/80/83 Erection of nine one bedroom residential units (outline application) at Chorleywood Working Mens Club, Solesbridge Lane, Chorleywood for Chorleywood Working Men's Club.

8/103/83 Erection of one detached dwelling at Woodlands Whisper Wood, Loudwater for E.E. Hesketh Esq.

