

LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

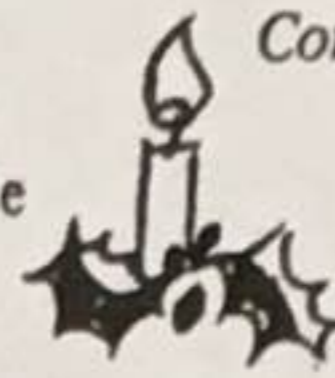
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NEWSLETTER No. 34

A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

JANUARY 1985

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

NATURE NOTES

Re: Badgers and Bumble Bees

Dear Editor

With reference to the query in the last Newsletter, we had a similar experience in our garden some 5 or 6 years ago. My mother-in-law, who was something of a naturalist, said that the cause of the problem was almost certainly the work of a badger looking for honey in an underground bees' nest. This was confirmed by another naturalist friend of ours, and on looking more carefully at the hole we did in fact find remains of a bees' nest.

While on the subject of natural history, we have in the past found three different species of wild orchids in our rough ground. Can anyone give advice as to the best time of year to mow the grass so as to disturb the propagation of both these and cowslips as little as possible?

Judy Baker, (Trout Rise)

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICEMAN

I first saw P.C. Brian Hopkins at our 1984 meeting of Neighbourhood Watch. The second time I met him he had, he assured me, just finished an eye to eye encounter with a muntjac which was in Pat Watson's field at the corner of Troutstream Way and Kingfisher Lure. Apparently the deer stared him out. He was a fine buck and was determined not to move so P.C. Hopkins decided he had been bested for once.

As a result of our meeting he was good enough to give me a brief profile of himself to pass on to you so that may feel you know him.

Brian replaced P.C. John Furr in May 1984. He had been our local bobby for the previous five years and Brian hopes to be here for a similar length of time. He married in August during the Bank Holiday week-end and intends to buy a house in Watford although Chorleywood or Rickmansworth would have been his first choice. He thinks that it is not too far away especially as he is based in Ricky. At the time I spoke to him he was living with his parents in Chipperfield which is further away.

He has been a policeman for just over eight years as a Panda car driver (five years in Ricky and three in Bishops Stortford). He has chosen the job of Neighbourhood Police Officer because it brought him into touch with the ordinary citizen. Had he continued as a Panda car driver, he would have been limited to meeting the public when they were doing something silly or in trouble either by burglary or accident. The only time he used to meet the ordinary person was when he went home and put on casual clothing, he said.

In answer to my further questioning, he told me that he was the leader and organiser of a team of five who did a sponsored parachute jump for the Gateway Club which is a club for handicapped children in Rickmansworth. Each member of the team paid £60 for the training and the jump, and the event raised £600. He said he could write a vivid account of his feelings when taking the actual jump!

He also told me that he lectures on 'Law and Society' to the Masonic School and Clement Danes. He wanted to be a zoologist but because he had 'A' levels in Maths and Technical Drawing he went into Computer Programming for a while before joining the Police Force. Computers, he said, showed him that his real interest was in working with people and not machines.

His private interest in zoology led him to tell me he was one of those people who always catch fish. He just cannot help it! At one time he caught a 16 lb pike and once caught 72 fish in 2 hours, which included a 3 lb and a 4 lb perch. Perhaps I ought not to say where he fishes in case it will cause a 'fish rush'!

In conclusion he told me of numbers of foxes seen at Ricky station roundabout that had come out of the park and the riverside and through the Masonic School grounds. He said that he had seen many badgers in the valley, particularly in Clutterbucks Wood. He thought that it was probably a badger that dug up the bee's nest in the lawn and that it was probably a muntjac that left black cherry droppings. They could be addicted to wild cherries, he said.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

A cheering report has been given by Mr. James Davis (Whisperwood) who, as you know, has been so kind in organising this scheme for us. He says that the scheme is going extremely well. The response has been excellent. He wants two more co-ordinators however, (neither arduous nor time consuming) and would be glad to hear from any volunteers. If you want to know whether you are covered, it is reasonable to assume that if you have not been contacted by a co-ordinator, you are not covered! If you are not yet in the scheme, be warned that three more houses that are just outside the scheme have recently been 'turned over' and have suffered large losses. Remember also that we have been advised by the Police that keeping the Estate gates closed is a deterrent. This applies to those who live outside as well as inside the Estate, on grounds of accessibility.

HELICOPTERS

Since the last Newsletter the LRA Secretary has been in contact with the CAA and other interested bodies to determine the extent of the intrusion by helicopters over the valley. He has been informed that the airspace over Loudwater is to the North of the London Control Zone and is outside controlled airspace. Non-public transport helicopters are therefore required to comply with Rule 5 of the Air Safety Enforcement Regulations which means that they must be capable of gliding clear of buildings and other public areas in the event of mechanical failure and fly at an altitude of not less than 1500 ft over built up areas and 500 ft elsewhere. They are not, however, confined to any fixed route.

The CAA has not received any applications to serve the approved heliport at Milton Keynes but will let the LRA know if and when such an application is submitted.

It is a little reassuring to know that any air transport licence application involving the use of a helicopter at a height of less than 3000 ft for the greater part of the distance which it flies over land, is designated as an 'environmental' application and the applicant has to make known his proposals in the areas likely to be affected so as to enable local interests to react and to ensure that sufficient notice is given to allow objectors to make timely objections to the Authority. In addition to publication in the Official Record Series 2, the CAA would issue a Press Notice drawing attention to the application. The period for such objections has been extended from 21 to 42 days. As this is such an important matter for the residents of this valley which is such a useful landmark for tired helicopter pilots and such an amplifying box for airbourne sounds, it would be very helpful if all residents could keep their eyes open for any Press Announcements and let the secretary,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

"It is surprising that even in as educated a district as this, many people do not know their local government structure, or representatives. For instance the LRA has campaigned not to lose Parish status for our part of Chorleywood, but few people realise that when a vacancy arises no election has to be held. Unless it is specifically requested, the Parish Council can just nominate a replacement. Although it is unlikely, it is thus possible to have a Parish Council none of whose members have been elected. Several recent vacancies have been filled this way and Sarrat Parish Council was largely co-opted. District Councillors have to be elected. The present District Councillors for all of Chorleywood are Messrs. C.S. Stewart, R. Shepherd, W. Reece and J. Oakley-Smith.

The County Councillor is Mr. Ron Crockett. Addresses and phone numbers from Ricky Library.

Almost all of the LRA area is part of the Chorleywood District Wards and the Chorleywood County area but the South Eastern section falls into Rickmansworth ie. most of Loudwater Lane and the Chess Hill/Lane roads are in Rickmansworth Town ward and the Rickmansworth W. County area. (County Councillor Mr. A. Witnet)."

John Jarrett

Resignation of John Jarrett

We would like to give a tribute to dear J.J. who has resigned from the Committee of the LRA and from the Estate Board because of his commitment in the County Council elections. He was the previous Editor of the Newsletter and a founder member of the LRA. He has given a great deal of time and devotion to the LRA and we are all indebted to him for his cheery encouragement and ability to make people feel that they belong to a community.

HEAVY LORRIES

The proposed GLC ban at nights and week-ends of heavy goods vehicles from entering the Greater London area has been the object of concern for the LRA during the last few weeks. We fear that a heavy demand would be created in our district for lorry parking and transhipment facilities.

As we already suffer from noise pollution emanating from the A405(M25), your Secretary, Don Cammell, has written to the Authorities concerned to object most strongly to an increase in the number of heavy lorries entering our residential area for the purpose of waiting (or 'stacking' like civil aircraft) prior to entering the GLC area at the appointed hour.

ROAD SAFETY LOUDWATER LANE

The dangerous situation in Loudwater Lane caused by the high density of fast moving traffic and the three blind bends between Glen Chess and Chess Lane has been the concern of your Committee for some considerable time. The Chairman of Three Rivers DC and Councillors have been approached for advice and assistance on how to proceed so that immediate steps can be taken to eliminate the most serious hazards that exist there and to provide some limited pedestrian protection along the most dangerous sections of the Lane.

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Sophie Evans - Rickmansworth 774436

Next issue to the Editor by 1st March, please.

£1.00 annual subscription received by:

LOUDWATER POST BOXES

"You may remember being asked your views on the relocation of the post boxes at the junction of Loudwater Lane and Sarrat Lane and Loudwater Farm. These views were passed on to Mr. Staines, the Head Postmaster, who is himself a local resident. Mr. Staines tells us that the box at the Loudwater Lane/Sarrat Lane junction is to be moved to the Troutstream Way/Sarrat Lane junction, as we had requested, early in the New Year. However, the Loudwater Farm box is to be left where it is for the time being. This will satisfy some residents but not all I'm afraid."

B. Usborne

POSTMAN HARRY

Did you see the beautifully composed photograph in the Watford Observer of November 30th? It was of the presentation of a cheque for £300 to Harry (postman for Loudwater Lane, Drive, Mansion, Chess Lane, Hill and Close, Rooks Hill, Timber Ridge, Armitage Close, Bridle Lane and Wagon Way) by Mr. Cyril Brine, our Treasurer who organised a house to house collection in recognition of the good service that Harry had given the residents for the last 3 years of his 17 years as a postman. It was done because everyone thought of Harry as a friend and as he was going to retire at the end of November, he would have lost his Christmas box. Mr. Brine had the photo taken with his own camera, of himself with a number of the residents who had contributed to the gift and how handsome they all looked, too!

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Delegation of Decision Making to the Director of Planning

With reference to the item in the April issue of the Newsletter there is an article by Derek Martin in the Autumn issue of the Chiltern News which states "that the Society accepts that minor planning applications can be determined by specified officers without being considered by the planning committee but they object: 1) to the officers giving permission when the Parish Council and others have objected and 2) the officers giving permission in respect of listed buildings and conservation areas." In both these cases they feel that the application should be considered by the full planning committee.

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8/673/84 Erection of nine detached dwellings at Upper Plantation, Sarrat Lane, Loudwater for Lesser Homes Ltd. This application was to be opposed by Three Rivers DC and the LRA. Letters of objection were sent but the application was withdrawn prior to the planning meeting.

8/706/84 Erection of a detached house with integral double garage on land adjacent to Pine Cottage, Trout Rise, Loudwater for W. Reece, Esq.

8/736/84 Single storey rear extension at Bois Cottage, Bridle Lane, Loudwater for W. Hope, Esq.

8/724/84 Erection of one detached house and detached double garage at Plot 4, Land rear of Dalilea, Sarrat Lane, Rickmansworth for Bruce M. Thompson, Esq. These applications have been approved.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

(For Muirside read Camrie - Newsletter No. 33)

If you are new residents, the Editor would like a card posted to her giving the names of your family resident here together with your address and telephone number so that details can be put in the Newsletter with any other information you would like to be made known. Also, it would be very helpful if any of you who are leaving to go elsewhere could write a note saying goodbye to us. We feel it is of great interest to readers who may have a fleeting acquaintance with you, say at the Summer Garden Party, but with whom you may not have had a close association.

We like to give a welcome to newcomers and afford them general information and a copy of the Newsletter.

Goodbye to Nora and Tom Van Schaick (The Coachman's House). They are leaving the Estate to live in Amersham in February, not too far, thank goodness. We wish them every happiness.

A.G.M.

Despite a clear night, a full moon and some potentially controversial issues to consider, there was the usual modest turnout at Chorleywood House on 7th December for the Annual General Meeting of the Estate Company. Quality there was, but no great quantity. The Report of the Directors, and the Accounts, already circulated to all householders, were speedily accepted, after clarification of a couple of points about the new garages (see below). The rest of the Agenda was disposed of quickly and the A.G.M. was over before the coffee had boiled.

So, straight on to the livelier part of the evening, the general discussion open to any resident, shareholder or not, to ventilate views about the Estate and what should, or should not, happen therein. First Hugh Matthews of The Warren, Trout Rise, raised the knotty problem of the basis on which road dues should be calculated. Some houses, particularly on corner sites, have a long border with the road and heavy assessment compared with others with a narrow frontage. A few, for historical reasons, have no compulsory liability at all. Even that use of and wear and tear on the roads bears little relation to frontage, it was argued that the assessment system was unfair. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the liability of each property was stated in each relevant covenant and was accepted when the house was bought. Also there was the problem that change would probably require consent to alter many people's covenants. After a full exchange of views it was agreed that a trio of residents, Messrs. Mitchell, Matthews and Kay should study the subject and produce their findings by next spring for the Board's consideration.

Talk of road dues gave Hywel Francis the opportunity to put in a plea for prompt payment of those outstanding for the current year. The majority of householders have paid; but those who have to be reminded add straws to the camel's back. (If you are amongst the laggards, please pay up).

Another hardy annual was Road Signs, "Rural Graffiti" as they were charmingly dubbed by Barnaby Osborne who led on this topic. Their proliferation, size and effectiveness were all called in question. Hywel Francis underlined the impossibility of pleasing everyone. Signs demanded by some were anathema to others. As regards a suggestion for transportable signs, to avoid over-familiarity and hence contempt, he pointed out that, regrettably, vandals are already wont to transport all but the most firmly secured notices. The Board will continue to do its best to strike a balance between the several considerations- safety, giving information, and aesthetics.

The need for fresh paint on the silent policemen was accepted. There were various opinions about their shape and numbers, and about the identity of the selfish, dangerous drivers who make them necessary at all.

Though not within the responsibilities of the Estate Company, the concept of Neighbourhood Watch received general support. The security value of shutting the road gates was stressed; (in particular, the one at the top of Troutstream Way continues to be left open). Pleas were also made for neighbours to pay attention when a burglar alarm is triggered, and for householders to ensure that someone is available to stop them ringing eternally.

Finally, on the resignation of John Jarrett from the Board after nigh on a decade of yeoman service, warm appreciation was expressed for his notable contributions to the welfare of the Estate. Also Hywel Francis was thanked and applauded for the enthusiasm and skill with which he had despatched a heavy load of work during his baptismal year as Secretary.

The Loudwater Brochure:

Newcomers, and probably some longer term residents, may well be hazy about the origin, constitution and role of the Estate Company, and the precise area over which it has responsibilities. The Loudwater Brochure, written by John Jarrett, which was distributed last year, explains all this and much more, including the Company's views on the criteria to be applied in carrying out its duty to uphold the covenants and to preserve the beauty, peace and value of the Estate. New residents can obtain a copy from the Secretary.

Building Plans:

In the last edition of Jottings it was suggested that residents intending to extend or otherwise change their property should check ideas at an early stage with the Secretary or a Director. They would then be told, before formal plans were drawn, what the Board would be likely to accept, thus easing the passage of their proposals. Again, if plans are agreed before they go to the Three Rivers Planning Department, the risk of extra expense and delay through redesign to meet Estate requirements will be minimised.

Not surprisingly, the very great majority of residents are sensitive to the need to preserve the character of the area. The widespread and vehement support already given in response to the Chairman's letter of 28th November about the possible infilling in Whisperwood underlines the general desire not to lower the standards that we value and enjoy. Also it is well understood that the Board's success in preventing the erosion of standards depends on support from residents throughout the Estate, not just those immediately concerned. The next threat might be right next door.

Incidentally, at least two house sales have broken down recently when would-be purchasers found that an extension had been built which contravened the covenants. The Board found the plans unacceptable, nevertheless the owner went ahead. The Board decided that, on balance, litigation was not justified, but the backfire came when the house was put on the market. This cautionary tale is told as a matter of interest, but with no satisfaction at all.

Garages:

After long gestation, the eight garages behind Loudwater Garage have now been produced, with Bill Pitt Ford presiding effectively as midwife. They are all occupied: initially the rent is £7 per week, payable quarterly in advance. There will be a waiting list for any vacancies. It is planned also to have some reserved parking spaces on the adjacent area. Anyone interested in a garage or space should contact the Secretary.

Parking on the Estate Roads:

Road parking can be a menace, especially in narrow stretches, on hills, and near corners. Residents are asked to keep parking within reasonable bounds, including arranging, where practicable, for visiting gardeners, tradesmen, etc. to park in their drives rather than clutter the road for long periods.

Free Offer:

Mr. Smith, Durley House, Troutstream Way, has oddments of spare building materials free for collection, e.g. galvanised wire wall cavity ties, 2 - 300 Chesham multi red faced bricks, galvanised door and window cramps, sand, lime mortar, hardcore, 30 plus concrete blocks.
Tel. Rick. 774425.