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Editor: John Jarrett

PHILIP, MEET CHARLES?

The next time the Queen comes to Hertfordshire, it may well be a Loudwater resident who greets her officially. Philip Groves, of Whisperwood, has been appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, and whenever Her Majesty pays an official visit to a county, it falls to the Lord Lieutenant or his deputy to receive her.

Philip Groves is an architect (what happens if the Queen brings Prince Charles with her!), and heads the internationally famous Architects Co-Partnership in Potters Bar. He is also Vice-President of the R.I.B.A., a past Chairman of the Herts Chamber of Commerce. The firm is heavily involved in hospital and university projects overseas (Ghana, Jordan, Trinidad etc), and at home (King's College, Cambridge, Harrow School, Maudsley Hospital etc), and its local work can be seen at the young offenders centre at The Mount, Bovingdon.

With the knighthood to Frank Rogers, (L.Drive) last year and now this honour to Mr. Groves, Loudwater is moving up in the world.

LOUDWATER GARAGE

Loudwater House and its outbuildings were, of course, the beginning of Loudwater. The Home Park for the house was, in fact, quite small, as can be judged from the gate-houses that marked its boundaries (now known as The Dell, L.Drive, Troutcote, T.Way, and Loudwater Lodge, Sarratt Lane.) Past these gate-houses the carriages would rumble from their base, the Coach House and stables, today Loudwater Garage, which still performs roughly its old purpose.

We hope in a later issue to talk about the history of the actual garage building, with its ugly heavy horses' heads at its entrance and the charmingly naïf plaques, one with its noted spelling error ("Honi soit qui mal ypanse") but there's just as much interesting about the people who have worked in the garage.

The Simmonds family have run the garage for 63 years. Harry Simmonds (father of the present occupant, Rob) started there in 1926. He had beforehand been apprenticed to the Rickmansworth car firm of Jones (from whose taxi operation Boughtons took over). Harry came to Loudwater to work for Cameron Jeffs, the diminutive but starchy developer of the Estate. Jeffs wanted people brought to see the plots he was selling — Harry and John Freeth drove them round in two buses, a Model T and a Lancia. Those buses fetched supplies in from Watford — coke, pig feed, timber. New roads had to be laid in concrete — Harry and John laid them. (One site, Oak House in L.Lane, still has in its garden a stretch of concrete put down for a road into the fields but never used.)

After the war, of course, cars were the garage main business. Like any boy, Rob used to like to be around the garage with his father. From 1958 he was regularly there and in 1970 made it his permanent occupation. Harry retired in 1975 when he was 70.

Those whose cars Rob services will know he is not a chatterbox. But they might be surprised how succinctly he has thought about his trade. In his view the "village garage" trade of his father's day began to die about the time the Metro was introduced.

New technology, he believes, has finally killed it. "Up till then," he says, "you had your car serviced every 3,000 miles,

maybe three times a year. A decoke could take a week, greasing took a day, another on carbs, tuning and all that. A garage had a lot of work. Now, modern cars get a service once a year if that, and then it's probably only an oil change. The rest is all sealed or electronic and if a part does go wrong it gets replaced at a specialist centre with specialist tools. My father had enough work to keep himself and two assistants going. Now a garage of this sort just supports one."

But, there were more houses in Loudwater and many more cars?

"And how many of the cars on the road in Chorleywood are company cars — 60-70%? Loudwater would be more. I bet you 80% of the cars you see the ladies driving round Loudwater are company cars — husband's gone in by train. Big companies are massive leasers now. And a leasing contract means a maintenance contract."

So Rob doesn't think his son, who is 13, will follow him. Rob still loves his vintage cars, the 1929 Austin 7 and the 1929 Humber 9/28, and he takes them on rallies. His own favourite car? The one he's owned that he liked best was an XJ6 Jaguar — "a lovely piece of engineering."

REMINDER

Can we repeat — our AGM is on May 18, 8 p.m. at Chorleywood House. It is IMPORTANT that as many of you as possible come — especially new residents. We succeed in protecting Loudwater only with YOUR support — the AGM is where you give us new courage for the battle.

SWAN AID

On Sunday the fifteenth of February, Mr. Derek Woolcock of Chess Falls, L.Lane, was instrumental in obtaining the help of Mr. and Mrs. Dorer, of Swancare, Boxmoor to save our own-reared female swan from certain death by starvation. A fishing line had become tangled round her neck and she had swallowed a fair length of it.

Approaching her was not easy. She was in great distress and could not be tempted by food, and her newly-found young mate was also agitated. After two unsuccessful attempts, coming all the way from Boxmoor (near Hemel Hempstead), one of them on a Saturday, Mr. and Mrs. Dorer finally cornered the swan on the Sunday.

The fishing line was then removed from the neck and skilfully and gently pulled up and out of the throat from way down in the stomach. We are all most grateful to Lis Dorer and her husband for their help.

The Dorers work voluntarily but on a full-time basis looking after and ringing swans. Any contribution to their expenses would be most welcome to them, though they will help, fee or no fee. But it costs them £68 per swan when one needs de-leading!

Incidentally, our mother swan has disappeared — presumably driven away by her daughter's new mate. Mrs. Dorer has good news of our old one-eyed and bad-tempered swan. He is now in a swan nursing-home at Egham and, although initially he moped for a mate, he is now so tame he can hardly be kept out of the house — a real old softy.

Dorothy Francis
(Swancare, Mr. and Mrs. E. Dorer, 14 Morland Road, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1NH. Hemel 51961).

PAUL WUZ ROBBED!

Sorry to say that Paul, our milkman, didn't win the big prize as Milkman of the Year. Better luck next time, Paul!

LADY LEWIS

We do not usually obituarise, but the passing of Lorna Lewis five months before her 100th birthday closes a long Loudwater chapter, and should be noted.

Before Lady Lewis came to Loudwater in 1933, she had already seen distinguished service nursing soldiers in France in the 14-18 War and she came back to help run a UCH baby welfare clinic. When she and her cardiologist husband Sir Thomas Lewis and their four children settled in Clearburn, T.Rise, Lorna Lewis got busy here, too, doing what she liked to describe as "minding other people's business." In 1937 she was elected to the then Chorleywood Urban District Council as an Independent, and independent she remained. Only in the last years, with some reluctance, did she accept the Conservative whip.

When the war broke out in 1939, she was once again involved, becoming Quartermaster for the Chorleywood Red Cross and a WVS organiser.

One day an Army Officer asked her if she could set up a canteen by the next day. "How many for?" "For 300". "Certainly" and at ten o'clock next morning it was ready for business.

Apart from being a Councillor — and for 50 years at that — she was a Governor of St. Joan of Arc School for over 20 years, a founder member of the local Citizens' Advice Bureau and she led the campaign to save Chorleywood House for the community. In the face of much opposition, she and her supporters bought it for the people of Chorleywood for the "extravagant"(!) sum of £5,000. She was awarded the M.B.E. in 1985.

(The Editor's thanks to Lady Lewis's daughter and son-in-law, Patricia and Sinclair Watson for help with this material).

CHRIST CHURCH CAR PARK

You may have seen that Chorleywood Parish Council is seeking to extend the car park opposite Christ Church School.

The present tarmac area was laid down as a playground and was never intended to accommodate cars. Now it is rarely free of them at any time of day, and at 3.15 p.m. when school finishes the number of cars collecting children is so great that many park on the grass. The same overflow occurs on Sundays. Because of this, more and more people take a short cut and drive across the grass which is causing damage to the Common. (It is a contravention of the Bye-laws to drive a car anywhere on the Common, apart from on designated parking areas.) The Parish Council is worried about increasing damage to the Common: the school and parents are worried at danger to children forced to play and run among cars. The Council, as guardians of the Common, are naturally reluctant to take Common Land (and may not take it without permission from the Dept. of the Environment to whom it must be proved that such action will benefit the majority of the local community) but they feel something must be done.

In agreement with the school Governors and the Church authorities, it has been decided to lay approximately 1,500 square metres of Grasscrete blocks around the two sides of the tarmac that abut the Common. Grasscrete blocks have hollow centres which are filled with soil and seeded, so that the effect at a distance is of a continuous spread of grass.

This should provide parking space for 70-80 cars.

The cost, approximately £37,000, is being met by the Parish Council, the Church, the Governors and the P.T.A. of Christ Church School.

When the car park is finished, parking on the tarmac will be banned during school hours. The perimeter of the new car park area and the access road verges will be lined with tree stump logs to prevent vehicles from driving on to the Common. It is hoped this will not only provide the extra parking space but also keep the children safer and the Common undamaged.

Cllr. Margaret Jarrett

YOU WRITE

I can see both sides of the argument about squirrels. My husband gets furious at the damage they do, and my children think they're funny and appealing. Could we not find a compromise and try to introduce red squirrels, as they have attempted in Regent's Park? I gather they have been provided with food and nest sites that are too small or too light for the grey squirrels to use. It is hoped that the reds, which are prettier and less destructive, will drive out some of the greys.

Linda Williams, Long Ridings, Loudwater Drive

I feel compelled to write about the increasing problem of litter on our verges and wooded areas. On any day it is possible to fill a large carrier bag with sweet wrappers, soft drink cans and bottles, cigarette cartons etc. Sometimes I see quite large items left around for days — two takeaway chicken boxes lay on the verge by the garage for several days before I decided no one else was going to bother, so I removed them.

It seems we cannot prevent people throwing litter around — but why, oh why, cannot residents see it is promptly picked up? If everyone removed litter from his or her frontage, it would help. The top of Kingfisher Lure is almost always a disgrace. One day my husband filled a large bag just from round the gate. The problem is worse during school holidays — please tell your children to bring their rubbish home. Let's try to keep Loudwater tidy.

Joyce Dixon, Nantucket, Violet Way.

PLANNING

(The application to build an extra dwelling on the Broad Oaks site in T.Rise which was opposed and later withdrawn has now been resubmitted to appeal)

8/1277/88 1 Ladywood Close. Single-storey side extension (Granted).

8/1286/88 Far End, Wagon Way. Single-storey rear extension. (Granted)

8/034/89 Chess Place. Erection of detached dwelling.

8/0046/89 Wychwood, T.Way. Two-storey side extension.

8/0099/89 Cherry Hill Cottage, T.Rise. Erection of cricket nets.

8/0128/89 Two Bridges, T.Way. Single-storey side extension and conversion of garage to habitation.

8/0131/89 Hunters, Bridle Lane. Two-storey side extension.

8/0139/89 Imber, Bridle Lane. Single-storey rear extension.

8/0202/89 Polstreath, Bridle Lane. Single-storey side extension.

8/0210/89 Long Ridge, L.Lane. Re-siting existing greenhouse. (Residents should not assume that the granting of a permission is necessarily the end of the story. In two recent cases, this Association or its allies have discovered work being done far in excess of that permitted and have managed to have this stopped).