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NEWSLETTER No. 64

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Editor: John Jarrett

"The best AGM I've ever been to . . .", ". . . I wish our AGMs were like yours" . . . "We come because it's a duty, but that was really enjoyable" — those were some of the reactions to our meeting on May 13.

Over 80 people turned up at Loudwater Farm — our apologies to those who had to sit on stools when chairs ran out. A number of you said the beautifully restored farm hall was more in keeping for our meetings than the rather formal Chorleywood House Chamber. And, with a little help, the video of the "Importance of Being Albert" worked first time and I know a lot of people will now go down to Batchworth Lock to see Albert. (Our thanks to Mr. Walker, of Overstream, for letting us have the video, to Dr. Wander of Kingfisher Lure for letting his firm Ovaltine sponsor the film, to Mr. Coy of Trout Rise for expert editing, to John Overend of Loudwater Heights for lending us the big TV set and to Gill Worthington, Christ Church School Head for lending us the TV stand.)

Clearly alarm at the proposal to develop "Clearburn" as a commercial livery centre brought some extra members to the meeting. It is disillusioning that the same Govt. department — the Department of the Environment — that instructed Councils to presume in favour of development and overruled so many Council objections to the now empty office blocks in Ricky has now also softened its stance on variations on agricultural use. Perhaps the D.O.E.'s initials really stand for "Developers Own England".

Worries expressed concerned builders' lorries heavy traffic now, continual horse-boxes later on, chaos on roads if the horses are taken up on to the Chorleywood Road or Sarratt Lane, smell, flies, slurry, work going ahead before permission, invasion of Green Belt, possible future expansion etc.

Unfortunately, there was no one present from the Estate Board to make a formal statement about what the Board was doing but John Jarrett reassured the meeting that much hard work was going on, that the LRA's co-operation had been generously sought by the Estate, whose legal responsibility the issue is, and we were working closely together.

Much of the rest of the meeting was — inevitably — a recapitulation of events reported in the newsletter, but the Chairman was able to congratulate Brian Gowshall, a member and Town Ward councillor, on getting fencing along L.Lane (it's hoped more will be done) and also to announce that the LRA had persuaded Herts C.C. to agree to centre white line dangerous corners in L.Lane. (That campaign took three years, but the fencing was first asked for over 20 years ago!)

Eric Tindall spoke of the technical information the LRA is gathering in case the dreaded extra lane is built in the M 25 and the Chairman reported that NORMAL now has 27 member organisations. Research has shown not one single supporter of the later plan for collector/distributor roads among the Counties, Districts or MPs anywhere along the M 25. Godfrey Crook showed some interesting slides of various lane-widening options the D.o.T. was considering.

John Reid's excellent accounts were accepted with thanks to Mike Hill for auditing. It was agreed that it was time to raise our modest subscription to £3, though a sizeable majority were kind enough to say it was worth a fiver.

The Chairman paid tribute to the work of Dorothy Francis and Mabel Tindall who were leaving the Committee and welcomed the election of Jack Prince, T.Way. The Chairman also said that he was stepping down. After two spells lasting

all told some eight years, he felt it was healthy to have a change, and Dr. Desmond Martin of L.Lane would be taking over. Desmond has done great work running Neighbourhood Watch.

Dr. Martin first of all gave thanks to all N.Watch co-ordinators. It was, he felt, significant that as this scheme went on, crime figures in the area had dropped to less than one a month on average. He then proposed a vote of thanks to John Jarrett which Isabel Johnson seconded warmly.

(Note. To the many people who at the meeting or after said very nice things to me, I can only say how grateful I am. It has been and still is a splendid hard-working Committee and, looking back, it is very rewarding to be able to say that there has hardly been one aspect of Loudwater life that the Association has not been able to do something worthwhile about. To the lady who said I should get an award — bless you but fat chance!)

CHALLENGE TO THE D.O.T.

NORMAL has a new member, the Hertfordshire Conservation Society whose patrons include almost every titled resident in Herts.

We have now scheduled our first public protest meeting. It will be at Kings Langley Senior School, Love Lane at 8pm on Sept. 9. We expect several MPs and County and District Cllrs from the five constituencies we cover, as well as spokesmen from the D.o.T., so this is the chance to put your views to the people who make the decisions. Similar meetings in Godstone and Staines, run by the Surrey Society, attracted several hundred people, so please take this opportunity to speak up for Chorleywood and Loudwater. All are welcome.

Richard Page MP has kindly agreed to ask the Minister for Roads to receive a deputation from NORMAL but he prefers to do this after plans are announced. He has agreed to help us approach another MP to get us to the Minister beforehand. We want to influence policy before, not react after.

We have been invited to make a presentation to the County Roads Panel and have done so. Our Brickett Wood members have drawn a reply from Mr Homer, head of the Eastern Road Unit, and it has two interesting points. One implies that the final plan for the extra lane — if it comes — may not be issued until 1994-5. The other is, chillingly, that the D.o.T. feels more lanes may well be needed!

In the meantime, on the other tack, we have been put in touch with a Shell initiative on what is claimed to be a new and quieter bitumen/asphalt surface.

As one of your representatives on NORMAL, I don't think it is unfair to recall that when we first appealed for funds, many people said that while they supported the stand against the then-planned two extra lanes, they wouldn't give, because nothing would stop those lanes being built. Well, they were stopped. Some of those who held back from giving us £50 to help the fight might care to contact John Reid, our Treasurer now.

P.S. NORMAL has been asked to take part in a major protest over Twyford Down. We hope to be there.

THE LAST ROUND-UP

"LRA residents bordering the Clearburn Estate and those who take the Chess Valley Walk may be interested to know the fate of the one remaining cow, Patricia, from the herd

that once occupied the farm fields of the late Lady Lewis.

"Patricia was adopted by my son Davide at the beginning of May and has been transported to a new home, a beautiful meadow in Chenies, beside the Chess which she knows so well but where she now has walk-in access and the company of a 15-year-old pony called Maggie.

"In the adjoining meadow are various horses and daily visits by their owners ensure Patricia's safety. Davide has a key to the meadow so he can visit her at any time".

Margaret Bianchin, Handa, T.Rise

COUNCIL CHANGES

There is a new Chairman of Chorleywood Parish Council, Cllr, Patricia Birchley of Burfield Road. Cllr. Margaret Jarrett now becomes Chmn. of the Common Committee (and was promptly greeted by the torrential downpour, almost completely flooded ponds and washed away horse tracks on the Common.

Bernard Wright having retired, the Chorleywood District has a new District Councillor in Cllr. Jane Weitzman, who joins Cllrs. Littlejohn and Whiting in representing Chorleywood. All live on or off Solesbridge Lane.

Parish Cllr. Tony Williams, who left the area shortly after being elected, is now on the Parish Planning Committee.

... BUT WE NEED THE RAIN

Following on from the above, the rainstorms fortunately did little damage in L/water, though poor Rob had his garage flooded. Both stretches of L/water Lane were flooded as usual when there's rain but much more so. The Chess by Dr. Martin's house, opposite Glen Chess, rose a foot in an hour.

One couple were really up against it. Wanting to go out, they were advised against trying L/water Lane, in the Chorleywood direction, so set off the other way towards Croxley only to find cars stuck in lakes. The trouble was they'd just returned from holiday and had no food in the house so it was a case of drive on or starve! Luckily they got through.

OUR MUSICAL EVENING

As reported, we didn't have a Garden Party this year. Again as usual, when you decide to stop something for lack of support, a lot of the people who didn't come then say: "What a pity!" We may try again. But we are holding one of our usual musical evenings. It will be on September 6, 8 pm at the Loudwater Farm. You will get further details but this is the only announcement there will be in the Newsletter, so please mark the date in your diary now. We can only accommodate 60 in the Farm Hall for a musical evening, so when details are available, please book early.

THE BRINE BENCH

A small group, including Joyce Brine, did at last manage to

inaugurate the bench in memory of Cyril. John Jarrett suggested there was an equivalent of the ceremony of "topping out" for a house, so we sat Joyce firmly on the bench and said it was now "bottomed in!"

WELCOME

When we go round collecting subs that haven't been sent in, we always pick up a number of new members. If the welcome is a little late, it is nevertheless well-meant. So welcome to Graham and Nicole Crane, Branksome Lodge, to Mike and Myra Rom, in Armitage Close and to Americans Jim and Judy Burch and daughter Stormy in K.Lure, and to Mr. J. Sterry in T.Way.

The housing slump shows no sign of lifting. There are a record number of houses empty in the Loudwater area (something like a dozen) and certainly more than that that either are up for sale or have been withdrawn when the right offers didn't materialise.

Welcome back also to Andrew Cameron-Mills in L.Drive. Andrew, who went to work in Denmark some years ago, has returned, with wife Hjordis and son Christopher, to the L.Drive house where many will remember his father living. Andrew is trying to accommodate them all in what must be the smallest house in all the Loudwater area!

PLANNING

- 8/807/91 *Tile Barn, T.Rise. Two-storey side extension. (Revised plans approved subject to Section 106)*
- 8/195/92 *Casula, Sarratt Lane. Part two-storey, part single-storey side extension, two-storey side extension*
- 8/291/92 *15, Glen Chess. Erection of balcony.*
- 8/304/92 *Clearburn, T.Way. Change of use to private livery stable and associated works. (Objected).*
- 8/308/92 *Oak House, L.Lane. Erection of conservatory.*
- 8/404/91 *Long Ridings, L.Drive. Erection of single house. (Objected, refused, granted on appeal.) This is a distressing story. The application, the latest in a series of applications by Cllr. Williams, all of which have been objected to and refused has been granted by the D.o.T. inspector on grounds we believe are factually wrong. We have pointed this out to him but we think it unlikely he will admit the error.*
- 8/336/92 *Contino Whisperwood. First floor rear extension and loft conversion.*

LASTLY

Please remember this is your newsletter, and the Editor wishes he wrote less of it and you wrote more. Letters such as Mrs. Bianchin's are always welcome, or any news from any of the other Associations (Troutstream Estate, Bridle Lane, Lower Plantation). Have a good holiday season. Ed.