

LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman
Desmond Martin
Chess Cottage
L. Lane
R. 775433

Vice-Chairman
Isabel Johnson
The Tile House
T. Rise
R. 772873

Treasurer
Maurice Escow
Wildwood
L. Heights
R. 771810

Correspondence Secretary
Don Cammell
Martins
Ladywood Close
R. 776126

NEWSLETTER No. 73 74

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Editor: John Jarrett

We hope you enjoy your Newsletter - enough of you are kind enough to say so. But how do you get it? It is put through your door by your deliverer, your patch warden or one of his or her family.

These are the men and women, Loudwater residents, who know your road, your area and, if you've been here some time, you. They are our vital links with you, and we don't give them enough praise. Some of the deliverers are also Committee members but many are not - they can't get their names on important-sounding documents or become officers, they just do, four times a year, carry out this most important job and this year we once again held a little party to give them our thanks. Because your deliverer doesn't just push a newsletter through your door - he or she also tells the LRA who has moved out or in, what the local problems are, how you feel about the LRA. He or she may well be the first contact you make in the area, be the only person to tell you about the LRA and what it stands for, to answer queries or explain differences between the various sub-sections of the area and to let the Editor know you have arrived so that you can be welcomed in the Newsletter. The LRA is quite extraordinary in that over 90% of the residents in the area belong - which gives us enormous clout with local MP, Councillors or Council Officers - and we couldn't do that if it were not for the work of the deliverers, or patch-wardens.

It is only fair that you should know the names of this gallant band. They are: June Baish, John Boon, Jane Calfe, Don Cammell, Godfrey Crook, Maurice Escow, Nan Hill, Brenda Hope, John Jarrett, Isabel Johnson, Diana Parker, Anne Pither, Denise Preedy, Jack Prince, Karen Read, Helen Sassoon, Derek Speight, Peter Tate, Vonnice Taylor, Rosemary Toy and Mary Walker.

SILENCE ON THE MOTORWAY

It becomes ever clearer that the 14-lane widening - now, incidentally referred to as the 12-lane widening - is dead, not merely for us but for the whole of the M25. Representatives from NORMAL, invited as usual to The Surrey Forum protest group, found even the most careful County Officers beginning to talk of the scheme - the last one still officially on - for Junctions 12 to 15 being abandoned.

As for our extra lane, the announcement on that keeps being notable only by its absence. It is now over six months late and, remember, what we are waiting for is only the D.o.T's response to criticisms of its proposals. Even if its response is given this Spring, the building of the extra lane could hardly start before this winter, and, in view of the Chancellor's announcement that the Transport Dept's budget has been pegged, it does seem more and more likely that this scheme, too, is a dead duck.

Two points on the road. Some of you have noticed that the one section of the M25 that has been widened with porous asphalt, that is between Junctions 7 and 8, is in trouble. After only four months, the surface has been deemed to need replacement or major repair.

The anti-porous asphalt lobby has always said that, however well this surface performs elsewhere, it would break down in roads where there was a high number of heavy goods vehicles, as near Junction 18, for example. But those who are arguing for porous asphalt because of its smaller noise and spray factor say that there may be other factors responsible for this failure. The material itself must be very delicately mixed, it may not have been laid carefully enough, the Reigate hill has special problems for any surface etc.

The Transport Research laboratory has forecast that it will be revising its present specifications for porous asphalt in view of failures here and in Germany. The question is still open.

It should also be noted that the LRA Committee at its last meeting confirmed its commitment to return unused donation money if and when the issue of widening seems settled, one way or another, and if the return is requested. The Committee nevertheless felt that, until and unless the D.o.T. produces its response, we could not consider any matter settled and the members who were kind enough to give would understand that it would seem imprudent to disperse the fund as of now.

THE IMPORTANT DATE

This is the Newsletter in which we tell you the date of our Annual General Meeting. It will be at the usual venue, the hall of the Loudwater Farm Subud Complex, and as usual, we expect to see 60-70 of you there. It will be your last chance to say thank you to our much respected Chairman, Dr. Desmond Martin, whose term of office ends then. Be there at 8pm on Thursday ~~March~~ ^{May} 11th.

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO

Continuing our looks back at the past, 1980 was the year in which installing sleeping policemen on T.Way was considered. Rob at the garage opened his shop. Loudwater House was told by the Dept. of the Environment that it had been so added to and altered that it could not qualify to be a listed building. It was the first year in which the LRA became concerned enough about the future of Beechen Grove Wood to offer to put together a consortium to buy it from the Clutterbuck family, but the fifty acre site was not judged by them to be sellable. This is a discussion that continues today. We noted the success of Mastermind, with its ominous theme composed by Loudwater resident Neil Grant-Richardson. Dorothy Francis noted that the resident Loudwater swan had fallen in love with his reflection in various glass doors and that, his interest being so perversely directed, there would be no cynets that year.

One resident decided to try to divert the river which ran through his property. The Water Board was called in, satisfaction was obtained. It was also in this year that the LRA began what turned out to be its longest running battle - it was to go for nearly four years - over a complex set of proposals to clear woodland and develop grounds of Great Populars. The felling had been brutally started then abandoned, and the building proposals totally unacceptable. When ensued, to jump ahead somewhat, was that your Committee, having initially accepted the bona fides of the request to clear what was in fact a somewhat scruffy woodland, then had at some meetings to spend its entire length trying to see which application, or variation, we were now dealing with, as the then owner appealed, withdrew, re-submitted with minor variations etc, etc until eventually he left the district and the property passed into receiver's hands.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Our people in the news this quarter made national, rather than local headlines. Gioconda Bicknell, née De Vito, who died in Rome in October, was the subject of an obituary in the Times, which described her as "a violinist of their first rank", especially playing her favourite, Brahms. She was an international star from 1932 to the middle 50s. In 1949 she married David Bicknell, head of EMI record division and they settled in T.Way, where their lushly over-

grown garden was always thronged with birds. Mussolini admired her playing so much he tried to give her a Stradivarius violin, but she refused. However she did acquire her own Strad which has now passed to another distinguished musician (the St. Martin's in the Fields group) who also lives in Loudwater.

The BBC TV programme "The World at War" in November had a contribution about Air Force tactics from Air Marshal Wilfrid Oulton, who used to live in Overstream.

October also saw the death of what was almost certainly Loudwater's richest woman, Mrs Smith of Durley House, T.Way. When her husband died a couple of years ago, his declared estate was over £16 million, but the Smith's life style was very modest.

WELCOME TO LOUDWATER

To Stephen and Deborah Smart and their four children in The Spinney, K. Lure and to Robert and Linda Cook in Meadowlands, Chess Lane. Hope you're happy here. Likewise to the Bertolotti family in K.Lure and the Powells in T. Way.

BITS AND PIECES

Neighbourhood Watch worked in October when several people, seeing a young man streaking hell for leather through their gardens, spread the word to police and neighbours. The young man, having stolen a Jaguar in Valley Road, had tried to escape via Loudwater but, being thwarted by the gates, abandoned the car and ran till he was caught near the Estate garages in T.Way, and the police dog bit him!

It appears that if the Local Government Commission's recommendation is accepted, all local authorities will stay the same. Good, but it is a pity some tidying could not be done. It seems fairly clear that the Chess Close complex and half of Loudwater Lane and Loudwater Drive consider themselves part of Chorleywood and the parish thereof, rather than of the unparished Rickmansworth, as at present.

A very belated apology is due to Isabel Johnson, whose name we have all these years spelt as Isobel. Sorry, sorry.

Joan Martin of Chess Cottage, L. Lane writes to say that two or three Loudwater Ladies are keen to swim locally. Would anyone with an indoor heated pool whose use they are willing to consider please contact Joan (775433)? It would be on weekdays only and with some financial consideration.

Is there anyone out there who still hasn't paid the sub? The year is nearly over and our Treasurer would like to clear his books. Any guilty party, please send the £3 to the Treasurer, address as above.

YOU WRITE

"How I sympathise with Anon of Sarratt Lane (last Newsletter). Loudwater Lane suffers from the same problems of speeding traffic.

"The road is used increasingly as a short cut not only by cars but also by heavy lorries. Not a day goes by without a near miss of some sort and, to my knowledge, an impact to the tune of a couple of thousand pounds happen every month. Only recently two cars hit side on at a narrow corner. One driver was local, the other travelling from Oxford to Harlow - and no, he said, he wasn't lost!

"It is amazing that so many accidents on the lane involve local people. Perhaps when you are so near to home, you don't take enough care. But Loudwater is used by walkers, many with dogs, horses, children, cyclists. Some residents actually have to cross the road to get to their garages.

"No matter what kind of car you drive or ABS you have, no one

can see around corners. To drive at over 20mph in L.Lane is criminally dangerous."

Geoff Saunders, L. Lane

"Most of the schools that Loudwater children attend to choose dark uniforms (understandably, because they don't show the ravages so much!) But this does not create a problem in the winter along unlit roads. Can I urge all parents to try to persuade their school children to wear some sort of light-reflecting band somewhere about them or at least to carry a white bag of some kind. Of course, it's the driver's responsibility to look out but anything may prevent a child being hurt must be worthwhile."

Isabel Johnson, T. Rise

PLANNING

Before going to the routine details, we should mention two unusual proposals.

The first concerns the "Dungeons and Dragons" gate at Cariad, L.Lane. Members may remember that the Council, supported by the LRA, objected to a wall and hedge on this property which were put up without permission being sought. On appeal, the Inspector allowed this. There was also an objection to the gate, for which permission had been given but which, when put up, varied considerably from what had been submitted. The Council issued an enforcement notice requiring conformity with the approved plan. Cariad have gone to appeal on this. It does seem odd that the American company which owns Cariad, largely as a pied-a-terre for visiting executives, feels this sort of issue is worth such obstinate indifference to local feeling.

The second issue that will be of interest is, oddly enough, at Great Populars (see 'Fifteen Years Ago' above).

After being through a number of hands, Great Populars has now been brought by a medical husband and wife. They also want to clear and replant the woodland and are in negotiation with the Three Rivers Council, the Forestry Commission and the Chiltern Woodland Trust about how to do this. Unlike previous owners, they have very courteously approached the LRA to inform us of their plans. It is probable that permission to clear will be given - the discussion is on the timing of the clearing (in one go or in stages) and the extent (trees in the L.Lane hill may be affected. The canopy of leaf across L.Lane is a cherished spectacle).

- 8/0551/94 *Erection of dwelling and garage on land adjacent to Old Meadow, Bridle Lane, (Objected, refused).*
- 8/0552/94 *Old Meadow, Bridle Lane. Two-storey extension, (Withdrawn)*
- 8/0604/94 *Broad Oaks, T.Rise. Single-storey rear extension to house swimming pool. (Objected, refused).*
- 8/0661/94 *Chessway, L.Lane. Single-storey rear extension and conservatory at rear. (Approved).*
- 8/0694/94 *Single-storey front extension, Daintree, Bridle Lane (Approved).*
- 8/0696/94 *Single-storey double garage. Domus, Chess Way. (Approved).*
- 8/0727/94 *Conservatory, Tara, T.Rise.*
- 8/0727/94 *Part two, part first floor extension, Krupa, T.Rise.*
- 8/0760/94 *Detached garage Aiglemont, T.Rise - re-submission.*
- 8/0794 *Detached garage Rooks Hill Cottage, Rooks Hill.*
- 8/0795 *Extension to garage, Aiglemont, T.Rise.*
- 8/0886/94 *Renewal of permission two-storey front extension. Old Meadow, Wagon Way.*

AND A HAPPY AND TRAFFIC-FREE NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL