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NEWSLETTER No. 89

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Editor: John Jarrett

This may be the shortest item ever to lead the Newsletter, but it closes a major chapter and it enables your Editor to crow a little.

The Government has officially confirmed there will be no widening of the M25 from Junctions 16-19. For six years, I, as former Chairman of NORMAL, have been telling estate agents, solicitors and prospective housebuyers that they were safe at least until 2010. But there were those, even on the LRA Committee, who would not have it. Now we who worked so hard for this can say "Nunc dimittis."

ANOTHER GARDEN PARTY SUCCESS

We did it again - the Garden Party took place in fine weather and well over a hundred of you turned up. One innovation was particularly successful, as shrieks of laughter showed that the children were loving the clown. Some more photographs had been added to the "Old Loudwater" display, and this time the food held out. Once again, thanks are due to Maurice Escow for the financial arrangements (and the wine), to all the members who helped behind the bar and to Mesdames Preedy, Martin, Tippen et al who produced such a spread.

OUR COPS AND ROBBERS DAY

Late in August, we had a day that could have come out of a Hollywood crime film - police cars rushing around, policemen with dogs and a helicopter going round and round the Chess Valley for hours, much to the annoyance of noise-sensitive residents.

We cannot say that the operation, which was mounted by Thames Valley police, was reassuring. One policeman involved told a resident the search was for an escaped prisoner, but another said, and Rickmansworth station confirmed, it was for a man who had dumped a stolen car in the area. Both accounts agree the exercise was not successful. For a dumped car, a helicopter, at how many thousands of pounds an hour, sounds unlikely.

MICKLEFIELD AGAIN

It seems impossible to keep Micklefield Hall out of the Newsletter this year and the Observer carried an article that it is now available to hire for weddings.

It is, as members will recall, the home of Richard Edmonds, the retired Chairman of Clements. Now his daughter and son-in-law have moved in and realised the upkeep could flatten them. So first, as we have reported, it was offered for film and television shoots. It has been the backdrop for the film "An Ideal Husband" and for "Midsummer Murders" and "Beautiful People", to be seen on Channel 4 next year. Now the Georgian house can be a bride's dream setting.

As if that wasn't enough, Mr Clements has just had his fourth win on the Peace Hospital lottery! He has handed the money back. It will now go to fund the Macmillan Nurses at the Peace Hospice.

WHO'S DIGGING FOR VICTORY?

Bridle Path Cottage path has again been attacked.

In July, the local paper reported that Public Footpath 10, which runs between Tall Trees and Bridle Path Cottage (L. Drive and L. Lane) had been flattened and tree roots exposed for the second time. After the last occasion, while an application was in by then Mr (Now Cllr) Mark Shephard for vehicular access to the cottage

was pending, workmen took the top off the footpath, after which the Council put up a barrier.

On this occasion, the barrier was knocked down by a digger.

Cllr Shephard's application was refused, his appeal refused, and leave to apply to the House of Lords also refused. A planning application to demolish Tall Trees and put three properties up has also been turned down. Meanwhile, the Council is considering legal action against the owner of Tall Trees, whoever that may turn out to be.

A murky business. Nor surprisingly, the leader of the Conservative Group on Three Rivers has expressed concern.

Now Cllr. Shephard's attempt to develop Bridle Path Cottage (L. Lane) reaches a new stage next year.

He wants to turn the one-storey cottage into a larger two-storey building and get vehicular access from the neighbouring property Tall Trees, which he is said not to own.

TRDC turned the plan down, citing damage to the track and its semi-rural character, general noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties, and (if building but not access were allowed), inevitable parking hazards at the Bridle Path/L. Lane and L. Drive junction.

Cllr. Shephard has appealed and the inquiry will be at Watersmeet from 10am on Jan. 20.

Like Cllr. Shephard's previous attempts to develop, this has produced some disquiet. Members who wish to express this can do so, either by speaking at the inquiry (it may take some time before the Inspector comes to this point) or by writing to the Sec. of State for the Environment, Room 1023 Tollgate House, Houlton St., Bristol, BS2 9DJ. This must be done before Dec. 23. Any further information, contact Miss L. Dormer Ext 1324, TRDC

THE TALLEST, OLDEST, BEST?

While we still have some trees left, would readers like to make nominations for any they feel are special.

Those that come to your editor's mind are as follows. There is a soaring larch in Loudwater Farm, a magnificent Cedar of Lebanon in Glen Chess and two fine copper beeches in L. House. Larch and beech grow fairly quickly, so the cedar is probably older, but there may well be a yew somewhere that is older, because they can reach incredible ages. Tom Pakenham's book on trees found one over which a medieval monastery had been built, so it must be several hundred years old.

ESTATE ON EASY STREET

The Loudwater (Troutstream) Estate AGM comes too late for any report in this edition, but from the accounts circulated, it is clear there is good news. For many years, the Board's finances were on a very thin edge. Now, because of some wise decisions some years ago, that are now beginning to show results, the estate has a balance of some £32,000. Of course, a couple of major problems could soon eat into that, but for the time being, all is rosy.

For those who might understandably say: "Let's have a cut in the Road Fund", alas, that doesn't work - for legal reasons, the two accounts must be worked separately.

THEATRE CLUB ADVENTURE

Spare a thought for those wonderful ladies Denise Preedy and June Curtis who organise the LRA Theatre Club.

They took us to see "Chicago" a few months ago. Their planning was immaculate but everything else conspired against them. To begin with, the night we went was the night of the Euston Square bomb scare, so, of course, from Baker Street onwards, the coach barely crawled because of all the traffic being diverted. But we got to the restaurant with just about enough time to eat a delicious meal, and then we had to get our skates on a bit. But was there anyone ready to give us a bill - not on your Nelly! Only when a few of us said we'd leave without paying did anyone get scribbling. Then to the show. No problems there, except that (as those of you have seen the show privately will remember) the theatre is not really big enough for capacity audiences, and two members who went for a cigarette and fresh air in the interval had to go right out of the theatre to get back in because the stairs inside were so jammed.

Then to cap it all, the coach waited at the wrong theatre and waited and waited. Only by accident did one member spot it and get it, half an hour late, to the right place.

None of this will stop your editor from going again, because the ladies can never have such bad luck again, and the show and meal were great.

THE CHILDREN'S CONTACT GROUP

The Children's Contact Group that Ann Garner launched earlier this year now has over forty families in it. At the first meeting in June a number of suggestions were made to increase community spirit among Loudwater children.

They included school-run sharing, a register of recommended baby-sitters in the area, developing a pre-nursery parent and toddler group, a register of Loudwater au pairs who may like getting to know one another, social events for teenagers and making all members aware that the notice board opposite the pillar box in T.Way can be used to advertise items for sale, offer services or make announcements.

The second meeting was on September 21st (too late for this issue). If any of the above interest you and you want more information, contact Ann Garner on 01923 770633.

BITS AND PIECES

The designated footpath in Beechengrove Wood is now clear, but it turns into a path at the Solesbridge Lane end and this is impassable with bramble and bracken. The LRA is looking into getting it cleared.

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The LRA finances are looking better with £890 in the bank and £3,500 in Premium Bonds, one of which won a £50 prize. Subs have been coming in well, but some fifty of you (naughty, naughty!) have not paid and Maurice Escow is waiting.

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The local paper carried a charming picture of Hywel and Dorothy Francis who celebrated their Golden Wedding this year. Dorothy was quoted as saying that it all started when Hywel "stole a kiss" at the seaside!

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Also in T.Way, Dr John Toy has been seen on television and heard on radio, talking about that emotive subject for screening scares etc, breast cancer, on which he is a known authority.

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Gordon Lang, a former Chairman of the Estate Board, and an astonishingly youthful looking 92, contributed a telling remark at a recent meeting. He said: "You really realise your age when your daughter becomes an old age pensioner!"

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Welcome to Ms Kay Rubens and Ms Ruth Henderson, both recently arrived off Violet Way. Judging by the extraordinary amount of changes and extensions going on in the area, there must be many more newcomers, but no one's told me, so if I've missed you, sorry!

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Local authorities are getting more and more worried about where they can put all the waste we generate. Land fill sites are getting full and scarcer - Three Rivers has to go to N. Beds to dump. It's all this ridiculous packaging we accept (razor blades are my pet hate for wastefulness).

The newest problem is the major increase in the use of disposable nappies, bulky and not very bio-degradable. In an attempt to reduce this fetid flood, TRDC and Watford are giving publicity to a recently started service that offers same-day laundry service for ordinary nappies. Contact Herts. C.C.

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The Investment Club has been launched, but of course it would happen just before a slump. There are two clubs, the Loudwater Troutstream Investment Club (12 members) and the Loudwater Investment Club (9 members). Both hope to be in profit soon.

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PLANNING

- 0926/97 Highacre, L.Heights. One detached dwelling. (Appeal dismissed).
- 0988/97 Land at Hillpoint and Glenhayes, L.Lane/Chorleywood Rd. Erect six dwellings with garages (Appeal dismissed).
- 0204/98 Land at Hillpoint and Glenhayes. Erect detached house, new access. (Refused).
- 0264/98 9 Lower Plantation. Part Two, part one single-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 0126/98 Clarinsh, Lodge Drive. Certificate of lawfulness for one-storey extension. (Approved).
- 0272/98 Corner Croft, L.Heights. One-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 0377/98 Bentley, V.Way. Replace flat roof with pitched. (Approved).
- 0513/98 Dormer Cottage, B.Lane. Two-storey side and front extension, one-storey rear extension, rear conservatory.
- 0544/98 Ferndale, B.Lane. Loft conversion and dormers. (Approved).
- 0353/98 Clarinsh, Lodge Drive. One-storey side extension.
- 0607/98 The Dell, L.Drive. Additions and extensions. Demolish side extension, construct two-storey annexe with link.
- 0683/98 Walden Lodge, L.Lane. Two-storey and one-storey side extension, one -storey conservatory at rear.
- 0684/98 Round Spring Farm, B.Lane. Separation of existing house by removing linking boiler room to create two houses.
- 0702/98 Greenacre, T.Way. One-storey rear and one-storey side extension.
- 0747/98 Pond House, B.Lane. Two story side extension

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