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NEWSLETTER No. 91

APRIL 1999

Editor: John Jarrett

The result of our fixtures against the developers over the past quarter have been two wins and one draw.

On Tall Trees and Willows in L. Drive, the developer's appeal against the Council's refusal was turned down. The plan was to knock down one house and insert four.

On the Dell, L. Drive, a plan for a major extension up and back was turned down by the Council, but we may well have an appeal here.

There was a particularly new and welcome statement in the Inspector's report over Tall Trees and Willows. The LRA, and individuals also protesting some plan, have continually made the point that one decision has a knock-on effect that would-be developers are quick to notice, but the Ministry's stance has always been that each application must be considered on its own merit.

However, on this occasion, the Inspector's report made definite reference to the likelihood that approval of this plan could have serious consequences of future undesirable development. Highly significant.

The draw, alas, was over Hillpoint where permission was given on appeal for four houses. But it should be remembered that the original application was for four houses on the one site. The new application was made jointly with the owners of Glenhayes, which backs on to Hillpoint, so it is four houses on two sites.

One point that is worth making concerns the cost of all these battles. It is sometimes not realised that each side pays its own costs, regardless of the outcome. The moral justice of this is clear - a private individual of limited resources might well be put off from a perfectly proper development plan for fear of a heavy bill if he lost, as against the Council's massive funds. But of course developers with deep, if obscure, pockets, are ready to play a game of poker bluff, raising the ante again and again; after all, handling a contentious application can well cost tens of thousands of pounds in work by planning and legal officers, secretaries, consultants etc. and Councillors know that it is our money and mine that they have to justify spending.

ONE HUNDRED NOT OUT

We have our first centenarian. Kathleen Richards recently had her 100th birthday party at her home, Watersmead, T. Way.

Our nearest up to now was the redoubtable Lady Lorna Lewis, formerly of Clearburn, T.Rise, who died only a few months short of her century - one of the very few tasks she did not see through!

Kathleen and her late husband, Melville Richards, came to Loudwater in March 1940, and have now lived at Watersmead for 59 years. Melville gave years of service to the area as Secretary of the Estate Board. Since his death, Irene Richards has been her mother's devoted companion with a gap of only a few weeks recently when Irene broke her leg, and Kathleen had to stay at Troutstream Hall.

They have both asked your editor to pass on their warm thanks for all the flowers, sweets, cards etc. sent to Kathleen by various local individuals and associations. Kathleen has had to give up her constitutional along T.Way, but otherwise, is in fine fettle. Well done.

Incidentally, to put to rest the queries of several people who asked: "How can the Queen send a centenary telegram when we don't have telegrams any longer?", the answer is she sends what the Editor has certainly never heard of, a Telemessage.

No one knows if this is available to ordinary mortals, but Her Majesty's telemessage is certainly handsome, with the Royal arms on the front of the message and a drawing of the Round Tower inside.

GROWING INTO A COMMUNITY

"Loudwater is slowly but surely becoming more of a community. It is no longer just a superb and beautifully maintained heavenly environment in which the slightly better off are isolated from the real world. We have realised how important neighbours are and how necessary human contact is, if we are to savour life's pleasures. Admittedly, in past years attempts have been made to bring us all together, but they have failed.

"Now others have made the grade, such as, to mention just two, the Bridge Club and the Investors Club, while the Theatre Club have arranged visits to plays in London and elsewhere.

"The most recent expedition to the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford will stay in members' memories for some time. The journey south in a luxurious high coach was a delightful change compared to the normal drive in a car-no need for concentration, and wives were relieved of the need to direct their spouses, instead being transported through our countryside from a height that produced a panoramic view.

"In the middle of this relaxed pleasure, Maurice Escow produced glasses and bottles of wine. The coach became a Caribbean cruise.

"We arrived at the theatre with plenty of time to eat with further libations of the grape. The theatre was a delight even if the play, Joe Orton's "Loot", was not to some members' taste. The journey home was again fun while the rest of the wine was quaffed.

"One enthusiast suggested that in future we forget the theatre and just amble along the leafy lanes of Bucks with a case or two. Do book early for the next theatre trip. It may well be over-subscribed." Hywel Francis, T.Way. "Thank you, Hywel. There is no doubt that Chairman Godfrey Crook's drive to involve people has been a great success.

But two caveats should be entered. It seems likely that the membership of these excellent clubs is duplicated, and is predominantly those who are retired. Obviously, younger residents are busy earning their livings, but... the other caveat is a far touchier subject but one that should probably at last be aired. We have practically no involvement from the Asian community. A couple of years ago, one in twelve homes in Greater Loudwater was occupied by families of Asian background. The proportion is somewhat less now. But it is still almost unheard of to see any of this large group at AGM's, Garden Parties or in the Club.

Not to be involved is, of course, their perfect right, but since the LRA should represent the interests of all its members, it is sad that this gap seemingly cannot be bridged.

THREE CLUBS BID

As it happens, three of the LRA clubs have asked for some publicity in this issue.

The Theatre Club is spreading its wings further. After a visit to the Savoy Theatre in April (play to be notified) there is a visit to the newly opened Globe Theatre in London. Everyone should visit The Globe once to see this fascinating view of how Shakespeare's plays were really staged. In August, the Club returns to The Mill at Sonning, which has its own restaurant, for the comedy "Say Who You Are" by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall. Lastly in October, we go upstage for "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at Stratford on Avon, The Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

Remember, you have to be a member (cost £5) to be notified of these plays and arrangements. Ring June Curtis on 721583.

Anthony Moss, who runs the Investments Clubs, says they have proved very popular, and have resulted in many people making new friendships. It took nearly two years to establish the idea, but contrary to expectations, it is felt the market was entered at an auspicious time and some useful investments have been made. The friendly,

informative meetings provide a low-risk way of understanding and profiting from the Stock Market. The clubs, called Loudwater Chess and Loudwater Troutstream, are both members of the Daily Telegraph Investment Club Services and both use Barclay's stockbrokers.

Meetings are held at L.Farm on the second Wednesday of each month, Chess at 5pm, Troutstream at 6pm. There is room for more members, especially in Chess, but numbers have to be limited. Contact Tony Moss on 896868 by day, 774907 in the evening.

The Bridge Club continues to thrive, sixteen to twenty people on average playing at L.Farm on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Emphasis continues to be on social bridge (Chicago format) and a good time is had by all, especially when two bottles of wine go to the pair making the best slam of the evening (not always won!).

It is not necessary to come in pairs, individual members are welcome. We start at 7.45 prompt and end around 10.30. For more information, phone any of the following: Liz Cook 776567, Fenny Lough 773416, Peter Phillips 778341, Maurice Escow 771810 or Chairman John Parsons 778241.

THOSE SECURITY LIGHTS

The remarks about security lights has brought two letters. "I was interested to read this item, especially as one of our neighbour's lights shines into the rear window of our bedroom, and another into our front window.

"However, when we had an attempted burglary on January 20th., the police, Crime Prevention Officer and other experts we consulted all recommended we have a security light fitted at the back of the house. The CPO said he did not know where the Newsletter got its information from."

Mrs K.V. Judith Hankinson, L.Lane

(Much to my annoyance, I cannot give the precise details of the source because The Times, which mentioned the light advice as emanating from a 'Home Office Crime Research Panel' will neither ask, or let me ask, the writer of the article. I can only say it has carried two further reports since to the same effect. Ed)

"We feel that the remarks about some of the houses and the type of buyers for them is out of order. Far from enjoying "HELLO". I'd rather read "OK", which makes a light-hearted relief from the tedious reading of the medical journals I have to do.

"I do not like drawing curtains, and am of no mind to lower the wattage on the lights outside my front door, as I feel it more important to be safe when entering the house in the dark. Incidentally, if burglars want to get in, they will."

Dr. Michael D Rom, L.Lane

(I spoke to Dr. Rom, who was very cordial, and kind enough to say he enjoyed the Newsletter and that "HELLO" was awful. But he felt there should be only news in the Newsletter, not views. If I have offended, apologies freely. On the question of lights, to object to drawing your curtains is a right, if a little unusual. I would just repeat - have lights if you wish, but avoid the sort of nuisance that Mrs Hankinson suffers. Ed)

BITS AND PIECES

There are a number of changes regarding the local elections in May. Some wards are being re-named, some gain Councillors, some lose, some new wards are being created.

Details are too complicated (and too boring!) to give in full here, but what affects us is as follows.

Those LRA members who are in what was Rickmansworth Town Ward will find it is now plain Rickmansworth Ward. Those in what used to be called Chorleywood Ward will find it now called Chorleywood East, and the area will lose one District and one Parish Councillor.

One innovation will be that the Chorleywood voters will have a polling station in Loudwater Farm. Sounds good, but watch out for traffic problems if an evening rush of voters coincides with the usual mad career of home-goers past that sharp bend.

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A delightful revelation. Apparently, the paper collected for recycling in Three Rivers is of such high quality that it is specially ordered by - wait for it! - "The Sun" newspaper.

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The Watford Observer, trawling through its files, produced a picture of our old Loudwater bus. That brought letters to the paper from former resident Muir Stratford, who remembered happy journeys in the "Harry" bus until 1972. Rob Simmonds also wrote to recall that the pioneering driver was John Frieth, then Rob's father, then Harry Cross. The bus was always known by the driver's name. Your Editor remembers that when he first came to Loudwater, he could not afford a car and he, his wife and his children went to work, to shop and to school and out for the evening using only Harry and other public road transport. Those were the days.

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Margaret Bianchin, of T. Rise, asks if she could have been right when seeing what she thought were wigeon and/or pochard on the river. Our internationally known ornithologist Peter Tate has the answer. Both were on Stocker's Lake in recent weeks, where they are quite often winter visitors, so it is more than possible that some had heard of the Bianchins' generosity and dropped in.

Even someone like Peter who has travelled the world birding can still get new experiences in just Loudwater. He writes: "On March 16 we had all three British Woodpeckers in our garden in the space of an hour-the Green Woodpecker which is very noisy at the moment, the Greater Spotted Woodpecker which is quite common on the nut feeder, and can often be heard drumming at this time, and then the Lesser Spotted high on our crab apple tree. It is not much bigger than a sparrow and almost rare. Being so small, however, it is probably missed."

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Roger Fawkner-Corbett of L.House, is the treasurer of the Friends of the City Churches. They are having an evening at St.Paul's on the 9th of June. It offers coffee, talks, music and a buffet supper in the Cathedral. Anyone interested contact him on 775695.

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PLANNING

- 0607/98 The Dell, L.Drive. Additions and extensions. Demolish side extension, build two-storey annex. (Refused).
- 0870/98 Five Trees, T.Way. One-storey extension. (Approved).
- 0901/98 Land at Hillpoint and rear of Glenhayes. Four houses with new access. Demolish existing house. (Approved)
- 1016/98 15, Lower Plantation. One-storey and first-floor extension (Approved).
- 0016/99 Hautbois, L.Heights. Replace side extension and rear extension (Approved).
- 0060/99 14, Lower Plantation. Part two-storey rear extension and first-floor side extension.
- 0112/99 Nightingale, Whisper Wood. One-storey rear extension.
- 0128/99 Burnside, T.Way. Conservatory at rear.

AND THE BAD NEWS!

This is the time of year when we ask for your subscription. At the AGM last year, it was, sorry to say, agreed that the subscription for 1999 should be £5. Most of you will be getting the official request soon.