

## LOUDWATER RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER No. 94

JANUARY 2000

Editor: John Jarrett

Because he is a pedantic old curmudgeon, your Editor refuses to say this is a Millennium. That starts on Jan 1, 2001.

But since there doesn't seem to be any major news for this issue, it may be a good time to answer a question that was put recently - "What is so special about this Loudwater of yours?"

It is easier, in fact, to start by saying what Loudwater is not. It is too recent to have any historic value. It is too small to carry any special weight in Herts. It cannot, like Watford, point to major industry, such as print or brewing: it cannot match Croxley Green's tradition of non-conformism or papermaking nor Bushey Heath's history of Jewish society and painting. We cannot match the coaching trade of Chipperfield, or Sarratt (let alone John le Carré and Smiley). We have not, like Abbots Langley, produced a Pope. We fail against our nearest likeness, Moor Park - no golf club, no great house.

So we must be humble - but not too much so.

What was Loudwater? First, but not till the mid-1800's, one great estate, Panmure Gordon's Loudwater House, and its grounds stretching from what is now Rickmansworth Playing Fields to Solesbridge Lane and North to Redhall Lane in Sarratt. We are left only with only the much altered L. House, and some of its out-buildings - the garage, the Coachman's House, The Dell, Flint Cottage. Then there was the paper making expansion with Glen Chess, the Mill House etc. But from the turn of the century, Loudwater slumbered and decayed, until Cameron Jeffs saw a handsome profit in developing the Loudwater Estate, and round it the rest of Loudwater spread.

We are newcomers, hardly seventy years old. We are an area of tolerable well-built houses, nothing great, nothing too modern, not much nasty. We have long been typically white Anglo-Saxon Protestants and middle-class, usually middle-aged, but today one in twelve Loudwater houses is home to families with roots in the Near or Far East, and few of us go to church anywhere. We're still mostly well-off, worth between half a million to three or four million, but we've so far only thrown up one or two multi-millionaires.

We are accountants, lawyers, oil men, second-level company directors, brokers, doctors, Mark and Sparkers (so convenient for the Baker Street H.Q.) We are, occasionally, performers, mostly in music. We have been from time to time thieves and fraudsters, quite often drunks, rarely adulterers, and regrettably from time to time we are foul-mouthed jobs and unscrupulous developers. We pay more attention to golf, bridge, fast cars and charity work than to politics where we are lacklustre Tories, but with a Liberal minority and the rare Socialist.

For one in three, it is a second marriage and we tend to follow the average of 2.4 children. We add on to our houses - boy, do we ever - so that a median Loudwater house now ranges from £400,000 to £750,000.

Nothing too special about all of that, one might say. Yet, time after time, new arrivals here begin to sense they have found somewhere of quality. It doesn't happen quickly because this is not a naturally neighbourly, over-the-fence area: in fact, social life is oddly split. Men may meet on City-bound trains or at a golf club, young mothers may talk at school gates, but in many roads, neighbours may visit only once or twice a year. Only the various LRA clubs-theatre, bridge, antiques or investments-plug that gap, and many ignore these, while the Asian community remains firmly uninvolved. So what does make Loudwater grow on those who come to live here?

Perhaps they come to realise that within 18 miles or 30 minutes of London, they are within the Green Belt, in a Conservation Area, an area with special protection; that hardly anyone is far from the chatter of a river: that anyone may hear or see a Muntjac Deer, a badger, a pheasant, a hedgehog, a fox: that almost all can, if sharp-eyed, see at least thirty varieties of birds from herons to hawks: that we still have hedgerows, woods, a lake, bridges for playing Poohsticks at, and trees.

My, do we have trees, almost all protected, as those who move in soon find when they dream of clearing this or that for more light. Your Editor alone has 21 different trees on his property and the Loudwater total is probably over a hundred. (Contrast the heavily-felled Moor Park Estate). We have almost no cheek-by-jowl housing. We have footpaths, bridle paths, but we do not have estate agents' boards, election posters, radio masts, street lights.

We have fought off those who wished to inflict on us an open-entry country club, a helicopter site, a gymkhana - but sadly we have lost our farms.

The various bodies looking after Greater Loudwater are rarely short of volunteers, and the LRA's membership is rarely below 95% of those eligible.

It does seem that, change as it has and must over its seventy year life, Loudwater has become something special. We are lucky. Floreat Loudwater in millennio novo.

### FIGHTING OUR CAUSE

Since everyone one and his maiden aunt is making nominations for the best of this or that of the 90s, why shouldn't this Newsletter be in the game? Who has been the LRA worker of the 90s?

There are obvious choices. The invaluable Isabel Johnson, but she has fled these parts: several other fragrant ladies have done great work, but came late in the 90s, or have left: we have had some excellent Chairmen, but that would look like toadying. So your Editor's choice for LRA Member of the decade is Don Cammell.

Don took over as Correspondence Secretary in 1981, and has been responsible for all our Planning responses ever since. He is diligent, knowledgeable, and notably crisp when any local authority seems to be failing.

We print below one of his recent efforts, when a petition got up by Barry Paydon got a less than satisfactory response from the Highways Partnership.

"Dear Mr. Walmsley,

Sarratt Lane, Loudwater

"Since receiving your letter ref. HP/2/3 SGW dated 10th. August 1999 acknowledging receipt of my letter to your Mr. S. Wooding concerning Loudwater Lane resurfacing, repairs to Solesbridge Lane and Sarratt Lane, our Association have received no communication from your department on this".

"Quite separately, but supported by our Association, Mr. Barry Paydon of Thorpland, Sarratt Lane has been pressing your department on behalf of Sarratt Lane residents for action to be taken to reduce dangerous speeding in the winding sections of Sarratt Lane. All he has received is a non-committal response from your department telling him that repainting of worn out and obscure 'SLOW' signs painted on the road are "on the list to do".

"Our Association is appalled by the inability of your

department to maintain and improve the heavily used through roads in Loudwater. Sarratt Lane and Loudwater Lane are used by motorists unfamiliar with the area as "cut through" highways which they traverse at high speed with no comprehension of how dangerous their speed can be around blind bends and along single passageway sections of the lanes".

"Please provide us with:-

- a) Firm dates for resurfacing Loudwater Lane along the badly broken-up sections.
- b) Firm dates for repainting 'SLOW' signs on Sarratt Lane.
- c) Assurance that 'SLOW' signs will be repainted on Loudwater Lane immediately resurfacing is completed.
- d) A response to our request for the grass triangle at the junction of Solesbridge Lane and Sarratt Lane to be converted into a mini island to eliminate the existing blind turn on this dangerous section of Solesbridge Lane. The grass triangle with traffic passing clock and anticlockwise according to driver preference is extremely hazardous and should be changed without further delay. It is a very serious traffic danger spot."

D. T. Cammell

(Peter Phillips, of Armitage Close, has also waded in via the local paper over the stupidly varying speed limits in L. Lane).

### **BITS AND PIECES**

Our investment clubs would like to increase their membership. The Loudwater Chess Investment Club needs one to two more members. The investment can be from £25 a month upwards, at members' choice. For more details, ring Tony Moss on 01923 774907. (And yes it does make money).

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After this issue, Jack Prince is giving up the post of Distribution Chief for the Newsletter. The fact that it is delivered with so few hiccups is due to the energy and good nature of Jack and his faithful band. Many thanks, Jack.

The new chief will be Roy Sterry of T.Way, to whom we wish good luck.

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Your Editor has been reproached for not paying tribute to the life of Gordon Done, who died last year. Gordon and Pam (who was for some years on the Committee) lived in Chess Lane for many years. It would take too long to list all of Gordon's community work, but above all, he was a pillar of the British Legion. A life well spent.

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Welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Gary Dodd and family at St. Cyrus, T. Rise

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Congratulations to the Watkiss family. For over 15 years, they have taken 20 to 40 people carol singing on behalf of a charity. This year they raised a record £251 for the Parkinson's Disease Society.

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### **FROM THE ESTATE**

"My colleagues and I on the Loudwater Estate Board, are pleased to be asked to add a few lines to the admirable newsletter which John Jarrett has produced on behalf of the Loudwater Residents Association for so many years.

"At the Company AGM in September, we discussed traffic problems on the Estate roads particularly concerned with the number and weight of the vehicles using roads not constructed to cope with such ever increasing demands. You will have noticed that we have sited two experimental bollards outside the Troutstream Way gate. These should prevent multi-wheeled heavy vehicles using that entrance. Later in the year, if this proves successful, a further two bollards will be sited at the Trout Rise gate. The exact positioning of the bollards was determined after consultations with all the emergency services to ensure access was in no way hindered".

"As also agreed at the AGM, architects and owners involved

in the planning of building works will be asked to ensure their contractors use smaller vehicles to deliver building materials to sites on the Estate

"You may also have noticed there has been drilling through the road surface in various parts of the Estate. Despite rumours to the contrary, there is no exotic end-product in prospect. The Company doing the drilling will produce for us an accurate profile of the road structures and this should help us to determine what more we need to arrange for their protection.

"It is also possible that the heavy vehicles, if, unregulated, could cause serious damage and costly inconvenience to the utility services under the sub-structure of the roads. There may be more radical action to be taken and we shall keep you informed of any plans.

"Meantime, apart from another mindless attack on the new notice board in the Spinney just before Christmas and a particularly splendiferous fusillade of fireworks over the valley at midnight on New Year's Eve, Loudwater eased itself very gently into the new Millennium." Derrick Speight, Chmn.

### **OUR CHAIRMAN WRITES**

"The executive Committee feel it is a privilege to serve the people of Loudwater and we wish you all joy at the dawn of the third Millennium. Two thousand years ago in a remote village in a far corner of the Roman Empire a child was born, who became a man preaching a way of love and working together which is still with us.

"People working together has certainly enhanced the feeling of community in Loudwater. Much has been achieved in the recent years with the Bridge Club, the Theatre Club, the Investment Club and the Children's Contact Group, which, together with other activities, which have provided new relationships.

"None of this happens without energy and much effort and I would like to express gratitude to all those work in the background. The quarterly Newsletter is of primary importance in our communication and grateful thanks are due to John Jarrett for his services, as Editor." Godfrey Crook, Chmn.

### **PLANNING**

- 01581/99 Omega Lodge, T. Way. Convert garages to habitable rooms, erect one-storey detached double garage, pitched roof. (Approved with tree protection)
- 01700/99 Bridle Path Cottage, L. Drive. Certificate of lawful use. (Approved).
- 01701/99 Tall Trees, L. Drive. Certificate of lawful use. (Approved).
- 01749/99 Tall Trees, L. Drive. Erect double garage. (Approved).
- 01788/99 Littlewolds, S. Lane. Two-storey side and front extensions, conservatory at rear. (Approved).
- 01731/99 2 Lower Plantation. One-storey and rear conservatory. (Approved).
- 01796/99 Bower Cottage, Rooks Hill. One-storey and rear extensions, replace garage. (Approved).
- 01803/99 Emmanuel House, Timber Ridge. One-storey conservatory. (Approved).
- 01875/99, 01876/99, 01905/99. Certificate of lawful use for level hard surface for access to Bridle path. (Refused).
- 01894/99 Winbar, T. Way. Two-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 01968/99 7 Lower Plantation. Part two-storey extension and first floor side extension. (Approved).
- 01996/99 Faraway Cottage, Bridle Lane. Convert garage to room. (Approved).
- 02010/99 Troutstream Hall, C/Wood Rd. Rear conservatory, lift tower. (Approved).
- 02113/99. 1&2 Rose Gardens. Three garages instead of four. (Approved).
- 02116/99 3 Rose Gardens. Garden room, alterations. (Approved).
- 02164/99 Willows, L. Drive. Two-storey rear and side extension.
- 02329/99 Rooks Hill Cottage, R. Hill. One-storey rear extension.

Club Numbers. Childrens' contact 770633; Bridge 710633; Investment see above; Theatre 721583