

Loudwater Residents Association

Your Editor makes no bones about returning (as promised) to the visit to the Houses of Parliament - only briefly noted last time because deadlines loomed.

It was an excellent evening for nearly ninety members. Champagne on the way in soothed our concern that one driver seemed to be going via Wapping Old Stairs, but we arrived in time. It was a balmy evening as we took drinks on the terraces where Gladstone, Disraeli, Attlee, Churchill and the Iron Lady had stood.

We were then in the hands of the guides, whom Richard Page MP, our host for the evening, told us were two of the best of the whole cadre of guides, and it was plain they had enough anecdotes about the history and oddities of Parliament to talk for hours rather than our half-hour tour.

We toured the Lords, looked at the Woolsack on which the Lord Chancellor sits (wool because it was a symbol of Britain's most important product, and still replaced each year) and then on to the Commons to see the seats where Blair, Hague, Kennedy and all would be sitting. The House was not in session, but MPs were still around, and there were whispers of "Isn't that so-and-so" as various members scurried to and fro. We saw the hall where former Prime Ministers' busts were installed, from Walpole to - Mrs. Thatcher. (One plinth was vacant - "It's going to be for her handbag!") we were told.

In the Chamber, our attention was drawn to lines marked on the floor about two feet in front of both the Government and Opposition benches. The lines, we were told, had been measured out as places behind which no one could reach the other side with a sword, and should anyone in anger run the risk of going over the line there would be a shout of "Toe the line!". At the back of the chamber, there is a wooden barrier or fence. Once past that, an MP has to take a seat in the House, but some just want to listen for a few moments without actually going into the chamber. So, they straddle the barrier and listen, in other words, they "sit on the fence".

Just as a grace note, our guide told us he was one of the special guard that has to accompany the Queen on her journey to the Commons at the opening of Parliament to ensure no one attacks her on the way.

We are all Richard Page's constituents, but, whatever anyone's political allegiance is, it would be churlish not to say how diligently and pleasantly he and the charming Mrs. Page looked after us. Richard was the speaker at the dinner that followed, and what a dinner! Anyone who cooks will know what a triumph it was for the Commons Kitchen to produce, among other things, a most succulent Boeuf Wellington for nearly a hundred people, and the rest of the menu was equally fine.

Richard's speech was very relaxed and competent and

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one anecdote is perhaps worth recalling. Lord Hailsham, then the Lord Chancellor, was passing through the Commons one day in his full imposing regalia, and happened to see the MP, Neill Macfarlane, to whom he wished to say something. He shouted out: "Neill!", and four Japanese tourists dutifully did so.

But this was not merely an evening for great food and wine, for anecdotes and insights - it was a reminder of how hard and long, and sometimes lethal, the journey has been to give you and me what, however flawed, is still the model of democratic government. The many LRA Committee members involved in this trip should feel proud.

The Garden Club tree trail

Through the good offices of Sue Stent, the Garden Club arranged for Paul Akers, an arboriculturist with Westminster City Council, to take a group round Loudwater to look at some of our trees - a general survey rather than picking out larger or unusual specimens. That may come later.

Once again, one of the LRA's initiatives brought together a group of people to enjoy a special interest.

As the twenty participants walked round, Mr Akers pointed out which trees were indigenous and which from abroad, which were suitable and which had been planted too close together. It was a hot and humid evening (August 23) so there was much gratitude to Linda Foster and her husband (The Warren, T. Rise) for welcome glasses of wine.

The Club's next outing is on Wednesday, October 10 for the Flower Festival at Leeds Castle. The special Christmas event at Wisley on November 28 is, alas, already fully booked.

The Estate AGM

This AGM was better attended than usual (some 60 people), probably because the Board had asked for support against vehement criticism by some members of the barrier and hut installation. This debate took up almost all the meeting.

Chairman John Parsons pointed out that, while the Company made every attempt to act only when majority support was clear for any change, it did have legal rights. If members were unhappy, they could call for Board resignations or a change of policy. Understandably, those nearest the hut were advocates of it being relocated but John Parsons stressed that moving the barrier higher up or opening the T.Way gate on to the Chorleywood Road would not be allowed by the Highway Agency as dangerous.

In fact, the majority of those attending expressed approval of the Board and the barrier/hut. John Parsons said that the Board would in any case, consider setting up a representative committee next year to assess the situation. He and Maurice Escow, (who were constitutionally due to retire) were re-elected.

Dogged does it

Irene Richards, daughter of the late Kathleen Richards whose death at the age of 102 we reported in

the last issue, has asked if this Newsletter could convey her great thanks to the many individuals and organisations who passed on their condolences. She says there were too many to send individual replies, but all were never the less, deeply appreciated.

She also sends this tale of a four-legged Loudwater character from the 1940's.

"A dog named Crackers, who used to live in T. Way, would regularly walk to Rickmansworth, presumably to visit a lady friend. When he was tired, he would lie down in the road at the junction of Station Road with the High Street, and play 'dead'. When a car stopped to see if he was all right and opened the door, Crackers would jump in. The driver, stuck with a dog, would usually look at the address on his collar and decide he might as well run the dog home, availing the not-so-Crackers a free lift."

Bits and Pieces

If you happen to see a very large, very blonde young New Zealander working on any of our footpaths, take note - you may be looking at a future Test Cricketer.

Luke Vivian, on a short stay in the UK, has been taken on by the Chorleywood Parish Council as an assistant to the Common Ranger and was thought worth being given a try for Chorleywood Cricket Club against North Mymms.

Coming in when the local team had slumped to 66-6, he cracked sixes and fours to hit an unbeaten 124 off 56 balls!

Another remarkable achievement has come from L. Drive resident George Watkins, who has painted a 120 foot mural along the wall of Watford Bowling Club. It shows some dozen members, men and women, strolling, chatting, at tables under gay parasols among tubs of flowers, and gives almost a three-dimensional look.

Says George: "It took me four weeks to create and was very demanding physically. I had to climb up and down ladders, mix my own paints, do a lot of running around. It was tiring".

Surely not? It couldn't be that George is 86? Well done, Sir!

A house in The Drive has been ordered to be demolished because Three Rivers D. C., and a Government Inspector have ruled that it was larger than the planning application had allowed. Loudwater residents will note with interest that the development is being championed by a Mr. Stent, of Bridle Path Cottage, who has been active in support of Cllr. Mark Shepherd and Mrs. Fitzpatrick in their attempted developments in Loudwater.

Trying to keep up

It is not always realised that the population of Loudwater changes about 10-12½ % a year. We do our best to keep up, but if our welcome to those named below is a bit late or a bit sketchy, apologies. So-welcome to Ms. L. Wiltshire in Chess Lane: Mr. B. Cannon, Mr. R. Head and Mr. N. Patel and Mrs. Bayhouse in L. Lane: Mr. and Mrs. Taylor in Overstream: Mr. Etten and Mr. and Mrs. Byne in T. Rise: Mr. Ian Clapp in T. Way: Mr. and Mrs. C. Reed and Mr. and Mrs. O'Hagan in Wagon Way.

The Editor has the last word

Now we have reached our century, it is perhaps time for me to retire and let someone else have an innings. This is, my last Newsletter.



Clearly the "new look" Newsletter was something you liked. Of the many people who said nice things, I would like particularly to thank Sir Frank Rogers and Mary Jane Peet, who were specially kind

It has been great fun working on the Newsletter for all these years and I must thank various Chairmen, Committee members, distributors etc. for all their support, but above all I thank all of you readers who have put up with me for so long.

Planning

- 01094-97/00 The Dell, L. Drive. One and two-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 01178/00 Loudwater Garage, T. Way. Redevelop to form four residential units
- 01559/00 Moonya, Bridle Lane. Two-storey rear extension (Approved)
- 00317/01 Land behind Rookery Wood, L. Lane. Build two houses.
- 00493/01 Med Mills, T. Rise. First-floor rear extension, dormer. (Approved).
- 00559/01 Oak End, Wagon Way. Front porch. (Approved).
- 00590/01 Woodlands, L. Lane. Two-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 00645/01 Mansard Cottage, L. Lane. Demolish existing house, build new.
- 00676/01 Montecello, L. Lane. One-storey extension. (Approved).
- 00678/01 Wren Top, Bridle Lane. Two-storey side extension,alts to roof. (Approved).
- 00748/01 Tall Trees/Bridle Path Cottage, L. Drive. Build three new dwellings, garages. (Refused).
- 00755/01 Tall Trees, L. Drive. Demolished existing and build new house. (Refused).
- 00824/01 Clarinsh, Lodge Drive. Two-storey side extension. (Approved).
- 00944/01 Five Trees, T. Way. First-floor side extension. (Approved).
- 00945/01 Pond House. Bridle Lane. Convert garage to study. (Approved).

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