



# The Ol' Trout

No. 139

May 2011

**Loudwater Residents' Association**

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Roy Sterry

## The Royal Wedding

The guests started arriving at 10 o'clock, coffee and buns were served and seats were taken as instructed so that everyone could enjoy this special occasion. No, this wasn't Westminster Abbey, just our house in Loudwater with invites to some 20 friends and neighbours for a marathon television spectacle followed by lunch at trestle tables in street party style on the terrace. With rain and heavy winds forecast a tent was erected and warm air blower installed. Our next door neighbours, Henry & Marion had said they had a family commitment but hoped to join us later: little did we know just how important that commitment was, but more of that after.

The viewers were noisy and the official commentators struggled to make themselves heard. It was time for the ladies to go into another room, with a television, of course so they could talk about the guests' dresses and hats. The men took the opportunity to lubricate their singing voices as the first hymn started up. The ladies were too engrossed to be tempted, but only for a little while. Lunch was served and toasts were made and everyone congratulated the Royal Family for pulling off a wonderfully British occasion, albeit not a State one. And in true

British style the only organisation that got anything wrong was the weather forecaster, for which we were grateful.

But what of the missing neighbours? They eventually turned up after a number had left, with surprise guests, who stayed long enough to be photographed with us before being whisked away to perform other duties.



Roy Sterry

## How to have a beautiful garden and save money



It's that glorious time of the year when the sun is out, the birds are singing and everything in the garden is growing madly.

It is also the time of the year when garden centre owners up and down the land are rubbing their hands together in gleeful anticipation of all those unplanned impulse buys and a lovely late frost to catch out the unwary.

Don't pander to their greed! Follow a few basic rules and save a fortune on failed plants.

**FIRSTLY:** know your soil. Most of us around here have very alkaline soil which is not naturally good for rhododendrons, camellias, pieris and skimmias amongst others.

I think we all have an abundance of flints and stones. Whatever its texture, all soil benefits from some improvement, so before planting anything, dig in lots of nice organic matter - for example well rotted manure or kitchen waste - and a sprinkling of blood, fish and bone for nutrients.

**SECONDLY:** try really hard not to buy plants just because they look pretty at the garden centre. What happens next is that you get home, find there's no room for it, leave it out on the patio for a few months and eventually shoe-horn it into some dank corner of the garden where it can die out of sight.

The same principle applies to the man knocking at your door with a van load of "cheap" plants. **YOU DON'T NEED THEM!** If you did, you would have already been to the garden centre.

The right thing to do is to decide **BEFORE** you leave your house roughly what type of plant would be suitable for the space you are trying to fill. And if you have no space, then what are you doing at the garden centre? Do something more constructive instead, (weeding?)

Work out how much sun or shade is available in the space, how sheltered or exposed the site is and how big a plant you need. Always think about how large a particular plant is going to grow in the next few years.

Then do some research - so many books are available. I could not function without the very brilliant "Right Plant, Right Place" by Nicola Ferguson.

**LASTLY:** unless you are buying large shrubs to give your garden structure, **NEVER BUY JUST ONE.** One lonely little plant will be instantly lost. Always buy three or five at least. Then you will have either a good clump or plants that can be repeated around the garden.

So there you have it - no excuse to waste a single penny on a plant failure ever again!

**TOPICAL TIP:** It has been so dry throughout April and the beginning of May, so don't forget to water. A really good soaking once or twice a week rather than a daily sprinkle.



Elaine Bailey

## LRA Diary of Events May to September

May	Wednesday 4th	Bridge Club
	Thursday 5th	Coffee Morning Cockayne, Loudwater Lane
	Saturday 7th	Fine Dining Club
	Tuesday 10th	Investment Club
	Thursday 12th	<b>LRA AGM All members invited</b>
June	Wednesday 18th	Bridge Club
	Friday 27th	Wine Club – Social evening with catered food and wine
	Wednesday 1st	Bridge Club
	Tuesday 14th	Investment Club
	Wednesday 15th	Bridge Club
July	Wednesday 22nd	Garden Club – Visit to Cambridge Botanical Gardens and Anglesey Abbey Gardens
	Thursday 23rd	LRA Committee Meeting
	Friday 24th	Wine Club – White wines from New Zealand, Tim Syrad
	Wednesday 6th	Bridge Club
	Saturday 9th	A Gala Evening of Opera and song in the gardens of Merlins, Sarratt Road
August	Tuesday 12th	Investment Club
	Wednesday 20th	Bridge Club Summer party
	Friday 22nd	Wine Club – To be advised
	Saturday 30th	Theatre Club Wife Begins at Forty. The Mill, Sonning
	Wednesday 3rd	Bridge Club
September	Sunday 7th	Garden Club. At Home – cream teas at Mont au Source
	Wednesday 17th	Bridge Club
	Saturday 27th	Fine Dining Club
	Wednesday 7th	Bridge Club
	Thursday 8th	LRA Committee Meeting
September	Tuesday 13th	Investment Club
	Wednesday 21st	Bridge Club
	Friday 23rd	Wine Club – Fine Wines from The Rhone, Sandy Leckie
	Wednesday 28th	Garden Club

### Theatre Club Outing to Die Fledermaus



What a brave man is Peter Laule, Chairman of the Loudwater Theatre Club. Last time he asked me to review a Theatre Club outing I slated it. It was to see *Kismet*, starring no less than Michael Ball, at the English National Opera. It was awful – and I said so. Luckily, even Michael Ball agreed, in interviews afterwards. This time, however, I have nothing but praise for the Club's outing to Milton Keynes to see *Die Fledermaus* by Johann Strauss Junior. I will admit that I am biased. I was born in Vienna and I love Strauss. I was only three years old when I left Vienna but I have Vienna Blood – excuse the pun!

We left the Royal Masonic School in Rickmansworth at 2.30 pm, heading for a destination of which I had never heard - Roade, in Northamptonshire. Peter, together with Club committee member and gourmet, Maurice Escow, had found a restaurant, after several outings, at Roade, called the Roade House. It was only about half an hour's drive away from Milton Keynes and what a find it was. Viv Schragger Powell, who runs the Fine Dining Club, might well consider it for one of her outings. The food was excellent, Peter and Maurice chose just the right wines, and the prices were very fair.

Then we were off to Milton Keynes. I'd never been there before. With respect to MK, I am not sure I had missed much. The theatre, however, was impressive by its very size. I got lost going to the loos but so what? We settled in our Royal Circle Seats. The overture began. I was immediately transported to Vienna.

*Die Fledermaus* is not really an opera – it is an operetta, with quite a great deal of dialogue – but the music was sublime. (It was to me anyway). It was sung in English but, very cleverly, there were surtitles for us to read. I am sure that all opera lovers will have found that listening to operas sung in English is very difficult. Milton Keynes made it easy for us. We knew what the singers were singing – except for a little breakdown in the technology - but who cares? The production was wonderful, the singers, except for the poor understudy who sang Prince Orlofsky, were

excellent. This was the Welsh National Opera at its best. Also, because the operetta was in English, I understood the witty dialogue between Frosch, the jailer, and his captives – something I had never been able to do before because I had only seen the operetta in German. What's more, Frosch made his jokes topical, which was another great bonus.

The ending was magnificent. Taking a leaf out of a recent Royal Opera House production, the curtain calls were done to the aria "Die Fledermaus" which allowed the audience to clap as though it was the Radetsky March (written by Johann Strauss Senior), and as performed at the Vienna New Year's Day Concert.

Our coach awaited us. We were back at the Royal Masonic School by 11.30pm. What a wonderful day it had been. You really should not have missed it.

#### Peter Phillips.

On the 30th of July we are returning to that most pleasant Theatre Restaurant The Mill at Sonning. We've booked to see another Ray Cooney & Co comedy "Wife Begins at Forty".

We hope to enjoy ourselves as much as we did last time and have a good laugh and pleasant meal at a fair price - in a delightful setting.

#### Peter Laule

#### Latest slurpings from the Loudwater Wine Club

Our February event saw members chase round the globe as they endeavoured to grasp the essence of two grape varieties – Riesling and Grenache – under the tutelage of Gary Coster.

This proved to be quite a challenge, particularly for Riesling which is used to make such hugely diverse wines that tasting just four really couldn't do the grape justice. Gary reckoned we could have a tasting of Riesling every month for a year and only scratch the surface of this versatile grape.

However, in one evening he did manage to demonstrate that Riesling is capable of producing wines that are considerably superior to Blue Nun (I can't believe I've actually named this wine in a Wine Club report – I'll probably be excommunicated from the club now!) and that this is a grape worth further exploration.

We moved on to try wines made from Grenache, one of the most widely grown grapes in the world. Renowned for its jammy, stewed fruit flavours, Grenache is frequently blended with other grapes so it was a treat to try it on its own.

Members were surprised at how mellow this grape could be and, taste buds whetted, we expect to see a good turnout for our September event when we'll taste fine wines from the Rhône, one of the spiritual homes of Grenache.

Our event in March was one of the most challenging to date when Lindsay Oram posed the question, 'Do you always get more for your money?'

This was a unique event when we had the opportunity to compare wines from the same producer which cost widely different amounts. It quickly became clear that increased TLC of grapes and wines is matched by an increased price tag. But is the more expensive wine any better and which did we prefer?

It was fairly easy to determine which wine was the more expensive in each pairing. In general, the lower priced, budget wine was an easy quaffer whereas its more expensive sibling was more complex with different flavours developing with each taste. They were all good wines but whether we would be prepared to pay twice the price is certainly a matter for the individual wallet.

You can read more about these events and the wines we tried on [www.loudwaterwineclub.org.uk](http://www.loudwaterwineclub.org.uk). You'll also find details of our forthcoming events so, if something takes your fancy, why not come along and give it a try?

#### Buzz Coster

## I do, I do, I do...

... believe Loudwater enjoyed one of the best evening ever put on by the LRA. There were so many headlines I could have given to this review on the Abbagirls evening, arranged by the LRA Events Committee, and held at Loudwater Farm on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March. "Thank you for the Music" was an obvious one. "From Las Vegas to Loudwater" was another. Slightly more risqué were "Loudwater - full of Dancing Queens" or "LRA Chairman, Tony Hale, meets his Waterloo". Davida, my very p.c. wife, forbade me from using the last two so "I do, I do, I do" will have to do!

The genius behind presenting the Abbagirls to Loudwater was, of course, Colin Timms, Chairman of the LRA Events Committee. Previously he had brought us Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Tom Jones and Neil Diamond imitators but I think we are probably all agreed that the Abbagirls were the best. The audience



was one of the largest we have had in the

Loudwater Farm Barn - 75 - yet there was enough room to dance and, believe me, there

were plenty of dancing (Queens!). Bless Percy McCloskey and Lorna Hawxwell for starting off the dancing but once they were on the floor so was nearly everyone. This was hardly surprising. The Abbagirls have

appeared in 20 different countries and in over 3500 shows. They were the first Abba tribute to tour in South Korea and they even performed in



Las Vegas at the Imperial Palace Hotel Legends show.

Colin would like me to thank all his team of helpers, Lorna Hawxwell and Christine Sterry for preparing the delicious main course, and Jo Homewood and Colin's wife, Carole, for making the equally delicious soup as a starter. Charles Homewood put in a tremendous amount of work in enlarging the stage, and I could go on in mentioning many others who helped in setting up and then clearing away but this article would become much too long. Thank you, anyway.

Colin's next big event is an Opera Evening to be held in the grounds of Merlins, the home of Charles and Jo Homewood. Make a note in you diaries - it's on the 9<sup>th</sup> July and will feature the lovely Emma Carrington, (daughter of Lorna Hawxwell), straight from her appearance at Glyndebourne, plus other highly acclaimed singers.

I cannot finish without giving praise to Tony Hale, the LRA Chairman, who welcomed us all in with a lovely glass of sparkling wine, compered the show, and made everyone feel part of one big and happy community. Well done, everybody.

**Peter Phillips**

## Loudwater Garden Club

2011 has seen a change of management for the Loudwater Garden Club. After running the Club for nearly seven years Sue Stent and her team, Sigi Enbergs, Jane Prickett, Sally Levenson and Gill Fulker, decided the time had come to take a well-earned retirement. Taking the baton from them are myself as Chairman, Ulla Hauser as Events Organiser, Barbara Holden as Treasurer and Joan Martin as Secretary.



An Extraordinary AGM to ratify the change over was held in February in the Small Barn at Loudwater Farm. AGMs being somewhat boring events, this was followed by a fascinating talk on "My Passion for Snowdrops" by Dr. Anne Shaw, which should have us all looking much more closely from now on at our fair maids of February.

The new committee have been working on a programme of events for the rest of the year and the first of these took place on April 13<sup>th</sup>, when Club members visited Audley End House and Gardens. We were given a really excellent guided tour of the House, learning much about its history and the families who lived there and admiring the views of the landscape gardens laid out by Capability Brown. After lunch we were free to visit the newly restored kitchen, dairy and laundry areas, where the whitewashed walls were used to screen videos of the servants at work and to explore the magnificent walled kitchen gardens, where all the plots were edged with beautiful espaliered fruit trees, all old varieties (one dated from 1600) and just coming into full flower.

We hope to have a full programme for the year in place shortly, but can assure members that our very popular "Gardeners' Question Time" will round off the year as usual. The panel are all booked and raring to go.

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to Sue and her team for all they did for the Club. They are going to be a very hard act to follow but we are going to give it a darn good try.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, which will be a double trip. We shall be visiting Cambridge Botanical Gardens in the morning and will then go on to have lunch at Anglesey Abbey and explore the gardens there.

On August 7<sup>th</sup> - The garden Club at Home - an afternoon party in the Garden at Mont au Source, including a cream tea, strawberries and wine. Come and join us.

**Margaret Jarrett**

## Loudwater Bridge Club

The Bridge Club meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. We are a thriving club with 28 members and regularly have 5 full tables and play the Chicago system.

Bridge evenings start at 7.20 pm with refreshments at 9pm and along with a chance to win a bottle of wine all for £2.

We are a very social group and welcome new people. If you don't have a regular bridge partner, don't worry, we will always find you a partner for the evening.

For more information please contact

**Janis Rees** on 01923 710095

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir (or Madam)

Was it really necessary to close Loudwater Lane from 3<sup>rd</sup> May for two weeks so that a house that has taken 11 years to build could have water, electricity, gas, etc. installed in it? Surely this could have been done in just a couple of days. The inconvenience to folk in Loudwater Lane, Armitage Close, Hayward Copse, Bridle Lane, Sarratt Lane, Loudwater Ridge, Loudwater Heights and Lower Plantation has been enormous. I do not blame the developer. I do blame those who allowed him that amount of time to put in the required amenities.

Yours etc.

Peter Phillips

Armitage Close

## Closure of Loudwater Lane 3<sup>rd</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May

Hertfordshire County Council stated that the new connections to the foul sewer, water, gas and electricity mains should occur during a single closure of Loudwater Lane. There are separate contractors for each utility, therefore including sub-contractors nine parties to be co-ordinated and two weeks was the minimum time required. New connections into the existing public utility services located beneath Loudwater Lane had to be made and Hertfordshire Highways have decided that this can only be safely carried out by closing a part of Loudwater Lane during the period of the works.

I wrote to Neighbours in Rooks Hill, Timber Ridge and Loudwater Lane that the section for the works was from the centre line of Rooks Hill to the drive entrance to Chess House but that access will be possible to all properties throughout the work period for residents and all service vehicles including waste collections. Through traffic has been limited during working periods but has been possible before 8am and after 1700 each working day and throughout the weekends.

I have personally been available on the site or nearby whilst the work was being carried out to handle any concerns or particular problems.

I am sorry for any disruption and inconvenience caused.

Godfrey Crook, Keruing-Cedar, Chess Hill, Loudwater. Tel 01923 776567

### Welcome

*Karen Roston, Lavender Cottage, Chess Hill*

*Mike Oldham & Patricia Eckersall, Tree Tops, Cherry Hill*

## Club Scene

### Troutstream Investment Club

*Meets 8pm, 2nd Tuesday of month*

Chairman

Trevor Slade (01442 831918)

### Theatre Club

Chairman

Peter Laule (778114)

### Wine Club

*Meets 8pm, 4th Friday of month*

Chairman

Tony Hale (774374)

### Bridge Club

*Meets 7.30pm, 1st and 3rd Wednesday of month*

Chairman

Janis Rees (710095)

### Garden Club

*Meets 4th Wednesday of month*

Chairman

Margaret Jarrett (774225)

### Fine Dining Club

Chairman

Viv Schragger-Powell  
(896198)

## Forthcoming Charitable Event

### Stewarts Law Moor Park 10k & Junior Fun Runs

The tenth annual event in aid of the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre (the support and information service at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre)

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

Merchant Taylors' School

Online entry now open at:

[www.moorpark10k.org.uk](http://www.moorpark10k.org.uk)

Further information from Buzz Coster (01923 844107)

### Henry and Marion Brown win Fancy Dress award.

Moor Park Golf Club held an Olde Time Music Hall Show on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, where the audience was invited to dress for the occasion. A prize was awarded by the Moor Park Committee to the best and most original fancy dress. I am happy to record that the prize was won, quite rightly, by Henry and Marion Browne of Troutstream Way.

### Peter Phillips.

The Ol' Trout is the newsletter of the Loudwater Residents' Association. It is published quarterly.

Editor/Designer:  
Carole Timms (776681)

**Please e-mail your articles to  
[loudwaterresidents-association@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:loudwaterresidents-association@yahoo.co.uk)**

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