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The Parish Pump

The Croxley Green Parish Council's House Magazine

Spring/Summer 2009

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The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views or policy of the Parish Council.

COUNCILLORS

North Ward:

Nik Bennett	773623
Frank Brand	248704
Brian Norman (Chairman of Council)	710250
Hazel Seeley (Chairman of - E&A Committee)	772696
Wendy Shafe (Vice Chairman of Council)	441638

Croxley Green Ward:

Marion Birch	449092
Leighton Dann	778484
Christine Jefford (Vice Chairman - E&A Committee)	771769
Janet Martin	774514
Roger Seabourne	770629
Cliff Vassiliou	779927

South Ward:

David Bains (Chairman - P&D Committee)	441480
Phil Brading	492893
Jeremy Hollands (Vice Chairman - P&D Committee)	448382
Mark Saxon	772581
David Wynne-Jones	251905

Chairman's Comment

Spring brings with it the benefits of regeneration and new beginnings. As one enters Croxley from Watford a large sales hording makes it clear that you are about to enter the 'New Croxley'. This is very apt with the quiet improvements that have been propagated over the past months and, like nature's renewal and in conjunction with the community, we are proud to promote the positive progress that has now been achieved.

Many of the ideas and projects have emanated from the Junior School Council, whose aspirations have the benefit of being untainted by preconceived opinion. Their ideas have included the campaign to raise the community's awareness of uncontrolled dog fouling, this being endorsed by a poster competition. This was followed by the autumn planting of spring bulbs within their respective school grounds. This alone has spawned the gardening enthusiasts amongst the

children to adopt small areas of school ground to be cultivated, assisted by the Croxley Green Parish Council Rangers. The Parish Council have been, since last summer, slowly placing planters around the numerous shopping parades, as well as planting bulbs in some grassed areas, hopefully bringing some spring colour to the community. Bird boxes constructed here by the Rangers have been placed in various bird friendly locations within Croxley.

Due to the Councillors endeavours, most of the funding for these projects has either been by local sponsors or latterly from successful applications to external organisations for grants aimed at helping the environment.

With quiet diplomacy we have now retained the contract to maintain The Green and Stones Orchard. We would like to thank the community for their concern and support whilst we negotiated for the retention of the contract.

The culmination of the last year's council work was the achievement of a partnership between the Community Centre and Parish Council to provide a Village Hall that now will be of benefit to the Croxley Residents and associated organisations that dwell within the village boundaries.

These are but a few of the projects upon which your council have embarked within the last year. The reports from the respective Council Committees will give a broader spectrum of our other ongoing projects.

As a community we should be proud of our village, especially with the prospect of a positive future.

**Cllr Brian Norman
Chairman**



Flowers in Croxley

Flowers4Croxley

Spring has sprung and summer is seeping into our village. We are beginning to enjoy summer evenings admiring the herbaceous borders, dead heading the petunias and digging up the daisies from the lawn...talking about daisies, have you by any chance noticed more and more flowers popping up all over our village? Did you happen to spot the thousands of spring daffodils splashing yellow on our village verges? Or have you noticed the blooming baskets, barrels and beds brightening up some of our shopping parades? Perhaps you've spotted the flower filled beds outside the shops in Watford Road when you've popped in for a hairdo or a curry? If not, surely you must have noticed several rose beds 'rising' from the Two Bridges roundabout?

We hope you have noticed at least some of our efforts because the *Flowers4Croxley* committee has been working very hard to provide a splash of colour all year round. In case this is the first you've heard of us, *Flowers4Croxley* was formed by residents and Parish Councillors in partnership with the Parish Council in March 2008 for the sole purpose of brightening up our village. You may be interested to know that research indicates that improving/enhancing the environment you live in has a positive impact on all sorts of anti-



social behaviour... We certainly hope so!

With an initial start up budget of £350 from the Parish Council, our funds very quickly 'grew' to over £2000 thanks to our fantastic local businesses and shops who 'dug deep' and made generous donations. In fact, donations are still growing, along with offers of help from our great community who really seem to be supporting this project. In fact, last summer we had a problem watering flower beds during a particularly dry spell. Not only did the nearby shops make a concerted effort to keep the flowers alive, but Shamma Drycleaners gave us permission to connect an outside tap to their water supply and a friendly Croxley plumber, Ben Guest, has since agreed to plumb in the tap free of charge enabling volunteers to use a hose pipe in dry spells. Volunteers have also helped to clear beds ready for planting and local school children have helped the Parish Rangers plant literally thousands of bulbs. All in all, it's been a pretty successful year!

And it doesn't end there! We still have lots of other projects lined up. With the dedicated help of Parish Secretary Amanda Taft, who spent hours filling in the paperwork, we fulfilled stringent criteria and were successful in our bid for a grant to provide and maintain flowerbeds on the Two Bridges roundabout – believe me, this was no mean feat! We also plan to provide floral troughs under the 'welcome' signs at the

main entrances to our village which we believe will send a positive message about our environment to residents and visitors. The Parish Rangers have also worked really hard on our behalf, but a project particularly close to their hearts is the *Flowers4Croxley* initiative to encourage local schools to grow their own produce and enable children to taste their very own home grown fruit and vegetables. We have been liaising with the schools to find out exactly what



they need and, as a result, several large vegetable patches have already been constructed by the Rangers and planted out by children at Little Green School. Yorke Mead School is next.

Lots of residents have already commented on the positive impact the floral displays are having and we are getting requests to provide planters and baskets elsewhere in the village. If you know of an area which would benefit, please contact us via the Parish Council and we will see what we can do. Of course, we rely on donations and volunteers, so *please* let us know if you can help us in any way too! Meanwhile we would like to give a huge thanks to the following people/organisations for their support so far:

Shamma Drycleaners – for kindly allowing us to plumb in a tap to aid watering, **Ben Guest Services** - for providing and plumbing in the tap free of charge and **Cllr Leighton Dann** – for propagating most of our summer bedding plants and saving the geraniums which were about to freeze to death in my greenhouse.

Mandy Grant



Daffodils

Spring is finally here and is very welcome following such a hard, cold winter. After all the efforts of the primary school children of Croxley, we were rewarded with what can only be described as magnificent displays of daffodils to herald the end of winter. Little Green Lane's verges were transformed by the pupils of Little Green School from white pillows of snow to beautiful green and yellow flower covered delights to the eye. It's great to see the benefits of their hard work for all to appreciate.

In central Croxley, Barton Way recreation ground has also been stunning local residents with masses of daffs popping up around the play area and around trees within the park. Thanks to the hard work of Malvern Way's students for improving this area so much.

Moving further around Croxley it's not hard to spot where the pupils of Yorke Mead School had so eagerly planted daffs, late last year. The footpath between Dulwich Way and the Guild of Sport was a delight to pass through due to their efforts, and the boundary of Stones Orchard and their school field could only be described as amazing.

I'm sure all the users of this area have benefited from this abundance of colour.

Many thanks go out to all the students who made this possible and through their hard work we have all been rewarded with floral displays that will be repeated for many years to come. It truly is an achievement they can all be proud of and shows a little hard work can go a very long way and can be enjoyed by all.

I hope future generations of students will be able to add to this and give us even more colourful open spaces to mark spring's



arrival in years to come. Perhaps we will be the brightest village around!!

*Andrew Goddard
Ranger*

Chairman's Charity Quiz

On Saturday 21 February, Croxley Green Parish Council held its 8th Chairman's Charity Quiz Night under the guidance of Cllr Mark Saxon as Question Master. The annual event was organised by Cllr Christine Jefford with the assistance of Parish Cllrs, staff and friends.

This year's nominated charity was Herts Air Ambulance – we understand that the funds raised will be utilised in Hertfordshire. We were also lucky to have two representatives from the charity present at the event who explained a little of the work the air ambulance does.

The evening was a great success with 96 'quizzers' sitting down to supper and the quiz. The evening resulted in a grand total of £863.42 being raised. The Parish Council would like to thank everyone who provided raffle prizes or took part in the quiz.

The winning team, led by Cllr Marion Birch, was presented with an Easter egg each together with a certificate to mark the occasion.

Cllr Christine Jefford

Visit to Somerset House Ice Rink

A coach of 48 senior citizens visited Somerset House on a crisp December afternoon to watch the thrills and spills on the rink. The coach then made its way to the West End to see the Christmas decorations in Regent Street, Oxford Street and the adjoining streets, passing Trafalgar Square en route in order to see the traditional Norwegian Christmas tree and illuminations. The coach then returned to Croxley Green after a very pleasant afternoon.

Cllr Christine Jefford

Gardening Clubs

The children of Croxley Green have been very keen to start gardening and, thanks to the Parish Rangers, things are really starting to happen.

Only a few weeks ago, at a meeting in the Parish Council Office, plans were made for the Rangers to help the Primary Schools in Croxley Green.

Immediately they set to work making raised beds for planting at all the schools. They have also given advice for planting and have joined Gardening Club meetings at Little Green School to help the very enthusiastic children with their work. Much of this work is being funded by the Parish Council.

It is planned that the support from the Rangers will not stop here and that they will be able to help at the various schools throughout the year to give advice and much needed muscle power with the heavier work!

Soon the children will be enjoying the fruits of their labour and will be tucking into the fresh vegetables they have grown.

Cllr Wendy Shafe



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01923 443770

Play Area Transformations

Watch out for changes to the play areas in Croxley!

We have got permission from Three Rivers District Council to add playground games markings to the multi skills court in Barton Way recreation ground. This we hope will be done before half term in May, but certainly by the summer holidays, and will provide an area for younger children to play. It will include a range of markings to encourage balance, target practice, co-ordination and cycling skills.

It is hoped that this area will then be used, particularly during school hours, by the younger children to widen their play experiences and to extend the use of the court. The markings will be away from the ends of the court where the basketball nets are so that older children will be able to use the court as well at other times.

The next phase of development will be in partnership with Three Rivers, and possibly Herts County Council by way of a grant. This will see a **total**

transformation of the play area in Barton Way with new ideas and equipment. There will be an extensive consultation period where the views of children and teenagers will be sought and considered so that the young people of Croxley have an area which they can use and enjoy, and feel some sort of ownership for, as they will have a say in what goes into it!

We will keep you informed, but do let us know what you want to see and do in the parks in Croxley through the consultations, via school councils, at our stand at The Revels in June or by email/letter to the Parish Office. It will take time but we should soon have play areas to be proud of in Croxley!

Cllrs Janet Martin and Wendy Shafe

New Face of Croxley Tennis Club

Residents of Croxley Green might have noticed a dramatic change in the facilities at Croxley Tennis Club over the last few months. Those members who valued the fading

elegance of subsiding courts and a clubhouse built from a converted portakabin have been won over by a major redevelopment of the site.

Now boasting six floodlit courts, three of them new, two mini-tennis courts and an impressive new clubhouse, Croxley Tennis Club is rapidly becoming the place to be seen in the area. Attractive to budding Andy Murray's of all ages and standards, the Club would welcome new players and there is a range of membership packages available to suit all pockets, even in the current economic climate!

In its final stages of regeneration, Croxley Tennis Club can now rightly take its place alongside other local amenities that make Croxley Green such a good place to live.



Neighbourhood Watch

Although our village is one of the safest in Three Rivers it still relies on everyone keeping a look out for the occasional anti-social problem that crops up. For this it needs volunteers in each area to act as co-ordinators as well as representatives in each street.

At the annual Neighbourhood Watch conference last November, each area had a table allocated to it with ten seats: most were full but our Croxley Green table had only two representatives. Something is wrong if we are the only area without representatives.

Being on Neighbourhood Watch is not hard work: in fact normally nothing happens in Croxley. I have only been asked to deal with two incidents in my ten-year experience – but we need volunteers so that we don't end up as the only village in South West Herts which is unrepresented. In North Croxley there is currently no one at all so we would really like one or two public-spirited residents to join up.

Everything is computerised nowadays (except burglaries of course) so once we get your names we will connect you with Malcolm Adcock – the local area Watch Liaison Officer who sends out a regular update on local events.

If you have made up your mind to serve the community in this way contact David Wynne-Jones on 01923 251905 or Geoff Ellis on 01923 772434.

Remember 'A friend is a stranger you have yet to meet' and 'a neighbour is someone whose property needs safeguarding just as much as yours does.' Pick up that phone.

David Wynne-Jones

Interview with Mr Alan Withey, Managing Director of M25 Security Systems Ltd

Alan was born in Croxley Green where he lived until recently when he moved to Abbots Langley with his wife Janey.

Alan trained at Dynalarm and attended Harrow Technology College. He started the business in 1980 under the name of Securalarm and in due course the name was changed to M25 Security. The business, which has been based in New Road for the past 16 years, started with a staff of one (Alan!), which in time increased to four plus administration staff.

M25 supply systems to residential, commercial and industrial premises within a 50 mile radius of Croxley Green – they have even fitted an alarm system in France!

Alan believes that every home and business benefits from a security system to deter uninvited guests from entering a property. Electronic security is the most effective deterrent to prevent your premises from being burgled, vandalised or damaged by fire.

M25 supplies alarm systems, CCTV and access alarm systems. For further details please contact 01923 441117 or www.m25security.co.uk.

Cllr Christine Jefford

The Parish Council Budget 2009-2010

<u>Finance & Administration</u>		Budget	<u>103</u>	<u>Groundworks</u>	Budget (£)
101	General Admin				
4001	Salaries & Wages	64,000	4001	Salaries & Wages	54,535
4007	Courses / Confer- ences	50	4006	Protective Clothing	500
4008	Training	250	4008	Training	1,500
4009	Travel	1,200	4010	Misc Staff Costs	650
4011	Rates	3,000	4017	Health & Safety	1,500
4012	Water Rates	900	4018	Refuse Disposal	50
4013	Rent	100	4037	Grounds Maintenance	2,000
4014	Light & Heat	1,500	4041	Equipment Hire	200
4016	Janitorial	1,400	4042	Equipment Maintenance	1,100
4017	Health & Safety	100	4046	Equipment Purchased	1,600
4020	Misc Establishment Costs	500	4051	Vehicle License & Insurance	1,600
4021	Telephone & Fax	1,600	4055	Fuel & Oil - LS08 WCP	1,200
4023	Stationery, Printing & Postage	1,600	4060	Fuel & Oil - Ground-	1,000
4025	Insurance	3,900			
4026	Photocopy Hire / Charges	2,500	4070	Maintenance - LS08 WCP	500
4027	Computer Software & IT	500	4071	Maintenance - Tractor	500
4036	Property Mainte- nance	1,000	4072	Maintenance - Ride on Mower	570
4156	Audit Fees - Exter-	960		OverHead Expenditure	69,005
4157	Audit Fees - Internal	820	1061	Agency Income - HCC Mtce	1,400
4158	Accountancy Fees	790	1062	Agency Income - TRDC Mrce	0
4963	F&A Project -	28,500	1080	Miscellaneous Income	0
	Tfr from Reserves - Pension Contrib	-6,000		Total Income	1,400
	OverHead Expenditure	109,170		103 Net Expenditure	67,605
1076	Precept	242,845	107	Grants (incl S137)	
1090	Interest Received	2,300	4200	Chairman's Charity Expenditure	1,000
	Total Income	245,145	4711	S137 Grants	1,000
	101 Net Expenditure	-135,975		Community Hall Membership Grant	9,100
				Tfr from Building Reserves	-19,600
				OverHead Expenditure	-8,500
			1077	Grants Received	0
			1200	Chairmans Charity Income	1,000
				Total Income	1,000
				107 Net Expenditure	-9,500
			150	Community/Village Hall	
			4036	External Decoration	4,000
			4036	Flood Prevention work	6,500
				OverHead Expenditure	10,500
				Total Income	0
				150 Net Expenditure	10,500
102	Local Democracy		199	F & A Capital & Projects	
4024	Subscriptions/Publications	2,000	4175	Sale of Assets	0
4033	Parish Pump News- letter	5,000	4823	Tfr to Vehicle Repl Fund	5,900
4201	Chairman's Allow- ance	500	4824	Tfr to Equipt Repl Fund	4,100
4300	Events - Revels on the Green	1,000		OverHead Expenditure	10,000
	OverHead Expenditure	8,500		199 Net Expenditure	10,000
1031	Map Income	50		Finance & Admin.	- Expenditure
1051	Advertising Income	1,500			- Income
	Total Income	1,550			198,675
	102 Net Expenditure	6,950			249,095
				Net Expenditure	-50,420

Senior Citizens Tea Party

On Tuesday 2nd June 2009, the Parish Council will be holding a tea party at Little Green School. There will be music and song and the children will be serving the refreshments. This is expected to be a popular event and as tickets are limited, places will be decided by means of a lucky draw. If you would like to enter the draw please complete the form below with your details and the name of your guest and return the slip to the Parish Council by 18 May 2009 when the draw will take place.

To be eligible to attend you (and your guest) must be a resident of Croxley Green, a senior citizen and must be independently mobile.

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Name of Guest:

I would like to attend the Senior Citizens Tea Party on Tuesday 2nd June 2009 and I confirm that both my guest and I are residents of Croxley Green, senior citizens and are independently mobile.

Signed:

'New' Village Hall for Croxley and Free Membership

At a special meeting of Croxley Green Parish Council on 12 January, the Council agreed to enter into an Agreement with Croxley Green Community Association for the provision of a Village/Community Hall for Croxley Green. The Community Association had also got the endorsement of its Members to enter the Agreement at their Annual General Meeting which was held on Sunday 11 January.

The Agreement means that ALL residents of Croxley Green may now have free membership of the Croxley Green Community Association. The free

membership needs to be activated by filling in a form which is available at the Parish Council Office or from the Community Centre in Community Way. The form should be returned to the Parish Council Office and a Membership card will then be issued. Processing is expected to take up to one month.

Under the new arrangements, the Village Hall will be available, free of charge, for public meetings, local non-profit making community events or activities and clubs having athletic, social or educational objectives. The Hall will continue to be available for hire for private functions when it is not being used for a community event. Prices are available from the office.

One of the other big effects of the new arrangement is that Croxley Green Parish Council has saved residents some £30,000 each year from their Council tax to Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) which up to now has been going towards the costs of Watersmeet in Rickmansworth.

The annual charge, referred to as 'Special Expenses', was levied on Croxley Green residents and collected by TRDC through their Council Tax because we did not have a Village/Community Hall unlike the other Parish Council's within the TRDC area. Now that we have a Village/Community Hall through the arrangements with the Community Association, this annual charge has stopped.

Coach Trip to Eastbourne

On Monday 8th June 2009, the Parish Council will be taking a group of senior citizens on a day trip to the seaside town of Eastbourne. This is expected to be a popular event and as seats are limited, places will be decided my means of a lucky draw. If you would like to enter the draw please complete the form below with your details and the name of your guest and return the slip to the Parish Council by Friday 22nd May. The draw will take place on Tuesday 26th May.

To be eligible to attend you (and your guest) must be a resident of Croxley Green, a senior citizen and must be independently mobile.

Good luck for the draw!!!!

✂ **Name:**

.....

Address:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Telephone Number:

.....

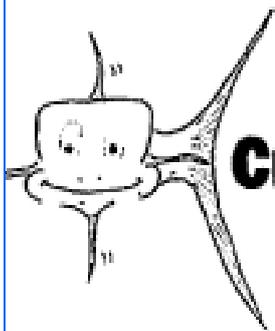
Name of Guest:

.....

I would like to attend the day trip to Eastbourne on Monday 8 June 2009 and I confirm that both my guest and I are residents of Croxley Green, senior citizens and are independently mobile.

Signed:

.....



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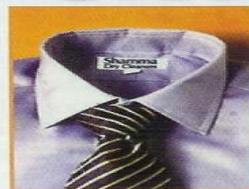
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Environmental Issues

It's Not the Dog that's Dirty!

In medieval times people would throw their mess into the street with a shout of 'Gardez loo!' to alert the unwitting passer by. Thankfully those days are long gone, but a small number of people still persist in allowing local roads, footpaths and open spaces to be fouled by the canine members of their family, without a thought for the mess it creates or the offence it causes others.

For a dog to do what comes naturally is only to be expected and, of course, the majority of owners are responsible citizens who clean up after their pets and use the bins provided for the purpose. The District and Parish Councils both provide dog bins around the village, which are emptied regularly, and the Parish Council provides biodegradable poop bags for residents to use in clearing up after an 'event'

So why is it that the number of complaints about dog mess seems to be on the increase in Croxley Green? And what more can the local councils do to tackle the problem? The Parish Council has no enforcement powers, but Three Rivers District Council has adopted legislation to control dog fouling throughout the district. Anyone who fails to immediately clear up after their dog is committing an offence, and is liable to prosecution.

Of course, a major difficulty for council staff is being in the right place at the right time to see an offence being committed. This can often be early in the morning or during the evening, outside normal office hours, but if environmental health officers are aware of a particular pattern of fouling (i.e. a regular time and place) they will nevertheless carry out observations with the aim of catching the offender. However they can only do this in response to reports of persistent offences, and for this they rely on information from the public.

In practice, anyone observed not cleaning up after their dog is likely to receive a verbal warning for a first offence, and experience shows that this is generally sufficient. However, persistent offenders can expect to be prosecuted. The courts are less likely to be lenient if the Council can show that a person has been warned in the past, and the maximum penalty is a £1,000 fine.

So if you know of anyone who routinely walks their dog and fails to clean up after it then please report it to TRDC (tel. 776611) or the Parish Council (tel. 710250). And please also report any dog mess you see in our streets or alley ways; the Council can only clear it up when it's been reported!

Councillor Phil Brading

How Smart is Your Driving?

Most car drivers could be travelling a lot further on a tank of fuel. No new car is required - just a change to smarter driving. Try these tips:

Shift up the gears earlier (between 2000 and 2500rpm). Cruising comfortably in 5th gear is the best place to be.

Cut your top speed. Wind resistance increases significantly with speed. The optimum speed for fuel efficiency is 45-50mph.

Avoid unnecessary braking by anticipating the traffic ahead. Fluid motion is better than stop start.

When slowing down, stay in gear and take your foot off the accelerator as early as possible. This reduces fuel consumption to near zero.

Plan your route to avoid congestion or getting lost.

Smarter driving could save you the equal of about one month's worth of fuel each year. For more money saving tips, contact the

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Energy Saving Light Bulb Myth Buster



Why use them?
Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) use 80% less

electricity, save you about £3 a year each, and last up to 12 times longer than old fashioned tungsten bulbs.

What are they?

Think of them as compact versions of the strip lights in work places since the 1950s.

Have they improved?

You can now get all shapes and sizes, fittings and levels of brightness, including 150W equivalent and dimmable options. A recent blind test of 761 shoppers, found that 64% preferred the light from them.

Is it better to leave them running?

No, switching them on uses the equivalent electricity as leaving them on for a few minutes. Most now light instantaneously.

How should I dispose of them?

Use the service your municipal tip provides for the safe disposal of fluorescent tubes.

Is mercury an issue?

Ironically, installing CFLs ought to help reduce the need for coal-fired electricity production - a major cause of global mercury emissions. CFLs contain mercury - about 5mg. Locked into its tube, this is harmless.

What should I do if I smash one?

Ventilate the room for 15 minutes. Put on your rubber gloves, brush the bits into a bag, seal it and drop it at the tip next time you go.

Are tungsten bulbs banned?

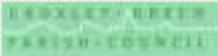
No. Manufacturers have agreed to withdraw them for sale, starting with 100W this year, 60W in 2010 and 40W in 2011.

Where can I find out more?

Contact the Energy Saving Trust on **0800 512 012**.

IF YOU CALL IN TO THE PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE YOU CAN COLLECT YOUR FREE ENERGY SAVING LIGHT BULBS.

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Return from Watford 12 noon

2ND JOURNEY

Sycamore Approach 10.00 am
 Valley Walk (Green) 10.01 am
 Valley Walk/Beechcroft Ave 10.03 am
 Frankland Rd/Harvey Rd 10.05 am
 Chalmers Court 10.08 am
 All Saints Lane (outside church) 10.10 am
 New Road 10.12 am
Return from Watford 12.30 pm

3RD JOURNEY

Junction Links Way & Warwick Way 10.30 am
 Junction Links Way & Dover Way 10.31 am
 Junction Links Way & Little Green Lane 10.32 am
 Junction Little Green Lane & Durrants Drive 10.33 am
 Junction Durrants Drive & Dover Way 10.34 am
 Kenilworth Drive/Baldwins Lane Footpath 10.36 am
 Manor Way 10.38 am
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Chronicle of a Chauffeur

As far as I can trace, my chauffeuring-related roots go back several generations.

My great grandfather, Robert Barnes, rode postilion to Queen Victoria in the 1880's. He was then a groom for Lord Dutton and later went into business on his own, breeding horses for the Royal Family and the Metropolitan Police, also selling horses at Tattersalls in Knightsbridge. He appeared as a caricature in Punch magazine several times.

Another set of great grandparents married at All Saints' Church, Croxley Green and lived at Dormers, the house adjacent to the Coach and Horses. My mother used to ride her horse 'Snowball' on the Green with the daughter of the Parrotts. She also attended preparatory school at the Hawthorns in New Road, which I believe had one time been owned by the great grandson of Madame Tussaud.

Charles Barnes, my grandfather, established one of the first private hire businesses at a mews in Kensington, London. He also started the first private hire business in Hemel Hempstead based at Boxmoor Station.

Around 1950 my father inherited the limousines from the private hire business in London and brought them to Bovingdon, many of his clients were from the nearby American Air Force Base.

I have been a chauffeur for over 35 years, starting off driving the Directors and later the Chairman of a major company in hotels, and the wine and spirit industry in London. During that period I drove the Chairman's Rolls Royce Silver Shadow on my own to the South of France several times to meet him, each time by a different route. On one occasion after

dropping the car off for his personal use I returned to the UK by his executive jet.

After that I became a freelance chauffeur driving the owners' vehicles. One of my assignments was to chauffeur an aristocrat in Belgravia – I would turn up in my 1958 Austin A35, take his Rolls out of the garage and put mine in its place. This was during the time of Prince Charles' and Lady Diana's engagement and wedding. I took him to a private party at Windsor Castle which lasted until the early hours of the morning. Driving out through the Quadrangle I saw Lady Diana and a girlfriend sitting on the steps giggling.

At another private party at a manor house near Windsor, we dropped off the guests at the main gateway from where they embarked in open horse-drawn carriages for the last mile drive to the manor. The driveway was bordered by lanterns. At the end of the evening, chauffeurs were asked to return to their cars and just as we got there, men came rushing from all directions carrying mobile phones connected to batteries the size of a briefcase. They were clearing the way for the departure of Nancy Reagan.

For the last 26 years I have been working as chauffeur for an exclusive Mayfair casino. Not all the members come to the club to gamble. As well as being a casino, the establishment also has a world-class restaurant which many of the members patronise for dining only, in a club-like atmosphere.

The first limousine I drove was a Rolls Royce Phantom VI. Later vehicles included a stretched London Taxi built by Aston Martin, stretched Volvo, Daimler, Mercedes, 6-door Jaguar, and more recently a Bentley Continental Flying Spur.

During this time I have driven a wide spectrum of people including movie stars, an astronaut, aristocrats, a former Formula 1 world champion, singing legends, foreign dignitaries, a world champion boxer, a Maharaja, Arab Sheiks, captains of industry and an international clientele, amongst many others.

As part of the courtesy service of the club, I have driven members to and from hotels, airports, major sporting events, film premieres, concerts, shopping excursions and occasionally sightseeing.

Another service the club provides is parking up members' cars. Various types of cars have ranged from Rolls Royce, Aston Martin, Ferrari, Porsche, Bentley, Lamborghini, Maybach, Mercedes and BMW.

I not only love driving as a profession, but often tour on holidays. I have driven throughout the British Isles and most of Europe. One time my wife and I could not decide where to go, so we turned left at Calais and drove to one of the islands off Norway, where her father's family came from. On one trip to the States, I drove from Minneapolis through the Rockies to Vancouver and back via Winnipeg, nearly 4,000 miles. I am sure that driving is part of my heritage.

Over the years through chauffeuring I have had the privilege and opportunity to drive some of the best cars in the world, to meet people from all walks of life and to visit places I have only read about in books.

As far as personally commenting on clients – discretion is part of the profession!

Mike Teasdale



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Dates for your Diary 2009

April

28 - **Bird Walk (starts Lock 79 opposite Met Station) 10am.** Join the RSPB and the Friends on Common Moor as we listen to the cuckoo and look at the various fascinating migratory birds that are out and about. Binoculars optional.

May

10 - **Butterfly and Wildflower Walk (starts Lock 79 opposite Met Station) 10am.** A guided walk around Croxley Common Moor identifying butterflies and wildflowers in this untouched ecological water meadow. Please wear strong shoes.

19 - **Bird Walk (starts Lock 79 opposite Met Station) 7pm.** Join the RSPB and the Friends on Common Moor as we listen to the cuckoo and look at the various fascinating migratory birds that are out and about. Binoculars optional.

June

2 - Senior Citizens' Tea (please fill in application form if you would like to come)

8 - Senior Citizens' Coach Trip to Eastbourne (please fill in application form if you would like to come)

20 - Revels

July

10 - Final submission date for entries to the Annual Garden Competition

15 - Initial judging of the Garden Competition starts

25 - FINAL Judging for Garden Competition

Aug

5 - Classic Cars on the Green (evening)

Brixton Fair (date to be confirmed)

Sept

19/20 - Classic Cars on the Green & Carters Steam Fair

Oct

11 - Craft Fair, Little Green School. Lincoln Drive, Croxley (see below)

Nov

8 - Remembrance Ceremony, The Memorial, The Green. Parade at 2.45pm, Yorke Road. Exhortation at The Memorial approximately 4pm.

Dec

31 - Firework Display 11.45pm (Pedestrian event ONLY)

Croxley Green Parish Council Craft Fair

I am interested in demonstrating my craft at the Craft Fair on Sunday 11th October.

*My craft is*_____

*Name*_____ *Contact*_____

Please return to the Parish Council Office or tel: 01923 710250 for further information

Nature around Croxley

Sparrowhawks

Residents around the Dickinson Avenue/New Road and Yorke Road areas of Croxley may have noticed unusual avian visitors to their gardens. Much to the dismay of smaller birds the visitors happen to be Sparrowhawks (*Accipiter nisus*).

The Sparrowhawk is a top predator whose diet consists mostly of songbirds. However females, the larger of the species, can take prey as large as woodpigeons; one in our area even managed to take on a crow! They are perfectly designed for chasing prey through trees and other obstacles, often very low. If you live near me you may have heard them rush past at head height, and they are capable of some truly amazing flight!

They can only thrive if there is an abundance of prey species for them to hunt, so their presence is a very positive sign that songbird numbers are healthy in our area. Songbird numbers are not overly affected by their presence, in fact cats are to be held much more accountable for the untimely deaths of songbirds and the presence of the hawks can be seen as a sign of a very healthy ecosystem. The numbers of Sparrowhawks were in serious decline in the 1960's and 70's due to excessive levels of pesticides in the food chain and numbers of songbirds remained constant in their absence. Their ability to take out sick and weaker birds from the ecosystem lets only the strongest of genes from songbirds survive keeping their populations in a healthy condition.

The Sparrowhawk is protected under the "Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981". It is an offence to kill, injure or take an adult and also to disturb, damage or destroy a nest and/or its contents. Sparrowhawks need woodland, small copses or clumps of trees to nest and usually use the lower canopy to build their nest of twigs lined with bark. Breeding is timed to coincide with that of other birds fledging so that there is an abundance of young

birds for the parents to prey on. Three to six eggs are laid during May and take four to five weeks to hatch. The chicks are ready to leave the nest at around four weeks old, however they often return to be fed and to sleep. After another three to four weeks the chicks are capable of hunting for themselves and are ready to find their own territories.



The Sparrowhawk is a beautiful bird and I must say I feel very privileged to see them from my kitchen window fairly regularly. The collared doves that dwell in the same area probably don't feel the same way as they provide a regular food source for these magnificent birds and may well be the reason they are resident here. As the collared dove isn't a native bird of Britain it is no great loss to lose a few of them to enjoy the benefits of seeing such a great



predator in action. If you happen to see one of the hawks hunting then you can fully appreciate their prowess and count yourself lucky for the privilege.

*Andrew Goddard
Ranger*

Titch

I am pleased to report that after the loss of Fred (the Jack Russell), Bob (the human) has a new little friend called 'Titch', a delightful mixed colour Jack Russell of small proportions. Although small, it soon put a large Labrador to flight.

At first Titch was rather nervous but is now beginning to settle down and enjoys walking with us around the Orchard. However, there is a tale to tell. On the second day after his arrival, Titch did a runner from Gonville Avenue. Friends began a search, but 'Che' our Police Community Support Officer came to the rescue by finding Titch in Baldwins Lane! Whilst enticing Titch with some chips, she was nipped on the hand (never bite the hand that feeds you!) but she managed to restrain the culprit and Titch was returned safely to Bob, who was very pleased and wrote to the Chief Constable to express his gratitude for the return of Titch. The Chief Constable replied expressing his delight at the outcome.

Having spoken to Che I can scotch the rumours that she got her hand bitten off, nor does she have rabies and she is, in fact, as pleasant as always.

Bess, Rover Reporter

Croxley three months ago!



Festival fun nearly here!

Don't forget Rickmansworth's Annual Waterways Festival is nearly here again, this year on Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 May.

This year's festival has it all – all the live music you could want on two stages in the Aquadrome and at Batchworth Lock, and the usual display of colourful canal boats along the towpath of the Grand Union. And visitors can take a scenic boat trip from Batchworth Lock to Stockers Lock and back again.

Bring your families! There's a lot for them to do too, including animal farm, exploring a former working boat and miniature canal garden on display. And if you're peckish, there's plenty of food and drink around to tickle the taste buds. There's no beating it.

It's all brought together by volunteers from Rickmansworth Waterways Trust, who'll be asking for donations to help fund "Learning at the Lock" – their canal education work with local schools. So please be generous!

Find out more about what they do and on the festival at www.rwt.org.uk.

If you've been before, you know what to expect. If you've not, you don't know what you're missing! It's easiest to get to by walking or public transport – just a short walk from Rickmansworth station. See you all there!

Rickmansworth Festival

Rickmansworth Aquadrome and Batchworth Lock

Dates: Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 May

Music: to suit all tastes – jazz, rock, chill, cool blues, folk and big band

Food: beer, burgers and much much more!



Opening times: 10.30am to 10.30pm Saturday, 10.30am to 5pm Sunday (music stages start from 11am).

Contact: Rickmansworth Waterways Trust, 01923 778382 or www.rwt.org.uk

Entry: free, although donations to the volunteer organisers will be welcome.

Getting there: Public transport is easiest. The festival is just 5 minutes' walk from Rickmansworth station or walk along the towpath from Croxley.

Croxley Great Barn Tour Dates 2009

Great news for all Croxley residents! The Great Barn in Croxley Hall Woods is open for visitors again this year; thanks to Barbara Owen, Rickmansworth Museum and Saint Joan of Arc School a happy compromise has been worked out.

The Barn is open on the last Saturday of each month. Dates are: 25th April, 30th May, 27th June, 25th July, 29th August, 26th September and 31st October.

Join us at Caravan Lane, Rickmansworth High Street (east end) at 10.30am for a ten minute walk. Guided tours last about an hour. Wear appropriate footwear as the lane can be muddy. School groups and others are especially welcome.

Enquiries to 01923 772325 or 01923 251905 or email enquiries@trmt.org.uk

David Wynne-Jones

Sailing Made Accessible!!!!

Colne Valley Special Sailors offers sailing for people with disabilities in ACCESS boats based at BLYM, the Aquadrome, Rickmansworth. The boats can be sailed by 1 or 2 people and are easy to sail using a joystick control. There are bookable sailing sessions on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2nd May to the end of September.

Our volunteers are used to introducing novices to sailing and provide buoyancy aids and guidance - you may recognise some of us as we have sailors and volunteers from Croxley and Ricky.

Sailing sessions cost £5 or £20 for unlimited sessions throughout the season.

If you would like to find out more about sailing, or would like to become a volunteer helper contact Peter Hammond Tel 01923 282720.

CVSS are having an Open Day on 2nd May when the boats will be available for "taster sails". Advance booking is not necessary but it is possible to register your interest or find out more by contacting Elaine Coombs on 01923 826313 or Roy Cook on 07599 074747.

CVSS is a registered charity

Remember you are invited to the

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

on

Thursday 30th April

In the Parish Council Office

Please come and join us and find out more about us.

The Christmas House, Lancing Way

Dave and Carol Edwards are pleased to report that the amount raised for their nominated charity for 2008 (Mount Vernon Hospital Cancer Unit) is £3,053 which broke the record of £3,000 in 2007. A new, and very popular, feature introduced this year was a raffle on the evening. The winning ticket enabled the child owner to switch on the lights. This year the winner was Archie Brew who did a great job.

Dave and Carol would like to thank everyone who so generously supported them once again and look forward to seeing all their friends again at Christmas 2009.

Cllr Christine Jefford

Access to Hertfordshire Libraries from Home

If you live a long way from your local library, did you know some library services are accessible from any Internet connected computer, wherever you are? Log on to: www.hertsdirect.org/libraries.

From here you can join the library, search the library catalogue, request and renew your books, and find information for homework or private study. It also offers access to county and district council services, details of local clubs and organisations, and a wide variety of recommended websites.

The Online Reference Library offers a range of online titles, including the full Oxford English Dictionary, Encyclopaedia Britannica, national newspaper and journal articles and the Grove dictionaries of art and music. These titles, only available on subscription, are offered free to library members. Just follow the instructions on the screen. Whether you want to join the library, find your nearest squash club, the answer to a quiz question or do your homework, give the library pages a try.

Be 'Ready for Anything'

A two week radio campaign which called on people across the county to think ahead of an emergency and be 'Ready for Anything' took place in January and February this year, targeting the elderly who live alone or who rely on support from a family member or professional care service or those who are socially isolated.

The campaign covered bad weather and flu which are highlighted as areas for attention on the county's risk register. Using scenarios of flooding and household emergencies, the radio adverts asked people to think about what practical and common sense things they can do to avoid problems in the event of a crisis.

Richard Smith, Executive Member for Community Safety, said: "The authorities in Hertfordshire have plans in place to respond to emergencies, but it is important that residents think about simple

things they can do now to prepare for an emergency such as severe weather, flooding and widespread influenza.

"The best items to have in your home in case of an emergency are a torch, radio (battery powered), telephone numbers of family and friends and emergency help lines, bottled water, ready-to-eat food and a first aid kit.

"Simple things to prepare include making copies of financial documents and keeping them somewhere safe that you can access in an emergency, and familiarising yourself with how to switch off gas, electricity and water supplies."

A leaflet called 'Ready For Anything' providing information and guidance is available at your local library and at www.hertsdirect.org/emergency or call 01992 555961 for a copy.

If an emergency happens, tune in to your local radio station.

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in association with
Croxley Green Gardening Club

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 _____ Post Code _____
 Telephone No _____ Signature _____

Categories – Please tick where appropriate

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HIGHWAY**

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Small Back Garden (less than 60' x 30')	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Gardens	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large Back Garden (more than 60' x 30')	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Best Floral Container Display	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Completed entry forms to be returned no later than **11 July 2009**
 Croxley Green Parish Council, Community Way, Croxley Green, Herts WD3 3SU

Parish Council Meetings - *general public welcome*



Council meeting - last Thursday of each month
(except May and August)

Annual Parish Meeting - last Thursday in April

Annual General Meeting - second Thursday in May

Environment & Amenity meeting - first Tuesday of each month
(except May and August)

Planning & Development meeting - first and third Wednesday of
each month

Finance & Administration meeting - second Thursday of each
month (except August)

Update on the Commemorative Trees on The Green

Following the article in the last edition of The Parish Pump I have received further information from several people about the trees on The Green, including lots of dates.

The fir tree planted on the section of The Green outside Croxley house was planted on the 28th November 1965 following the death of Sir Winston Churchill earlier that year.

The Millennium Oak was planted on the 10th December 2000.

The Victory Oak, at the southern end of 'the triangle' to commemorate the end of WWII was planted on the 19th November 1945.

The tree planted to commemorate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II was planted on the 2nd June 1953, outside Providence Hall.

Continuing south along The Green, the tree planted to mark the Coronation of King Edward VIII was planted just 24 hours before his abdication! Luckily it was left to grow, although I was told that the original died and was replaced, so the short reign of this king is still remembered in Croxley!

In my last article I wrote that the low, spreading oak tree outside Hollow Tree House did not appear to be one of the commemorative trees. I have since been told that it is, and it was planted on Revels Day, 2nd July 1977, to mark the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

The original tree planted for the



Coronation of King George VI unfortunately died. It was replaced but that also died. I am not sure how many trees were actually planted here but the one which stands today was planted on 10th November 1973 as part of the Blue Peter campaign to 'plant a tree in '73'.

Finally on this side of The Green, just outside the gates to the garden of All Saints Church stands the oak commemorating the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria which was planted on the 8th December 1897.

In addition, on the opposite side of The Green next to the War Memorial, stands another tree. This is a replacement which was planted at some time in the 1980's, replacing the original which died,



planted to remember all those who lost their lives during WWI, WWII and the Korean War.

I have also learnt that a walnut tree can be found in Stone's Orchard, with a bench, which was planted to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe.

Thank you to those residents of Croxley who provided me with this updated information and so quickly after publication, too.

I would also like to add that, as I was researching for the previous article, I was reminded that we failed to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. I proposed that the Parish Council should buy and plant a tree to mark this remarkable event to continue the history of the royal family on our Green. This was agreed by the council. Following this one of the Commoners of The Green has volunteered to purchase an oak tree, hopefully to be planted later this year; the location for this is still to be agreed with Three Rivers District Council. We will keep you posted of further developments.

Also as a result of the previous article, which was sent to The Chiltern Conservation Board, we have received a grant to plant more trees in the Orchard. Also our commemorative trees are to be included in a project which they are undertaking called 'Special Trees and Woods Project - Chilterns' so they have been given this status.

I am amazed with what has come from my original article, just written from my own interest in these trees and wanting to share them with everyone else. I hope many of you have been to look at them and, if not, maybe you will now go and investigate Croxley's 'special trees'!

Cllr Janet Martin



Editorial Committee

David Allison (Clerk)
Cllr Christine Jefford
Cllr Janet Martin
Cllr Hazel Seeley
Cllr Wendy Shafe
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