



Pre - A.G.M. Issue Autumn 2000



**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD
ON MONDAY 20TH NOVEMBER 2000
IN THE KNOWLE VILLAGE HALL AT 8.00PM**

Chairman's Annual Report

Throughout the year Knowle 2000 has been high on our agenda, with the Society's normal work continuing as usual.

The Solihull Unitary Development Plan is taking its course. The Society is primarily concerned with shopping, housing, the Green Belt, leisure, the footpath network and towpath, etc. We commented on the Council's first review of the existing plan, and the 'first deposit' will be issued next year. We hope the needs of the smaller centres, such as Knowle, will be given due weight.

The Planning Sub-committee has considered all the applications for Knowle in the last year, and commented when appropriate, without falling into the trap of opposition on principle. It is also important to have some grasp of planning law, although it is not our place to become experts - that is best left to the professionals. It is worth stating that inspectors do not *expect* us to be planning experts, and a little ignorance can sometimes work to our advantage. A number of applications for telecommunications masts are generating strong feelings; but unless we all do without our mobile phones (some bought for safety reasons) they have to go somewhere. We should like to see a change in the law to give the local authority more control. A recently approved scheme for

twelve flats on the site of the old swimming bath in Crabmill Close will soon be implemented. In principle the Society approves of such developments, which provide much wanted small housing units in the centre of the village. They are infinitely preferable to more office development.

After careful thought and constructive discussions with Council officers, the sub-committee submitted proposals for the extension of the Conservation Area. We are pleased that most of these proposals were accepted by the Council, which is now consulting those affected: a good example of the Council and the Society working together.

As you have doubtless noticed, the Knowle and Dorridge Traffic Study has now reached the implementation of Phase 2, involving Warwick Road and High Street as far as the Kenilworth Road junction. There are still no plans to relieve the Lodge Road corner, for which most possible solutions have a downside. We shall keep on trying. Consultation for the next phase of the study should start soon. Car parking remains a seemingly insoluble problem, for which money and land - both in short supply - are the prime requisites. The Society has just received an invitation to a meeting on the subject

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Dates For Your Calendar



Monday 16th October	General Meeting: 'An Unusual Job for a Lady' - a talk by Mrs M.R. Canning. - 8.00pm in the Village Hall.
Monday 20th November	Annual General Meeting (See Top of Page)
Tuesday 26th December	Boxing Day short local walk: Start at 11.00am from the Guild House, back before 1.00pm (Wine & Mince pies will be served en route)

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under the auspices of Councillor Don Blake. Bus services and the airport have once more been monitored by Lewis Edwards and Ted Walden respectively, with representation on the relevant user committees.

High Street has been brightened up once more by the hanging baskets and the planters. Many thanks to Councillor Les Kyles for his efforts on this subject. The Society continues to make a contribution towards watering costs.

The Nature Conservation Sub-committee has continued to work hard to maintain the nature reserve, monitor trees, verges etc. The local part of the tree survey is complete and more has been done on the hedge survey. The wild flower walk in May attracted a good following.

As usual the walks programme comprised the Boxing Day stroll and four summer walks. The Society has continued to attend meetings about the development of the Borough's footpath network.

The Local History Sub-committee has been fully occupied with the Millennium celebrations. A proposed reprint of 'The History of Knowle' was abandoned it due to lack of response, but the millennium exhibition, 'A Thousand Years of Knowle' proved popular. Interviews, the administration of the Local History Centre, etc. continued as usual.

An interesting programme has been provided at the general meetings, which have normally been well attended.

The Society has continued to take part in village activities, providing the Christmas tree as usual and making a full contribution to Knowle 2000, including a float in the carnival procession. Progress, albeit a little slow, is being made on the millennium sign for the village

Throughout the year membership has crept up rather than galloped, reaching 1700 for the first time. The treasurer, auditor and secretariat have, as usual, continued to serve the committee and members by producing the newsletter, minutes, accounts, membership lists and all those other jobs which make the Society run smoothly.

On the personal side, we were all saddened by the death of Betty Walden on February 16th, after a valiant fight. She is sadly missed, not just for her considerable expertise on the Local History Committee, but as a friend. We are sorry to lose Malcolm Brain, who has resigned as Local Walks

organiser due to pressure of work. Anyone willing to organise five walks a year, please contact me or Adrian Emsden.

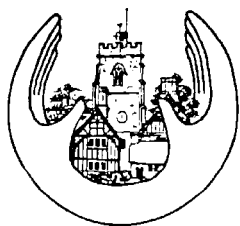
I'm afraid I have to say *yet again* that the Society is short of help. We *still* have no publicity officer; we need someone to replace Malcolm; and the sub-committees are short of willing hands. It has come to the stage where, if no more help is forthcoming, we shall not be able to continue some of our present work. This would be a great pity, as the Society has a good name, both in the village and with the Council. Working for the Society is interesting, stimulating and good fun. Volunteers *please*.

Finally, on behalf of everyone I should like to thank all those who *do* work so hard for the Society and for Knowle: the committee, the sub-committees and their numerous helpers; our team of newsletter distributors; our ward councillors for their constant support; the Council officers for their unfailing helpfulness; and, of course, our members.

As some of you know, I shall be giving up the chairmanship at the Annual General Meeting. I have enjoyed my nine years in office, but my personal circumstances now demand that I pay a little more attention to the domestic scene. In any case, it is time for new blood. I felt privileged to follow Dr. Bower and hope I have been able to build a little on the foundations he laid. My successor will doubtless improve things further. The committee's nomination is Peter Ellis, who has been chairman of the Planning Sub-committee since 1994, and is therefore fully conversant with one of the most important aspects of the Society's work. He has the unanimous support of the committee. My grateful thanks to the members of the executive committee for their support over the years and very best wishes to my successor.

We look forward to next year, to the meetings, the lighting of the Christmas tree, the Boxing Day Walk and other Society events, at which we hope to see you.

Elaine S. Warner
Knowle 775887



Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Monday 20th November at 8.00pm** in the **Knowle Village Hall**.

There will be elections for President, Officers and Members of the Executive Committee. The Officers and at least five Committee Members retire each year and are eligible for re-election.

Nominations, in writing, can be accepted up to 6th November. They should be signed by the nominee, proposer and seconder, all of whom must be members of the Society, in good standing.

Nominations should be addressed to the Society Secretary at 102, Tilehouse Green Lane, Knowle Solihull, West Midlands. B93 9ER.

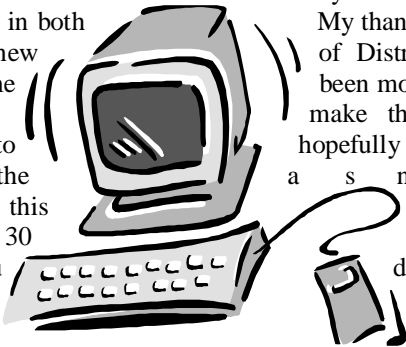
We hope for a good attendance and for some interesting discussion. Please come and raise any matters that concern you.

Colin Smith
Knowle 772981

Membership Secretary's Annual Report

The membership over the past year has seen a net increase of only 12. This brings our total membership to 1706, still the highest figure in the Society's history but nonetheless worrying in some respects. If however you consider that we have, during the year, gained 61 new members it will give you a measure of the ongoing interest in both the history and future of Knowle by new 'villagers' joining the community - to me that is very encouraging.

This issue of the newsletter brings us to another 'milestone' in the history of the Society. Roy Bunclark has been printing this newsletter four times every year for some 30 years - (he won't thank me for telling you that little fact.) - together with all the other printing needs of the Society from programme cards to letterheads. He is now retiring completely having been gradually shedding his workload over the year. He has put up with my little peccadilloes and last minute panics with never a complaint, and has always had a quiet word of good humoured and practical advice ready



when needed. Roy and his family have been members of the Society for many years, and will I hope continue to be active members for many more. On behalf of the Society may I say how grateful we are for all Roy and Margaret have done for us over the years.

My thanks once again to Walter Birch and his team of Distributors. Walter has quietly and steadily been modifying distribution rounds over the year to make the distributors' tasks more logical and hopefully easier, and also recruiting new distributors as necessary. The system now functions extremely well - and rarely misses a beat. Thank you Walter and all your team of distributors for another year of effort.

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members who have joined since the publication of the last newsletter and hope that we shall have the pleasure of their company at some of our forthcoming functions.

Mrs J Bennett
Mrs Joan Pratt

Mr & Mrs J Keown
Mr & Mrs Taylor

Mr & Mrs B Langford
Mr & Mrs J Turner

Mr B McCarthy
Mr & Mrs Withers

Patricia Lesser

John F Chaloner
Knowle 778705

Local History Sub-committee Annual Report

Most of the sub-committee's time this year has been taken up with our contribution to Knowle 2000. We were extremely disappointed that the proposed updated reprint of Eva Wootton's 'History of Knowle' could not proceed due to lack of support, but perhaps most of those interested have already got a copy. Some people suggested to us that we would have sold a lot of copies during the festival; but we needed to sell hundreds more to cover costs, and the Society cannot take such a risk (printing costs would have been over £6,000, and a smaller print run would have meant a much higher unit price).

We do, however, want to publish the additional chapter, particularly as many people took the trouble to provide material. After considerable thought we propose to produce this in A5 booklet form (similar to 'A Short Guide to Central Knowle'), with a much shorter print run, which we can afford to finance ourselves. We would like to have caught the Christmas market, but with the heavy workload at the beginning of the year, we have a backlog of work.

By contrast, the festival exhibition - 'A Thousand Years of Knowle' - was a success. It followed a now familiar form, concentrating on the history of Knowle during the last



thousand years, with sections on the church, the manor, education, medical services, etc. A selection from the rest of the Society's extensive local history collection was also on show, including books, posters and some recently transcribed oral history tapes. These and the scrap books attracted the most interest as usual. After the festival the central display was moved to Chester House for a few weeks.

As usual, early in the year we were pleased to welcome Year 6 from Knowle Junior School in connection with their local projects. In April the sub-committee took a stand at the third Solihull Local History Fair, organised by Solihull Library. More recently Gillian Knight was asked to give a talk on the history of Dorridge by Kingslea School. Dorridge, of course, is part of the old Manor of Knowle, and grew up after the station was opened in 1852.

The Local History Centre at Knowle Library (first floor) is now well established and continues to attract 'customers'. Apart from enquiries in person on Saturday mornings, enquiries about Knowle come from Solihull Central Library direct; others arrive by post or telephone. The centre is manned on a Saturday morning between 10.30 and 12 (except Bank Holidays) Anyone wanting a lot of our time may find it helpful to ring the

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administrator, Elizabeth Stanley, on Knowle 773283 beforehand. Interviewing for oral history tapes has continued, although not at the same pace.

In the immediate future, we propose to concentrate on the accumulated backlog of cataloguing and indexing, and the filing cabinets in the library need re-organising. This takes a tremendous amount of time, mostly unseen and unsung, but if left undone it makes using the collection difficult.

It remains for me to thank all those who have helped us during the year: our team of stewards, members of the sub-committee, who have all worked very hard; and everyone who has helped with the exhibition, interviews or provided items for the collection.

Elaine S. Warner
Knowle 775887

Planning Sub-committee Annual Report

As our Chairman has reported in recent Newsletters we have been studying the Conservation Area, the boundaries of which have been unchanged since 1977. We came to believe that after 23 years the year 2000 was an appropriate occasion to review them. So we walked the area to assess if there was a case for any change. Our conclusion was that there was, but not much.

After discussions with the Council Conservation Architect, Planning Officer, our Councillors, and the Society's Main Committee, we submitted our proposals to the Council's Planning Committee. We were very pleased when it approved them, subject to consultation by the



Council with affected residents, now ongoing. As soon as the outcome is known we will give it to you. As I say the changes are modest but beneficial we believe.

Telecommunication masts have been a controversial feature of this year's planning scene. We appreciate that the public wants a good network and government supports this, but phone companies have to choose sites that are environmentally acceptable otherwise local authorities will reject them. The Society has successfully objected to three sites, two at or near Knowle Football Club and the other near the shoppers' car park by the Village Hall. Another site at Knowle Cricket Club has been approved by Council and we believe that this one is just about acceptable.

Another planning feature which has worried us this year concerns the planning obligation for property developers to provide car parking spaces for those who

will work at or visit their new or extended developments. For example, in applying for permission to extend, TESCO Knowle needed to provide extra shoppers' car park spaces. They were unable to do this. The permitted solution was for TESCO to negotiate the payment of a sum of money to the Council to be used to fund the extra car parking spaces, within a designated

time. If the Council fails to use it, then the money will be returned to TESCO. Another current example is The Bank House application to convert the health and fitness facilities to offices. What concerns the Society is that the Council will indeed fail to find a site for these funded cars parking spaces, and Knowle car parking congestion will become even worse. We will be monitoring the situation very closely.

Finally, a few words about Knowle as a shopping centre. Knowle does not enjoy status as a primary shopping centre as does Solihull, Shirley and Chelmsley Wood, but Solihull Council recognises Knowle as an important secondary shopping centre and has a policy to maintain it as such. This means that more Banks, Estate Agents, Professional and Business Offices in the High Street instead of retail shops are not to be encouraged. Of course we must recognise that market forces ultimately have the major influence on the composition of Knowle shopping centre, but we will continue to support Council policy by objecting to planning applications for non-retail activities there.

P.L. Ellis

Amenities Sub-committee Annual Report

The most time consuming aspect of the committee's work during the past twelve months has been the Knowle and Dorridge Area Traffic Plan. As I compile this report the conclusion of Phase 1 is still awaited by the construction of a replacement footpath for Tuffnells Gap, which is between the Warwick Road service road, opposite the end of Blackdown Road, and just north of the Royal British Legion. Phase 2 has now started to be implemented, incorporating gateway bollards at the village approaches at the top of Stripes Hill, to the south, and just north of the Wilson Arms, both on the Warwick Road. The building of three speed cushions at the latter site has certainly had a calming effect on traffic movement, and it is hoped that the raising of the three pedestrian crossings in the High Street will have a similar effect, as well as making it safer to cross the road for all pedestrians. The planned prohibition of loading and unloading along the High Street during the periods of high usage will add an additional benefit to the environment. The future Phase 3 will deal with Lodge Road, Longdon Road, the triangle of High Street/Kenilworth Road/Wilson's Road, and the junction of Station Road with Warwick Road. It is hoped that the proposals for that work can be formulated by the end of 2000, in order that consultation and the subsequent work can commence in the financial year 2001/02.

An increasingly important element for consideration in the not too distant future will be the formation and development of cycle routes, and the protection of pedestrians on pavements, as well as the affect on other road users. Certain balancing acts will be required, but I have absolute confidence in my hard working sub-committee that they will take into account all the different aspects concerned in this matter.

I would report that the village, through the Council, hosted another very successful Cycle Road Race this summer, and thankfully the finish also occurred in the High Street making it possible for "locals" to witness the whole event for £0.00.

The High Street has again been enhanced by a blaze of colour this year, thanks to the efforts of Environment Services Parks Department, although only one planting took place for the hanging baskets, but it was considered worth waiting for the summer planting in June.

The appeal by the proposed developers of a Motorway Service Area (MSA) was heard from September 1999, and concluded this summer. A decision is awaited on whether one of the three appellants will be successful, or not. The time and effort put in by Paul Heath on this matter is appreciated.

Dependent on your point of view, it has been a quiet year on the Car Park front! The Council have received additional funding from a major commercial concern in the village for additional car parking spaces, and so a proposal is awaited as to how some relief can be found now that the Council have lost the opportunity for additional parking spaces along the eastern side of the dual carriageway south of Station Road, because of a few objectors.

Concern has been expressed to West Midlands Police in connection with the noise associated with motor cycle riders

along the Warwick Road on Wednesday evenings, and at weekends. In addition recently the aspect of alcoholic sales from the fish and chip shop at the top of Station Road, and maybe an opening of a further off licence in Station Road, have received the attention of the police. Paul Blackman, the Society's representative on Solihull South Police Consultative Committee, has advised that in targeting criminals the police want to bring to your attention that to enhance your own personal safety ladies should be more careful in leaving purses on view in handbags, and that anyone should be careful if carrying mobile phones on trouser belts. It is pleasing to learn that the Local Authority have assisted financially in equipping a covert police vehicle with high tech surveillance mechanisms capable of recording the activities of both target criminals and those inconsiderate motorists who bring danger to our roads through their bad driving habits. The vehicle is operated by specially trained crews, and has a 24-hour capability. An Anti Graffiti Strategy has been introduced by Solihull Police and the Housing Department to tackle the scourge of graffiti within the borough. The strategy involves a series of measures including the introduction of a confidential anti graffiti hot line (0800-7838899) allied to covert policing operations to trap perpetrators.

It has also been noted that the aim of the police is to recruit 100 additional Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators before June 2001. So here is an opportunity for you to consider, unless of course you would prefer to make yourself available on a Knowle Society sub-committee!

TRAINS! Chiltern Railways have won a renewal of their franchise for up to 20 years and have promised to invest up to £370 million on the route between London and the West Midlands. They are also hoping to extend their journeys to Stourbridge and Kidderminster and may revive the service



between Oxford and Bedford. There will be faster trains and more of them.

By the end of September all their trains will be operated using Clubman coaches.

Bargain fares to London are offered to families, over-55s and groups of

four adults travelling together. Average £10 return or less - and some are available for a whole month.

Well done Chiltern, and thank you for sponsoring Knowle 2000 and raising hundreds of pounds for local charities. We are fortunate to be served by such a company - and their staff are invariably polite and helpful.

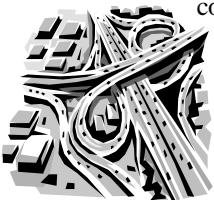
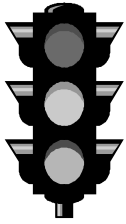
BUS CHANGES! In the past we have recommended route 60 - Knowle to Warwick and Leamington. But it never had enough passengers and Midlands Red South abandoned it. But here is the good news: It has been taken over by Johnson's (of Henley) and now operates every weekday with an approved timetable - giving three

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Chours in Leamington It is interesting that route 197 (Solihull and Knowle to Balsall Common)

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has been taken over by ZAKS. We shall miss Pete's Travel on this route (though they still operate 151 and 39).



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hours in Leamington, departing Knowle Green bus at 10.13am. It is an interesting journey - through some delightful Warwickshire Villages - do try it!

It is interesting that route 197 (Solihull to Balsall Common) has been taken over by ZAKS. We shall miss Pete's travel on this route (though they still operate 151 and 39).

ZAKS have a good reputation, and one of their drivers was recently voted 'Driver of the Year'.

All in all we are enjoying good and fairly frequent bus services

Time keeping is not as good as it used to be - because

route 41 originates in the centre of Birmingham, and route 40 has to negotiate the congestion at Acocks Green.

Members requiring comprehensive bus timetable of all services between Knowle and Solihull can obtain a copy from Lewis Edwards.

In conclusion it has been a memorable year, especially the Knowle 2000 festival, with unfortunately the wrong weather supplied; and all the associated matters relating to roads and traffic.

Gary Masters.
Knowle 779955.

Meetings and Social Sub-committee Annual Report



The meetings have generally been well attended during this year. We have heard about life on the canals, the First World War, birds, butterflies, the magistracy and other interesting subjects.

Following a great deal of effort by the committee to organise a trip to Northampton it was very disappointing to find that few members appeared to be interested in taking part. The visit to Stoneleigh was cancelled, as the renovations there are unexpectedly a year behind schedule. The committee does not intend to plan any excursions next year. Besides the fact that few members appear to wish to participate, I shall have an increased workload at my office, and it is therefore essential that I keep my commitments to a minimum. The situation can be reviewed in 2002.

I should like to thank my Committee for their generous support, to Jenny who controls the visitor's book, and also to Phil Vince for opening up the Village Hall and setting out the chairs.

Looking forward to the next few months, I have to say that unless more members are prepared to help, some events will, over the next year or so, have to be cancelled.

In order that we can continue the tradition of having a Christmas Tree in the village, we require someone to liaise with the person who supplies it and erects it, and to check the lights during the festive period. This has been done for many years by John Clarke. After this year John will not be involved with this, and we are therefore looking for someone to take over. It does not entail a great deal of work and it is only once a year. If someone feels they could help will you please telephone me on the number below.

We also have a problem with the Boxing Day walk. We require someone to lead the walk, which takes the same route each year, and also someone to organise the mince pies and have them ready and warmed for the break at Elvers Green Ford, midway through the walk. If there is anyone who feels they could help please telephone me on the number below. The Boxing Day walk is in jeopardy if help is not forthcoming. On the assumption that help can be

found, the details are as follows.

Meet at Guild House at 11.00am. A leisurely walk, with a break at Barston Ford, and return to the Guild House by 1.00pm.

We have been unable to find someone to continue the work so ably done by the late Alan Moore. Alan used to prepare posters, advertising the monthly meetings, for distribution around the village, and also write pieces for the Church magazine. A member has volunteered to deal with the aspect of the Church magazine but we still require someone to prepare the posters. I have had to deal with this since Alan's death. If anyone is artistic or perhaps has a computer and would be willing to take on this task I should be pleased to hear from you. There are only about 10 events to advertise each year. Each event requires 6 posters. If you do not have a computer then the original one can always be photocopied.

We desperately need more help. It is very difficult for a few members to cope with the various tasks involved. Please telephone me if you can be of assistance.

Details of our forthcoming Meetings are as follows.

MONDAY 16TH OCTOBER: An Unusual Job for a Lady. Mrs Marion Cannings is a Toastmaster. She will give members an insight into this rather unusual female profession.

MONDAY 20TH NOVEMBER: Annual General Meeting.
BEGINNING OF DECEMBER: Switching on of Christmas Tree and Village Lights

26TH DECEMBER: Boxing Day Walk. Subject to help being available.

MONDAY 15TH JANUARY 2001: Down the Garden Path. A talk by Tristan Thacker.

MONDAY 19TH FEBRUARY: Update on Touchwood. A presentation by Lend Lease

Sandra Lea
Knowle 776850

Nature Conservation Sub-committee Annual Report

We are already three-quarters of the way through this quite extraordinary, unique millennium year AD 2000.

Will anything have really changed by 2001? Will we all be more aware of our responsibility towards the future of our incredibly precious and fragile ecosystems? Global warming apart (and only today has the Environment Agency warned of increased flood risk) any collapse in farming, for instance, would seriously affect the future of the countryside as we know it. So it is most encouraging to read of the National Trust's support for its many tenanted farms; indeed the Director General states "Today, it is the threats to our environment that are uppermost in people's minds: to the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, to the sea, rivers and to the landscape we treasure."

Solihull Council's Local Agenda 21 Plan embraces the same concerns and is seen as "an opportunity for everyone to help create a cleaner, greener, brighter and more sustainable future".

Commemorative Tree Planting - This event is a typical Agenda 21 project which the Council is happy to support, within the ESSO National Tree Planting Week in November. We are registering our planting date of 24th November with the Tree Council to help boost ESSO's bid for entry into the Guinness Book of Records for the most trees planted in 3 days between 23rd-26th November. (we are told every little helps!)

There will be posters & publicity.



Cuttlebrook Wood (left)

The creation of this magical 17-acre woodland at Springfield by the Woodland Trust must rank as a

high point of the year. The first 1,000 out of a final total of 10,000 trees were planted by local schoolchildren and the name chosen came from the little Cuttlebrook which meanders from a source at Middlefield and then under Watery Lane to join the River Blythe at Temple Balsall. Walking this week in the newly mown spaces between the rows of protective tubes, each with its own little tree growing snugly inside, I disturbed a large bird which rose with a squawk and wafted low over the field to the tall trees of neighbouring Temple Balsall nature reserve. I walked on amongst the specially sown mix of grasses and Chamomile noticing tiny flowers at ground level, even

a solitary bright blue flower of Flax from a previous crop. Last February I had planted 2 baby Yews and a 6" Holly - how to find them now? Suddenly the large bird re-appeared, showing the distinctive face of a Barn Owl. This was a thrilling moment, as I had never before seen one in the wild.

Butterflies suffered in the cold and wet of late spring following the warm spell in March; in fact I haven't seen a single Tortoiseshell or Holly Blue in the garden up to September and the Buddleia and its Peacocks were a month late. Nine of us braved the wet Butterfly Walk in July and spotted one Ringlet in Kixley Lane plus a host of Meadow Browns, which rose up, despite the rain in the meadow beyond Kixley Bridge. Adrian netted one for observation and future identification and we all trudged back along the canal to Sunnymount for a welcome tea only to find it rained off! My first garden sightings were:- COMMA 20th March; BRIMSTONE male 7th April; ORANGE TIP male 29th April; WHITES including GREEN-VEINED 18th July; GATEKEEPER 3rd August; PAINTED LADY 6th August; 6 PEACOCKS, RED ADMIRAL 13th August; only the dancing SPECKLED WOOD enchanted us all summer. However David Hall has just reported 4 CLOUDED YELLOW over from the Mediterranean - he has some fascinating records for the January Newsletter.

Flowers - A wonderful year and Solihull Council certainly 'went to town' to try and capture an even greater prize in this year's Britain in Bloom competition. At the Library everyone helped to spruce up the little Knot Garden - and wasn't it a picture? So too was the lovely Shakespeare Garden at Knowle Primary School, inspired by Shakespeare historian Mrs. Betty Walden and dedicated to her memory, as very sadly she died before the Opening Day. We

grieve with her husband Ted at her loss.

We have scarcely needed water butts this year (except for patio plants).

The sodden Nature Reserve produced not only a much-increased flowering of Marsh marigolds in spring but in July the sweetly scented Meadowsweet spread over the whole meadow. (above right)

Trees - Why then have so many trees looked so unhealthy? Many of the small leafed Prunus and large leafed Cherry seem to have died off completely. Rowan and Sorbus have sickly specimens and large forest trees such as Ash, Chestnut and especially

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Willow have shrivelled leaves.

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Warm humid conditions alternating with cold at the wrong time may have exacerbated ever present fungal and insect borne diseases. Yet many large Beeches have been quite overburdened with enormous crops of beechmast.

Many of the smaller diseased street trees shown up in the surveys that Tree Wardens have been carrying out for the Council may have to be replaced if there is no recovery next year. Did you hear on 'Gardeners Question Time' that folklore on beating a Walnut Tree is incorrect? The bark is beaten to promote the special effect of burred walnut veneer!

Pauline Hornby has offered to help with the neglected CPRE Hedgerow survey before leaf fall.

Congratulations to Reg Elliot on his BSc in Environmental Sciences. He is about to begin the 2nd stage of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Bio-diversity Audit and needs help!

M42 Motorway - A meeting was held recently to consult with local groups about the possible installation of overhead lighting between junctions and 3A and 6, contrary to the original intention. This would introduce massive light pollution snaking right through a beautiful rural landscape at night, and lines of obtrusive lighting columns by day.

Warwick Road Banks - The line of the new footpath across the spinney from the pedestrian refuge at the British Legion was carved out in August 1999 and bluebells were rescued and transplanted. Delays to traffic calming in Warwick Road halted further progress until 4th September 2000 when work resumed and the path was slightly re-aligned to avoid important tree roots. Engineer Andy Hood handed over a further bag of bluebell bulbs on 7th September and promised new planting in November to screen the path. Hopefully the end of a long saga!

Odds & Ends - The sound of heavy machinery laying the pitches for Arden School continues. (above right) They will not be ready for some time, but the



new Arts Centre will open after half term; it looks quite splendid and unobtrusive too.

F r o m Warwickshire Natural History -

Fox lovers can add special drops to food to treat the

current outbreak of distressing mange, otherwise incurable. Non-fox lovers can spray a pheromone liquid - it will persuade foxes the territory is already occupied. (Retardine obtain on Tel No 0906 - 272 - 4411)

Veteran Ash - found recently on the green between Woodrow and Hollywell Rd. Mr & Mrs Langford came out with a tape measure and measured it at a whopping 156" (13ft) girth, and promptly gave me £3 to join Knowle Society! Its so easy - if anyone shows interest or says they always meant to join just accept their £2 (£3 family) on the spot, then phone me and I will pass it on to John Chaloner. This way we should easily reach our important target of 2,000 members before 2001.

I would like to thank the members of the sub-committee for all their invaluable help over the year.



And finally, a beautiful blue/green Hawker Dragonfly (left) was rescued from the cobwebs of our high glass roofed yard with the aid of a broom.

**Stella Jarman
Knowle 774528**