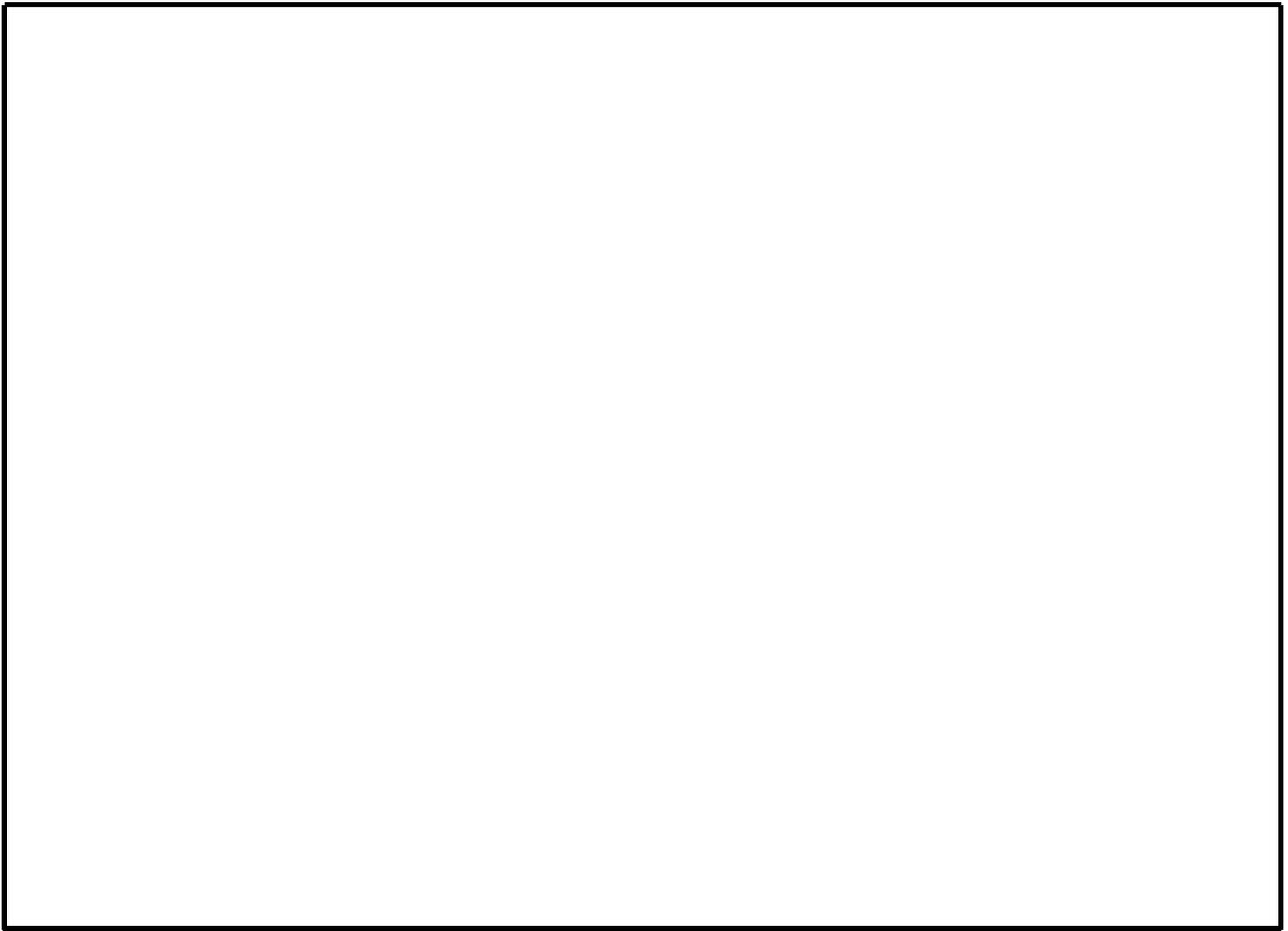


www.knowledgesociety.org.uk

Volume 40 Number 3



Summer 2002—Jubilee Edition



Dates for your Calendar



Sunday 14th July	Butterfly Walk: Meet at 2.30 p.m. at the Guild House
Monday 15th July	General Meeting: Talk 'Going, Going, Gone' a talk by Mr Mark Hannam, a valuer from Bonhams (Formerly Phillips). 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall
Monday 16th September	General Meeting: Talk 'The Bull Ring Development' an illustrated talk by Mr Simon Wallis. 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall
Sunday 29th September	Walk from Temple Balsall General Meeting: Talk 'The Story of Malta' an illustrated talk by Mr Leo Singer. 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall
Monday 18th October	General Meeting: Talk 'The Story of Malta' an illustrated talk by Mr Leo Singer.
Monday 19th November	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall

Membership Secretary's Report

This has been a very quiet quarter on the Membership front with another minor fall in numbers to 1694 with 7 new members joining us.

There has been a slightly disappointing response to my plea in the last Newsletter to fill in and return the Gift Aid Certificate that was attached. We have now received a total of 195 forms, an increase of only 46 since the first enthusiastic response in January. Thanks to all of you who have taken the trouble to spend that few minutes needed to fill in the form and extract a little from the 'Taxman'

Mrs J J Cooper

John F Chaloner
Knowle 778705



To those of you who 'filed' the last Newsletter before you got around to filling in the form I have placed a further copy at the end of this Newsletter. I repeat last quarter's plea with no apology! 'Please just take a few moments to fill in the form, returning it to me or to your Distributor. It really is so simple and could make such a difference to the Society's income.'

As always we extend a warm welcome to the following new members who have joined us since the last newsletter was published, and hope that we shall have the pleasure of their company at some of our forthcoming functions.

Mrs Y J Cooper

Mr & Mrs M Elmer

Mr & Mrs Gallimore

Mr J Crosbee

Amenities Sub-committee Report

The writer has a feeling that you may well be reading this article in what is known as 'the silly season'. The reason for that comment is that at the time of writing very little can be told with regard to the issue of car parking in the village. After an unsuccessful meeting, also attended by the Knowle Traders Association, at the Council House on 6th April, when the only result was that the officers were to reconsider the situation and make a further report to the Transport and Highways Committee late on in June. Public opinion was successful in having the waiting period extended to four hours alongside the Village Hall, at the meeting of the previous mentioned Committee on 5th April; but this will mean the all-day parking brigade turning up at 9.00 a.m. and then moving their vehicles at 1.00 p.m. in order that they are in a new position up until 5.00 p.m. which is the common leaving time for the local office workers. So it means a little ingenuity is all that is required, and the parking difficulties will still exist. Has any one a 'magic wand' to resolve the problem?

Some far-reaching thoughts are urgently required before the village loses its trading centre, and becomes nothing

more than an inexpensive office centre, with restaurants and bistros. This would mean that the office workers would occupy the car parks during the day, and the patrons of the eating establishments in the evening, as in several villages elsewhere in the country when the local services decline, then the banks close, and the centres lose their vitality and identity.

It would appear that the Knowle and Dorridge Area Traffic Plan is currently moribund at the Council offices, and so there is no further progress to report.

Current representations are being made for footpaths that are badly littered, and in need of vandal-proof waste bins, but already the 'budget' is coming forward as a reason for inactivity.

Finally it is hoped that the floral display in the High Street this year will not attract the vandalism as last year. Surely

this must be another good reason for no further food outlets in the village.

Gary Masters
Knowle 779955.



Local History Sub-committee Report

Our cataloguing backlog is coming down - very slowly. More working parties have been held:

Joyce Harrison has been busy numbering and Julia Brain continues to work on the slides. In the meantime the usual crop of customer enquiries has been dealt with. We are particularly pleased to have provided information and photographs for the company refurbishing the Red Lion fireplaces - we have a photograph of the original 18th century public bar fireplace in the archives. John Rear and myself both took some



photographs of the Maddocks family in their shop before it closed, which will go into the Modern Collection. It may seem premature, but we have also started to think about next year, which is both the Queen's Golden Jubilee and the 40th anniversary of the Society. The sub-committee obviously wishes to make a contribution to any celebrations: we are thinking in terms of an exhibition.

Elaine S. Warner
Knowle 775887

Planning Sub-committee Report

Everyone was saddened to learn of the closure of Sodens earlier in the year, only to be followed by Maddocks, both of them long established family businesses. We are concerned about the loss of such traditional village shops and the erosion of the retail base.

There was even more concern when an application was made to turn Maddocks into a hot food takeaway. We do not think this is appropriate in such a special location, close to the Guild House and the Church, and indeed the Council's own guidelines suggest that such developments should not be allowed in Conservation areas, so we hope that it will be rejected.

We were also disappointed to see an application to turn Sodens into offices. We had hoped that it might be retained as a shop (or possibly two) with some accommodation

upstairs. In any case - we hope that the fabric of the building can be retained as far as possible.

Members will probably recall an earlier application for the development of apartments at 1266-1288 Warwick Road. This has now become a very complex issue with two competing applications (one combined with

the McCann Erickson apartments), and both involving the addition of a roundabout, one at Copt Heath Croft and the other at Lightwood Close. We have expressed concern to the Council about over-development along the Warwick Road.

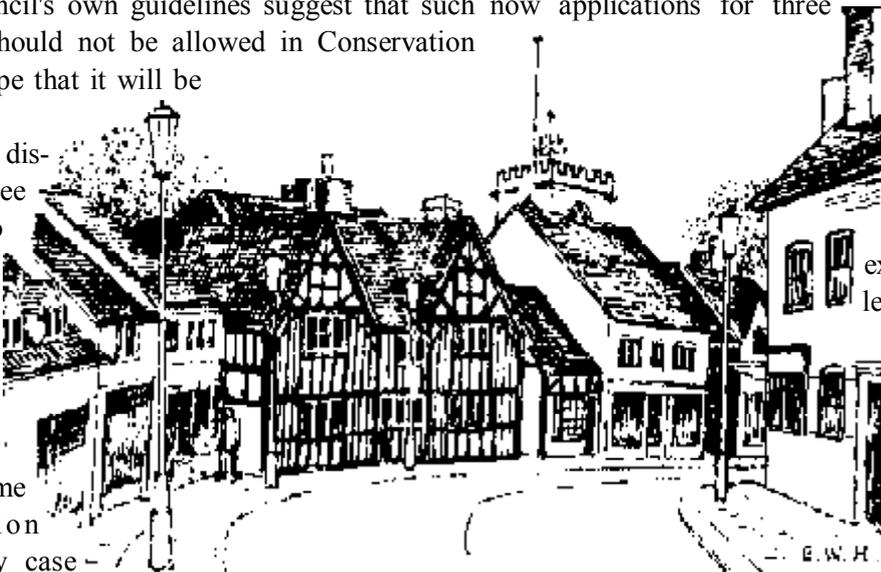
We are also concerned about similar over-development along Station Road, especially near the junction with Widney Road. In addition to the Mansions now being built on the Grove Road corner, there are now applications for three

other houses in near proximity to make way for apartments. They are all very close to the inadequate roundabout and will only exacerbate existing traffic problems, especially bearing in mind the presence of the Cricket Club on the other corner.

We understand that the Council has begun consideration of general policies for the

Unitary Development Plan, so we hope to see the First Deposit (funny name) during the summer.

Ken Richards.
Knowle 777436.



Meetings and Social Sub-committee Report

My colleague Susan Trucchi and I took the opportunity at the end of May to visit Stoneleigh Abbey with a view to organising a trip in September. Although work is ongoing there, it was a most interesting and enjoyable afternoon. Some of you may have been at the meeting last year when Shirley Reading gave a talk about Stoneleigh. The history is fascinating and the restoration and most beautiful plasterwork make it well worth a visit.

We have costed the trip and feel that the cost per member for the coach would make it a fairly expensive afternoon out. For those who are fortunate to have transport we would certainly recommend a visit. We understand that there will be an art exhibition during September/October time so you may decide to delay until then. The other advantage of going in the autumn would be that the renovation of the Abbey should be further advanced. The telephone number for information on opening times etc. is 01926 852116

Details of the meetings over the next few months are as follows:

MONDAY JULY 16th 2001: 'From Ambridge to Hong Kong' Ms E Wilson was in the cast of the Arch-

ers, and then spent 14 years in Hong Kong with her husband. A light hearted amusing talk.

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 17th 2001: 'The Work of the Woodland Trust' A talk by Mr. D Brown. I think the title is self-explanatory.

MONDAY OCTOBER 15th 2001: 'The Story of Malta' Leo Singer has been a guest speaker in the past. His illustrated talk will explore Malta over 6000 years, also the shipwreck of Paul in A D 60, moving on to the influence of Knights of St John of Jerusalem and British occupation up to the Second World War.

MONDAY NOVEMBER 19th 2001: Annual General Meeting.

Please come along and support us. Why not bring a friend who is not a member. He or she may be tempted to join.

Sandra Lea
Knowle 776850

Nature Conservation Sub-committee Report

Lots of news and happenings to report in this issue, so where to begin?

Firstly, as usual, a comment on the weather. May 2001 was officially the sunniest May month for 9 years - not quite a centuries-old record! In her Country Diary for 1906 Edith Holden wrote 'After a week of warm growing weather we have returned to cold north winds and hail storms' and so May that year was declared 'a cold and stormy month'. Interestingly she also reported earthquake shocks in Western England in June 1906, almost coincidental with the strong tremors felt in Devon in May this year.

It has been good to see the recovery of most of the street and garden prunus trees that shriveled so badly last summer. Some appear to have blossomed more luxuriantly than ever! Starlings have nested again under our own roof, and tiny two spot ladybirds overwintered indoors under our bedroom windowsill. There seem to be more than ever of the huge Bombus bumblebees with white or red tails diligently searching over the ground for useful holes for nest building. The smaller workers are everywhere, but not the hive bees - only two lay on the massed Limnanthus (poached egg) flowers. Many hives are now in-



fectured with the dreaded Varoa mite whose larvae eat their hosts from the inside. Ray Morton tells me that only regular fumigation can control the pest but not entirely eradicate it. The wild bees of course have no such protection.

Solihull UDP First Review has Topic Papers on the Environment and Countryside. The Council's latest **Strategy for Nature Conservation** will consider new policies on protected species, natural corridors including the River Blythe, and other wildlife features and habitats identified in the Warwickshire Biodiversity Action Plan. It also aims to increase the number of Local Nature Reserves. The **Woodland Strategy** will seek to restore the character of the Arden landscape through the creation of new woodlands by planting or natural regeneration together with enhancement of existing woodlands

The latest **Sustainable Solihull** newsletter (available from the library) has an update on the new Brueton Park Nature Centre; also a report about our Tree Warden Group - we have now been given the opportunity to transform the old Council Tree Nursery off Widney Manor Rd into a Community woodland and ar-

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

boretum, which could eventually have links with and be visited from the Brueton Centre - a very exciting possibility.

Our Knowle Society Tree Planting story also appears in **Sustainable Solihull** with 2 photographs in full colour (one on the wrong page!) but sadly some of our trees in Jobs Close have already been vandalised or even uprooted. The mowing contractors too have not taken sufficient care and after an on-site meeting we were assured that six trees would be replaced - in due course.

The Nature Reserve - has been badly vandalised too, especially during the Easter holidays. If such destruction continues, the viability of all of the relic tree and shrub species lining Purnells brook along the length of the reserve will be at risk - and where branches are torn down, the ground flora disappears too, and we have already lost the rare wild Yellow Archangel. Indeed we may no longer qualify for SINC status. However under new Council policy we can apply to become a Local Nature Reserve, which may afford some protection. There is also a new Lotteries Wildside Fund to which we can apply for the heavy boundary fencing we need to restore a better appearance.

CPRE's successful Safer Country Lanes campaign resulted in the new Transport Act 2000 giving Local Authorities power to establish a network of 'quiet lanes'

~ managed to encourage walkers, cyclists and horse riders, without banning cars entirely. Already piloted in Norfolk and Kent, CPRE hopes that concerned people will ask their own Council Councillors for such an initiative and even suggest a suitable lane. Elvers Green Lane springs immediately to mind - it is very dangerous for the non-driver.

The Wildflower Walk of 20th May was warm and sunny and 16 of us enjoyed the scent-laden air of Kixley Lane at its springtime best - the banks all in flower with cow parsley, bluebells stitchwort and red campion, and the tall hedges laden with hawthorn blossom. Rarities included wall rue and hartstongue fern and the less often seen bulbous buttercup. Of course we all stopped for tea at Sunnymount - where else could you get a huge crumbly scone with butter, jam and clotted cream and a large pot of tea for only £1.50 in aid of the Home? Their own new-laid eggs for sale too.

We shall be back after the Butterfly Walk on Sunday 15th July! See you at the Guild House at 2.30pm.

Stella Jarman
Knowle 774528

Local Walks - Co-ordinator's Report

A WALK IN THE GARDEN

The first of the Local walks for 2001 took place on the afternoon of Sunday 13th May following the very successful Knowle Fun Run). A group of ten members left the Guild House in brilliant sunshine to walk to Springfield House and explore the lost gardens of Temple Balsall.

Due to the continuing restrictions on the use of footpaths caused by the Foot & Mouth infection we were forced to follow the Kenilworth Road, rather than use the much more pleasant footpaths. The last section, from Lidgate's, was particularly difficult as there is no pavement. However we made it without incident and were joined at Springfield by another five members. We had a most interesting tour of the facilities, including the walled garden; the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust reserve and of course the 'lost gardens'. These are awaiting full restoration, a task that will require expert advice and much effort. We also visited the Study Centre, which provides an educational experience for Birmingham pupils with special educational needs. Some of the work they had done was on display and was well worth admiring.

Following this, some of the party decided to return to Knowle due to other pressing engagements. The majority, however, continued on to the Old Hall at Temple Balsall, where much needed refreshments were consumed in such quantity that most decided to take advantage of offers of lifts back to Knowle, rather than walking. As it turned out they were very wise to do so, as the sunshine soon gave way to black clouds and the end of the walk was a race against time and the onset of a very wet thunderstorm.

Forthcoming walks, all from the Guild House: -

Sunday - July 15th 2.30pm (Butterfly walk)
Saturday - August 4th 2.30pm

The routes for these will have to depend on the lifting of footpath restrictions, but the walks will take place regardless.

Leighton Jones
Knowle 773894

Dear Member

Gift Aid

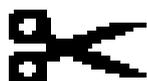
You may have read in the newspapers about the changes affecting ‘Gift Aid’ – the way that charities can benefit from Income Tax that you have already paid. Basically in the budget last year the system was changed so that the old ‘ Deed of Covenant’ has now been replaced by a new version of Gift Aid. This is good news for The Knowle Society as the new system is easier to operate and allows us to claim back money on all subscriptions and donations.

If you want your subscription or donations to be made through the Gift Aid process simply complete the declaration form below and return it to our Membership Secretary, - John Chaloner, 31 Kenilworth Road, Knowle, Solihull. B93 0JB or to your Newsletter Distributor.

You will have read in the quarterly newsletters some of the positive things which the Society is doing with the aid of your subscriptions. All this activity means that we need your support more than ever, and by returning the Gift Aid form you will help to make an even greater difference – at no cost to yourself.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely
Peter Ellis (Chairman)



Cut Here.....

The Knowle Society Gift Aid Declaration

Surname..... Forenames.....

Address.....

..... Post Code.....

I want The Knowle Society (Registered Charity No 238524) to treat as Gift Aid all donations and subscriptions I have made since 1st October 2000 and all donations and subscriptions I make in the future, until I notify you otherwise. I must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the Charity reclaims on my donations in the tax year.

Signed..... Date.....

Please return this form, when completed to the Membership Secretary, Mr J F Chaloner, 31 Kenilworth Road, Knowle, Solihull. B93 0JB or to your Newsletter Distributor