

Volume 41 Number 3



Summer 2003



www.knowlesociety.org.uk

Chairman's Report

HELP!

I am appealing for your help. The Society needs to fill vacancies on its **sub-committees**, on which the Society depends for the operation of its activities and responsibilities. These are all manned by members. There are two sub-committees which need help urgently.

Firstly, we appeal to those members who are interested in helping to keep Knowle as attractive as it is, especially the central conservation area. The Society works for this through its **Planning Sub-Committee** which peruses all planning applications and opposes any which would spoil Knowle. The sub-committee has a positive relationship and constructive reputation with the Council's Planning Officers, and we work closely with our elected councillors. This is vital work to keep Knowle the place we all want to live in. We are not looking for planning experts. Your interest is enough.

Secondly, we appeal to members who enjoy the Society's **Social and Meetings programme** and are prepared to consider helping with it. The programme consists of talks to our members at our monthly meetings and visits to places of interest. This is another core activity of the Society and very successful.

Sub-committees meet about once a month, and last about two hours. They are informal and friendly but businesslike. If you are interested, can spare the time, do please help your Society and contact me with your questions for further details about the specific vacancies, and/or contact the respective sub-committee chairmen direct who are: Planning - Ken Richards on 01564 777436 and Sandra Lea on 01564 776850 for Social and Meetings.

Peter Ellis.
Knowle 775261.
chairman@knowlesociety.org.uk



Dates for your Calendar



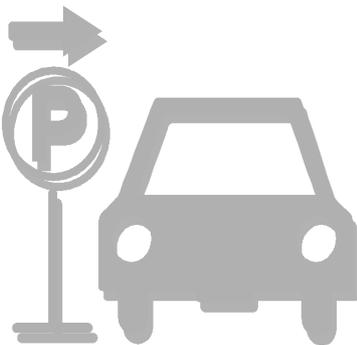
Monday July 21st	General Meeting: Talk 'Comic Capers' by Mr Patrick Baird. 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.
Sunday July 27th	Butterfly Walk: Meet at 2.30 p.m. at the Guild House.
Monday September 15th	General Meeting: Talk 'Food Additives' and illustrated talk by Mr Ian Fryer. 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.
Tuesday September 23rd	Visit to Coventry: Coach leaves Knowle Village Hall at 10.00 a.m. (See Meeting and Social Sub-Committee Report on Page 5 for details and back page for booking form)
Sunday September 28th	Walk from Temple Balsall: Meet in Car Park opposite Lady Katherine Leveson School at 2.00 p.m. Returning to the Old Hall for Tea and Cakes
Monday 20th October	Grand Quiz Night in the Village Hall at 8.00 p.m. (See Meeting and Social Sub-Committee Report on Page 5 for details and back page for booking form)
Monday 24th November	Annual General Meeting - 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Amenities Sub-committee Report



New Station Road/Warwick Road Junction

By the time that you read this, you should have been able to make up your mind whether the road improvement works on Station Road between Lodge Road junction and the Warwick Road junction, are to be considered as safer, or more dangerous than the original unimproved version. In reaching your decision you should have taken into account the fact that the old junction at Warwick Road had one of the worst accident figures in the borough. Needless to say no person welcomes change, but on this occasion some remedial work was necessary, otherwise the accident situation would only become worse with the ever increasing volume of traffic on the roads in our village. Further improvements at the Warwick Road junction are being worked upon by your committee, but these will take a little longer to come to fruition.



The mention of traffic brings up the old hoary chestnut of cars, and the parking of such. At this stage I would encourage drivers, passengers, cyclists, and pedestrians to air their views with regard to the car parking situation in the village. I hasten to add that there are currently no hard plans being followed on this matter, but your comments would help the committee to formulate an opinion to be linked to the area of the Pathfinder project. If you would prefer to attend a sub-committee meeting to inform of your view then this can be arranged. In the meantime due to the sterling efforts of Allan Coleman, the area of chewed up grass in St Johns Close

caused by the delivery vehicles to the Red Lion, has now been "grass-creted". This will ensure that grass has the opportunity to survive, whilst giving the large vehicles the extra support for their turning wheels.

Your committee is becoming increasingly concerned with the volume of airplane traffic that is currently over flying the village when taking off in a



southerly direction. In this connection John Rowley would ask you to telephone the Complaints line on 0121-767-7433, which is a dedicated environmental helpline which operates as an answer phone outside of normal office hours. Following investigation of a complaint, a detailed written or telephoned response, whichever is appropriate, is given to callers within seven working days. If you experience any problems with the service then please report to the number below this article.



Paul Blackman advises that the next meeting of the Solihull Police Authority Consultation Forum is to be on 3rd July at the Council House in Solihull. (*Editor's Note: Apologies should this Newsletter not reach you in time*) This is a public

meeting, and will give everyone the opportunity to meet your new local Police Commander.



Finally I apologize for not being able to bring to your attention sooner that a meeting was held in Jobs Close Park on Saturday 28 June, in order for all users to express their views about the proposals put forward by Solihull Council.

All I can say is that the consultation process seems to be a never ending endurance test on this matter, and some day, maybe in the next decade, someone will turn up and start work!

Gary Masters
Knowle 779955.
amenities@knowlesociety.org.uk

Local History Sub-committee Report

The wonderful year marking the 600th anniversary of Knowle Parish Church is still in full swing, with a number of attractions to come. The Society's main contribution to the celebrations has past, but we are delighted to provide help for the flower festival and '600 Brought Alive', for which we have lent photographs. It is a happy coincidence that the Revd. Anthony Upton's new book (see the box below) is to be published during this year.

'REMEMBER WALTER COOK'

Many of you will already know that the Revd. Anthony Upton has written a new book about Walter Cook, founder of the Church, the Guild and the College. Modern Knowle owes much to Walter Cook, so it will be of special interest to those associated with the Church and village. Well illustrated and attractively produced *'Remember Walter Cook'* explores his life and career in considerable detail.

The author's *'History of Knowle Church'* was published in 1966. In retirement Anthony Upton is still actively engaged in historical research. His new book, based on contemporary documentary sources (many previously unpublished), is crammed with vignettes of Walter Cook's life. It solves the mystery of the circular gravestone and suggests that it was largely due to the Guild and College that medieval Knowle expanded.

An eminent ecclesiastical historian contributes the foreword to a book which will grace the shelf of any private home or centre of serious historical study. Within its full-colour gloss art board cover are approximately 130 pages printed on silk art paper. The cost will be £12.99 per copy, but only a limited number will be available.

The book will be published on July 9th, the 580th anniversary of Walter Cook's death. Appropriately, it will be launched at the Guild House after the 10 o'clock communion service, when the author will be present to sign copies. This newsletter may not reach you in time, but afterwards the book will be available at a number of outlets, including the Knowle Society Local History Centre at Chester House (first floor). To reserve a copy ring Elizabeth Stanley on 01564 773283 or Gillian Knight on 01564 773409 or just go to the Local History Centre on a Saturday morning between 10.30 and 12 noon. And watch for posters and leaflets around the village.

The Local History Committee will now concentrate on its backlog of work, accumulated over a number of years. This is not at all boring, but hardly makes for riveting newsletter reports, so I will not have anything very interesting to say for a while. First job - tidy up and reorganise the Local History Centre. Second job - put away the items used in the exhibition. After that there is a long list of other jobs, which we are trying to put in priority order. A status report on cataloguing looks frightening, but we are not as far behind as some professional archives departments and we are lucky to have some offers of help.

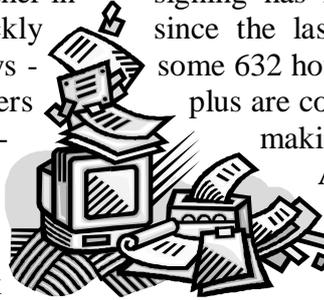
We have also reorganised ourselves a little. John Johnson has taken over Oral History from John Rear, with typing help from Valerie Morton. John Rear has taken over Care and Maintenance of the collection - such things as putting together large documents copied on to several smaller pieces of paper, making sure items have appropriate protection (acid free where necessary) and stock checking. This is quite a big job and not half as mundane as it may sound - it needs someone both dextrous and meticulous, because everything must be very neat and absolutely accurate. He will continue to be our photographer and look after the oral history tapes and the photographic equipment. Julia Brain is taking over more and more of the general administration and Elizabeth Stanley has nobly taken back responsibility for the show case displays as well as continuing as Chief Steward. Gillian Knight will still look after sales (and lots of other things) and Valerie Morton will continue with Schools Liaison.

The Local History operation has grown enormously in the last few years, and we could not manage without our large team of volunteers, who help with stewarding, the Junior School local history project and the scrap book, etc. At the last count over 25 people help us regularly. We are very grateful to them all.

Elaine S. Warner
Knowle 775887
history@knowlesociety.org.uk

Membership Secretary's Report

Perhaps tempted providence when saying in the last Newsletter that I expected further increases in Membership to happen quickly with the summer weather and longer days - Yes that did happen with 15 new members joining since the last Newsletter. However, we finished with a net loss of 2 because of the ever changing population of Knowle. Membership now stands at 1,751. Thank you to all those who took time out to fill in and return their Gift Aid Forms. There were some repeats, but no matter, thank you



all for the effort. The total number of members signing has now risen to 374, an increase of 8 since the last report. This therefore means that some 632 households out of an approximate 1,000 plus are covered. Thank you all for your help in making the Treasurer happier.

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.

Mr & Mrs J Letts

Mr & Mrs A Wright

Mr & Mrs D Clapham

Mr & Mrs E Evans

Mr & Mrs W B Yates

Mrs J B Nelson

Mr & Mrs M Thornborrow

Mr & Mrs Basford

John F Chaloner

Knowle 778705

membership@knowlesociety.org.uk

Planning Sub-committee Report

Despite already having planning permission to erect 42 apartments at 1266-1288 Warwick Road, Parkridge Homes have now lodged a new application for 88 apartments, plus 4 townhouses. We are opposing this mainly on the grounds of the very high density (108 per hectare compared with government guidelines of 30 to 50 for this kind of situation). We also feel that the large blocks are far too dominant and out of character with the rest of the area. Obviously, the increase in the number of dwellings involves more people and more cars, imposing an even greater problem for the traffic along the busy Warwick Road.



CHESTER HOUSE, KNOWLE

Photo. by Berridge M.I.

apartments. However, the company has now appealed against non-determination of the application within the permitted time, and this appeal will now be heard on 14th October.

The First Deposit (revision) of the Unitary Development plan should be available shortly, and we will then have six weeks in which to make any further comments. We have received copies of the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidelines with regard to Windfall

Developments – we support these proposals and hope that they will help to avoid the kind of problems referred to above.

Ken Richards

Knowle 777436

planning@knowlesociety.org.uk

On the next site at 1290-1300 Warwick Road, Solihull Council rejected the application from Redrow Homes (Mercia Midlands) to erect 24

Meetings and Social Sub-committee Report

MONDAY 21st JULY: Comic Capers. A light-hearted talk about well known comedians, to include Tony Hancock and Jasper Carrot.

MONDAY 15th SEPTEMBER: Food Additives. An illustrated talk by Mr Ian Fryer. The Chemical Industries Association offers a choice of talks to associations and community groups. The subject of food additives has been selected as this is a topic which arouses a great deal of interest.

TUESDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER: Following the talk in April by Mr Paul Thompson, we are organising a visit to Coventry, mainly to visit the site of the former 11th Century Benedictine Priory founded by the Earl of Leofric and Lady Godiva, together with the Guildhall of St Mary's. There is a most interesting Visitors Centre next to the site of the Benedictine Priory. A Guide will be present at both venues. In addition to the aforementioned places of interest, the Cathedral is close to hand as is the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum. Shops and restaurants are also conveniently placed.

The Itinerary will be as follows:

10.00 a.m. - Meet at Knowle Village Hall.

11.00 a.m. - Arrive at Coventry.

11.00 a.m. to 12 00 noon - Tour of the Visitors

Centre and Benedictine Priory site.

12.00 noon to 2.00 p.m. Free Time.

2.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. - Tour of the Guildhall of St. Mary's.

3.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. - Free Time.

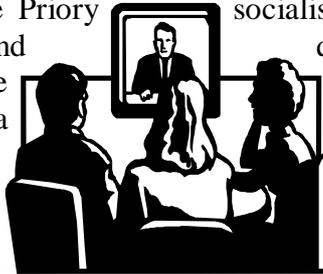
4.00 p.m. - Board coach for journey home.

5.00 p.m. - Arrive at Knowle Village Hall.

These times are of course approximate, and may be varied slightly depending on circumstances.

MONDAY 20th OCTOBER: A GRAND QUIZ NIGHT. We are hoping that an evening such as this will give members the opportunity to socialise. It is not our intention to make the questions so difficult that no one can answer them. It will be a 'bit of fun'. We are not looking for Brain of Britain! You may either form a team, which should consist of no more than 6 people, or come along as an individual or couple and join up with other members.

Please fill in the Booking Forms within this newsletter if you are interested in taking part in the excursion or the quiz night.



Sandra Lea

01564 776850

events@knowlesociety.org.uk

Nature Conservation Sub-committee Report



Have you noticed that practically every plant everywhere has grown at least twice its normal size so far this year? Snowdrops, primroses, cowslips and Bluebells, Wood Anemone and Fritillaries - all flowering prolifically and many at practically the same time too. Which then are true native and which have been introduced? Bluebells now have a warning that the popular Spanish Bluebell sold in Garden Centres (some even labelled as native) are very invasive and hybridise easily with the slender drooping bluebells of woodland and hedgerow, so that these may eventually be altogether lost to the native British flora. The same is true of the Primroses and Cowslips we cherish in our gardens but cannot protect from cross pollination with the exotic Primulas we buy in their thousands! The Primroses develop stout

branching stalks whilst the Cowslips produce bigger and yellower flowers that stand all around the flower head instead of falling to one side. Spanish Bluebells have much wider leaves and an entirely upright spike, but in case this spring's extraordinary growth raises doubts, just look inside the flower - blue anthers in the Spanish, - creamy anthers in the native (non-scriptus). Many clumps of Spanish Bluebells have been planted on the Knowle reserve stream bank in recent years - these must be removed if those inside the reserve are to keep their native status. And we must monitor also the newly planted ones at Brueton Centre next year.

Nature Reserve - the sub-committee turned out in force to do some much-needed management:.

(Continued on page 6)



Knowle Reserve Working Party
Roger King, Stella Jarman, Sue Owen and Reg Elliot

replace the ones we saw cut down in the hedge bank last year before they had time to seed. We appreciate David Muntzer's letter 'Eco Vandals' in Solihull News on the same subject!

Heronfield Animal Rescue - has several new arrivals. There have been many improvements and I was asked to survey their bottom meadow for a nature trail below the canal bank-and alongside the little hidden stream. Mrs. Withy showed me an unusual short bulbous Buttercup with blue/green leaves, turned-back sepals and six petals. A couple had called for their injured pigeon - dropped

(Continued from page 5)

We hired a mower from Heronfield, which Reg Elliott collected, used on the meadows to great effect, and returned the same day. Thank you Reg. Tony Rowe, Roger King and Mike Bignell removed all the retaining fencing and wire, whilst Sue Owen and I cut back the brambles on the perimeter boundary. What a difference - we've had many comments. Huge thanks to everyone! And to Solihull Council who collected the debris. We found one large patch of Wood Anemone in the Alder copse undisturbed and thriving.

Trees - Hillmorton Rd still awaits action on its overgrown Sycamores. Solihull Council are too busy pruning and felling trees in the Borough identified as unsafe by a team of arboriculturists. Latest casualties are two Ash and one Lime in Lodge Rd. Litigation fears determine every decision.

Wildflower Walk - was nearly rained off but we only caught one shower in Kixley Lane damp meadow just as we were admiring the enchanting and vast sea of Golden Buttercups - so different from the monotonous yellow of agricultural Rape. Knapweed and Saw Worth, Yellow Meadow Vetchling and Birdsfoot Trefoil were not yet in flower, but there were Orange Tip butterflies over the Lady's Smock, and a virtual forest of hugely tall Marsh Thistles just by the little mid-field bridge.

Unfortunately Solihull Council had mown the Kixley Lane verges almost clear of the beautiful foaming Cow Parsley that is such a feature of this ancient lane that ends at the old Kixley bridge. And the Water Board, too, had been busy strimming away both sides of the towpath since my 'recce' of the previous day! So all the massed Pond Sedge in full flower along the water's edge had gone and there were no Foxgloves to

by a sparrow hawk and cared for at Heronfield for 2 weeks. Mich deftly caught it out of a large pen full of flying pigeons! There are lots of young helpers - fancy a childrens' birthday party? - or do you know of any old machinery for his expanding heritage collection?

Airport - Have you returned the consultation document inside Solihull News? Our response may be vital in determining the fate of Bickenhill, Hopwood Organic Farm, Ryton Organic Gardens, the W.W.T. Brandon Marsh Nature Reserve & H.Q. to name but a few. Birmingham & Solihull Friends of the Earth are campaigning on this and on Genetically Modified Foods at Environment Day in Brutton Park on June 15th. - Hope you were able to go and enjoy the day.

Royal Show - Sunday June 29th - the biggest open debate on farming and the Countryside Forum for up to 2,000 of the public. The Panel includes David Bellamy and Alan Michael.

Stella Jarman
Knowle 774528



May 25th Wildflower Walk

Joyce Sammons, Anne Smith, Sue Owen, Mick Metcalfe, Sylvia Vincent, Angela Coleman, Ted Reville, Diana Reville, Louise Reville and Stella Jarman.

THE KNOWLE SOCIETY

GRAND QUIZ NIGHT - 20th OCTOBER 2003

AT KNOWLE VILLAGE HALL – 8.00 p.m.

Please reserve a place forperson/people at the quiz night.

Please reserve a place for my team ofpeople.

Delete that which is not applicable.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Telephone No.....

PLEASE RETURN TO :

SANDRA LEA

9 JACOBAN LANE, KNOWLE B93 9LP, NO LATER THAN 20th SEPTEMBER 2003

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THE KNOWLE SOCIETY

EXCURSION - 23rd SEPTEMBER 2003

BOOKING FORM FOR VISIT TO BENEDICTINE PRIORY AND GUILDHALL
OF ST. MARY'S, COVENTRY

Please indicate number of tickets required.

.....Tickets at £7.50 each.

I enclose cheque for £.....payable to Knowle Society.

Your Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Telephone Number.....

PLEASE RETURN TO:

GARY MASTERS

1490 WARWICK ROAD, KNOWLE, B93 9LE, NO LATER THAN 9th AUGUST 2003.

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.