

The Knowle Society



Volume 46 Number 4

October 2008

www.knowledgesociety.org.uk

AGM (Annual Reports) issue

I am always surprised by how soon it is necessary to write again concerning the year end reports. It seems rather incongruous that in the month of August, when the sun should be shining, that a report has to be prepared ready for the membership to consider in time for the Annual General Meeting to be held on 24 November. Unfortunately the timing however is dependent on the printing requirements and the distribution date of this Newsletter.

This year I shall make reference to the changes agreed by the Trustee Directors during the year to date that are apart from the actions of the various Sub-Committees. The

Chairmen of the Sub-Committees will be referring to events since the start of the Society's year (1st October 2007) up to the current situation in the reports on the following pages, and any further updates will be available at the AGM in the Village Hall.

The Trustee Directors have considered several actions in the current year. Initially an enquiry was received from a member as to the availability of Corporate Membership. This was not available at the time and several discussions over the months ensued after obtaining information from other amenity societies that do offer this level of membership and the Civic Trust. Finally it was agreed after checking the

Society's Memorandum and Articles of Association that such membership can be accepted in the future after the forthcoming AGM. It will now rest with you to vote on what is considered to be an acceptable subscription rate at that AGM. Please ensure that you attend to cast your vote.

The Society's Directors then agreed to support the proposal that a site be progressed for the placing of a memorial to the late Dr Bower on the area at the top of Station Road near to where the closed toilet block is. This proposal is named the *Knowle Green Community Project*. In making the initial enquiries of the

(Continued on page 2)

Events Diary

Sunday 28th September
Meet 2.00pm in the car park
Fen End Road, Temple Balsall

Thursday 9th October
7.45pm at Arden School Hall

Monday 20th October
8.00pm at the Village Hall

Monday 24th November
8.00pm at the Village Hall

Monday 1st December
4.30pm by the Christmas Tree

Friday 26th December
11.00am at the Guild House

Temple Balsall with optional Tea & Cakes
3-4 mile walk finishing at the famous teas at Temple Balsall
Always a popular walk

An evening with Carl Chinn
Famous historian, writer, broadcaster and champion of Brum
(Note variation in location, day and time)

Quiz Night
A popular members-only evening, pre-booking required

Annual General Meeting
Members only

Switching on the Christmas Lights
Father Christmas, carol singing and mince pies

Boxing Day Walk
Mulled wine and mince pies

(Continued from page 1)

Council it was found that Knowle and Dorridge Rotary Club along with Knowle Traders were making representations about this particular site as well. Accordingly an initial meeting was held with representatives from both those organisations and the Council officers to establish common ground which has developed in considering redeveloping the whole site for a mutual benefit to the community. It is intended that a memorial will still be included. Progress is now well under way following the Public Consultation exercise.

SUSTAiN, which is the responsible body appointed by Solihull Council for looking after the Voluntary and Community bodies, introduced a competition for all voluntary organisations in Solihull early in 2008 to establish which group had the aims of Best Practice within their management. I am delighted to say that although the Society was not the overall winner we did finish in the top three and as a result was awarded a prize of £100, which is to be used in developing the interests of youth in the *Knowle Green Community Project*, as described in the previous paragraph.

Currently the Trustee Directors are considering what effects the White Paper on the Third Sector might have on the future of the Knowle Society. This document is far reaching and will certainly test the resolve of the Society to find sufficient volunteers if all suggested actions are followed. More information will be made available as discussions progress over the following months.

I have the authority of my fellow Trustee Directors to bring to your attention the recent launch of the emergency information scheme *Message in a Bottle*. This is a national scheme and is sponsored locally by Solihull NHS Care Trust. The idea is that you are supplied with a plastic bottle and inside you complete a list of all the medications that you receive. The list is then put inside the plastic bottle and placed in the refrigerator. You are also supplied with a badge that you put in a prominent place inside the front door and then if an emergency arises

the doctor or paramedic is aware after entering the premises that a list of medication is available without having to try and obtain the information from the patient. Bottles are available free of charge from many local places, including chemists and doctors surgeries. More information can be obtained from any member of Knowle and Dorridge Lions which is supporting the scheme nationally.

OTHER MATTERS

I give a very warm thank you to those members who did come forward and offer their services after the publishing of the last Newsletter. More volunteers are still required so please do not "hide your light under a bushel", make yourself known to any Trustee Director, committee chairman or committee member. This can be done by telephone, by email or at any open meeting or walk held by the Society or of course at the AGM this year. Remember that new helpers are the life-blood of any voluntary body. Circumstances for all people change over the years and existing people cannot be expected to continue going forever.

FINALLY

It only remains for me to say a big "Thank You" for the help that I have received from the Trustee Directors, Sub-Committee members, Newsletter distributors, and other members over my past two years in the Chair. I must not forget the local Councillors who continue to give good advice and guidance as well. In addition the support and assistance that my wife, Gwen, has given has enabled me to apply the time to the role that was necessary.

I wish the incoming Chairman every success in the future in taking the Society towards a challenging future, and look forward to an occasion that is not too far away now, which is the fiftieth anniversary in 2012.

**Gary Masters - Chairman - Knowle 779955
chairman@knowlesociety.org.uk**

AN INVITATION

Knowle Parish Magazine kindly includes news of our meetings each month and we are pleased to reciprocate by mentioning that everyone is welcome to a special Advent Festival Service on Sunday 30th November at 11.15am. At this service there will also be the dedication of four new altar frontals sewn by the Solihull branch of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS). These have been made in memory of well-known local builder Gordon Hicklin, who was born in the Greswolde Arms! The new frontals will be on display and everyone is invited afterwards to a reception in the Guild House.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF FIRST MEETING IN 2009

Monday 19th January 2009, 8pm, in the Village Hall—Hear about the work of the Acorn Children's Hospice Trust .

Your January newsletter will include a separate programme card giving details of the Society's activities in 2009.

THE KNOWLE SOCIETY

(a company limited by guarantee)

I give notice that the **Annual General Meeting** of The Knowle Society will be held in **Knowle Village Hall on Monday 24th November 2008 commencing at 8pm.**

The meeting will receive Reports on the activities of the Society during the previous 12 months and also the Accounts for the year ended 30th September 2008. It will elect the Officers of the Society (Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer) for the ensuing 12 months and up to 6 other Trustee Directors.

Nominations for these vacancies should be in writing and should be sent to the Honorary Secretary of the Society at 26 Wychwood Avenue, Knowle, Solihull, West Midlands B93 9DG **to arrive no later than the 10th November 2008.** They should be signed by the proposer, seconder and nominee, all three of whom must be members of the Society. The Nomination form overleaf may be used if desired or may be photocopied or downloaded from the website (*see box below*).

Andrew Marston
Hon. Secretary
September 2008

01564 774082

Company Number 05514023

Charity Number 1111085

TWO IMPORTANT CHANGES

AGM FORMAT

The AGM this year will be divided into two, the formal part will begin the evening, then there will be a break for coffee followed by a more informal Q&A in which we hope there will be a useful exchange of ideas between members and the Trustee Directors. During the refreshments and informal Q&A session we are planning to put on a 'slide show' of some of the events that the Society has been involved in during the year. We'll also have the questions and answers to the picture quiz that we used as the 'blockbuster' at the Society Quiz Night, so if you didn't make it to the Quiz you'll get a chance to test your knowledge of the buildings of Knowle. We hope that you will welcome and take advantage of this modest change.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON

Due to the large crowd last year the Police were concerned about the safety of the pedestrians using the road outside the barriers into Kenilworth Road. As a result this year the whole event will be held on the Churchyard abutting Kenilworth Road. Our grateful thanks are extended to the Vicar for allowing this much safer site for the event.

WEBSITE TIP

To download a copy of the nomination form overleaf without defacing your newsletter:

Go to www.knowlesociety.org.uk then select Membership and Newsletters. Select Newsletter 46.4 and use the password printed on the back page of this newsletter to gain access. Print page 4 of the downloaded PDF.

THE KNOWLE SOCIETY

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Form of Nomination of Trustee Directors including Officers

We, the undersigned, being members of the Knowle Society, hereby nominate

Full name.....of

Address.....

.....

as a candidate to serve as *

of the Society from the 2008 Annual General Meeting.

Proposer (*full name*).....

(*Signature*).....

Seconder (*full name*).....

(*Signature*).....

Form of Consent

I, the above named,

being a member of the Knowle Society, confirm my agreement to serve in the above capacity.

Signed.....Date.....2008

* Complete as appropriate with:

'Chairman' / 'Deputy Chairman' / 'Hon. Secretary' / 'Hon. Treasurer' or 'Trustee Director'.

PLANNING CRUNCH ?

It has become very noticeable that over the last months there are fewer and fewer planning applications being submitted, certainly so far as *windfall* developments are concerned. The Council has confirmed that they have seen a substantial reduction in major applications and for those who feel that *garden-grabbing* is not generally what we want to see in Knowle this can only be a good thing.

The reason for this phenomenon is fairly obvious when one considers the catastrophic effect of the *Credit Crunch*. The ludicrous idea that was not restricted to the USA that it made economic sense to lend up to 125% of the price of a house to people who in some cases were credit risks has led to an economic crisis that the Chancellor thinks is the worst for 60 years. Accordingly developers are rapidly reducing all outgoings and we shall probably come to a point where the only new dwellings being built are some sort of subsidised social housing. Over-priced flats are very unlikely to be built in Knowle for some years to come.

My committee are therefore considering far fewer applications but it does give us time to give more of our energies to smaller matters that may still have an adverse effect on our village. For instance we have seen several recent applications in the High Street for retrospective permission to keep signs and boards that have been erected in the Conservation Area. I find it hard to believe that any trader in the High Street is not aware of the necessity to obtain permission for any external work before carrying it out.

At our last meeting with Gary Palmer, Head of Planning at the Council, we asked about progress in printing the definitive version of the report on the newly re-appraised Conservation Area. The wording was completed many months ago but accompanying photographs are still being selected and I think it will be a month or so yet before we have the final printed version. In the meantime we have been told we can quote the draft as *gospel* in any comments we make on an application.

The marina saga continues and becomes more complex. There are now five possible sites that we have become aware of and the Council I believe will be under some pressure to consider at least one on a favourable basis. I have had now quite a few comments from Knowle residents on at least two of the sites. I have to say that some people are quite well disposed to the principle of the idea and some opposed. Until we have an actual application which meets the Council's criteria for accompanying documentation my committee continues to keep its powder dry. If you have not yet commented and wish to do so I look forward to hearing from you.



Lastly, I have to say that the economic downturn seems also to be having the effect of dissuading developers from appealing against adverse Council decisions in situations where such appeals would in the past follow as night follows day. I will not mention specific applications for fear of triggering unwanted events but there's nearly always a silver lining to such situations.

Peter Ewin explaining the 'marina saga' to members Nick & Sue Houghton under cover of the Society's stand at the Festival in the Park.

Peter Ewin - Knowle 776381

WEBSITE TIP

To get a useful table of all the buses between Knowle and Solihull:
Go to www.knowledesociety.org.uk then select Community and Buses.
Choose either the weekday or weekend listing as a downloadable PDF.

AIRPORT EXPANSION

As always in the October Newsletter we attempt to summarise the events of the previous year and bring you up-to-date with those items which by their very nature, have a long time span. In particular the Birmingham International Airport proposals have been clarified and a Planning Application has now been submitted to the SMBC and is under review. Your Society opposed the original plans for a second runway and this has been withdrawn from the submission, much to our delight.

The Planning Application submitted does include the extension to the main runway and the airport company is required to carry out an Airspace Change Process relating to anticipated changes to the departure flight paths. This is in order to conform to the Civil Aviation Authority stipulations. Consequently a Focus Group with agreed representation has been formed and The Knowle Society has been invited to attend. We will keep you informed of progress.

Earlier in the year a number of complaints were received about helicopter noise and after raising this with the airport company, changes were made to flight paths, especially at night, and as far as I am aware there seems to have been a marked improvement.



Photo: Solihull Police

SMBC MATTERS

- Contact with Solihull Council is on a regular basis and we have a very good working relationship with them. There is a two way exchange of ideas and we are in regular contact with them over numerous issues.
- The proposed Motorway Service Area (MSA) inquiry has now been concluded and a Knowle Society representative attended on relevant days. As a Society we were opposed to the application. The final decision is still awaited.
- The Library refurbishment is now completed with the toilet facilities more accessible, the opening ceremony was well attended and the plaque presented by The Knowle Society in memory of Councillor Les Kyles was unveiled.
- During the year concerns were raised regarding the surface of the car park in Hampton Road and after representation to Solihull Council, they agreed to make improvements, which are now complete.

- We have again made a financial contribution to the flower tubs in the Village High Street which we fully support.
- Work has started on various pot-hole repairs around Knowle and we will be monitoring progress over the coming weeks.
- A barrier rail has been erected in Lodge Road opposite the passage way leading to St John's Close, which is a marked improvement. Local Councillors were involved and work is still ongoing to find a suitable way of improving safety on this busy road.
- As previously reported, a new strategy is being developed by the Government and Local Councils, which includes the *Voluntary and Community Sector* in the setting of objectives and priorities. The Community Services sub-Committee has a watching brief on developments and Lilla Baker of this committee has been in attendance at the first meeting on Health. The Knowle Society Trustee Directors are reviewing how best we should respond to the initiative; this is likely to be a topic of discussion for some time to come.

Police Matters (Lorna Gale reports)

The past year has seen some changes, both in the Society's link with the local police team and within the team itself. Regular readers will know that Paul Blackman handed over the Society's link to Lorna Gale early in 2008 and that Sgt

Ann Strachan's role on the team was taken over by Sgt Jo Comer. PCs Andy Timmins and Gary Waldron, together with Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Roger Downes, remain on the area team. Although the team works from Shirley, when on duty they are usually in the area they cover, either on foot or in a patrol car; it is a popular misconception that they work at Shirley – they start their shifts from there then move out onto their 'patch'. While it may not always seem so to those directly affected, Knowle fortunately remains an area with low crime statistics. This is due in part to Neighbourhood Watch schemes, and the police are keen that these be expanded.

A significant change is that the regular priority-

(Continued on page 7)

LOCAL NATURE RESERVE, THE PARK & GRASSED AREAS

The persistent rain at times during this year has resulted in poor quality grass cutting, and borders, beds etc. have been largely ignored. This committee will press the Council department responsible for more consistent and greater care in dealing with locations around the village.



DIVERSION

The six week improvement to Purnells Brook culvert beneath Longdon Road, which will be completed by the time that you

RECYCLING (NOT FLATS & MAISONNETTES)

This is moving well with new kerbside collections for glass being planned for October. We are requested to remove tops and stoppers and rinse out before placing in a black box (to be delivered in September). Ovenware glass or broken glass is not required at this time. Further information may be obtained on 0121 704 8000.

receive this newsletter, with its larger water escape route should alleviate the flooding problems the area has experienced for some time.



TESCO TROLLEYS (POSSIBLE COIN OPERATION)

This old chestnut is becoming quite a saga but during a meeting with Tesco Head Office staff, the local manager and this committee, it was agreed that a Tesco six month survey be carried out amongst all shoppers and traders to establish exactly what the local community would be happier with; either a coin return system or maintain the status quo. The local manager has promised more in the way of gathering up abandoned trolleys, consistent with the wishes of residents.

SHRUB BEDS (SHOPPING PRECINCT)

These were a very sorry sight and have caused some disquiet amongst those who visit the area for shopping and dining. This committee together with the local traders pressed the Council for some action as a matter of urgency and we are happy to report that all four beds have received some attention and we hope will be included on a regular maintenance schedule.

It is because of these delays, where pens or satellites would have to be considered, that work on the car park has been held up. We will now press the Council for the proposed work to be started up again as soon as possible where remaining and some minor surface work is scheduled.

AND FINALLY...

We have received three calls recently from local residents with regard to tree problems, in all cases on private land. Although we are sympathetic we are only able to advise the help numbers that people should call with these concerns.

ENFORCEMENT

This is now common and proving a deterrent to those who have little regard for the current parking regulations.

Allan Coleman - Knowle 772237

(Continued from page 6)

setting meetings at Knowle Village Hall are to be replaced by a mobile surgery which will be located at different places each time. The drive behind the change was the lack of attendance at the Village Hall meetings. The police team has been asked to place details of these in Knowle Library and to publicise them well in advance. They *do* want to hear the views and concerns of local people, and want to work closely with all of us, so do look out for these mobile surgeries.

following the previous event, they appear to have had a positive impact.

Once again, a week of multi-agency activities took place at Arden School, with students taking part in activities relating to drugs, crime and anti-social behaviour. As reports of the latter were down

The police team still has a standing invitation to join the committee's meeting and police matters are regularly discussed at our meetings. We communicate priorities to the team and Society members are encouraged to make their views known, either to us or directly to the police team via the Police Website which can be accessed on the Knowle Society's Website, under Community Services or through the regular telephone number: 0845 112 5000 ext. 7928 6264. Speeding remains a concern for many – perhaps we all need to watch our speedometers as we travel around the village!

John Rowley - Knowle 778289

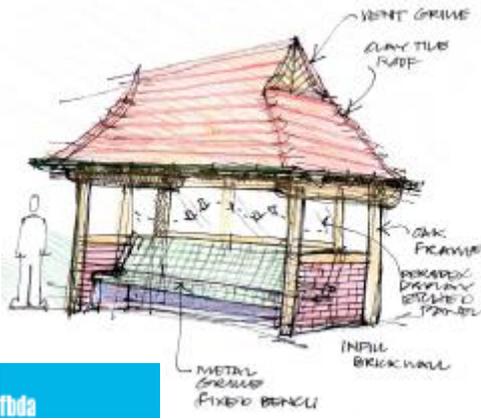
KNOWLE GREEN COMMUNITY PROJECT (KGCP) - CONSULTATION

The consultation which the Society organised for the Knowle Green Community Project has now been concluded and the analysis of results complete. This is the project to give a facelift to the area around the bus terminus in the heart of the village and also provide a memorial to Dr Ronald Bower, which the Society is working on in partnership with Knowle and Dorridge Rotary Club, the Knowle Traders and Solihull Council.

The Solihull Times' take on the subject!



We asked those completing the questionnaire if they would support a project to redevelop this area. An overwhelming majority, about 95%, declared that they were in favour of doing so. When we asked what to do with the bus shelter, whether to redevelop the current building, demolish it and create a smaller structure with same materials or replace it with a more modern shelter, the highest number were in favour of the middle option. Nearly 70% of respondents thought building something less imposing but in a similar, traditional style was a good idea.



We exhibited some concept drawings twice during the consultation period, once at the Festival in the Park and once in the Guild House. On both occasions, one drawing in particular drew a lot of interest and favourable remarks. That is reproduced here. It shows one way in which the style of the current building could be echoed in a lighter replacement.

When the questionnaire asked about replacement landscaping for the currently overgrown areas around the bus shelter, opinions were much more divided. The greatest level of consensus was between those in favour of an informal layout, mixing landscaping elements, but the total in favour here was still less than 50%.

The most popular option for a new shelter

So, the project team is now busy assimilating these results in detail and will be working with specialists to take these conclusions into a next level of preparing, and costing, detailed proposals.

David Pinwell - Knowle 772348

Trustee Director with responsibility for publicity & member of KGCP steering group



One of architect FBDA's example proposals as pictured on the front of the Public Consultation document

The year started with what was intended to be a revealing and fascinating ‘behind the scenes’ talk on the John Lewis Partnership, with a focus on the five years that they had been open in Touchwood. Well, for reasons that became clearer only after the night of the talk, we didn’t get the Customer Services Manager whom we had expected, but a young shop assistant who had been ‘dropped in it’ at almost the last minute. Worse than that, he hadn’t been provided with the aids that we were expecting (slides and a projector) so had to make do with a set of printed sheets that he had had nothing to do with preparing. The lad did his very best, but it was a great disappointment. Things improved however when he had dealt with the talk and moved on to areas that he was knowledgeable about, when the meeting, thank goodness, came to life. Needless to say a strong letter went to the John Lewis management! We did hear later that the original speaker had left the company, although not directly as a result of the events of that night.

Thank goodness things picked up at the next meeting! What we had was indeed much better than we had expected – a talk on the history and manufacture of pearl buttons. George Hook of George Hook & Son (in fact the fourth George in successive generations) gave us the most lively and personal account of the rise and fall of the pearl button and jewellery trade. He was a real showman and had the Members eating out of his hand within seconds of starting his talk. I only wish I had a fraction of his gift. Talking of gifts, there were quite a number of ladies who were treated to one of his products that were bought at the end of the evening. I believe some also visited his workshop – goodness knows how much they spent there.

The March meeting was entitled *Packwood House and the contribution of Baron Ash*. It turned out to be an account of an amazing man who spent his family’s money in some of the best ways, acquiring antiques and restoring Packwood House. It is perhaps more accurate to say “giving it a make-over in the best television style”. Remarkably, it is the only house of its period that the National Trust has adopted, despite it having hardly any original features. One of the other notable things about Mr Ash was that he was only a ‘Mr’, Baron being his first name, not any sort of title.

The mood changed markedly at the next meeting, where we heard stories of the parts that women played in the ‘front line’ during the First & Second World Wars. This was a wide ranging talk given by a real enthusiast with a great depth of knowledge. He talked about the roles women played, not only in the spectacular ways of espionage and sabotage, but in quiet and almost unnoticed ways. He explained how women were used as couriers and radio operators in the occupied countries, but also ran

some of the escape routes. They must have seemed like stories from history to some, but there were many others there that evening who had personal memories, or even had a personal involvement in some of the activities – quite sobering.

There was another change of tone for the June meeting, addressed by someone who grew up locally and has gone on to become a senior manager with our local main line train company, Chiltern Railways. His account of the history and development of the rail lines that serve our community was full of personal memories, as well as a sprinkling of business considerations. He gave an account of the way in which the London service was rescued from near closure to a flourishing one and their plans for further improvements that will provide an even faster service to London.

In July we had a rubbish talk. Not that the quality of the talk was rubbish, but it was about waste disposal, or more accurately about recycling rather than producing rubbish. Thank goodness Solihull is starting to get its act together as far as reducing the proportion of waste we have to dispose of. Some goes to the incinerator, which does provide heat and electricity, but I’m sure we could find a better use for much of it.

By the time you read this we’ll have had what promises to be the noisiest meeting ever, with Mr Topham of Acme Whistles showing off his noise making machines. The special meeting on Oct 9th with Carl Chinn might also have gone, but don’t forget the Quiz Night on Oct 20th. There may still be some spaces left for what should be a fun night, so if you’re interested, give me a ring. That only leaves the AGM, of which more elsewhere.

Two of our walks this year were not well supported due to the pretty poor weather we’ve had. We were much luckier with the Bluebell walk, though. There was an excellent turn-out and we were treated to an excellent show of real English Bluebells growing naturally in the woods.

Next year, we have another selection of speakers for you which I hope you will really enjoy. We are trying an experiment of resurrecting general afternoon meetings in 2009. These used to be quite a feature of the programme, but not for many years. We had some requests to try them again, so please come and support us. We do get a reasonable number of up to 100 at the evening meetings, but that’s not a very high proportion out of our 3000 or so members. All that remains is to express my thanks to my committee and all those others who help (usually inconspicuously) to make things work.

Continuing our series of extracts from the Knowle Society's new 'A Short Guide to Central Knowle'.

KENILWORTH ROAD

Kenilworth Road has some of Knowle's oldest buildings and the area just to the south is thought to be the site of the original village. The stretch nearest the village, together with High Street, was called Knowle Street until about 1871. The area between Kixley Lane and The Manor House is known as Golden End. Further along, Kenilworth Road used to be known as Knowle Hall Lane. Cook Close, named after Walter Cook, was built in 1977 on the site of Milverton Farm. There are signs of ridge and furrow cultivation in a field at the rear.

Paterson Court incorporates the original Village School built in 1871 by Knowle United Charities at a cost of £508. 3s. 9d. It was used until 1968. In 1979 it was converted into sheltered housing by The Royal British Legion and named after Colonel Paterson, a past chairman of the Knowle branch.

No. 3 was the schoolmaster's house and is still owned by Knowle United Charities.

Nos. 15, 17, 19, and possibly 21 were all at one time *The Bull's Head Inn* which was mentioned in Pigots Directory of 1828. Sometime in the mid

1890s the property was re-built and converted into primarily a large private house with a small shop at the end near the old villas. The work was finished in 1897 at the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee hence the plaque on the wall. It was originally called Sunnyside but is now known as Jubilee House because of the plaque.

In 1935 the Police Station moved to No. 19, the Police Sergeant occupied No. 17 and the Constable No. 21. If you look at the roof of No. 17 it can be seen that some of the coping stones in the middle stand proud of the rest. This is because an air raid siren was sited there during WWII. No. 15, which was a shop / off-licence, also did its bit for the war by allowing the local school children to shelter in its cellars.

Nos. 18-24 are timber-framed with stucco

frontages. Note the fire insurance plaque on No. 18.

Nos. 29-33 were once a single property and are 16th century timber-framed with a Georgian brick frontage. The exposed timbering at the rear is visible from Kixley Lane. In the early 20th century the land on the corner was used as an unofficial pound. No. 35 is a later addition.

Golden End House is an original timber-framed farmhouse with an Edwardian frontage. The Old Barn House was once a barn for the farm.

Golden End Cottage is another 16th century timber-framed property and was used as a forge in the mid 19th century.

The Cottages (Nos. 62-70) are sideways to the road and are early 19th century. One of these once housed a small school.

The Black and White Cottages (Nos. 72-98) are 16th/17th century. Their long front gardens were originally common land where the market may have been held. Nos. 90, 90a and 96-98 are charity cottages administered by Knowle United Charities and built on land given by Richard Grimshaw in 1690/91.

A barn, now in the front garden of No. 106 Kenilworth Road, housed a small school in the early 20th century.

The Grand Union Canal forms part of the parish boundary and was opened in 1799. It runs through a deep cutting and is noted for its flight of five locks which were built in 1934 to replace the original six smaller ones (which are still visible). Knowle Hall Wharf (used for unloading coal within living memory) still exists, and the remains of a public weighbridge can be seen underfoot. Although commercial traffic declined with the opening of the railway in the mid 19th century the canal still thrives.

An abattoir was once at Lidgates which is further along the road past Elvers Green Lane.



For more information on historic buildings see *A Short Guide to Central Knowle*, (£3). The third edition is on sale now at Knowle Society meetings and at the Library, Carly's, Midland Business Equipment and Oxfam Book Shop in Knowle. It is also on sale at Tourist Information in Solihull Library and in Borders book shop in Touchwood, Solihull.

REPORT ON THE LOCAL HISTORY ACTIVITIES FOR THE PAST YEAR

FILING

I am pleased to report that Kathy Jephcott and David Bower have now made great inroads into the cataloguing of the archives and the work is still continuing. David has undertaken to ensure that the latest data is included on the website. In due course the archive searching on the website will also be replaced with an even better one.

SCRAPBOOKS

We have now started a programme of repairing our old scrapbooks with the intention that more of them can be put on display.

DONATIONS

During the year we have received a number of donations of materials and copies of materials, for our archives and scrapbooks. If you are able to donate anything yourself could you please either drop it in to the Centre on a Saturday morning (not on Bank Holiday weekends) or ring Elizabeth Stanley (Our Chief Steward) on 773283.

LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE - EXHIBITIONS

In the Local History Centre display cabinets, we started the year with an exhibition showing *Knowle Street* which consisted of old photographs put together to represent a walk through the village. This exhibition was kept on display until the library closed for refurbishment. Soon after the library reopened we put on the next exhibition which was *Scouting in Knowle*. We are grateful to Alf Vernon, 1st Knowle Scout Group and 4th Knowle Sea Scout Group for staging this exhibition. Our current exhibition is entitled *Then & Now* and consists of photographs of Knowle as it used to be together with photographs taken in similar locations in 2007/2008. The Local History Centre can be found upstairs in the library. It is manned by our stewards on Saturday mornings from 10.30 until 12.00, but not on bank holiday weekends. A steward can be made available at other times by prior arrangement.

KNOWLE FESTIVAL & HERITAGE DAY

Part of the *Then & Now* exhibition was on display at the Knowle Festival in Knowle Park on 21st June and from the beginning of September the full exhibition is showing at the Local History Centre upstairs in the Library. On Heritage Day, 13th September, we

displayed excerpts from *A Short Guide to Central Knowle* and our popular scrapbooks were also available to view in the Local History Centre.

VISITS

Following the success of our visit to John Hardman Company in May which was greatly enjoyed by thirty-two of our members and guests, a visit was arranged to the National Trust Back to Backs in Birmingham. This event has been well booked and will be reported on in the next newsletter.

DVD OF THE RATCLIFF FILMS (PICTURE LEFT)

From the 1930s to the early 1960s Mr. Ratcliff made a number of films showing various events in Knowle including processions, carnivals and comic football matches where the players dressed up in fancy dress. These films are now on a 67 minute DVD which is on sale



Penny Farthing cycles at Knowle Carnival 1953

at Knowle Society meetings.

OTHER ACTIVITIES FROM THE YEAR

In February and March, our volunteers gave their usual annual sessions of helping the pupils of Knowle Junior School by displaying information about Knowle and answering questions about local history within the national curriculum.

COMMITTEE

Alan Jayne has had to leave the committee temporarily due to work and family commitments. He is now the proud father of twins. We all wish him well.

We welcome Bill Bohanna, Bryan Smart and Ann Wiles as new members bringing the strength of our team up to eight.

The other committee members are Janet Erzen, Kathy Jephcott, Elizabeth Stanley, Susan Trucchi and myself, Derek Mellor.



Kathy, Janet & Ann

Derek Mellor - Knowle 205129

A MORNING TALK

Colin Smith will be giving a talk on The History of Knowle in the Village Hall at 10.30 am on Monday 17th November in the Village Hall. This event will take about one and a quarter hours and all are welcome.

HEALTHY MEMBERSHIP = IMPROVING THE SOCIETY'S SERVICES

Following the refurbishment of the library, the Local History sub-Committee worked hard to return the Local History Centre to its former state, but realised the Centre was looking a little tired, most particularly as the library was looking very smart. Derek Mellor, Chairman of the Local History sub-Committee, asked the Trustee Directors to consider providing funds to buy new filing cabinets and a new table. In addition some very old prints had been discovered and it was felt that, suitably framed, these would make the Centre more interesting and inviting. The Trustee Directors felt this was a reasonable request and confirmed that funds would be made available. The total cost is just over £1100. I understand that photographs will be on display at the Annual General Meeting to show the Local History Centre before and after these improvements. Together with the items mentioned above we also purchased a new screen earlier in the year for use at our Monday meetings. This is entirely due to your continuing support of the Society.

Longstanding members will be aware of funds which the Society holds in respect of the sale of a book by Eva Wootton, which took place many years ago. These funds are kept entirely separate from Society funds. The Trustee Directors make distributions from time to time to worthy causes within the Village and following the very successful Festival in the Park, the Society presented a cheque for £100 to The Friends of Knowle Park to help towards the refurbishment of the Children's play area.

I look forward to presenting the annual accounts at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting and hope as many of you as possible are able to attend.

Sandra Lea - Hon. Treasurer - Knowle 776850

Mrs Carolyn Bourne	Mrs E O Irving
Mrs M P Austin	Mr & Mrs P Johnson
Miss N Barrett-Rawlins	Mr J Johnson
Mr & Mrs P Bennett	Mrs J M Joiner
Mrs D Carvell	Mr & Mrs L Liszewski
Mr & Mrs P Cash	Mr & Mrs D Pollard
Mr W J Clarke	Mr & Mrs S K Pratley
Mr & Mrs A Cleave	Mr & Mrs M Quantrill
Mr & Mrs G Davis	Ms A Rawlins
Mrs L Dolby	Ms R Reddington
Mr Evans	Mr J Reed
Mr A Ewing	Miss J Roscor
Ms M A Fall	Mr & Mrs R Savage
Mr & Mrs M Gray	Mr & Mrs B Steele
Mr I Hakki	Mr & Mrs R Sutton
Mrs L Herbertson	Mr & Mrs P Tall
Mr & Mrs A Hart	Mrs L Wilson
Dr W Holweger	Mr H Wright
Mrs I Hooper	

To view this issue with its colour images go to www.knowlesociety.org.uk and select *Membership* then *Newsletters* from the top menus. Click on issue 46.4 and enter the password jwn9k2. No password is needed from 1st January 2009.

IN THIS ISSUE...

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Chairman & Diary | 5. Planning | 9. Meetings & Walks |
| 2. Chairman | 6. Community Services | 10. Local History |
| 3. AGM notice | 7. Environment | 11. History |
| 4. Nomination form | 8. Kno Grn Comm Proj | 12. Finance & Members |

A warm welcome to 37 new members this quarter including those listed below.

The Knowle Society has over 3000 members, can you encourage your friends and neighbours to join too? This may be done either by contacting the Membership Secretary or through an application form on: www.knowlesociety.org.uk

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Next issue

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