
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER JANUARY, 1968

1. STOP PRESS:

Monday, 29th January, 1968, at 8.00 p.m.:

JOINT MEETING WITH SOLIHULL CIVIC SOCIETY
IN KNOWLE VILLAGE HALL

CIVIC TRUST SPEAKER: MR. DAVID SMITH

SUBJECT: THE NEW CIVIC AMENITIES ACT

This Act is the biggest shot in the arms to those who want
to keep what's best in Britain since the death of George III!

So this talk should be a source of great encouragement to
this Society: come if you can.

2. FUTURE PROGRAMME:

12th February, 1968, at 8.00 p.m. in the Knowle Village Hall.

A meeting to discuss the Society's outline proposals for
development of the white land adjacent to Job's Close.

One of the Society's most important functions this year:
please support us.

SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER MAY 1968

MANIFESTO!

We are still enjoying a KNOWLE in which we are proud to live - largely because of what has been left to us from the past. There is a tendency for our own age to consider that it represents the peak of civilisation - to think that all that it does is better than the past. Granted we all probably smell a bit less than they did in the Eighteenth Century (although if you have to wait in a traffic jam with car exhausts all belching carbon monoxide you can doubt even that). But are hygiene and home comforts the sum total of civilisation? What about England's green and pleasant land! Shouldn't our visual environment provide pleasure (as it has in less enlightened ages with far fewer resources) and provide some substantiation for the so-called dignity of man?

IF YOU FEEL IT SHOULD THEN YOU MUST HELP THIS SOCIETY.

Does it matter anyway whether we are effective as an amenity society? Let there be no doubt about it that the Knowle of tomorrow is being formed by the decisions that are made NOW. If we are to influence these decisions - YOU MUST HELP.

In the writer's opinion an Amenity Society can only do two things -

IT CAN HAVE ITS OWN OPINIONS.

IT CAN SEEK TO INFLUENCE THOSE WHO FORM OUR ENVIRONMENT.

To formulate opinions is comparatively easy: to influence others involves hard work in gathering together and convincingly presenting the facts, in energetic representation and propoganda.

These activities must not be left to the limited resources of a few -

YOU MUST HELP.

Nor must you think that in so doing you are committing yourself to a parochial tilting at windmills, to the support of petty lost causes. Knowle Society is affiliated to the Civic Trust and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, and through these bodies is linked to most other amenity societies, and much has been achieved so far.

New blood has come into the Committee and into the membership, with the result that we are able to voice our opinions more expertly and with greater pressure. But always the obstacles to be overcome grow more complex. If the Society is to be effective -

YOU MUST HELP.

THE YEAR SO FAR

Many of you will know that we have held two meetings so far this year, the first in conjunction with Solihull Civic Society, when we were given a talk by a member of the Civic Trust on the New Civic Amenities Act. This meeting was well attended and extremely interesting: the principal matter dealt with being conservation areas. In this connection your Committee is at present preparing a report on part of Kenilworth Road, with a view to its being designated as a Conservation Area, and we are informed by the Borough Surveyor that a large section of the High Street is likely to be so designated.

The second meeting, at which 77 people were present, was devoted to the Society's considerations as to the principles that should be borne in mind when the White Land between Station Road, Tilehouse Green Lane and Longdon Road are developed. After a detailed and clear submission of his sub-committee's findings by Mr. Kedge, the meeting showed a constructively critical interest in the project. Consideration of provision of schools and dealing with vehicular traffic was urged upon the Committee, which has now, in the light of all that was said at the meeting, formally submitted its findings to the Local Authority.

Meanwhile, representation continues to be made to Local Authorities, private bodies and individuals about any matters affecting amenity in our area that come to the Committee's attention.

Latterly the proposed bye-pass or relief road has claimed many people's attention. The Knowle Society is doing its best to find out exactly what the proposal involves and will then formulate its opinion.

FUTURE PROGRAMME

Our programme for the remainder of the year contains the sort of items that we have proved in the past are bound to be enjoyable - and also some new ones. Please book the dates in your diaries now and return the slips at the bottom of this letter, as appropriate.

Thursday, 23rd May Members of the Knowle Society and friends are invited by the Lapworth Local History Group to attend an Ascension Day evening service at St. Mary's Church, Lapworth, and following this, a conducted viewing of this lovely old church and its historic features.

Saturday, 15th June A joint outing with the Knowle Operatic Company to Packwood House:

A visit to a stately home with buffet in the best Knowle Society tradition - but this time with music (live) as well.

Tickets a bit pricey at 17/6d. each, but well worth it. X 2 = 350

Numbers limited to 100 or else the floors might collapse.

KNOWLE SOCIETY

*Established to maintain the
character of the village*

NEWSLETTER JUNE 1968

15 Church Street,
WARWICK
Phone 42109

1. VISIT TO PACKWOOD HOUSE, Saturday 15th June:

the programme is as follows:

- 7.30 p.m. House and Grounds open : assemble for a firm start at -
- 8.00 p.m. Introductory remarks by the Curator, Major C.E. Grundy,
followed by individual wandering in the House and garden.
- 8.45 p.m. Madrigals in the garden by Knowle Operatic Society.
- 9.00 p.m. Sherry and cold buffet in the Great Hall.
- 9.45 p.m. Songs by the Operatic Society from the Minstrel's
Gallery - how about that!

A lovely house in a beautiful setting, very carefully restored, and

- 3 -

Please return the tear-off slip below to secure your place,
and start saving your threepenny bits NOW.

Saturday,
26th October

A coach visit to Westonbirt Arboretum:

One of the most lovely collections of trees in the land, to
be seen at the most colourful time of the year, all nestling
in the creamy Cotswolds - gorgeous!

We will leave Knowle Church at 12.45 p.m., have a good tea at
5.30 p.m. at Moor Court Hotel on Minchinhampton Common, having
visited the Arboretum, and expect to be back in Knowle by
10.00 p.m.

Tickets will be 25/- each, or 12/6d. if you use your own
transport.

In order that we can decide how many coaches are required,
please use the second tear-off slip below to let us know NOW
if you think you can come.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION YET?

If not, please send it to Mr. R. Gaukroger at 148 Station Road, Knowle.

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15 Church Street,
Warwick

Phone: 42109

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER, 1968, AND NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DOES IT REALLY MATTER? IS IT WORTH IT? (to be read only by persons
of discernment!)

The holidays are almost over, the children will soon be back at school, the things you were going to do with the garden this summer will now have to be put off until next summer, and the organisations which form part of the local community start up again after the break for the holiday period. Amongst them - Knowle Society! One is (this one is, at any rate) tempted to ask oneself whether all the fuss about Supermarkets in the High Street, Bye-passes in the back garden and flashing neon fascias really does any good: "they" are going to do these things anyway, whatever a few long haired, tweed be-clad local preservationists say.

But there are more than a few basic errors in this somewhat natural but none the less easy-way-out attitude.

Firstly it overlooks the fact that a lot of people have come to live in Knowle as a matter of choice - yes, deliberate choice. They like the appearance of Knowle, and they like the fact that Knowle is still an identifiable community.

Secondly it presupposes that all the Knowle Society is out to do is to prevent any change and to preserve everything exactly as it is. A glance at the Chairman's report will show that the various activities and concerns of the Society in the past year prove that this is just not true.

Thirdly it hardly reflects well on the evolution of western civilisation-- the peak product of which our present society is supposed to be! We, most of us, reject the person who doesn't care a bit what he looks like - who doesn't shave, clean his shoes, crease his trousers, wipe the egg-stains off his tie - as an offence: an offence to our conception of what is right and an offence to the eye. Yet when it comes to facing up to some of the things that some development companies, some so-called planners and some individuals are doing - or failing to do - to our environment (the place we have chosen to live in, to work in or to holiday in) we cease to apply these judgements; we just look the other way and comfort ourselves with the thought that there's nothing we can do about it anyway.

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But - emphatically - this is not so. Amenity societies all over the country have fought many battles and, whilst it is true that due largely to public indifference, they have lost many of them, there are many instances in which they have been able to prevent, moderate or otherwise influence what they consider to be bad proposals and to encourage and advance good ones. And Knowle Society is no exception in this.

If on the other hand you feel that the Society's aims and intentions are good, but it is just so, so ineffective, and at the same time you have done nothing about it - then my good sir or good madam, the fault is not the Knowle Society's but YOURS.

The coming year with all that will happen in it - decisions regarding the 'Bye-pass', finalised proposals for the development of the white areas, further proposals to rape the dear old High Street - will offer plenty of opportunity for you to help maintain the pleasure of our environment in Knowle - PLEASE GET US OFF TO A GOOD START BY COMING TO THE A.G.M. You might even like to have a go at being on the Committee. If so, please let Dr. Bower or myself know.

WINTER PROGRAMME 1968-9:

- 7TH OCTOBER: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: At 8 o'clock p.m. in the Village Hall. Admission free!
Election of the new Committee and officers - including a brand new Secretary: then a talk by the Local Secretary of the C.P.R.E. (if you don't know what it stands for come and find out), Lyndon F. Cave, A.R.I.B.A.
- 26TH OCTOBER: By coach or your own car to WESTONBIRT ARBORETUM - world-famous collection of live trees in autumn foliage.
Thence to tea in Minchinhampton: then home to bed. If you haven't already, let me know that you would like to come, there's still time.

In November we hope to arrange for a visit to the Birmingham Art Gallery (where there are lots of very lovely things) with a buffet supper, and also a more technical lecture in January or February.

PERSONAL:

It is somewhat illogical that these Newsletters should come to you from an address in Warwick - also I'm afraid that my exhortations are becoming a bit flat, so that it's time for a new Secretary.

I'm afraid there have been many lapses during the past three years from the standards of both good taste and efficiency set by my predecessors. If you are one of those who have suffered, please accept my sincere apologies.

J.M. PHILLIPS, A.R.I.B.A.
Hon. Sec. Knowle Society

September, 1968