

*Knowle.* We have conducted one guided tour and provided guides for Knowle Parish Church on Heritage Open Day. Once more we took part in Knowle C of E Primary School Year 6 Local History Project, this year with an extra session when the children were learning to query a web site. A more unusual enquiry came from Sir John Soane's Museum in London, which thinks the bridge at Springfield is based on a recently discovered design by Sir John Soane. A new venture this year is a compilation for *Solihull Talking Magazine* based on last year's *Growing Up in Knowle* leaflets and featuring Roslyn Croft's wonderful soprano voice. We had our traditional stall at Knowle Festival, and at Barston Fete. We have several bookings for next year and may receive more.



*Springfield Bridge*

### **FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION & MEMBERSHIP, ETC**

The minutes of the last AGM are enclosed and will be taken as read, as will this report; the accounts will be available at the AGM. The Society's reserves are building slowly, but it continues to operate on a tight budget. We are particularly grateful for a generous donation from one local business for which we provided photographs. HM Revenue & Customs has confirmed that we are registered as a charity for Gift Aid purposes and we shall now claim relief from 2007. We have also been in touch with the Heritage Lottery Fund and will be considering how we could use grant aid. Net membership has increased to 162 from 143 last year. The web site is attracting an increasing number of visitors (we are sometimes surprised at how people find us).

**WE URGENTLY NEED A SMALL AMOUNT OF DRY STORAGE SPACE (E.G. IN A GARAGE) TO HOUSE THE GAZEBO AND TABLES. WE NEED ACCESS ABOUT FOUR TIMES A YEAR. CAN YOU HELP?**

### **FUTURE PROGRAMME**

Following a short AGM on October 19th Valerie Morton will give an illustrated talk entitled *Kenilworth Road*. In November Mark Booth, a retired senior archivist from Warwickshire County Record Office, will speak on *Warwickshire Castles*. The Society is moving towards concentrating on a single subject each year, with a talk, plus an associated booklet and exhibition. Next year's subject will be *The Greswolde & Mermaid Arms*, on which work has already started. As the hotel has recently been refurbished it seemed the right moment, although it has meant deferring publication of *The Canal Through Knowle*. For Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee we are planning an exhibition in the Guild House on June 4th. Further ahead, Valerie Morton and John Johnson will present an exhibition on the legacy of Eva Wootton, whom both knew well for most of their lives. Early dates for next year are in the Diary Box; the fixture card will be circulated in January - we have some excellent speakers lined up.

*We hope you enjoy your membership of the Society and look forward to seeing you soon.  
The next newsletter will be circulated in January 2011.*



# **KNOWLE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

## *Making History Live*

### **Newsletter**

Volume 4 No. 1  
*September 2011*

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

#### **September 2010 to August 2011**

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

In the last year the Society has made huge strides forward. The exhibitions continue to attract interest: we are now holding regular exhibitions at Solihull Library as well as at Knowle. The new Exhibitions Group is immensely successful, with enthusiastic new members augmenting existing skills. It handles not only exhibitions, but also talks and publications, which are all allied, and has become the power house for the Society's projects. Illness has prevented the Research Group meeting recently, but it hopes to restart. Our new treasurer, Graeme Spencer, has given impetus to financial matters and net membership is increasing.

*continued overleaf ...*

### **Diary**

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|---|--|
| Sat October 15th.<br>2.30 p.m.              | Illustrated Talk: <i>The History of Dorridge</i> for Dorridge Friendship Club. Speaker: John Johnson. At St. Philip's Church Hall. |
| Wed October 19th<br>7.30 p.m. Coffee 7 p.m. | AGM followed by an illustrated talk: <i>Kenilworth Road</i> . Speaker: Valerie Morton. At the Guild House.                         |
| Mon October 31st<br>2 p.m.                  | Illustrated Talk: <i>The Old Village Part 1</i> for Solihull MS Society. Speaker: Jerry Tucker. At The Bridge, Stratford Road      |
| Thurs November 3rd<br>8 p.m.                | Illustrated Talk: <i>A Thousand Years of Knowle</i> for St. Margaret's Church Fellowship. Speaker: Elaine Warner. Spencer Hall.    |
| November 7th - 21st                         | Exhibition: <i>The Place Names of Knowle</i> at Knowle Library   |
| Wed November 16th<br>2.30 p.m.              | Illustrated talk: <i>Warwickshire Castles</i><br>Speaker: Mark Booth. At the Guild House.  |
| Saturday November 19th                      | Autumn Luncheon at the Wilson Arms   |
| Mon January 16th<br>3 p.m.                  | Illustrated talk: <i>A Thousand Years of Knowle</i> for Knowle W. I. Speaker: To be announced. At the Guild House.                 |
| Wed February 15th<br>2.30 p.m. Tea 2 p.m.   | Illustrated Talk: <i>The Greswolde &amp; Mermaid Arms</i><br>Speaker: In house. At the Guild House                                 |
| March 12th - 26th                           | Exhibition: <i>The Greswolde &amp; Mermaid Arms</i> at Knowle Library  |

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## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Wednesday October 19th 2011 at 7.30 p.m. at the Guild House to receive the Society's accounts and elect officers and trustees.

Nominations should be signed by the nominee, a proposer and a seconder, all of whom must be members of the Society. Nominations should reach the Secretary at 23 Blackdown Road, Knowle B93 9HP by October 5th. It would be helpful if any member wishing to propose amendments to the rules or any other motion would let the secretary know by the same date. The present officers and committee must all retire at the AGM, but are eligible for re-election and are willing to continue.

Contacts with other local history organisations have expanded through the good offices of Warwickshire Local History Society, which now provides an umbrella service for the county. Our objectives have been met in the usual ways by activities intended to be both educational and enjoyable: through exhibitions and talks, by providing a service to individuals and organisations, and increasingly through publications.

Outside requests have increased, particularly from village organisations wanting exhibitions for special occasions. To fulfil our programme we owe much to the support of others: to the library staff at both Knowle and Solihull and to the enormous contribution made by long-standing residents who have provided material and/or information. I thank them and everyone who has worked hard to make the Society the success it has become: the committee, the working groups, the speakers, and everyone who has helped the Society in any way, not least our members for their support.

Elaine S. Warner  
01564 775887

## TALKS & SOCIAL EVENTS

There have been three public talks since last September, starting in October with Roslyn Croft on *Around Knowle in Old Photographs*. An autumn lunch proved more popular than the Christmas Social held in previous years, with nearly forty people enjoying a convivial meal. As afternoon meetings met with approval from members this was repeated, with Edna Handley talking on *Bentley Heath & Widney Manor* in February. *The Place Names of Knowle* followed, with an in-house speaker (Elaine Warner). Cost considerations caused the planned visit to Berkswell in July to be replaced with a strawberry tea, which proved popular, cheaper and was without overheads.



Four Ashes, Bentley Heath

## EXHIBITIONS & TALKS

September 2010 saw *The Pride of Lyons* on display for Heritage Open Days; *The Westminster Connection* followed in April. The summer exhibition continued the theme of *The Place Names of Knowle*, with an associated booklet. As usual it was first seen at



High Street showing the original grocer's shop

Knowle Festival and then at the delightful Barston Fete. It will be shown at Knowle Library in November and eventually at Solihull Library. *Six Knowle Buildings* was on show at Solihull in March and *The Railway Station* is there at present. *Knowle's First Grocer's Shop* will have been on show at Knowle Library for Heritage Open Days. Many thanks to Greta Court, Rosemary Hubbard (née Meeks), Richard Band and Peggy Miller for their contributions. Two further talks have been prepared this year: *The History of Dorridge* and *Kenilworth Road*. Existing talks continue to prove popular with outside organisations; we are now included in Solihull Council's list of speakers.

## IMAGE LIBRARY & OTHER RECORDS

Further additions to the image library have been made when preparing exhibitions. The oral history records have been similarly augmented through research.

## PUBLICATIONS

*The Place Names of Knowle* appeared in June in time for the Festival in the Park and is selling well. After careful thought, we printed this in house, allowing use of colour and removing concerns about initial cost. Booklets in preparation include *Memories of Four Seasons*, (based on the *Growing Up in Knowle* leaflets), *Gumley Wilson Squire of Knowle* and *The Greswolde & Mermaid Arms*. We keep a small stock of each booklet, with further copies printed as needed.



Eastcote ford, once called Coldford

## OUTSIDE EVENTS

Five talks have been given to other organisations this year, including one for Knowle Library in Adult Learners' Week. Exhibitions were provided for Knowle British Legions's 90th anniversary celebrations in July and for Knowle Parish Church Family Fun Day the following week. *Books in Knowle* had a repeat showing at the Oxfam Bookshop for the Oxfam Book Fair, for which we also provided *Images of*