

computer screen, which several people wanted to look at. The Society has recently provided photographs for 1683 Chocolate Place which will open on September 4th. Refurbishment and the opening will be filmed by Channel 4 as part of a larger series.

### **OUR WARWICKSHIRE**

*Our Warwickshire* is planning for the 70th anniversary of V.E. Day, for which two articles have been submitted for Knowle: *V.E. Day in Knowle* and Ray Morton's diary which he wrote on the day, which is his own contribution. Entries for exhibitions and Society meetings are now being submitted: one for *The History of Knowle Park* is already published; another for the Parsonage exhibition may be on-line when you receive this newsletter. *Our Warwickshire* attracts a lot of hits, which raises the Society's profile with a wider audience: after the last meeting our secretary typed *Evelyn's War* into Google and found us at the top of the list, via *Our Warwickshire*. Personal contributions are encouraged. Many members must have at least one article in them; the committee will provide advice on how to set about it. A mention that you are a member of the Society would be appreciated.

Right: *The church, floodlit for the first time on V. E. Night*



### **KNOWLE PARISH MAGAZINE**

There is a big gap between April and September when the Society submits no copy. During those summer months we may send in an occasional photograph, with brief details, entitled *Looking Back ...* or something similar. Photographs not often on public display are possibilities. Deb Ment, who has always been very helpful, will retire as editor at the end of May. We thank her for everything she has done for the Society and for the village and send our good wishes to her successor, Rosemary Watts (well known to many).

### **FUTURE PROGRAMME**

Events later this year are on the programme card, with more details in the next newsletter. We shall shortly be considering next year's programme - all ideas are welcome. At the February meeting members expressed a wish for an extra meeting. This would have to be with an external speaker as an in-house talk would put too much pressure on the Exhibitions Group. The Society can now afford it, although the cost of both the Guild House and a speaker have increased. The main problem is finding a suitable date: events should not be squashed into a short time span, but between May and September many people are on holiday.

*We hope you enjoy your membership of the Society and look forward to seeing you soon.*

*The next newsletter will be circulated in September 2015.*



# **KNOWLE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

## *Making History Live*

# **Newsletter**

Volume 6 No. 4  
May 2015

***WE HOPE ALL OUR MEMBERS WILL ENJOY THE SUMMER***

### **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Most of the time since Christmas has been spent on preparing projects, especially the canal, including both talk and exhibition; considerable work on the parsonage exhibition has ensured that it is viable. Two existing talks have been amended; the park exhibition is now at Solihull; a number of enquiries requiring more work than usual have been received and answered; several talks to outside organisations have been given; the *Our Warwickshire* web site has received attention; and progress has been made on DVDs and oral history. On the flip side, technical problems have relegated expansion of the web site to the back burner again. More details overleaf.

Elaine S. Warner  
01564 775887

### **Diary**

Until July Solihull Central Library	Exhibition: <i>The History of Knowle Park</i> On show at the discretion of the Local Studies Librarian
Thursday July 16th 23 Blackdown Road	Summer Buffet 6.30 p.m. Call notice enclosed
July 16th to July 29th Oxfam Books & Music	Exhibition: <i>The Canal Through Knowle</i> (short version)
Saturday September 12th Church 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Events for Heritage Open Days Tours of Knowle Parish Church (for Knowle Parish Church) Exhibition: <i>The Old Parsonage</i> (No. 1644 High Street)
Sunday September 13th Dorridge Park	The Society at Dorridge Day. To be confirmed. Exhibition: <i>The Canal Through Knowle</i>
September 14th - 28th Knowle Library	Exhibition: <i>The Old Parsonage</i> (No. 1644 High Street)
Wed October 21st Guild House 7.30 p.m. Coffee 7 p.m.	Talk: <i>Bowling in Knowle</i> . Speaker: In house Preceded by a short AGM

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## PEOPLE

As many members already know, Ernie Norman died at the end of January. He had been a member of the Society since its formation in 2007, always ready with an entertaining snippet of new information and the star of many an interview session at Knowle Junior School. We are grateful for everything Ernie did for the Society and the village and hope to maintain contact with his family.

On a happier note, Neil and Jackie McDougall took over the distribution of the newsletter in January, including folding about 300 documents three times a year - sole destroying on one's own, but quite companionable with some help. They have proved themselves both willing and very efficient.

## MEETINGS & SOCIAL EVENTS

The first of the two talks this year was *The Canal Through Knowle* given by Andrew Bryson in February, which went down well and gave a boost to the sale of the associated booklet. In April we continued the canal theme when Tim Coghlan, the Managing Director of Braunston Marina, gave an excellent talk about two young ladies who manned coal boats during the Second World War. We could have listened for much longer than our booking at the Guild House allowed.

The next event will be the Summer Buffet on July 16th (call notice enclosed). After the summer break the AGM on October 21st will be followed by *Bowling in Knowle* with an in-house speaker

## TALKS & GUIDED WALKS

There are currently eight talks booked by other organisations, including some in 2016. *The Great War in Knowle* is still in demand; *The Canal Through Knowle* is now available for other organisations, with one request already received. As mentioned in the last newsletter, talks are now being timed at 45 minutes rather than an hour. *A Thousand Years of Knowle*, perhaps the most popular, has already been reduced and is the better for it; rapidly catching up is *The History of Dorridge*, now restructured and including extra information. Both are 45 minutes; so is *The Mermaid & Greswolde Arms*. Some organisations want only 30 minutes (especially after lunch). *The Old Village*, currently in two parts of one hour each, is a prime candidate for division into sections such as *Around the Square*, *A Walk Along High Street*, etc., which will provide an opportunity to insert new material. *Kenilworth Road* is a talk in its own right and could be cut down. Audiences clearly prefer a lot of slides without too much detailed information: revised thinking is required on how many slides to the hour are needed.



Left: Bateman's Monumental Mason's Yard in High Street, near the Lodge Road corner. From *The Old Village*.

Talks are not as easy to prepare as might appear: structure and content must be right; text must relate to the slide on the screen; slides must be changed at the right point in the text. If it is right, no-one notices; if it is wrong, *everyone* notices.

## EXHIBITIONS

Following established practice, an exhibition on *The Canal Through Knowle* was shown at Knowle Library in April following February's talk; a short version will be at Oxfam Books & Music in July. *The Old Parsonage* follows in September (more below) and *Bowling in Knowle* in October. At Solihull *Two Knowle Shops ~ Maddocks & Sodens* was replaced by *The History of Knowle Park* in February; it will remain at the discretion of the Local Studies Librarian, possibly until July. There is a suggestion that *Maddocks & Sodens* should be shown again in Knowle, where it has not been seen for several years.

Preparation of *The Old Parsonage* is well ahead. Many people may be unaware that behind the mid-20th century front door of No. 1644 High Street lies what remains of Knowle's 16th century parsonage, with the timbering largely intact. The exhibition will include a section on Knowle clergy residences from 1413 onwards. In the course of research, The Revd. Dr. Anthony Upton has discovered the intriguing fact that the chief priest of Knowle's medieval ecclesiastical College probably lived at the White Swan. The Society is grateful to Dr. Upton, the Curtis family and Knowle Goldsmiths for their help.

Right: Knowle Goldsmiths with No. 1644 to the right.



## IMAGE LIBRARY & OTHER RECORDS

Management of the Society's DVDs and Oral History records has been taken over by John Lyons. The early oral histories were typed on a manual typewriter from hand-written notes; later ones were recorded on to audio tape. Some (but not all) of the latter were transferred to a digital format by Geoffrey Dean some time ago. Now most of us have laptops the world is different. After the success of the last *Solihull Talking Newsletter* article we are considering further interviews using a newly acquired external microphone. Progress has been made on DVDs: a copy of DVD editing software (Roxio NXT) and an external DVD drive have recently been purchased. This last will save wear on John's own internal drive (DVD drives are vulnerable).

## OUTSIDE EVENTS AND ENQUIRIES

For Heritage Open Days in September members will be on hand in the church to answer questions as usual, something we do for Knowle Parish Church. The Society's contribution will be *The Old Parsonage* exhibition (see above). Many thanks to the Vicar for allowing us to display it in the church on the Saturday. This year Dorridge Day falls on the same weekend. With several people on holiday we may not have enough manpower. If we can manage it, the exhibition will be *The Canal Through Knowle*, together with maps and a postcard album which proved popular. Last year we had a beautiful day - although the glare of sun prevented our being able to see the