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# NEWSLETTER

Nottingham  
Civic Society

September 1982

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EDITORIAL

The Newsletter in its new format will no doubt provoke some reaction amongst members. Any comments especially constructive criticism, are welcome. Hopefully the best response of all would be contributions for future issues.

As always the strengths, the success of any society's publications depend upon the commitment of its members. It is hoped to start a correspondence column. If members consider the prospect of writing an article too daunting then a letter starting, or replying to some controversy might appeal.

The change in the actual printing process will allow the use of illustrations so maps, diagrams, line drawings and most black and white photographs can be used to enliven the Newsletter.

So much is happening in Nottingham at the moment that the only limitations seem to be those imposed by the apathy of the inhabitants.

A recent report suggested a greater range of sporting activities, for watching or participating, existed in Nottingham and District than in any other area in the country. The opening plans for the new Concert Hall have been announced, a new music hall has opened, another is planned; the Playhouse has been re-decorated; all of these combine to add to the spice and variety of life in Nottingham. 'Operation Clean Up' continues and small but significant blighted corners have been refurbished.

Of particular personal interest is the active renovation of the Express Building on Parliament Street. Great patches of sky have been seen through the hoarding and the scaffolding; this leaves one to suspect that only the shell of the Pothergill Watson/Watson, Pothergill building remains. One grins at the prospect of those battered heads that graced the entrance receiving the beauty, treatment!

*Ken Brand*

A letter to "The Builder" in 1867 (p. 475)

Nottingham Mechanics Hall Competition

29th June, 1867

Sir,

The first premium is awarded to an "Architect and Builder" of the town and a member of the Committee.

"Caught Napping"

## FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME

Tuesday 12th October 1982, 7.30pm, Cathedral Hall:

"NOTTINGHAM THEN AND NOTTINGHAM NOW", an illustrated talk by Keith Train

Tuesday 9th November 1982, 7.30pm, Cathedral Hall:

"THE SMALLER GEORGIAN HOUSE", an illustrated talk by Alec Clifton Taylor

Tuesday 14th December 1982, 8.00pm - CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year we are holding the Christmas Party in Bob Cullen's new office premises at 1 Kaye's Walk, The Lace Market. This is a large warehouse which has been converted into offices and meeting room/exhibition area, and should prove to be a very interesting venue. The building is located near the Stoney Street end of Kaye's Walk. Admission at £2.00 per person will include wine and a light buffet. A booking slip is enclosed. Please return this to me no later than 30th November. No tickets will be issued for the party so you may assume your booking has been accepted unless you hear from me to the contrary.

### 1983 Programme

This has not yet been finalised, but please make a note in your diary that the first meeting of the year will be on Tuesday, 11th January, 1983 when Geoffrey Oldfield will give an illustrated lecture on "The History of the Lace Market."

We hope it will be possible to hold the Annual General Meeting in February at one of the meeting rooms in the new Concert Hall, but at the time of going to press this has not been confirmed.

Full details of the 1983 programme, together with papers for the Annual General Meeting, will be circulated in late December together with the next Newsletter.

### CATERING

This year we will be doing our own catering for the Christmas Party, under the supervision of Peggy Charlesworth. Peggy would be glad to hear from anyone who would be prepared to make something for the party, the cost of which would be course be reimbursed. Her telephone number is 873062.

We are also always glad of assistance in the kitchen at public meetings for making coffee and washing up. This will be particularly so on November 9th at Alec Clifton Taylor's lecture, which we anticipate will attract a large audience, so please help out if you can.

Ann Booth

## TAKE A LOOK AT: Stanford Street (off Castle Gate)

A number of people walk down Castle Gate, turn into Stanford Street and look at the rear of Stanford House (19 Castle Gate). This is quite rewarding for enough remains of the original facade to imagine sweeping lawns and the elegance of life in a town house in fashionable eighteenth century Nottingham.

Alas, for some, that is the end of the diversion. This is a shame, for on the other side of the street are four distinctive, imposing warehouses each with its own strong vertical "lines".

At the bottom on the right hand side is a warehouse for Messrs. Perry (now Drewry and Edwards Ltd.) by the architect R.C. Sutton (1874). Sutton is more often remembered for his churches, notably the Castle Gate United Reformed Church (1863) and Parliament Street Methodist Church (1874). In fact he well exhibits the versatility of Victorian architects for he "superintended" the workmen working through the night erecting the scaffold etc. prior to the last public hanging outside the Shire Hall (1864).

The next warehouse, now surprisingly Stanford House, is the oldest on the street. It was designed for J. Lewis and Son probably by "the" Nottingham architect of the 1850's, T.C. Hine, about 1854. Stanford Street was cut in the early 1850's and on Salmon's map of 1861 this is the only warehouse marked. A pair of "Lace Market" windows, the smaller above the larger, the parapet with cornice; the rows of rounded window openings; all point to Hine.

The third warehouse was for F.M. Caporn by Evans and Jolley (1878). This architectural practice was very active in Nottingham and District for a number of years from c. 1870. Robert Evans had been a pupil and later a partner of T.C. Hine. Evans left Hine in 1867 and soon formed a partnership with Jolley of Derby. Their Nottingham office was in Eldon Chambers, Wheeler Gate. Amongst their many impressive assignments it is worth noting the first plans for the Mapperley Park Estate (c. 1880).

The architects for the last warehouse, which also has a frontage on Castle Gate, were the established S. Dutton Walker and a relative newcomer Howitt. It was built 1890-1 for Messrs. Sudbury. The structure of the brickwork in Stanford Street is strongly reminiscent of a railway viaduct. Dutton Walker was the architect of that very intriguing building at the junction of Clarendon Street and Goldsmith Street, Terrace Royal, of 1863. Howitt, here without the dignity of an initial, was John Howitt later to design King John's Chambers on Bridlesmith Gate and other notable buildings on Stoney Street and Wheeler Gate.



WAREHOUSE J. LEWIS AND SON  
(JACKSON'S MAP 1861)

FREDERICK JACKSON'S  
MAP OF NOTTINGHAM (1861)  
IS IN THE SOCIETY'S FIRST  
SET OF FOUR MAPS (95p)

#### MEMBERSHIP AND OUR 21st BIRTHDAY

To mark the "coming of age" we are staging a 12 month membership drive.

Throughout July we had a window display at the corner of Maid Marian Way and Friar Lane through the generosity of the Leeds & Holbeck Building Society. There was a display at the 21st Birthday Party at the Midland Group Gallery on 9th July and guests were featured in the August issue of Nottingham Topic.

This month, Sisson and Parker of Wheeler Gate have provided and dressed a window with our special display material and featuring our publications coinciding with the new edition of the Caves book - "Nottingham City of Caves" (published 16th August). The display is continued inside the shop on their special feature table at the top of the basement stairs. Prominence is given to our question "Do You Care About Nottingham?". I hope you saw it.

Further displays after the New Year are planned for a Building Society at Bulwell and possibly for a Nottingham Fortnight in Pearsons of Long Row.

For your part, you will find enclosed a membership application form for a friend.

This is the last Newsletter of the year and I invite you to consider paying your future subscriptions by Bankers Order. Better still - pay by Covenant. The only requirements are that you pay Income Tax at the standard rate and have a bank account. Briefly, the Society can claim from the Treasury the tax you have paid on your subscription. The refund is 46p. for each £1. Thus an individual subscription is worth £2.92 to the Society and a family subscription £4.38 AT NO EXTRA COST TO THE MEMBER.

Enclosed within the Newsletter is a Covenant with a Bankers Order attached.

1. For a Covenant please complete both sections and return the complete page to me.
2. For a Bankers Order only please complete just the bottom half and return to me.
3. For members with a National Giro account please contact me as I have a supply of the special forms required.

Please return the completed forms as soon as possible and we will hold them until after 1st January 1983, to prevent a double payment being made. Should this occur, it will come to light in our Bank Statement and a refund will be made.

So with both schemes you save worry and postage, and with the Covenant, at no expense to yourself the Society benefits and only the Chancellor of the Exchequer loses!!

PLEASE HAVE A GO THIS YEAR - IT'S LESS WORK ALL ROUND.

Cliff Deane  
Membership Secretary

#### TWENTY FIVE YEARS OLD

This year the Civic Trust celebrates its Silver Jubilee. The climax of its celebrations was the National Congress of Amenity Societies held at the University of York from Friday 9th July to Sunday 11th July.

As we, as a society, were more concerned with blowing out a mere twenty-one candles on July 9th, our only official delegate was John Cadman, whilst another member, Marion Wallwork, represented the Beeston and District Civic Society, and sent us a copy of her very detailed report.

Many of the familiar recurring problems were discussed. In retrospect such came over as succinct briefings for our local skirmishes to come. From a wide range of generally well informed and enthusiastically presented topics one can here only give a few highlights. By a coincidence two recent "outings" by our society were covered during the York weekend viz: the involvement of the Civic Trust at Wirksworth and the major visit of the conference was to Hull.

Concluding a lively address Professor Graham Ashworth of the North West Civic Trust emphasised that societies should get involved in the social and economic issues of the day; as a moral he pointed out that in Toxteth the inhabited areas were not desecrated. His two imperatives were: 1. Land should be considered as a resource in trust for the future. 2. Government involvement is essential to control the developing environment.

It was good to wage war on the indifference of our national character. Lessons of environmental sensitivity have to be relearned in each generation.

Audrey Lees of the G.L.C. reiterated that too much land is blighted especially round the edges of towns. She indicated the need to husband natural resources including the re-use of urban land; the recycling of waste and to ensure the cleanliness of the air. One needs to protect the sheer enjoyment of living in cities, at present endangered by neglect, the pressures of development and traffic.

The report of a discussion group on Design Standards made the following points:

The main aspects of design in a building are: 1. Its usefulness, 2. its soundness, 3. the delight it gives, 4. that it should be sympathetic to its surroundings.

We should always keep architecture which is old and good. In historic areas we should abhor fakes and reproductions. New building in historic areas should be done in a good modern style, fitting into its surroundings by virtue of materials and scale.

(Other discussion groups covered: Tourism and Conservation, Public Transport, Freight Transport, Inner Urban Areas, Legislative Reform, Care of the Countryside, Education and Influencing Public Opinion.

Lord Reilly, a former Director of the Design Council in a tremendous speech linked the vast supply of buildings in need of conservation with the vast supply of hands in need of employment. "Fashion", he said "is the most misleading of mistresses". "We need to seek order". He suggested awards should be given for bad buildings not built and to every town whose skyline was still dominated by the church.

Closing the Congress, John Shannon of York Civic Trust said "Man needs an outward and visible sign of history". He then quoted William Blake's "Jerusalem".

"I shall not cease from mental strife  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land"

John Cadman took a supply of the Society's publications to York, mainly for display purposes - all societies attending were allocated display boards. He intimated there were perhaps one or two more striking displays but we had one of the largest and certainly most varied offering.

The Nottingham Civic Society stand created a lot of interest but generated minimal sales. Perhaps this is the age of the give-away, the free leaflet!

In recent years there has been a considerable increase of interest in family history and genealogy generally. This is not the place to discuss this hobby except to point out that a free leaflet "Your Family in Nottinghamshire - An Introduction" has been produced by the Manuscripts Department of the University of Nottingham. It is available from the University, and from the County Record Office, High Pavement.

Almost as much enthusiasm has been shown by those trying to unravel the life history of houses. Some confine themselves to the history of a single house, many are interested in the evolution of a local style, the regional vernacular.

There is an ever increasing "literature" outside of the specialist journals available for students.

The work of R.W. Brunskill is a good starting point. His "Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture" has been much praised and widely used. Another of his earlier works is the "Vernacular Architecture of the Lake Counties". Two recent books, perhaps not yet so well known are "Traditional Buildings of Britain" (1981) and in the Collins Archaeology Series "Houses" (1982). The former is recommended as a very good general reader and its delightful illustrations might well encourage the more artistic member to unplug his/her Rotring pen and produce some sketches for this newsletter.

R.W. Brunskill is also the joint author with our November guest speaker Alec Clifton Taylor of "English Brickwork".

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#### TOURS - SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

In general there has been a disappointing response by the public to the evening tours. The Shire Hall and Caves has, however, been an outstanding success. Although all the other weekday tours have ended, we are extending the Shire Hall tour until September 21st. So please make a note and come and enjoy the visit yourselves.

Tuesday, September 21st, 7.30pm at the Shire Hall, High Pavement.

Don't be late - this last tour has to be completed by 9.00pm and so starts on time. We look forward to seeing you.

Cliff Deane  
Walks Department!

#### HISTORY - LOST AND FOUND

"Why didn't you let me know?"

"If only I'd known . . ."

These are sad phrases when they refer to old books, pamphlets and post-cards which have been destroyed - because "No-one wanted them".

Within the last year I have acquired three interesting items:

1. A coloured postcard postmarked 1908 showing the tram standards outside St. Peter's Hotel.
2. A short history of Nottingham Castle, published 1904 by Harry Gill.
3. Extracts from the diary of a Nottingham schoolteacher for three years from 1881 (A female teacher at Basford School).

The postcard was purchased by my daughter in a second-hand bookshop in Stratford on Avon for about 20 pence. Did you know that there were tram standards down the middle of Wheeler Gate and that the St. Peter's Hotel is now Sisson & Parker's? Some of the servants' rooms still exist on the upper floors above the sales area.

There are two very interesting items in the book. The City coat of arms is depicted with the original supporters who were foresters ("Robin Hoods") before they were replaced by the present stags. The second is a vivid account of the burning of the Castle. After a description of the events leading up to the fire, he continues "The details, so far, I had from my father and others. Now for my personal recollections. On that 10th of October I was in bed about eight o'clock but not asleep: the roar outside was too terrible and persistent for even infancy's slumbers. Presently someone lifted me up - presumably a servant - and throwing a shawl over me, held me at the window, I can never forget that sight". He vividly describes the flames "lighting up St. James's Church, Standard Hill and the whole neighbourhood" and the noise of falling timbers: "by and by a delicious odour was wafted in our direction from the burning cedar wood from which the panels of many rooms were made"

". . . one impressive sight was the molten lead pouring down in lurid streams from the roof of that noble mansion". The memories of a child still vivid over 70 years after the event.

And from the diary, two items:

(1881) Thursday June 30th

"Prince Leopold came to open our University. The Prince came to Bestwood Hall (Duke of St. Alban's seat) on Monday so he is having rather a long stay there".

There follows a description of the procession from Bestwood to Sherwood Street, "and then came the Prince again, escorted as before and I had a better view of him than in Goldsmith Street. I was honoured by a look from the Prince and he has glorious blue eyes".

(1882) Saturday 18th March

". . . drive in a wagonette, we drove through Bestwood Park and home thro' Bulwell (we had a drink at the well, lovely spring) and Aspley, Aunt Alice left us for Mickleover, she has been staying at Southey St. nearly a fortnight. Dick rode over and put his horse up at Dabells".

These vignettes could have been lost but were given to me almost apologetically on the grounds that "you must know all this stuff anyway". As you can see, we just don't.

If you do not have room to collect any of these items, then the Historical Sub-Committee would be pleased to receive them, or interesting information that can be copied and the originals returned. Remember when on holiday to look out for Nottingham items. They will not be plentiful but cheap and just as good.

The post-card bought in Stratford with a Nottingham scene was postmarked "9.00pm, Dec. 3 08 Teignmouth" and addressed to Torquay!

Cliff Deane, Chairman  
Historic Sub Committee

#### WANTED - ONE FILING CABINET

For the past year or so, Ray Banks, one of our Committee members, has been assiduously going through the Society's archives, which by now have reached vast proportions. It would be a great help to him if he had a filing cabinet at home in which to store the material. If any member has an old filing cabinet either at home or at the office which is surplus to requirements, please contact Ray Banks on Nottingham 254679, and arrangements will be made for its collection.