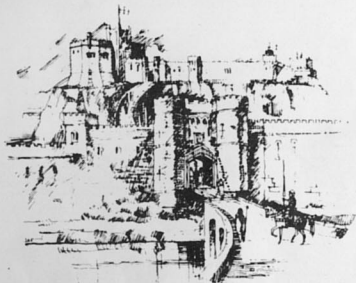


# The Civic Society's Gatehouse Shop



**Reopens after Refitting**

**Weekends Only from 12th February**

**Daily 11am - 4.30pm from  
Good Friday 1st April**

Postcards, Lace, Books, Maps, Slides, and Souvenirs

**Nottingham  
Civic  
Society**

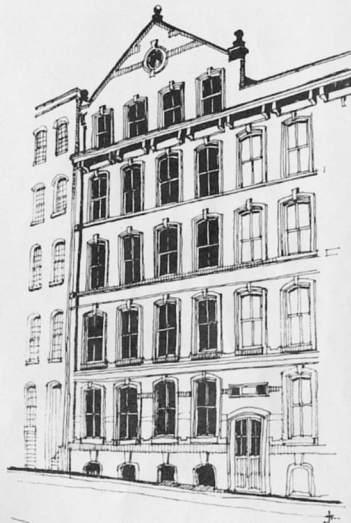
President: Professor M.W. Barley  
Chairman: A.N.R. Hamilton  
Secretary: Miss A. Booth ☎260113  
Editor of Newsletter: Ken Brand ☎263997

**NEWSLETTER**

Nottingham  
Civic Society

January 1983

**60**



No. 1 Kaye's Walk c. 1855. Recently renovated  
for the Cullen, Carter, Hill Partnership, the  
venue of the January meeting.

**20p**

INDEX

1. Editorial
2. Nottingham's First Civic Society
3. Bridge Housing
4. How We Began
6. The Gatehouse Shop
8. Take a Look at Victoria Street
11. Recent Lectures
12. Bulwell Dovecote
14. Royal Concert Hall
15. As I Remember: Burton Street 1913-14 (Part 1)
17. 19 Park Terrace
18. Walks, Guides and Membership
20. Letters and News Items
22. Projects 83. The Shire Hall
24. 1983 Programme

What is the lure of Nottingham? Is it its extremes, its contradictions, is it still at the crossroads of England, the true heart - a little off centre? Reading of the scheme to give the beauty treatment to the western side of Mansfield Road, from Peachey Street to Forest Road, gave me that exciting inner glow.

Several days later I heard of the proposed 'Yule Tide Fair' in the Market Square. I have seen, heard, even discussed many interesting proposals for your Market Square but I am afraid this is not one of them.

The topic was brought up at an Executive Committee meeting and received with mixed feelings. At this stage the Committee felt the fairest course of action would be to see how things went. Although a protagonist of "Slab Square for the People" I feel there's more of Boxing Day and less of Christmas about this.

Here's a conundrum for the New Year. How do you name a pub? Among many answers, perhaps one would suggest to perpetuate a local connection. Good, now how (or why) do you rename a pub? The answer seems to be "Convert it into a fun pub". The Willoughby Arms at Wollaton has blossomed into The Greenhouse; The Gardeners on Wells Road has become The Hoe Down (American not Dutch!).

I must thank J. Whitehorn Esq. for drawing my attention to a careless error on my part. I assumed, incorrectly, some family connection between John Howitt and Son, sometimes of Bentinck Buildings (which he designed) and now, with grandson John, of Westgate Southwell and T. Cecil Howitt. Both architects deserve our attention, in particular the work of Cecil Howitt which has been largely ignored in our euphoria over Victorian warehouses. A review of the work of T.C. Howitt is planned for the next newsletter, but in the meantime do look carefully at your Council House, walk around it, look up, use your eyes; there's rather a lot to see!

*Ken Brand*

## NOTTINGHAM'S FIRST CIVIC SOCIETY

The following extracts from annual reports of the Nottingham and Derby Architectural Society show how Nottingham's first Civic Society was formed.

### 1919 (p. 11)

"At a General Meeting held on 25th February 1919 Mr. Alderman Manning, on invitation, explained his ideas as to forming an Advisory Committee of Members of the various learned Societies in Nottingham for the preservation of ancient buildings and beauty spots in the City".

### 1920 (p. 20)

Extract from address by the President, H.G. Watkins, F.R.I.B.A. on 14th October, 1919.

After referring to local opposition to any development of the Market Place and to a tall factory chimney being erected within a few yards of Trent Bridge, he said: "It was such incidents as these that brought home the necessity for a Civic Society in the City. The objects of such a Society are to preserve all buildings and monuments of historical worth, and maintain a vigilant opposition to all acts of vandalism; to stimulate civic pride in the domestic and civic life of the citizens by urging the adoption of a high standard of architecture for domestic buildings, offices, warehouses, factories etc; to advocate the public acquisition of land for the provision of open spaces etc., to assist with advice any scheme of works controlled by public bodies, ranging from town planning to designs for parks, bridges, fountains, memorials, shelters, slats, lamp standards, tramway masts etc; to co-operate with the Education Committee and training bodies for the development of local art and to help to co-ordinate the efforts of existing societies by uniting architectural, engineering, artistic and handicraft groups in a common aim. The Society should seek to carry out these aims by means of newspaper and other propaganda, including exhibitions, lectures, competitions etc. A strong Civic Society is in existence at Birmingham and I have learnt that it has had considerable influence in obtaining the employment of architects in housing and town planning schemes: it practically killed the official and uninspiring war memorial scheme for Birmingham and carried its own case at a public meeting".

### 1921 (p. 14)

"A resolution of the Town Planning Committee (of the Society) that a Civic Society be formed in Nottingham similar to that of Birmingham was considered and it was decided to invite delegates from the Society of Artists, the Thoroton Society, the Rotary Club and Workers Educational Association, to a joint meeting to consider the matter and a meeting has been arranged".

### 1922 (p. 17)

"The Council invited representatives of the Rotary Club, Thoroton Society, Little Movement and Workers Educational Society to consider the formation of a Civic Society for Nottingham and a provisional committee was formed to inaugurate a Civic Society".

### 1923 (p. 26)

Report of Town Planning Committee. "The formation of a Civic Society proposed by the Society in session 1921 has now become an accomplished

question of the treatment of the Exchange Site".

\* \* \*

The East Midlands Region of the R.I.B.A. has copies of the annual reports from 1900 and the above extracts are reproduced by kind permission of the Region.

Geoffrey Oldfield

## THE BRIDGE HOUSING SOCIETY

Recently the Bridge Housing Society's latest housing project, in Halifax Place, was opened by Owen Luder, President of the R.I.B.A. Coverage in the press (and local radio) linked the Civic Society and the Bridge Housing Society. Some members may know very little about the Bridge Housing Society and the following note should prove of interest.

In 1965, some members of the Civic Society, including the President, Professor M. Barley, and R. Cullen, the architect of Halifax Place, formed a housing association in order to exploit the provisions for voluntary housing to further the aims of the Society. The completion of Halifax Place by the Bridge Housing Society thus represents, thanks to the City Council's readiness to assemble the land and to make it available for housing the realization of what was long a dream but at last became an exercise in the enlightened treatment of an historic area. Bridge also recognised its responsibility for the proper treatment of the archaeology of a site in the centre of the oldest part of the city. It was able to arrange for excavation before development, carried out by the Castle Museum and funded by the Department of the Environment.

The Bridge Housing Society remains a small society by national standards with a modest full-time staff and using as far as possible part-time staff and consultants. It is engaged in a combination of rehabilitation and schemes for new building; it now has some 300 housing units. It is responsible for rehabilitation in areas of working class housing such as Sneinton and Basford: it has built 26 new units in Beeston. The Society continues to attach much importance, if not priority to work of the kind represented by Halifax Place, which was built in compliance with normal yardsticks with a special grant from the Housing Corporation for housing in an outstanding conservation area; this grant made possible the top storey which integrates the design to that of the surrounding lace warehouses. The Society hopes that opportunities for renewal of this sort, either by conversion or by new building will enable it to make another contribution to the environment of an historic city.

## HOW WE BEGAN

The Nottingham Civic Society officially celebrated its twenty-first birthday a few months ago. There was, in fact, a Civic Society in existence very much earlier than 1961, and Geoffrey Oldfield has collated some information about this. We also know that in 1926 it sponsored the publication of the well-known collection of T.W. Hammond drawings, "Nottingham Past and Present". If any of our readers can provide any further information about this Society, I should be delighted to receive it.

The history of amenity, conservation and heritage societies and associations, in the widest sense, goes back well over a century, with many notable milestones on the way, but the formation of the Civic Trust in 1957 marked a general resurgence of interest in such matters. The climate was right, therefore, in 1961, for the formation of our Society. The credit for getting things moving belongs to Arnold J. Pacey, who was at that time a student in the University of Nottingham and Chairman of the recently founded Architecture Society. He enlisted the support of the Civic Trust, who were able to give advice and assistance in many ways, such as the formulation of a Constitution for the newly formed Society. Mr. Pacey contacted a large number of individuals and organisations in Nottingham, whom he felt might be interested in the project. Members of the University and the Architecture Society were very much in his mind, of course, and he elicited the support of many prominent members of staff and heads of departments at the University. He cast his net very widely, however, in his initial approaches, writing to many of those well-known in industry, commerce and local government. I set out with the intention of listing them, but I soon concluded that anything like a complete list was impossible and it would be better to write in general terms rather than risk leaving out someone who deserved to be mentioned.

In the letter which he sent out in August, 1961, he said "I envisage the kind of society which would watch new developments in the city and raise informed and constructive criticisms where necessary: it would also try to combat 'subtopia' in the way which has been so successful at Windsor, Norwich and elsewhere. But some of us in the Architecture Society at the University are also most concerned about the destruction of old houses of architectural merit and we hope that a Civic Society would make a consideration of these a matter of some urgency."

Writing to Mr. & Mrs. Maurice Barley, he added "As students, we are very much temporary residents in Nottingham, and we are relatively inexperienced in these matters. We are therefore particularly anxious to enlist the support of those members of staff who have helped our Society during its first year. I very much hope you will approve of what we are doing and will come to our meeting in September".

Mr. Pacey must have been quite a remarkable young man, fired with enthusiasm and also evidently having the ability and determination to launch this very considerable enterprise.

The response was extremely encouraging, ranging from the benevolent to the enthusiastic and it soon became evident that there was a wide-spread interest in the idea. To quote only one reply, Mr. E. J. Laws, the Art Director and Curator of the Castle Museum and Art Gallery, wrote "I sympathise strongly with your views. The destruction of houses of architectural merit is almost a Nottingham speciality. A city that could destroy Abel Collins' Hospital is capable of anything! Fortunately there are people in Nottingham who resent this kind of vandalism and if you can organise them into an active and effective group you will be doing the city a real service".

A meeting was called for 21st September 1961 in Cripps Hall at the University to discuss the proposals. There were 27 persons present, with Professor J. D. Chambers in the Chair. It was agreed that any society must cater for those interested in preservation as well as for planners, that a Society Society should be formed in Nottingham affiliated to the Civic Trust and that a temporary acting Committee be formed to organise a public meeting and to draft a statement of policy and a Constitution.

The Acting Committee met on several occasions before the end of the year, mainly to agree details of the Society's Constitution and to define the road ahead. There was a feeling that a prominent figure in industry or commerce in the city should be invited to become Chairman and approaches were made to several such, including Mr. Anderson of Boots and Mr. Linb of Ericsson, but these approaches were unsuccessful.

A meeting to inaugurate the Society was arranged for 11th January, 1962 in the Co-operative Education Centre, Broad Street, Nottingham. This does not appear to have been a public meeting in the strictest sense, though the invitation list was extensive - some 300 persons. Unfortunately we have no record of the proceedings of this meeting, but its Agenda was set out as - (1) Introductory Remarks: Professor J. D. Chambers, (2) Short Talk: Mr. Tim Rook of the Civic Trust, (3) Adoption of Constitution, (4) Election of Officers and Committee, (5) Remarks of the Chairman of the Society.

Mr. Maurice Barley was elected Chairman, with Mr. Brendan Henry, Managing Director of Jessops as Vice-Chairman. The Secretary was Mr. David S. Corder and the Treasurer, Mr. A. Storrey. The Committee were Professor J. D. Chambers, Mr. Peter Bartlett, Mr. R. Cullen, Mr. J. G. Dady, Mr. E. W. Muggleston, Mr. F. T. Hartlett, Mr. W. W. Potter, Mr. M. G. Dobbin, Mr. G. W. Cutts, Miss Margaret Walton, Mr. L. Spinks and Mr. F. C. Matthews. Mr. Pacey and Mr. Paul Ritter, the well-known architect and planning consultant appear to have been co-opted onto the Committee.

So the Society was launched. It has had its disappointments as well as its very considerable successes. We wish it well in the future!

Ray Banks  
"Keeper of the Archives"

## \* CHATEAU GAILLARD CONFERENCE 1982

The Eleventh Chateau Gaillard Conference was held at Karrebaksmunde near Naersted, Zealand, Denmark from 29th August to 4th September. Chateau Gaillard is a peripatetic conference, held every two years, devoted to the study of Medieval Castles in Europe. Archaeologists and historians from all over North and Central Europe are invited to attend. It is therefore a considerable honour and a recognition of the importance of both the Castle and our work that Chris Drage, the Director of the excavations was asked to deliver a paper on Nottingham Castle. The lecture summarised the archaeological and documentary research that Chris has done on the Castle since 1976 and was, we understand, well received. An article, based on the lecture has been completed and will be published in the Conference Proceedings in 1983.

## THE GATEHOUSE SHOP

We have just finished our seventh season at the shop. Despite the recession and falling pound we managed another successful year and, as last year, made a profit of £6,000.

The success of the shop, however, cannot be measured in money alone. It provides our members with a task which entails not only selling but providing the details everyone seems to want to know . . . "How far away is the Major Oak?" "Where has the Black Boy gone?" "Do I have to pay to go into the Castle?" "Is this the Gentlemen's lavatory?": Helpers also have to take criticism of the City: "Your streets are filthy!" and accept praise "What a lovely clean town you have here". Requests are met with courtesy and sometimes almost too much enthusiasm: for example one helper actually went all the way to the Robin Hood Shop to get a Robin Hood T shirt for a customer when we had run out of that particular size!

Sometimes helpers get so carried away they even sell pictures put up to fill the empty spaces and brighten the walls, or decide to totally rearrange the counter. But, despite the weather, people falling ill at the last minute and the hordes of children, we have survived! That in itself is a tribute to all the hard work put in by so many kind people.

To those of you who do not help in the shop, may I assure you that it is not, so I am told, all fun and games. If we did not have the shop we would not be able to produce our books, maps, Christmas cards, etc. because we would not be able to sell them in sufficient numbers to allow us to produce them in bulk and therefore at a reasonable price. For example, this year approximately 4,000 of our Get to Know Nottingham books were sold through the shop and about 500 through other retail outlets. When you consider that we produce the books in runs of 3,000 or 6,000 copies you can get some idea of how long it would take to sell them through local booksellers.

The shop also provides the public with a picture of our Society. It tells them what we do and how we do it. When we started the shop in 1976 we had three old tables and £100 of stock. Today we have four old tables and £8,000 of stock. It is perhaps time to scrub up our shop and tidy our image. It is five years since we last painted it and so we have decided to get to work yet again in January. All volunteers please contact Cliff Deane. We also feel it is right to spend a bit of money on improving the counter. Some years ago Cliff did a splendid job in converting our tables into a counter, but the time has now come to spend some money on, if possible, a second hand counter. If anyone has any suggestions please let us know.

Next year will hopefully see the continued success of the shop. We are extremely lucky to have the generous support of the City Council who effectively make our work possible. For without their "loan" of the premises there is no way that we could remain in business. It is good to see a hitherto "derelict" building being put to good use and a Council so keen to support a voluntary organisation. (Incidentally, the Gatehouse was built in 1252 and as such is one of the oldest surviving parts of the old Royal Castle. Before 1976 both sides were used as store rooms and were never open to the public.)

What happens to the money we raise? In the Spring we hope there will be an excavation at the Middle Bridge. We intend to have an Open Day to show off this and other excavations to the public. Your help as shop helper or guide will be gratefully received. The money raised and some of this year's profit will pay for the excavation. As far as the remainder is concerned, this has to be put into one or more of the other projects which we and the City Council agree upon, including (1) other excavations in the city, (2) Sneinton Mill, (3) Bulwell Dovecote and (4) the Shire Hall Prison.

So finally, one can say that the shop affords the Society the opportunity to do something positive in the city rather than just to talk about it.

Andrew Hamilton

To keep the shop going, we do rely upon the volunteers who so gallantly turn out in all weathers. This does not mean we have enough helpers. We can always do with more. So, if you are not amongst our happy band, do please consider joining us. We only ask you to give us two hours of your time. There are always two helpers on at any one time, and we make sure that newcomers are always paired with an experienced helper.

The shop will be closed until Saturday 12th February to allow the re-fitting and repainting of the shop to be carried out. From the 12th February until Friday 1st April (Good Friday) it will only be open at weekends; thereafter it will open daily from 11am to 4.30pm.

Very many thanks to all who have assisted in the shop during the year. Your help is much appreciated and I hope to see you again in the 1983 season.

Wishing you a Happy New Year.

Thoresby Bradley

The School of Art (Old Buildings) by Frederick Bakewell of Nottingham (1863). This was the starting point for the Society's Spring Walk (1982) through the Arboretum area and via Mapperley Road into Mapperley Park



SCHOOL OF ART

TAKE A LOOK AT: VICTORIA STREET

Victoria Street, although not quite completed, was formally opened on 10th March 1863. The opening was part of "the rejoicings in Nottingham" celebrating the marriage of Edward Prince of Wales to Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

A civic procession perambulated the town, taking in the Pavements, Stoney Street, Carlton Street down Victoria Street though the Market place and via Milton Street and Mansfield Road to the Forest where the Robin Hood Rifles were reviewed. The party returned via Alfreton Road and Derby Road to the Exchange where a Loving Cup toast was drunk. In mid afternoon a banquet was held in the Exchange Hall and in the evening the Exchange was illuminated.

Four days of festivities followed and concluded with a firework display on the Forest where close on 90,000 witnessed the spluttering ignition of a bonfire of "50 tons of coal, 40 of wood and 10 of tar" (given by Mr. North of Cinderhill Colliery) which finally burnt for a further four days.

The cutting of Victoria Street was but one of at least six successful proposals for improving the width and alignment of streets put forward by the "Town Improvement Committee" on 7th September 1857. The intention was "widening Chandler's Lane, the north end of Bridesmith Gate and (Old) Queen Street".

On 6th October 1859 the Council acting on the recommendation of the Improvement Committee agreed to promote a new street from Carlton Street to the Poultry 50ft wide (Victoria Street replacing Chandler's Lane).

Further progress came with the submission to the Home Secretary of a petition for Powers of Compulsory Purchase of properties affected by the improvement scheme on 23rd January 1860. By 19th November the Secretary of State had responded and the Local Government Supplemental Act 1860 No. 2 gave the Council full powers to proceed.

The Improvement Committee reported back to the Council on the progress of compulsory purchase at intervals in 1861 and into the summer of 1862. Demolition of buildings in Chandler's Lane and Bottle Lane commenced in March 1862, work on the new street started in August and was completed by the early summer of 1863.

The initial effect of forming Victoria Street was to expose the backs of the buildings on Pelham Street; several soon had entrances on both streets. In this group were Underwood (Tobacco Manufacturers), the Nottingham Journal Chambers and Moses Stanley (Ironmonger, later J.W. Lewis and later still Lewis and Grundy).

In the 1864 Directory, 1, 3, 11, 13 and 15 on the Northern side and 2 (the Review Office) and 4 (the Express Office) on the Southern side are listed.

It is difficult to trace the architects of the earliest buildings on the street for some were built well before the compulsory submission of building plans to the Council (from September 1874).

The Malt House (ex Lewis and Grundy) was built in two stages, the second was by Evans and Jolley (1873) who were probably responsible for the first. This brick building has an interesting display of tiles and stone relief panels.

Victoria Buildings (1872) had entrances on Victoria and Pelham Streets. Basically similar on both sides, each had a gable with the monogram of the owner M.I. Preston; here again, Evans and Jolley were the architects. The original no. 9 was a furniture warehouse for Brown and Smart Cabinet Makers and Upholsterers.

The southern side is more rewarding. At the top is the old G.P.O. and Postal Telegraph Office, designed by Mr. Williams of London, the Government Architect. It opened in December 1868 as a two storey building. Until recently it was the Oddfellows Building and now has an uncertain future. Its "heating vents" do resemble inverted letter-boxes!

It is possible that a scheme for "Shops and Offices" by H. A. Goodall of 1881 included the building of the additional storey. Alas, these plans are missing.

The Victoria Club was originally the Imperial Fire and Life Insurance Office, a "handsome building" of 1870 by Robert Evans. However, its conversion into the Reform (or Liberal) Club during the first half of 1913 entailed significant alterations by William Beedham Starr and E. D.J. Hall of Victoria Street. Two doorways were replaced by a central entrance with a small balcony above; extra rooms, lit by a row of dormer windows were built on the old roof. The Reform Club premises were sold in April 1969.

Robert Evans and William Jolley were the architects of the adjoining building, bank premises for the Nottingham Joint Stock Bank Ltd. (1872). Of the two entrances to the building, the left hand was for the bank and the right hand for rooms "above" which almost from the start housed the Conservative Club. In recent years the building was for a time an Art Gallery.

In 1896 the bank temporarily moved across to No. 7-9 whilst a new larger bank, now by Evans and Son, was under construction. The bank opened in 1897. The bank now extends to the Leicester Building Society on the corner. However a good look at the balustrade on the parapet of the bank will reveal a change in a sequence of squares to a couple of rectangles and indicates a later extension.

This extension absorbed T.C. Hine's own offices of 1871 (T.C. Hine and Son). The offices remained in the family for some time after T.C. retired c. 1891, for in June 1912 Evans and Son submitted plans for altering a saleshop on Victoria Street for G.T. Hine. In fact the shop was long occupied by Mr. Slatter, Shirt Maker. The old architect's office/saleshop finally disappeared in 1920-1 when Thomas B. Winney of London produced designs extending the bank, then the London Joint City and Midland Bank to the County Club Premises (now the Leicester Building Society Office).

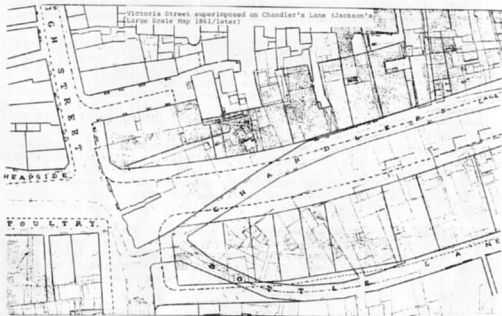
The County Club (The Nottinghamshire Club) by Hine and Son opened in 1868. An interesting reminder of the elegance of earlier times is the frieze of tiles alternating ~~and~~ and the Club motif on the Bridesmith Gate elevation. There are several monogrammed iron grills on the side in Bottle Lane. The concave corner of the building indicates the position of a tourelle, an original feature later removed. The Bridesmith Gate frontage was set back from the line of Bridesmith Gate to allow members to alight from their carriages at leisure. A severe fire c. 1929 destroyed most of the early records. In 1954 the premises were sold to the Leicester Building Society and the Club leased back all but the ground floor; access to the first and second floors was by lift via a new entrance on Bottle Lane. The Club has now closed.

11-10-95

The name Victoria Street was chosen on 21st June 1862; earlier suggestions had been Runnymede and King Street.

(M.O. Tarbottom, Nottingham's far sighted Borough Engineer, had a subway built beneath Victoria Street for sewers, gas pipes etc. It was considered to be the first constructed outside of London (Started 1.7.1862 and completed 1.6.1863)).

Ken Brand



The G.P.O. and the Imperial Insurance Office as built; the top of Victoria Street 1871

#### THE SMALLER GEORGIAN HOUSE - Alec Clifton Taylor

Members were entertained recently to a sparkling talk by a man who not only has considerable knowledge of his subject, but thoroughly enjoys it. Alec Clifton Taylor delighted his large audience with an illustrated talk on 'The Smaller Georgian House'. The beautiful craftsmanship and the precise nature of the work involved give a feeling of quality and visual satisfaction when viewing the large number of Queen Anne and Georgian houses which survive in various parts of the country.

The use of colour in the brickwork and variety of stone employed provide one with much visual pleasure. The great cost of transport in this period encouraged the use of local materials by local craftsmen giving an interesting combination of styles and colour.

Mr. Clifton Taylor, well known for his book "The Pattern of English Building" (Faber), has more recently been responsible for presenting the BBC TV production 'Six English Towns'. He informed his audience that the country was rich in small period houses which often go unnoticed. Some of the detail was missed because of the "irreverent growth" of greenery which was allowed to rampage over many houses. We are a nation of gardeners rather than architectural connoisseurs declared Mr. Clifton Taylor.

The essential feature to be found in houses of this era was the proportion of windows to wall and this was amply illustrated during his fascinating talk which was highly appreciated by all who attended.

Margaret Headen

#### NOTTINGHAM THEN AND NOTTINGHAM NOW - Keith Train

An illustrated talk by local historian Keith Train was all that was required to pack Cathedral Hall with members for the Society's meeting in October. Views of Nottingham then and Nottingham now depicted in paintings, old photographs and modern slides were shown in profusion as Keith Train enthralled his audience in his own inimitable manner.

The River Trent through several centuries - in flood, in drought and on ice - and the Old Market Square and its environs were the object of Keith Train's critical attention.

Whilst praising the pedestrian precincts and walkways, Keith Train deplored the destruction of the wonderful medieval street plan in the name of traffic. Nostalgia, too, had its place in scenes of the last Goose Fair and the last market to be held in the Square.

Margaret Headen

OVERHEARD in the Gatehouse Shop, Easter Saturday. A small girl of some five to six years of age purchased a postcard of "The Trip to Jerusalem" Inn. Her grandmother somewhat surprised at the girl's choice asked her why she had chosen that postcard? To which the reply came "Because that is where Jesus stayed".

## BULWELL DOVECOTE BEING REPAIRED

The Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust in conjunction with the Bulwell Historical Society is presently carrying out repairs to this very fine dovecote which was languishing in the centre of Bulwell.

The building stands on ground between Commercial Road and Coventry Road and is thought to be mid to late Seventeenth Century in origin.

The stone building about 14 feet wide by 16 feet long comprised a dovecote on the first floor with a stable underneath. The stable was subsequently enlarged by removing the rear wall, presumably to make a waggon shed. The building was in a very dilapidated state and the Trust has negotiated a 21-year lease from the Nottinghamshire County Council, the owners. The building is listed as being of architectural and historic merit and is one of only four dovecotes remaining in the City, the others being Clifton, Wilford and Wollaton.

The Nottingham City Council have given a grant of £1,500 and the Nottingham Civic Society £500 to help towards the restoration. The Bulwell Historical Society are also busy raising funds to continue the work.

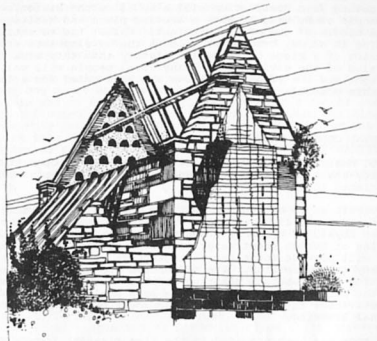
The repair work is being carried out by Messrs. M.D. Lievesley and Associates (Midlands) Ltd., under the direction of John Severn, who is a member of the Trust and also a member of Nottingham Civic Society.

Initially, the work involved strengthening the collapsing structure, the re-construction of the roof using second hand timbers and reclaimed pantiles, with the builders carrying out the difficult specialist work and voluntary helpers organised by the Bulwell Historical Society helping with the cleaning out of rubbish, the treatment of the timbers, and drilling of pantiles for nailing back into position. The pupils of the Alderman Derbyshire School at Bulwell have also carried out tasks to further the repair and restoration.

Apart from the rarity of finding such a building these days remaining in the middle of an urban area (apparently no one knew of its existence until the roof fell in some years ago), the construction of the nesting holes are, if not unique, most unusual. Built up of bricks and stone and set out to form triangular arches they are then plastered over to form smooth rounded nesting areas for the pigeons and their young. The sketches show the nesting holes and their construction.

The study of dovecotes is particularly interesting because it concerns one of the earliest forms of standard buildings. These buildings were essential to the life of certain classes of the community and were just as important in early and medieval times as the great tythe barns which were so numerous. At one time, there were about 26,000 dovecotes in the British Isles. In this County, we have examples of some of the earliest dovecotes and also examples of the latest ones as well. It is a fact that pigeons were of considerable use in agriculture in this County, even up to the 1860's when the manure from the pigeon loft was still considered of great importance to farming practice.

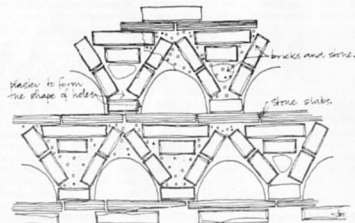
Pigeons, essentially were reared for food. In the early times, fresh meat during the winter was non-existent. Until the advent of root crops, the cattle not required for breeding were culled in the autumn and the meat salted down. The reason for this was that there was insufficient fodder available on the farmsteads to over-winter cattle not required for breeding in the next season.



Bulwell dovecote Nottingham.

W. G. W. 20.

Very few were aware of its existence until the roof fell in the nesting holes of brick and plaster are most unusual and no similar examples have been found in the County. Internally the dovecote measures 15'0" long x 12'0" wide.



BULWELL DOVECOTE  
CONSTRUCTION OF NESTING BOXES.

As well as the fact that the repair of this building will allow our children and future generations to see a real dovecote at close hand, this saving from destruction will also allow the Historical Society and the people of Bulwell to have a meeting place and heritage centre right in the middle of the modern precinct. Whilst the retention of the building in no way changes or stifles the developments around it, the inclusion of a piece of Bulwell's history into this area must enhance the value of the environment. Many local people will welcome the foresight and the efforts of those who have tried for a long time to make this possible.

John Severn

#### THE ROYAL CONCERT HALL

Lights! Music! Action! The Royal Concert Hall is open at last. Now the city has a quality venue where the best of entertainment can be appreciated in comfort.

The overall style of the new building works well; blending contemporary use of glass and light with the Victorian formality of the adjoining Theatre Royal. The concrete and steel framed structure supports a roof covering of German sheet material which provides seam free joints. The glass will provide countless photographers with the desire to capture its many facets on film. Its reflective properties were achieved by reheating the glass and blasting it with titanium particles. Hence from the street during daylight one sees a mirror effect while at night the activities in the five levels of foyer become apparent under the internal lighting.

Ample room has been provided in the five pleasant foyers and two bar areas for a capacity audience, but there does seem to be a shortage of direction signs and the toilet facilities are limited. In the hall itself, the seating (and leg room) and the unobtrusive air conditioning will suit the comfort of most people. For the presentation of a performance, there is a highly advanced system of acoustics which can be tailored to suit the size and nature of each event. The main feature of this system is an adjustable acoustic reflector suspended above the large stage, but acoustic consideration has also been taken with the 'line' of the plastering on the walls - lasers were used to ensure that imperfections were kept within a tiny tolerance.

It is a pity that the same care and attention has not been applied to the area immediately surrounding the "Royal Centre". Signs and poles seem to be sprouting up at every street corner, to the detriment of the pavement slabs and pavement users. More importantly, while part of Goldsmith Street is being pedestrianised, Theatre Square (the traditional and logical approach to the 'Royal' from the City Centre proper) remains a race track for the motorist and an obstacle course for the pedestrian.

Lights! Music! Action! LIGHTS! The now famous light sculpture on South Sherwood Street designed by a London artist, was an interesting idea which seems doomed to failure - much as the electronic newscaster above the front of the Theatre Royal has failed. MUSIC! The opening nights for the Hall have been very successful and the diversity of forthcoming events, with many already sold out, bodes well for the immediate future. ACTION! The building is now there, do go along and see it for yourself. It is worthy of everyone's attention as it surely enhances the life of the City.

Dave Lovesey

#### AS I REMEMBER: BURTON STREET 1913-14 by Gerard K. Cooper

These are personal memories of this town centre street, in particular that part now dominated by two monolithic buildings between the crossing roads of South Sherwood Street and Goldsmith Street. The buildings are of course the Newton Building and Tower of the Trent Polytechnic and the new Royal Concert Hall.

As four I was a curly-haired exuberant child playing with a loving, licking, floppy dog named Sammy outside the doorway of my father's first shop. This was at number 30, the last house in a row of eight very plain brick-fronted houses on the site of the Newton Building of the Polytechnic. My father, John Thomas Cooper, had just had the opportunity of moving into the much larger, better designed house at no. 34, closer to the Spread Eagle public house on the corner of Goldsmith Street so that he, along with my mother and one or two men, was very busy carrying pictures and prints, as well as furniture, the necessary short distance.

At that time I was overjoyed to find that our new house had a private arched entrance shared with no. 32 and at the rear a stable with loft over and a covered space to each house where a gig or dog-cart could be kept.

Thus I gained a secure private playground and improved amenities and most apparent to me was the fact that we had prominent bay windows on the first and second floors from which I could see all the life of the street. My father had previously also rented a long, double workshop in the precinct at the rear of Burton Street, known as Forman's Buildings to the local people but as Goldsmith Place to the makers of street name-plates.

Unknown to myself, the atmosphere of international affairs had taken a turn for the worse. Tremors of fear about German designs upon the whole of the British Empire and the personal life of the people of Britain were beginning to affect the carefree legacy of the Edwardian era.

My father's business in wood-carving, the making of ornate picture frames coupled with the annual re-gilding and the restoration and cleaning of hundreds of large oil paintings which adorned the walls of both the large country houses and the rich merchants and manufacturers who lived in places like Nottingham Park, began to slow down quite noticeably. He had therefore reduced his work-force of twelve skilled craftsmen down to three or four, and they continued to use a smaller workshop in Forman's Buildings, whilst my father made the top floor of our new house into workshops for his own personal work of gilding and picture restoring and some picture framing.

Frequently, if it was raining, or I had no older playmates or my mother had to go shopping and my father being in his workshop, I could go up to his spacious top floor and stand in the large bay window looking down on the people in the street, also the traffic which was varied and busy. If he was in the same front room he could answer my many questions as to who this man was or that, who were Town Officials passing to and from the Guildhall, or which Solicitor was standing on his doorstep waiting to go to court.

Many professions and occupations were carried on in the street and I came to accept that very few other people were so well informed as my father in knowing who was who, and what they did.

My father had come to Nottingham as a country boy of 14, straight from a small farm bailiff's family of five at Nettleham near Lincoln. He had no skills, but fortunately, due to his uncle being a partner in the large Nottingham furniture making, storing and removal firm of Foster & Cooper, he was offered a 14-year apprenticeship to a Mr. 'H. W. Warner at Toll Street in Wollaton Street. Mr. Warner had his well established business of working for the well-to-do clients of the local artists and house furnishers, so it happened that although 14 years of that apprenticeship were long and tedious, it provided my father with a fine range of skills as well as the intimate knowledge of how to deal with wealthy and demanding clients. It has become apparent to me in more reflective times, that even whilst being apprenticed he must have worked hard to perfect the necessary 'three R's', as well as good speech and vocabulary to the envy of his brothers who stayed longer in Lincolnshire. In short he built his own personality as a responsible man of judgement, with good manners and respect for others.

At the same time he built up his own knowledge of paint styles and the classical and modern painters. He knew well the local artists and both bought and sold fresh works for several of them. In our house we had 40 of the large charcoal drawings by Tom Hammond, and usually had works straight off the easels of Denholm Davis and Arthur Spooner in the workshop, sometimes for framing and sometimes for repairs to the canvas stretchers. Gifted amateur painters, of whom Nottingham had many, would bring works in from time to time, when local exhibitions were being mounted, for advice on hanging or to seek quick 'fixing' for fragile crayon or pastel drawings, whilst sometimes in his capacity as agent for Rowney's he was able to provide a particular colour or fine sable brush.

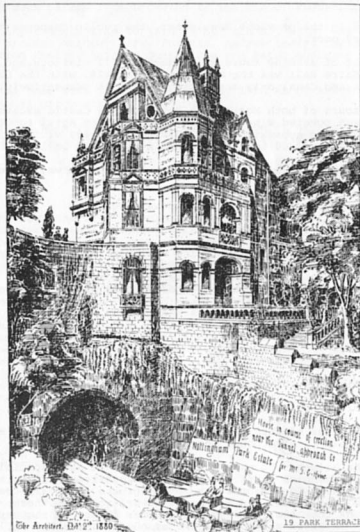
These latter thoughts are of course from later years. When the war with Germany commenced I was with my parents on holiday with a relative who was the Head Post-Master at Sutton Coldfield near Birmingham. I was leaning out of the window there when the first message came through to the Telegraph room, but even before that the newsboys were shouting on the street below, all of which caused me to swallow the small lead weight in the tail of a toy tin parrot, which could balance on the edge of any projection, in that case the window sill. I had taken the parrot to pieces and I suppose that - like most of the tin toys at the time - it was German, very cheap and brightly painted with paint that would be forbidden today.

We returned to Nottingham by train and I have little recollection of the day to day events except that the traffic in Burton Street increased by day, and soon by night.

(To be concluded)



Memories: The County Hotel and the "new" Theatre Royal 1870.



19 Park Terrace precipitously perched on the edge of the Park Tunnel is probably the most imposing of T.C. Hine's later Park houses. It was built 1880-1 (dated 1881) and has recently been refurbished. It has some features of the Queen Anne revival and several of Hine's distinctive circular air vents each with a curved eight pointed star.

The drawing from The Architect (October 1880) suggests carriages were still using the Tunnel "exit" as late as the 1880's; it is unlikely that carriages ever used the Tunnel regularly. Notice the Newcastle 'N' over the mouth of the Tunnel. Rebuilt gate pillars on the Park Terrace frontage have blue bricks, suitably stamped, celebrating the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana and of course the centenary of the house.

If the Park Tunnel is all very much of a mystery to you, why not try the Society's Heritage Walk which has the Tunnel on its route.

## HERITAGE WALKS

As mentioned in the previous Newsletter, the public response this year has been very poor.

Over 11 weeks of evening tours we conducted 572 visitors and realised £220. The Shire Hall was the most popular at 428, with the Lace Market and the Park and Canal only attracting 88 and 56 respectively.

The Sunday tours of both Mortimer's Hole and the Castle excavations with David's Dungeon covered a period of six months from April to October. Each tour realised approximately £200 with about 850 visitors descending Mortimer's Hole and 700 touring Richard's Tower and David's Dungeon.

The proceeds this season have been donated to the Bulwell Dovecot Restoration Fund.

For 1983 we are planning a more ambitious programme:

1. Sunday tours of the Castle as at present.
2. Tuesday evening tour of the Shire Hall with a possible improved route.
3. An evening walk each week on Wednesday only with a four week cycle.

- (a) The Castle new excavations and grounds
- (b) Georgian and Lace Market
- (c) Regency and The Park
- (d) Medieval

thus tour (a) will be on weeks 1, 5 and 9.

4. With a nucleus of four guides these tours (NOT the Shire Hall) will be available in afternoons for party bookings.

Thanks to the helpers who made the tours possible and especially to Bob White and the upstairs staff at the Public Relations Office, to Dawn and the girls of the Information Office who kept the customers coming. To Dave Jackson of the Bell and Richard's Tower, to Clyde Thorpe of the Salvation who took over the Caves and upper floors on the retirement of Roy Jensen. To Brian and Jim who let us out of the Shire Hall and Ted Wyatt who stood by to let us in St. Mary's Churchyard. To the ladies and gentlemen of the local press. To the guides - Maggie's Gang and Cliff's Lot and especially to Fay Burnham and Andrew Leary who joined the Society last year and became qualified guides. Finally to Janet and Maria - Vielen Dank!

Cliff Deane

## GUIDES 1983

As you will see from the Heritage Walks report we are hoping to extend our programme in 1983 and will need some more people to join our existing band of guides. The programme is being finalised and training can begin about mid-April. Itineraries and fact sheets will be available coupled with personal tuition over the routes. The four tours will be concentrated

into the 12 week period from mid-June to the end of August.

If you think you would like to join us but are not sure, why not talk to one of the present Guides? (Fay Burnham, Andrew Leary, Christine Prickard, Fred Hudson, Shirley Gutteridge and Peter and Mary Martin - to mention but a few).

Please let me know EVEN IF YOU HAVE ALREADY TOLD ME OR ARE A REGULAR GUIDE (Personal circumstances do change!)

You can tell me when you renew your subscription or even at the A.G.M. My phone number is 43359 or after January 26th 473359.

Cliff Deane  
Historical Sub-Committee

## MEMBERSHIP

We start the New Year with a membership of 554 including 190 Family members (counted as two) giving a voting strength of 744. There were 76 new members, of which 22 came as a result of the Membership Drive.

Following my plea in the last Newsletter, several members are now paying by Bankers Order and some have made the Chancellor help our funds by making a Covenant. This is a great help and very much appreciated. Bankers Orders or Covenant forms are available from me at any time.

The increased subscription in 1981 indirectly resulted in the resignation of 83 members. It has been difficult to arrive at this figure as reminders were largely ignored! But I feel at last that we have arrived at a stable membership.

So as all subs are due on January 1st, I am standing by for the inrush of cash, cheques, and requests for Bankers Orders.

Cliff Deane  
Membership Secretary

## INTERPRETATION BOARDS AT THE CASTLE

Interpretation boards are being prepared and will soon be located around the Castle by the City Council. They will contain plans, reconstruction drawings of the former Royal Castle and a short text. In addition general introductory boards will be situated at various strategic locations; for example at the Gatehouse, The Black Tower, Mortimer's Hole, enabling the visitor to understand these features and their relevance to the medieval Castle.

**HOLLAND AND GARLAND,  
BUILDERS IN GENERAL.**

HOLLAND STREET.  
GOOSE GATE, NOTTINGHAM.

Does this advertisement of 1852 solve the enigma of the builders' initials G and H over the Birkin Gateway on Broadway?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

THE NOTTINGHAM RAGGED SCHOOLS

The foundation of the Ragged Schools followed the discovery that ordinary elementary schools were not drawing from the lower strata of the population. In 1842 the Children's Employment Commission made particular mention of this and recommended the extension of Ragged Schools. These were free schools set up by Charitable Organizations - mainly the churches.

The Church of England Ragged School was founded in 1847 in Sherwood Lane by T. Smith Wright, a local banker and philanthropist. In 1852 it moved to a new building in Glasshouse Street. In 1852 there were approximately 200 children and in 1857 300 children. The site was especially chosen being in the poorest part of the city and near the Workhouse. This building was demolished when the Great Central Railway was built.

The Dissenting Ragged School known as the "Nottingham Town Mission" was opened on 19th October 1859 by the Earl of Shaftesbury. Much welfare work was needed and anonymous donors provided meals twice a week and the Committee hoped to extend them to everyday. A note to the Lord Mayor from a parent gives a grim reminder of the existence of the poor in those days. "You sent my girls home last night because they was so little. They had scarcely anything to eat all day and they were talking of the bread and butter and coffee they should have in the evening, but they came home without and I had nothing to give them, so they went supperless to bed".

A feature of the Ragged Schools was the attempt to use them as social centres and in this school such activities as Day School, Sunday School, Night School, Accordion Band, Industrial Sewing class, Mothers' meeting, Reading class, Dorcas Society (providing ready made clothing), Blanket loan charity, Coal club, Penny Bank, Magic Lantern, School Treats, were all part of the programme.

The building on Gedling Street, near Sneinton Market, is still in existence and on the front has a scroll which reads "Mission Ragged Town Schools 1858". For many years it was used as part of the Secondary Technical School for the Textile Trades and more recently as a warehouse, but now it is empty and in a bad state of repair. It is owned by the Nottingham Corporation and I believe it is up for sale. Is it a building worth saving for its historical connections?

S. O. Rogers

Editor's note: The Environment Committee is in fact looking into the matter.

Dear Sir,

While in Wallingford (Conn.) a friend of mine produced a "coin" in neat plastic bag, price \$8.

On examining this copper "coin" closely with a magnifying glass, I realised that here indeed was a find - an 18th century token! It was about the size of an old penny and in perfect condition. Around the perimeter were the words "Promissory Halfpenny payable at Nottingham OR". In the centre within an oval of leaves was "Donald & Co., Manufacturers, Wholesale and Retail". On the reverse was "No. 29 Bull Street, Birmingham - 1792", in the centre an 18th century domed beehive surrounded by a swarm of bees. My enquiries with regard to tokens resulted in my discovering that they were minted for merchants, traders and local government to ease the shortage of small change, since coins of the realm were of gold and silver - copper being considered too inferior to bear the monarch's head!

The City of Birmingham Local Studies Department have confirmed that Donald & Company did in fact exist at that time, but I could find no record of a branch in Nottingham.

Please can anyone solve the puzzle of the Nottingham connection?

Fay Burnham

NEWS ITEMS

A lively booklet "Look at Newark on Trent" produced for Newark Civic Trust is now available in Nottingham price 35p. Eight A4 pages of drawings, historical snippets and questions to answer draw attention to the main points of interest in the Centre of Newark. Two further booklets should appear by Easter 1983, one on the Civil War, the other on the Timber Framed Buildings in Newark.

The Victorian Society. An East Midlands branch of the Victorian Society has recently been formed. Further details can be obtained from the local Secretary, Ian Wells, 4A Kelvin Road, Thornewood, Nottingham (phone 54464).

Nottingham Playhouse celebrates its 20th Anniversary in 1983 and the Society offers its congratulations and best wishes for the future. (Several members who drift into the Playhouse bar after our public meetings feel the bar could do with a face-lift and so cease to qualify as almost the drabest place in town). A little churlish perhaps to link the two but it's like having unpolished shoes with a new suit!

Trevor Buck, the secretary of the Alexandra Park Resident's Association has written an interesting booklet "Alexandra Park Before 1900". The booklet was prepared to support the Association's case for the inclusion of Alexandra Park in the Mapperley Park Conservation Area. The evidence has been well researched and presented, the whole case is very plausible and deserves success.

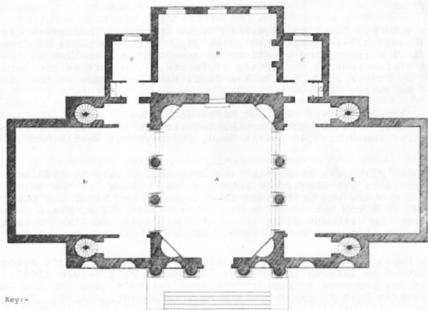
## PROJECTS 1983

No doubt as a result of our and other societies' enthusiasm the City Council has now agreed to spend £60,000 on building a museum complex around the Mill Yard at Sneinton. Our Society had already offered £4,000 and the George Green Memorial Trust a somewhat larger sum. This money will now be used towards the building, or display of material in the museum. It is perhaps a good example on our part of priming the pump.

Another project that we have helped along is the Bulwell Dovecote. The proceeds of our "Guided Walks" for 1981 and 1982, amounting to £500, have now been given to the restoration project. The building now has four walls again and a roof, thanks to our donation and money given by the Council.

The Shire Hall cells might perhaps benefit from a donation from the Society in 1983. Some of the cells remain substantially as they were left in the 1870's when the new prison was built. They proved popular with the public during our guided tours last summer and hopefully we will be able to repeat them next summer. Much work should be done in clearing blocked passages and removing coal and other debris from some of the cells. It would be marvellous to see the former prison governor's house converted into a police and prison service museum. That is just a thought today, but it was not very long ago that the idea of a George Green "Science" museum at Sneinton was first broached - so who knows!

Andrew Hamilton



Key:-

- A Main Hall
- B Grand Jury Room
- C Jury Rooms
- D Sessions Court
- E Nial Prison Court

*Plan of the County Hall at Nottingham.*

*Plan de l'Hôtel de la Comtesse de Nottingham.*



*Elevation of the Design intended for the County Hall at Nottingham.*

James Gandon submitted in all five designs for the County (Shire) Hall at Nottingham. This is the entrance on his original "intended" design.

The building, erected between January 1770 and January 1772, was the cheapest design. As Gandon put it later "Out of the five different designs which I presented to the Commissioners for the approbation . . . the Commissioners were resolved to act as frugal as possible in the execution of their trust, they gave preference to that which is erected, it being the least expensive".

(Vitruvius Britannicus Volume 5, 1771)

All of this and much more will be in a pamphlet on The Shire Hall, Nottingham to be published by the Society shortly.

1983 PROGRAMME

The programme card for the whole year is enclosed with the Newsletter. Further details of meetings up to April are as follows:

Tuesday, 11th January, 1983 - At 1 Kaye's Walk, Lace Market - 7.30pm

"Nottingham's Lace Market" an illustrated talk by Geoffrey Oldfield

Thursday, 3rd February, 1983 - at the Nottingham Mechanics, 1st Floor, Birkbeck House, Trinity Square, Nottingham - 7.30pm.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Although we had originally hoped to meet at the new Concert Hall, this was not possible to arrange, so we have decided on the Mechanics as an interesting and easily accessible venue. Please note that this meeting is on a Thursday evening - the only time they could fit us in.

Mr. T. Graham, the Manager, has kindly agreed to give a short talk on the development of the Mechanics movement in Nottingham prior to the business part of the meeting.

An agenda, nomination slips and other papers are enclosed with the Newsletter.

Tuesday, 8th March, 1983 - 7.30pm

"New Roads in Old Communities" an illustrated talk by Mr. V. S. Payne, the new Director of Planning and Transportation for Nottinghamshire County Council.

Tuesday, 12th April, 1983 - 7.30pm

"Thirty Years of Architectural Change in Nottinghamshire" an illustrated talk by Miss Elizabeth Williamson of Penguin Books.

Miss Williamson is on the staff of The Buildings of England, and has revised Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and County Durham for the series. A new edition of Leicestershire and Rutland is in preparation.

TAILPIECE

Ann Booth

(A letter to Mr. Webb, Council Building Surveyor, re Bank Premises, Victoria Street)

August 12th, 1921

Dear Sir,

London Joint City and Midland Bank Ltd., Victoria Street, Nottingham

We herewith enclose plan of re-arranged Manager's lavatory etc. at the above. We shall be pleased to discuss same with you at your convenience.

Yours faithfully,  
\*\*\*\*\* and Sons