

Number
FORTY-THREE

Summer 2001

OUR CHANGING VILLAGE

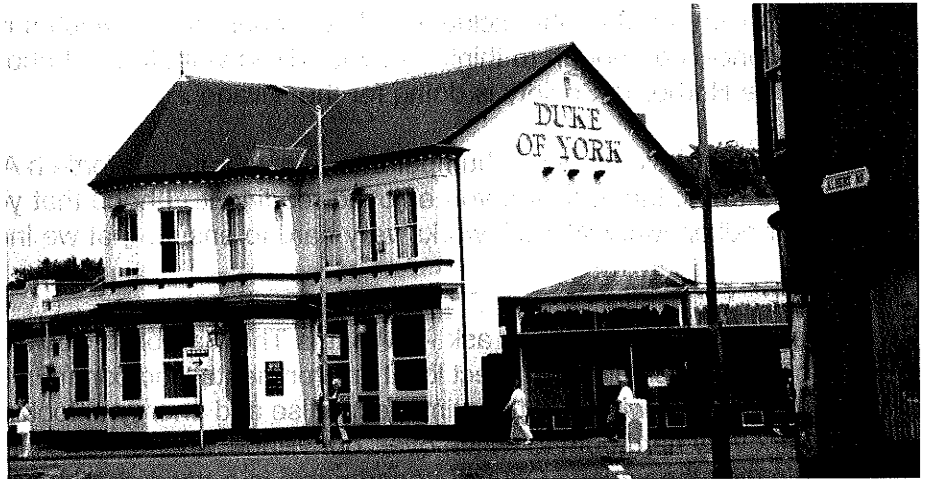
When I was a small girl the world was unchanging. Time passed gently by and I could still be certain that when I walked down a road the same buildings would be there. How very different Harborne is. I have known the village for over thirty years and lived here for nineteen years, so I am an incomer in comparison to many people reading this.

A long talk with a ninety-one year old has underlined even more how much is changing still and the Society is in the happy position of having a say on your behalf in how this change is handled.

The four largest projects in hand at the moment are the Harborne Institute, the Duke of York site, Eccleston School and Techno House.

The Harborne Institute was listed eighteen months ago. It was not used as an institute for more than about twenty five years but the outcry when it was proposed for demolition was deafening. Why? We have never taken much care of it, Chad Valley used it, then it became part of a garage with oily floors and an air of dereliction. Yet suddenly it mattered. It mattered because it is a part of our heritage and it was perhaps guilt which made us get it listed and then fight for a suitable use. It is to become residential, the architect and owner cared enough to produce a scheme which is so suitable that it

The Harborne Society NEWS



should have been their first thoughts not their second.

The Duke of York, the dear, tired, unloved, public house is to reduce our twelve pubs down to eleven. Again it is to become a residential site, 40 flats with so little parking that the surrounding streets are bracing themselves for the onslaught of strange cars.

Eccleston School, so small now that it is not bringing in either enough pupils or income for its owners is proposed for residential development with the demolition of a rather lovely building, an increase in traffic at a dangerous point of St Peter's Road and the loss of some superb trees. This latter act of vandalism being one which it is going to take any developer a long time to live down.

Techno House, that ugly wart on the site of what was the Baptist Church in the

High Street, has been purchased at great cost by a very caring developer. Tim Horwitch-Smith has already proved his mettle with the conversion of the former Fire Station in Rose Road but it will take special magic this time to make us love this one. However the scheme this time is not just for residential development. The application includes an either/or. There could be commercial use on the ground floor with offices on the first and second floors. The inclusion of some shops could make an enormous difference to the ambience at that end of the village. It was after all the original Harborne Town. Just to get the feeling that that mass of dead building will be coming alive gives one hope. But it will then be up to us to ensure that those shops are used!

Thus our village is proving to be what Edgbaston was, a highly desirable place in which to live. But what are all these new incomers going to do with themselves? We need more modern leisure facilities. Gymnasiums, health and beauty salons, meeting rooms, (we have lost two already this year), somewhere to hear good music, see a film, spaces for sitting and contemplating. We have few or none of these facilities. I think that it is time for us to cease this lemming like rush to provide homes and to think of ourselves in relation to our social and spiritual needs in the years to come.

Just a few thoughts.

Ann Yorke
Technical officer



Chairman's Letter ~ Mary Abbott

The Society has been delighted over the past twelve months at the number of new members joining us. Many of these were through our stall at the Carnival or through the Summer Newsletter.

The Newsletter is delivered free all over Harborne and it is thanks to so many members who wear out their shoe leather going from house to house that you all receive a copy. Delivering is not an easy job as I know from experience. Letter boxes may be high up or low down, there may be a barking dog on the other side ready to snap your fingers off, if the spring on the letter box has not already done so, or difficulty pushing the letter through the draught excluder. We do ignore signs which say, no circulars or free newspapers, as we are conceited enough to think that you will all want to read about what is happening in your locality and what The Harborne Society is doing for the village.

Last summer's newsletter was a bumper one to celebrate our fortieth Anniversary. We know, through comments made to us, that many of you enjoyed reading it. I hope that you will find the present one as interesting. Our editor, Mary Worrall, works very hard to ensure that we include articles which will appeal to all of you.

If you are new to the area and ask - What is The Harborne Society? - I would answer that we are an amenity society which aims to reflect local environmental and community interests. We are a voluntary body composed of people who give their time, expertise and energy to looking after Harborne. The various committees work very hard both to watch over our village and to, hopefully, influence the way it develops. Our relationship with the various Council departments is a good one - we even have the actual plans for major developments sent out to us direct. By the way, if you want to see copies of plans I expect you know that they are now available at Harborne Library. Please look at the programme for next year and you will see how many community events you could attend - meetings with speakers, the annual dinner, the Heritage Day walk, etc.

Harborne means home to all of us. It is up to us working together to ensure that it continues to be a good place to live. If you are not yet a member, please turn to the back page and find out how to join NOW.

Yours sincerely,

Mary P Abbott (Chairman)

Notice to Non-Members of the Harborne Society

THE HARBORNE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

This Newsletter comes to you as a free edition as we would like the whole community to know something of what we are doing and hope to achieve for Harborne.

Members receive two further newsletters at Christmas and Easter and there is also an exchange of information at our monthly meetings.

If you would like to support and encourage us then please consider joining The Society and letting us have your views. Membership fees are modest and full details are given on the back page

We look forward to welcoming you.

QUEEN'S PARK ~ A CAUSE FOR CONCERN



In April the City Council initiated public consultation on its approach to the development of a Birmingham Parks Strategy and issued a questionnaire. Quite why the Council should even need to ask the public what it wants is baffling. Communities want clean, safe, well-maintained and attractive parks with play and sports facilities for all age groups but, most importantly of all, the public want the return of the Park Keeper. The Society submitted its views and in particular commented on Queen's Park.

Queen's Park was purchased and laid out by the Harborne Carnival Committee to

commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and was presented to the City Council on 5th October, 1898, with the condition that children should be particularly cared for. Once the jewel in Harborne's crown, with flower beds to rival Cannon Hill, Queen's Park has been the setting for post-war victory celebrations, coronation and jubilee festivities, charity fetes and carnivals. However, Queen's Park is now in a very sorry state, testament to years of neglect.

The City Council has presided over the demolition of the original bandstand and rain-shelter, the filling in of the pond, the removal of the putting green and several tennis courts, the closure of the toilets, the demolition of the sensory Garden for the Blind [only opened in the 1960s], the removal of both sets of swings and two climbing frames, the turfing over of flower beds and the abolition of the Park Policeman. This is not a complete list.

If all this was not enough, the most disgraceful situation relates to the bowling green. This used to be the hub of the Park, set in a sun trap, with the public crowding round to watch the bowls whilst generations of young children learned to ride their bikes on the path around the green. Now a monstrous metal fence has been erected around the green, which also blocks the path, to provide a facility for the exclusive benefit of the Bowling Club. The result is that a public facility in a public park maintained at public expense is not actually freely available to the public at large. To add insult to injury a rain shelter has now been provided for the bowlers! To top this, an informal basketball court has unbelievably been erected across two tennis courts thus removing them from public use.

Contrast the neglect of Queen's Park with what is happening elsewhere across the city, where major refurbishment and improvement schemes have been carried out or are planned at Farm Park, Handsworth Park, Small Heath Park, Calthorpe Park, Ley Hill Park and Victoria Common to name just some examples.

The demise of Queen's Park and the lack of facilities has been raised repeatedly by the Society at the Ward Committee but without any positive response whatsoever from the Leisure and Culture Department, although recent ground works will hopefully resolve the poor drainage problem. The Society has urged the City Council to produce a scheme for the refurbishment and enhancement of Queen's Park with a Park Keeper and to investigate all possible sources of finance, including the lottery, as it has done elsewhere in the city.

The Victorians with their instinct for public service and Municipal enterprise knew exactly what parks should provide and recognised that, because of the great value the public placed on parks, they should be properly funded from the Council's own resources. The public's appreciation of parks remains but the City Council appears to have lost sight of the traditions and example of its founding fathers.

If any readers have old photographs of Queen's Park I should be very pleased to see them.



Phil Stokes

TECHNICAL OFFICER'S REPORT - SUMMER 2001

We started the year trying to get some interest going in the refurbishment of Albert Walk but apart from a couple of businesses moving in, and one moving out very rapidly, nothing much else seems to have happened. The remaining firm however remained true to his original intentions and refurbished the old toy shop but sadly this has now closed. Perhaps this is one for following up this year.



We have reported a number of planning aberrations to the enforcement officer who has been very helpful in the matter of unauthorised advertisements.

We were involved from a very early stage with the redevelopment of the Harborne Institute when the architects were sent to see us a year ago. We protested violently at their proposal to tear the building down and put up houses but, in the end, in May we had the satisfaction of seeing an acceptable scheme produced. We are still pursuing the architects to reinstate the original tower but, even if they don't, the scheme is excellent.

Nothing, and I repeat, nothing has happened with regard to the parlous state of the Harborne Market except that it now has been painted a particularly virulent shade of blue. Perhaps the owner hopes that this will hold the building together. In the early days there had been a great deal of interest shown when it was suggested that it might be sold. I think that this is one for the coming year.

Nigel Griffiths and Phil Stokes have chased up various service companies and had graffiti removed from a number of places. Marks and Spencer was opened by the Lord Mayor to a fanfare (it was a lovely party) and then asked for extended delivery hours, a suggestion that we backed, and which will come up for review this July. We shall back them again (especially as I have refused to enter Safeway ever again if they persist in playing loud music whilst I am trying to remember what I am there to buy).

The Junction has been refurbished, and again we were asked to inspect the proposals prior to the planning application. We still didn't manage to stop them from calling it O'Neills but they have been very friendly about our request to know if the Edwardian tiling had been retained - it has, and repaired in places - all we need now is an assurance that the urinals will re-open. The scheme received approval in December including the amendments we had suggested.

The Techno House scheme was presented to the Technical Committee in November by Tim and Rosie Horwitch-Smith and I later attended a meeting at their offices where I spent a happy couple of hours, armed with a felt tip drawing balconies and plants whilst they drew roofscapes. The scheme is now in for Planning Approval and it certainly has our backing.

The Greenfield Road Conservation Area came to the fore again in December. A report has been promised now for about ten years and we are getting impatient, especially as certain householders are engaged in re-roofing their dwellings in a most inappropriate style and nothing can be done about it. The report has been promised for July this year.

In January we were alerted to the demise of Eccleston School when a number of large trees were felled. The residential scheme is now in for Planning Approval and we have been sent a set of drawings, supplied by the Planning Officer, on which we have been asked to make comments.

In May last year we heard the first stirrings of the demolition of the Duke of York when the adjacent hairdressers were given notice to quit. In February Phil and I attended a meeting at the Planning Department to discuss the proposals for the site with the planners and developers. We had objected very strongly to the proposals. It was a useful meeting and the actual planning application has reflected our suggestions in the layout. If they can do something about the elevations it should look good.

Please do not expect The Society to fight your battles for you. We are perfectly willing to advise and direct you to the best places to get things sorted out, but we are primarily concerned with with the conservation of the Village. We are not here to sort out, for example, the fact that there are holes in the pavement (Transportation Department), someone is making a lot of noise (Noise Abatement Officer) or seems to be constructing something which contravenes the Planning Approval (Enforcement Officer). I have no objection to receiving calls but I do not like to be ranted at because the Society "will not do anything". And I cannot stress strongly enough the value of attending the Ward Committee meetings. Notices of dates are in the Library and Post Office. That is what we have elected councillors for.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of the members of the Technical Committee for their enthusiasm and help. We hold our meetings once a month and, although at times they become very heated, we are a united group with the best interests of both the Society and Village at heart.

Ann Yorke

WHY DON'T ~~THEY~~ YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

We have all seen streetlights not working or on in the daytime but not at night. It is hardly surprising, really, when you consider that the City Council is responsible for maintaining nearly 90,000 street lights throughout the city. So instead of just complaining do something to help and report the matter by phoning 303 6000.

This is just one of several telephone lines set up by the Council to enable the public to report items needing attention and some of them are set out below.

Please use them!

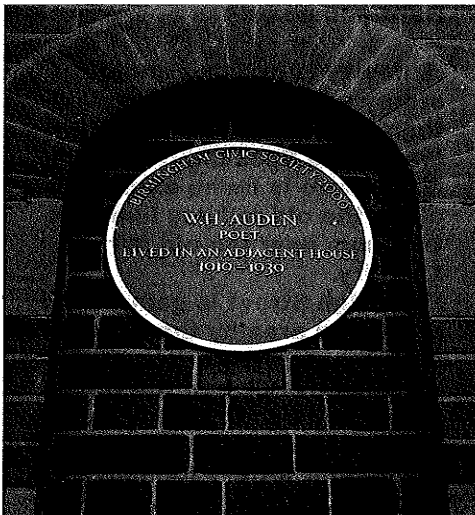
Phil Stokes

- 303 6000 - Street lights & illuminated road signs
- 303 6644 - Potholes, footpaths, road markings, traffic signs & blocked road drains
- 303 7370 - Traffic signals & pedestrian crossings
- 303 7799 - Abandoned traffic cones & road contractor's signs/barriers
- 303 6789 - Refuse collection, street cleansing, litter bins, fly tipping
- 303 1947 - Abandoned vehicles
- 303 6007 - Pest control
- 303 1935 - Overflowing recycling bins
- 464 8728 - Trees in streets
- 0800 413381 - Trading Standards

BLUE PLAQUES- Phil Stokes

In 1999 English Heritage's National Blue Plaque Scheme was extended to embrace Birmingham and three other cities in addition to London. The Society welcomed this and submitted two nominations, namely, Charles Parker (1919-1980), the pioneering BBC radio producer who lived at 'Elmley Lodge' in Old Church Road, and Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-1892), the historian and

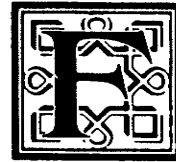
political activist who was born at Metchley Abbey. Charles Parker was the prime mover in founding the Harborne Society and his speech to the inaugural meeting was reproduced in last summer's Newsletter.



After a wait of nearly eighteen months English Heritage finally announced its decisions on the Birmingham nominations and very disappointingly both of the Society's nominations were not deemed "suitable for commemoration".

Many history groups and local Civic Societies have copied the Blue

Plaque Scheme. According to press reports at the time, the Birmingham Civic Society appeared to take umbrage at the extension of the national scheme and they responded by erecting a few more of their own plaques, including one to the poet and essayist W. H. Auden (1907-1973). As a teenager Auden lived for several years at the family home at 42 Lordwood Road (now part of the site of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) and he subsequently visited his parents after they moved to 13 Court Oak Road in 1939. English Heritage plaques can only be erected if the building concerned is still standing but the Civic Society has no such restriction. Last October, after having had the matter in mind for several years, the Civic Society erected a plaque commemorating W.H.Auden, albeit somewhat inconspicuously on the front of Harborne Swimming Baths.



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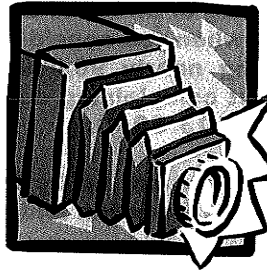
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HARBORNE 2000 ~ A PHOTO-GRAPHIC RECORD

Following the unsuccessful bid for a grant from the Millennium Festival Awards for All scheme, it was agreed to carry out a similar but smaller scale photographic record of Harborne, to be used as an educational and historic resource at Harborne Library.



As Lords Lichfield and Snowdon were not available, the photography was undertaken by Mary Worrall and Ann Yorke towards the end of last year. The project has now been completed and contains over 160 photographs, which are a representative cross section of residential roads in Harborne as well as the High Street and the principal buildings, schools, pubs, local shopping parades and Listed Buildings etc. A copy of the document has been presented to Harborne Library as part of the Madeline Aston Collection, which has been built up in the Children's Library and is funded by the Society.

Phil Stokes

HERITAGE OPEN DAY GUIDED WALK ~ 9TH SEPTEMBER, 2001

The Society will again be celebrating Heritage Open Day, co-ordinated by The Civic Trust, with another of Edward Chitham's extremely popular guided walks. This year Edward is devising a brand new walk covering the north/north-west of Harborne. The leisurely walk will take place on Sunday 9th September starting at 2 p.m. from 'The Kings Head' public house [now called 'The Quantum'] at the junction of Lordswood Road and Hagley Road and should last no more than



two hours. Please note that the walk is still at the planning stage but on this occasion it is very unlikely to be a circular tour and consequently it is expected that the walk will not return to the starting point. The walk will take place whatever the weather, so please be prepared! Everyone is welcome.

Phil Stokes

HARBORNE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME ~ PHASE TWO

The late March deadline for implementation came and went without all parts of this phase of the Harborne Traffic Management Scheme being in place. However, slowly but surely, the City Council continued with the necessary street works and all the new changes were finally operational by the Spring Bank Holiday. The changes have brought about a marked improvement, particularly on High Street, but the selfishness and ignorance of some motorists remains undiminished and the lack of enforcement of the parking regulations continues to be an issue pending transfer of responsibility from the Police to the City Council. The next phase of the Scheme has yet to be announced officially but is likely to be centred on the Moorpool area ~ we will keep you posted.

Phil Stokes

RUMOURS RUMOURS Karen Noy reports!

Have you heard?

.Safeway is building another storey onto the store to give their staff the same facilities as Marks and Spencer.

.The metro is being extended along the old railway line to a terminus near the old Mirror Laundry.

.The High Street is going to have a covered area by the parade for use as an open market on Wednesdays, when the High Street will be closed.

.Queen's Park Bowling club has applied for lottery funding to build a new club house.

.The Harborne Market is being closed and refurbished as a cinema.

.The Swimming Baths is being demolished and a leisure centre opened.

.The Green Man is closing and Marks and Spencer are extending.

Remember you heard it here first and it's all totally without foundation!

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HAPPINESS IS OUR BUSINESS

The Birmingham Fellowship of the Handicapped



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The Birmingham Fellowship of the handicapped was formed in 1952 as a voluntary organisation to provide social activities for physically handicapped adults from the age of 16. Harborne is part of District 1 which comprises of the Harborne, Quinton, Ladywood and Rotton Park wards.

Many members live in Harborne, some in homes run by Harborne Parish Lands Charity, an organisation that is very generous to District 1.

Social activities include a monthly club night, with entertainment, regular outings to various venues are arranged, also trips to the theatre and concerts whenever possible. We go on three holidays a year. One to a holiday camp, the others to hotels. Transport is provided for all our activities, we have our own ambulance. All our helpers are unpaid volunteers, and our money raising events include a Flag Day and sponsored walk, both held annually.

Voluntary drivers provide our transport, in ambulances and cars.

The Birmingham Fellowship of the Handicapped is a very happy club. If you are over 16 and physically handicapped, or would like to help please ring one of the telephone numbers below for information.....You won't regret it!

0121 455 8916 - 0121 422 6786 - 0121 427 8955

John Cutler Chairman.

Harborne Orchestra - Derek Benson

I suppose it is not unusual for members of a local community to be unaware of the existence of one of its activities. This could be so for our Harborne Orchestra which has been practising and performing for almost the last sixty years from its various homes.

There is a considerable library of music giving evidence to its long history, lovingly maintained in envelopes displaying titles and information in copper-plate lettering.

It was founded in the Clock Tower, High Street, and has continued since those early days under the administration of the City Education Committee as part of its Adult Education Programme. In the 1970s the Clock Tower home had to be abandoned because of the pressure of demand for other activities upon the hall space, and under a Conductor named Trevor Collins the orchestra moved to Station Road Schools. Much to the dismay of the members another move had to be made, owing to financial considerations, to George Dixon School, City Road - out of its own area of Harborne. Early during the 1990s it was rehoused back home to the Martineau Centre Harborne, with Trevor Collins as Leader, until he suffered a period of bad health and retired. A local professional musician, Anne Hagyard, then took over the leadership until Richard Elliott assumed the position of Conductor and Musical Director some three years ago.

Richard comes from Bristol and studied Tuba at the Welsh College of Music and Drama. He then obtained a PGCE at Bath and began teaching Music in Birmingham in 1982. Currently he is Head of Music at Plantsbrook School, Sutton Coldfield. As well as conducting this Orchestra for nearly three years, he conducts the Sutton Brass Ensemble and plays tuba in the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra and the Gemini Brass.

Under his baton our Orchestra gives Charity Concerts in and around Harborne in the local Churches and will welcome enquiries from all the communities. As well as keeping our links with established commitments we will be pleased to play new venues.

Further information may be obtained by phone from either

Leslie Boden - 427 3941 or from me Derek Benson - 427 4667.

Finally, rehearsals are held every Friday evening during Term Time at 7.30. pm. in the Martineau Centre and we are interested in recruiting amateur musicians of all ages above 15 years of age to come and enjoy making music with us.

P. KAPNISIS

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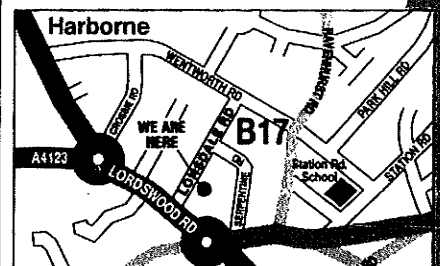
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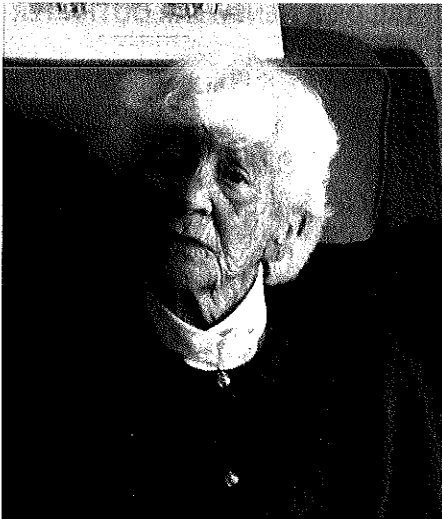


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Harborne Personality Number 5 - Mary Baker

Interviewed by Mary Abbott and Ann Yorke

Mary Worrall



Mary Baker is a very longstanding member of the Harborne Society. A well-known local writer she was interviewed by Mary Abbott and Ann Yorke.

Mary was born Mary Schofield Green in 1910 in Derby Maternity Hospital. She was an only child and her father's job meant that the family was often on the move. Between the ages of three and seven Mary lived with her family in Cornwall. In 1917 her father accepted an offer of work in Birmingham and the family came to stay with the Hewitt family in Park Hill Road. Her father's office was in Paradise Street.

In those days there were fields on the left-hand side of Park Hill Road and the "Corpo" dump at the bottom of the road by the railway bridge. Carhorses were the main means of transport for goods. The Hewitt children and Mary had a wonderful time together.

She attended Mrs Macready's dame school in Wentworth Road from 1917 and then applied to go to Harborne College in St. Peter's Road, near Eccleston School. She did have an interview but, meanwhile, Mrs Macready had written a complimentary letter to her father. As a result, in 1922, Mary took and passed the entrance exam for King Edward's School. She matriculated in 1928, but left school without taking Higher School Certificate as she "didn't want to teach".

When her father retired in the early 1930's he decided that they should move back to Cornwall. He bought his first ever car, a Morris Oxford saloon, in Broad Street and, though he had never driven before, drove them all down to Cornwall in fear of their lives!

Mary met her husband, Jack Baker, back in Cornwall, marrying him in 1933. They

had three children, Alison born 1934, John born in 1936 and Margaret born in 1938. Jack worked for his father in a nursery garden at St Ives but when the war started both the nursery and their bungalow were closed and sold. Jack joined the Coldstream Guards and went off to war in 1939. Mary and the children returned to her parents.

In 1951, the year that her father died, Mary started work for the BBC as one of the technical staff at a transmitter station, and she continued to work for the BBC until she retired in 1970. A change of job had brought Mary and her mother back to Birmingham in 1952. Her husband, by this time demobbed, had demanded that she give up her job but, sadly, when she refused, they found they had nothing in common and so parted.

In Birmingham Mary worked at the BBC in Broad Street and it was at the studios here that she met Charles Parker. She was waiting to edit a tape of the cricket at Edgbaston one evening when a stranger walked in and asked the state of play. That was Charles. She continued to do work with him, and shared his deep love of folk music, until he left the BBC. Mary has since edited the Charles Parker Archive which is in the Central Library and which contains all of his books, programmes and radio ballads on tape and, now CD.

Mary and her mother returned to Harborne at last, in 1976. Her daughter Alison had already bought a house in Yewcroft Avenue and with the increasing infirmity of her mother (she was 101 when she died) and grandchildren to baby-sit it seemed the logical thing to move closer together.

Since her retirement, as well as babysitting, doing up the house, gardening, involvement with the Harborne Society and attending local history courses, Mary has found time to write. She published her first book in 1993, "The Primrose Time" describing her idyllic childhood in Cornwall. Her second book, "Over the Bridge", concerning the return of the family to Birmingham in 1917, over the Tamar Bridge, was published in 2000. Both books are available to borrow from Harborne Library.

Mary now has 9 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

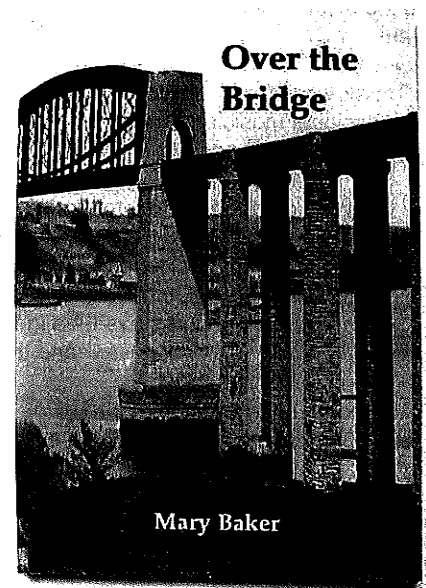
She feels that the present day Harborne is not so interesting, it was so much more exciting for children when she was small.

She well remembers the toy shop, Astleys the theatrical costumiers, Powells the bakers, and Edith Lees, (n e Powell) Vicars also for bread, Bootherstones the butchers, Inces the drapers, Head the grocers and Miss Harper who made ladies clothing. Also in the High Street there was a seed shop, a green-grocers, and a bicycle shop, which is now a florists, from where her first scooter was purchased after she had badgered her father so much that he gave the money to her to go and get it! Scarfs had a grocery shop where Rumours is now sited and Mitchells another butchers shop on the Safeway site along with, at a later date, Woolworths.

If there was something which she could change about Harborne she would ban parked traffic completely from the High Street, a wish heartily backed by the rest of the present day Harborne villagers.

Mary Abbott and Ann Yorke were talking to Mary Baker about her life and the part Harborne has played in it. At the end of Ann's transcript on which I have based this article Ann wrote - "This is by no means the whole of the story about Mary, her memory is phenomenal, she has the most enchanting smile, she loves and lives life now, and we could have talked to her for hours".

A wonderful testament to one of our oldest and most treasured Harbonites.



Mary Baker's latest book

HARBORNE LIBRARY -

Phil Stokes



The scheme for improvements to Harborne Library, is proceeding albeit at a funereal pace. As reported in previous Newsletters, the Council is developing a two-stage approach to the proposed scheme, firstly taking over the adjoining Council owned shop premises and bringing them into Library use by creating a new reception area and installing a small lift. Unfortunately, detailed specialist surveys of the shop premises revealed them to be in a very much poorer condition than had first been thought, particularly the roof and guttering, timber rot in the floor joists, the condition of the exterior brickwork at the rear of the building and problems with the basement. Significant work to the premises is required and securing funding for this has been a problem although some of the external works have already been completed. The City Council still intends to install the small chair lift, which will vastly improve access to the main library for a many users, but clearly this will have to be carried out in parallel with the remaining structural works. This element of the scheme is a high priority for funding having regard to the Council's responsibilities under the Disabilities Discrimination Act.

The second stage of the scheme is the possibility of the installation of a lift to the second floor Children's Library and local history collection but the considerable technical issues still remain to be resolved. Any proposals would, of course, have significant financial implications.

Despite the seemingly slow progress we remain optimistic about the long-term outcome and will keep you informed as things develop.

Finally, and more successfully, the City Council's bid for Government funding for computer terminals for free public access has been approved for a city-wide enhancement of community library facilities, to be known as "the People's Network". Harborne Library should see the initial benefits later this year with a second phase in late 2002.

Harborne Local History Group

Now in its twelfth year, **Harborne Local History Group** has recently returned to **Harborne Library, holding monthly meetings on a Tuesday evening from 7pm-9pm.**

This gives the group access to the Don Wright Collection of local history material, a valuable and popular resource already appreciated by those visiting the library with an interest in Harborne's past.

Keen to expand, the group extends an invitation to their meetings to any who share an enthusiasm for Harborne's history. Whether you are new to the area and wish to

learn a little more about your locality, or simply enjoy recalling earlier days, new members and visitors are always welcome. Meetings are informal, and the group is small and friendly. Many hours have been spent in pleasant village reminiscence - amongst members, there are memories going back even to the days of the First World War (see Mary Baker's interview), and an extensive knowledge of the area during the 1930s, 40s and onwards. Equally, any research or project undertaken by individuals is welcomed and supported.

Information about forthcoming meetings is displayed on the library noticeboard, or may be obtained by telephoning

Wendy Carter at the library 0121 464 1596 or at home 01584 881225

Many thanks go to Mary and Eric Abbott, who hosted the group's meetings in their own home for several years

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A local Harborne architect

ROUND UP

The Court Oak Club

Following the regrettable closure of Onneley House by the BCOP, it is good to be able to report that, with generous financial support from the Harborne Parish Lands Charity, Verity Montague-Smith has founded a new day centre ~ the Court Oak Club ~ to serve some of the frail elderly displaced from Onneley House. The Club is based at Court Oak Methodist Church in Earls Court Road and is open three days a week. Verity is appealing for volunteer helpers and anyone interested should contact her on 449 1961.

"A New Partnership for Governance"

Earlier this year the City Council published a lengthy consultation document outlining several proposals for fundamental changes in the management and devolution of services and increasing the level of participation in local democracy. One of the principal changes would be the replacement of the Ward Committees by Ward Strategic Partnerships. The Society supports the underlying aims of the document but has submitted detailed comments on a number of particular aspects, notably the need for Ward boundaries to embrace the true, natural local community.

Harborne Carnival

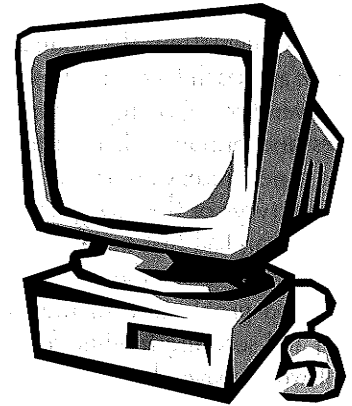
The carnival on Sunday 24th June was blessed with good weather and was even bigger and better than last time. The Society again had a stall with literature, Newsletters, prints and a photographic quiz which was won by Mr & Mrs Dealy and Mr & Mrs Curtis. We were very pleased to recruit several new members.



High Street Crime Prevention

The Harborne Crime Prevention Initiative has been trying for some time to secure funding from the Home Office for a closed circuit television scheme along the High Street but a full scale scheme is currently estimated to cost £160,000 to install with running costs of £30,000 a year. Due to the high costs and the lack of Home Office support, alternative smaller, more affordable schemes have been examined. A computerised open circuit television system, as opposed to the usual live transmission system, is now being contemplated which would be monitored at Rose Road Police Station and initially have three cameras.

Surfing the Net - an editor writes



Mary Worrall

As editor of the Harborne Society News I am occasionally sent letters from local groups and individuals who are wanting some space in our publication. Sometimes the answer is yes, and sometimes no, obviously we need to carefully consider content and relevance - however we are always interested in what people have to say.

A letter I received earlier in the year made me aware of the growing importance of the internet and the part it can play in everyone's life.

Remember you do not need a computer yourself to use "the Web", many public places have computer access and free courses to familiarise non-users abound (check out The Clock Tower and QAC, Court Oak Road). Hotmail, the free email address system is an ideal way of 'writing' to friends and relations in far away places without incurring any cost! Sessions of one hour per week are bookable at Harborne Library and are also free.

To return to my letter, St Mary's Church Harborne had just put together a web site and wanted us to publicise it for them. The address is

www.saintmarysharborne.org.uk

So check it out next time you're on line. A search on "Harborne" can also bring up some interesting results. Remember the web can give you anything once you are used to it, local history to love - the choices are literally infinite.

So please keep the websites coming - I promise to publicise anything with any local interest element as a regular feature each Summer.

Hopefully by next year
The Harborne Society
will have its own website, as ever we will keep you posted.



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REPORT OF THE A.G.M. ~ 23RD MAY, 2001

The 41st Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on 23rd May, 2001, at Harborne Primary School. Disappointingly the attendance was lower than last year.

Mary Abbott chaired the meeting and reports were presented by her, Ann Yorke, the Technical Officer, and Brenda Durbin, the Honorary Treasurer. All the reports gave a very clear indication of the work undertaken by the Society's officers, the Committee and its Sub-Committees, and emphasised the very wide spread of issues pursued during the year, particularly on planning, transportation and environmental matters, and the continuing high level of activity undertaken on behalf of the membership.



Membership levels had been maintained and consequently The Society remained in a sound financial position notwithstanding the increased expenditure on administration and the purchase of equipment.

All eleven members of last year's Committee stood for re-election. In addition, the Committee was pleased to support two new nominations, namely Mark Gribben and Raymond Le Gallais, and all thirteen were elected.

The full list of Committee members and officers for 2001/2002 is on the back page of this Newsletter.

The evening concluded with refreshments courtesy of Marks & Spencer and a photographic quiz ~ Jim Jones, Janet Shaw and Jack Steer were the prizewinners.

Phil Stokes

St Peter's Church Visit

A visit has been arranged for members to St Peter's Church, Harborne on Saturday 29th September.

We are lucky that Reverend Jo Evans will be our guide and we are invited for refreshment afterwards in the church hall.

The church has many interesting features. Particularly special is its 14th Century sandstone tower which houses the bells which are rung every Sunday. The late church architect, Douglas Hickman, directed the restoration of the masonry in the 1980's.

The main part of the church is Victorian with the sanctuary being rebuilt in 1974/5 after a fire. Interesting and commemorative items to local people include - a memorial window to David Cox and a memorial to Sir Henry Rushbury (both artists), ironwork from the grave of Austin Francis Hill who made the gates of the Houses of Parliament, the communion rail in memory of Stephen and Dorothy Lloyd (daughter of Mrs Neville Chamberlain who is buried in the churchyard), the lectern, dated 1874, in the form of an eagle in memory of Charles Hart whose family gave their name to Hart's Green, a war memorial to the fallen of the First World War and a list of vicars beginning with Robert de Radinges in 1255. Outside is a 'closed' churchyard and, unusually, three lychgates.



**If you would like to attend please notify Jenny Buchan by 22nd September.
Telephone 0121-426-4854 or address 50 Margaret Grove Harborne B17 9JL
Please meet inside the church at 2-00pm.**

Officers and Committee 2001 - 2002

Patron

The Right Reverend
The Lord Bishop of Birmingham

Chairman

Mary Abbott,
Victoria Lodge
1 Victoria Road, B17 0AG
427 1378

Vice-Chairman

Graham Parker,
12 Old Church Road, B17 0BB.
427 3666

Honorary Secretary

Phil Stokes,
4A Queen s Park Road, B32 2LA
426 1289

Honary Treasurer

Brenda Durbin,
28, Hart s Green Road, B17 9TY
427 3170

Technical Officer/Chairman

Technical Sub-Committee

Ann Yorke,
98 Greenfield Road, B17 0EF
604 7364

Membership Secretary/Chairman

Social Sub-Committee

Jenny Buchan,
50 Margaret Grove, B17 9JL
426 4854

Newsletter Editor

Mary Worrall,
91 Wood Lane, B17 9AY
426 6467
Fax: 0121 427 7286

Committee Members

Eric Abbott
Leslie Blennerhassett
Michael Darby
Mark Gribben
Raymond Le Gallais
Roger Miles

THE HARBORNE SOCIETY

Programme of Meetings 2001-2002

2001

- Sunday 9th September** Heritage Open Day Walk 2-00pm.
Starting point - King s Head, Lordswood Road
(now known as The Quantum)
- Wed 12th September** Fingerprints for Detection
Ms Sue Clegg
- Saturday 29th September** Visit to St Peter's Church. Meet there at 2-00pm
- Tues 9th October** The Mother-of-pearl Trade - Buttons and Jewellery
Mr George Hook
- Wed 7th November** Historic Hospitals of South Birmingham
Dr Roy Cockel
- Tues 4th December** A Gaijin in Japan
Mrs Jean Owen

2002

- Tues 5th February** Birmingham Register Office
Mr Jerry Hughes, Superintendent Registrar
- Wed 13th March** A Walk Through Harborne - a slide show
Mr Roger Miles
- Tues 16th April** Environmental Issues and Harborne's Parks
Darren Share, Birmingham City Council
- Wed 22nd May** **AGM**

All meetings begin at 7-30pm. Tuesday meetings are held at Onneley House, Court Oak Road; Wednesday meetings are held in The Conference Room, Harborne Primary School, entrance in Wentworth Road.

We have a very varied and interesting programme of meetings. Some will have a strong local flavour while others are of wide general interest.

In addition to the talks the meetings have a short business section so that members can be kept informed of local news and committee activities and also can raise issues of local concern.

We look to forward to seeing you. Non-members are most welcome on payment of a fee of 50p.

The Harborne Society

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