

# KEELE PARISH NEWS

May 1989

Vol 2 no 12



We get the cream, you get the milk & he gets a headache.  
Get the joke?

Keele Parish Council held its Annual Meeting on Tuesday 18th April in the Village Hall. There were 29 present - a good audience, it was later agreed.

The Chairman's report gave an overview of the year's work undertaken by the Parish Council.

The issue of the bypass had top billing. Despite rumours to the contrary, the Chairman has been assured by the County Council that the starting date will be late in 1989 - earlier if the land acquisition is settled quickly. If not, then early 1990. (A book as to the actual starting date will be taken in due course.) That, notwithstanding, the County recognises its obligation to build the by-pass and it will go ahead. Land has already been acquired at the back of Boggs Cottages to provide parking space for residents' vehicles. The latest plan, however, did show a vehicular bridge across Quarry Bank Road. The Parish Council understood that this was to be a pedestrian bridge, large enough to take a pram only. The Parish Council will raise the matter with the County Council immediately.

An accident record of the A525 is still being kept by Dr. Naylor and all accidents should be reported to him.

The other road matters reported on were the dangerously loose setts in Whitmore Road. These are now to be replaced - as they become dislodged - by the Borough Council.

Drainage in Pepper Street has been a long-standing agenda item throughout the year, as has speeding in Pepper Street. Both matters were investigated and the Borough Council are carrying out a drainage scheme at the South end of Pepper Street now. Other areas along the road are also being investigated. Police have investigated the speeding problem.

A turning space in Highway Lane is being investigated and legal procedures are being followed. The Clinic Road is also under scrutiny and its ownership is being looked into.

Footpaths in the Parish have been examined and the Newcastle & Moorlands Countryside Project is to mark them all properly in due course.

Under the heading of Amenities the Chairman reported the following:- That a Keele Parish Tourist leaflet had been produced and had received favourable comment. It was selling well especially to conference goers and holiday visitors to Keele. Greetings cards and notelets had also been produced. All were on sale in the Post Office and Campus Bookshop. The Chairman reaffirmed his partiality to the colour pink. (was he referring to his politics or to the Greetings cards? A burning question to be asked in questions afterwards)

The Village Hall had been extended over the year to include indoor lavatories. The kitchen had also been refurbished. A generous grant had been received from the Borough Council to carry out the building work and an additional precept had been raised to cover the cost - £10,000 plus.

The Churchyard wall had been rebuilt and was now proudly boasting two awards - one from the Civic Society and the other from the Council for the Protection of Rural England. The awards are on display in the church.

Bus shelters had been another long-standing agenda item. It had now been decided, eventually, to place a bus shelter in Whitmore Road. A design had been decided upon - rustic & wooden. (not a description of Parish Council

members incidentally!)

The Parish News was still being produced and the Chairman thanked everyone involved especially the deliverers.

It was reported that rubbish dumping in the Parish was still a nuisance, especially along Two Mile Lane, in the woods close to the motorway and in Hollywood Lane. Parishioners were asked to take numbers of vehicles found dumping rubbish and to report the incident either to the Police or to the Parish Clerk.

Under planning matters, the Chairman reported that despite the Parish Council's strong objection, the building of the Golf Driving Range by the Borough Council had gone ahead. It was generally agreed that the building was an eyesore. It was also pointed out that it had possibly been constructed too close to the proposed by-pass. The request for floodlighting, adding insult to injury, was still under consideration.

Keele village and parts of the Parish had been designated a conservation area. Once the by-pass has been built, various areas of the parish will be looked at e.g. the War Memorial area, the Green, the Yew Tree area, with a view to improvement. The Best Kept Village competition was taking hold and Keele had been entered again this year. There would also be a Best Kept Garden Competition. Details can be obtained from either Wenslie Naylor, Best Kept Village Coordinator or from the Parish Clerk. Footpaths in the Parish, it was generally agreed, were a disgrace and it was impossible for wheelchairs to be pushed along those in the village.

The Trustees of the Keele Charities presented their annual account to the meeting. A letter from the Charities Commission confirmed that the charities could be increased by either gift or bequest to increase the amount being distributed by the trustees.

The Chairman was thanked for his report. The Leader of the Borough Council, Councillor M. Brereton was then invited to address the meeting on the subject of the Community Charge.



The meeting was informed of the following:-

that the Parish Council's income would be less than it is at present. If the Parish Council wished to increase its income to cover any major project in the future, a further tax would have to be levied by the Parish Council on the parish. The Community Charge would be levied on every individual over the age of 18. Councillor Brereton suggested that the rate for Newcastle would be in the region of £300+ per head - to cover the cost of implementing the scheme which he said had been in the region of £1 million. The Government had awarded the Borough Council £124,000 towards the cost of implementing the scheme. The cost of installing and hiring computer systems to operate the scheme was in the region of £700,000 (per annum) and a new wing had had to be constructed (£500,000) onto the Borough Council offices to house them and the 40 extra staff who had also to be employed.

The Charge can be paid by direct debit, in full or by instalments (10 in all). Every individual will be billed separately. There will be concessions for students and for those receiving family credit etc. Not to pay will be a criminal offence. The estimated percentage who will avoid paying will be covered by an increase charge in the annual charge to those who do. For those not permanently resident in any area, a daily levy is being contemplated.

For those who refuse to pay, powers have been given to employers and banks and building societies to freeze assets until the Community Charge has been paid in full. No appeal procedures are envisaged.

The rate levied from commercial properties has not yet been set but this will be paid directly to the Government, who will then redistribute a proportion of it to County Councils to disburse.

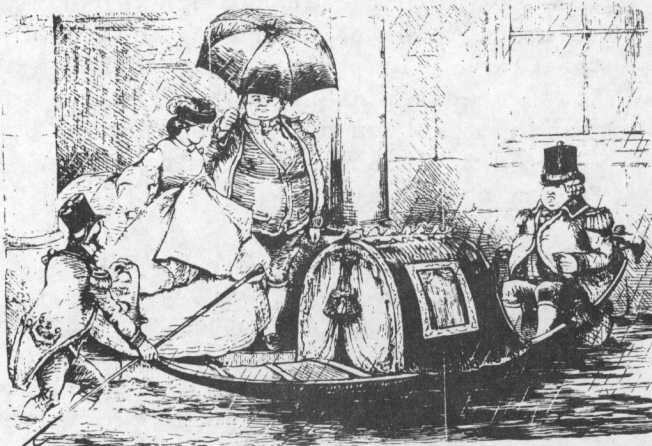
The final charge to individuals would be based on the rate fixed by the Local Council + cost of inflation + cost of administration. Councillor Brereton estimated that the cost to bill each individual once would be about £5. He was asked if there was any way that administration could be streamlined to

lower the cost. He thought not. The overall impression given was that the Borough Council was helpless and that protest was hopeless.



#### PARISH COUNCIL NEWS ....

##### Drainage



"In its new tourist leaflet Keele can be advertised as the Venice of Staffordshire"

It was reported that water was flowing again in Keele in Church Drive onto the A525 and outside Miss Bedson's cottage. The pool (where a horse once drowned, we were reliably informed) near the golf course also seemed higher than usual and looked as if it could flood the A525. The Borough Council were being informed and the situation was being monitored.

### Resurfacing Highway Lane

This matter resurfaced at the Parish Council meeting. A letter had been sent by Dr. Naylon pointing out that Highway Lane had, indeed, once been a highway (hence its name) and therefore as there are maps to prove this, the Borough Council should adopt the lane and pay for its resurfacing. At the Parish Meeting on 18th April, Councillor Cairns stated, when the matter was raised, that it would not be impossible for the Borough Council or County Council to adopt the lane and bring it up to Highway status i.e. with footpaths on one or both sides, which would possibly necessitate widening the road.

It was pointed out that the nomenclature of the lane was relatively recent and it had in the past been known as Workhouse Lane. It was also pointed out that any maps that could possibly prove the status of Highway Lane were either non-existent or in private hands or had disappeared, for example the Tythe Award Map (1842) which was once kept in the Church. The Parish Council therefore requests that if anyone has any 19th century (or earlier) map or plan of Keele that they contact the Parish Clerk. Similarly, if they have in their possession any of the missing maps, that these be returned in a plain brown paper envelope to either the Post Office or to the Clerk. The possibility of house-to-house searches and regular frisking of parishioners was not discounted in efforts to locate the missing items. Please co-operate.

Under the circumstances the Parish Council is left with the following alternatives regarding the resurfacing of Highway Lane:

- a) to contribute £1500 to the total cost of £4000 (the Parish Council's original suggestion which was turned down by residents of Highway Lane).
- b) to allow the Borough Council and County Council to adopt the lane and resurface it from general rates.
- c) leave it.

Given the indications of the way that the Community Charge is to be distributed, it is unlikely that Keele Parish Council will have the funds to make a similar offer next year.

### Speeding through the Parish

The blue mini which was reported to have been speeding through the parish on several occasions, has been apprehended.

### Students left in the dark

In reply to a letter from the Parish Council requesting improved lighting near the Hawthorns end of Quarry Bank Road, the Borough Council responded that the lighting there was adequate and met the standard requirement for the type of road. Improved lighting had been requested to ensure the safety of female students, primarily, walking to and from their hall of residence. Sorry girls, it's back to karate, judo and torches. You will be forgiven for thinking that you have stepped back in time to the dark ages. A copy of the letter from the Borough Council is being sent to the Warden of the Hawthorns Hall.

### X marks the spot



Thank Gawd they're way marking soon.

Mr. Keith Morris of the Newcastle and Moorlands Countryside Project is on his starting blocks and raring to go around the Parish, waymarking everything that doesn't move. Loiterers beware you could become way-marked - which would be a change from being waylaid. Mrs. Locker requests that the improper fence mentioned in the last Keele Parish News is not on her son's land. It in fact belongs to a farmer from Madeley.

### Thar she blows/Tea at Trusthouse Forte

Coal lorries have been reported speeding along the A525 and deviating from their designated route by nipping up Whitmore Road and onto the M6 Service Station - possibly for breakfast. Parishioners are requested to take registration



numbers and names of contractors' lorries, usually printed on the side in large letters.

#### Mud

The Borough Council are being asked to investigate the presence of mud on Pepper Street, where lorries are coming to and from the Old Quarry/Tip. The Parish Council is informed that it is illegal for lorries to bring mud, from their wheels, onto highways, even inadvertently.

#### Litter

The large-scale dumping of litter in bags about the parish has already been reported elsewhere. However, it was noted that litter in the form of cans, wrappers, cigarette ends etc. is widespread, not only throughout the Parish, but also the Borough. In fact, given the potholes in roads - Quarry Bank Road now has several and the poor maintenance of pavements and footpaths - in Keele they are appalling - litter is serving to add insult to injury. The Parish Council is to ask the Borough Council to initiate a major campaign against litter forthwith. In the meantime, given that regular street cleaning used to form a component of the rates, perhaps we should ask why this service has stopped if we are still paying for it?

#### Noise in the Machinery

The Village Hall Committee is being asked to look into the noisy fan heating system in the village hall, with a view to changing it to something quieter so that visiting speakers can be heard above the rattling of fans.

#### Village Groups

The Parish Council awarded a grant of £285 to the Village Hall Committee to fund the use of the hall by Parish Groups such as Guides, W.I. etc. However, it was noted that this grant would have to be reviewed once the Community Charge allocation to Parish Councils was known.

#### Tsk! Tsk!

Cleaners used by British Telecom to clean out telephone booths were noted, in Keele, to be sweeping litter out of the telephone kiosk outside the Post Office and leaving it on the pavement! When the cleaner involved was

approached by a Parish Councillor he apparently became abusive and drove off. British Telecom is to be contacted about the incident.

#### Tree planting

The Parish Council is considering a tree planting scheme at the moment. The planting of limes to interleave with those along the main road has been suggested. If there are any other areas in the Parish where you think trees could be usefully planted, please contact the Parish Clerk.

#### P.M.T.

It has been noted that buses, especially P.M.T. buses, are not pulling into the recesses at bus stops on the campus. Given the narrow roads, this is a dangerous practice. Bus wheels are also churning up grass verges on the campus and along Whitmore Road. The matter is to be investigated.

#### Many thanks

Madeley High School has thanked the Parish Council for its generous donation to the school which enabled the school orchestra to visit Limoges in April. The school orchestra played at two concerts, had a very good time and have been invited back next year.

#### Conservation Area

Now that Keele has become designated as a conservation area, planning applications are referred to the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee. A recent application by the University for 3 detached houses and 2 bungalows in Quarry Bank Road has been rejected.

#### Noticeboards

The Parish Council noticeboard is to be investigated with a view to removing it and erecting a new one in its place.

#### Foul Dogs

At a recent meeting of the Parish Council, a letter was received complaining about dog fouling in the Parish. Should any diseases be contracted by parishioners as a result of dog fouling, then the Parish Council would be liable. The Parish Council is therefore investigating ways of educating dog owners about their dogs using public places as lavatories.

### Fat Fee

As the weight of our revered Chairman has decreased his expenses have increased - not as compensation. It was agreed at the last meeting that the Chairman's annual expenses be increased from £75 to £100.



What a good boy am I.

### VILLAGE NEWS ....

#### Best Kept Garden Competition

In addition to the Best Kept Village Competition this year, Keele is to nominate a garden for entry in the Best Maintained Private Garden As Seen From The Road Competition. Judging will take place in the four Staffordshire areas with one winner from each area, who will then compete against each other to be the County winner. Nominations should be received by the Parish Clerk as soon as possible - they can be left at the Post Office. One garden has already been nominated so get going!

#### Mail Reorganisation

Mr. Wade, District Delivery Manager addressed a recent meeting of the Parish Council on the subject of mail reorganisation. The mega-plan of the G.P.O. is to transfer sorting and deliveries from Keele sub Post Office to Newcastle, as part of its mega-mega plan to concentrate all Post Office activities in towns and away from rural areas.

The reasons given for this were:-

- a) at present there is no parcel delivery at Keele and complaints had been received about this.
- b) Complaints had been received about late deliveries.
- c) Small staffing units such as Keele caused staffing difficulties as only part-time staff were needed and these were difficult to recruit and problems arose when staff were ill.

Indeed in the past the Parish Council had complained, but its complaints were usually about the Newcastle sorting office and the Parish Council wondered if Newcastle could, in fact, cope with the extra load. Councillor G Cairns delivered a metaphorical left hook in the form of a 336-name petition supporting the retention of the Keele Sub Post Office. This was followed by a right upper cut from Mr. Anderson-Palmer, Keele Sub Postmaster, (in a letter to the PC) along the lines that a large number of overseas students reside at the Hawthorns where numerous express, recorded and registered items needed signatures on delivery. The only practical method of collection was from Keele Sub Post Office, otherwise students would have to travel to Newcastle. This sent the Delivery Manager reeling. He was unaware of this potential problem and agreed it was an important point. In retaliation he



This will fool 'em.



delivered a jaw-breaker of his own. This was the only point he had heard which might cause him to change his mind. All other arguments put forward were emotional. Clearly the notions of Senior Citizens hobbling down to Newcastle had left him unmoved. "A hard nut to crack, this one," muttered Biggles from the pink corner, without moving his lips.

However, some parts of the District Delivery Manager were obviously moved - possibly by the sight of the Parish Council looking like cheese on the counter costing fourpence - because he did eventually concede that he would circulate everyone in Keele with a questionnaire (don't hold your breath) to learn their views as to where they would like the sorting office to be and what services they would require. Well, that was March. In the meantime on April 17th Keele didn't receive any mail to sort at all - it was not put on the van at Newcastle. Parishioners have yet to receive their questionnaires. The Parish Council are pursuing the matter. If it's any consolation, a letter posted in Australia on 17th April arrived in Newcastle on 21st April - an indicator that perhaps the G.P.O. should concentrate its activities in Australia and with the savings invest in carrier pigeons.

#### W.I.

The W.I. were given a most informative talk at their April meeting by Dr. C. Philipson, entitled "Challenges of an Ageing Society". He suggested that some of the ways that the challenges of old age were being met were being busy, fit, well-fed and fairly well-off.

The W.I. birthday party will take place in May and in June Mr. Busfield will be talking about antique clocks. Everyone is welcome.

#### **A LAMB RETURNS TO KEELE**

The new landlords of the Sneyd are Sue and Jed Wedgwood. And by one of those strange quirks of fate an old Keele connection is renewed for Sue is the grand-niece of George Lamb who ran the Sneyd before the O'Connors took over! Welcome back to Keele!

#### Life after the By-Pass



Like the Community Charge it appears that the Green Belt is to become, equally, a bone of no contention. At the recent Parish Meeting, the leader of the Borough Council, Councillor M Brereton, pointed out that all rural areas were being greatly pressured by developers, and the Government saw such pressure as a market force at work and therefore that 'realistic' development in rural areas should not be opposed. He suggested that it was better for Councils in these circumstances to cut losses and start 'doing deals with developers'.

May the force be with us.

#### Keele Village Hall Appeal - Refurbishment of the Kitchen

The Coffee Evening & Bring and Buy held in March was a well attended, happy and successful village event. The opener, Mrs. Fender stressed that the kitchen refurbishment would benefit the various organisations and persons using the Hall and appealed to all present to give generously. The Management Committee is pleased to report that £347.80 was raised during the evening. The Committee would also like to thank the various organisations: the W.I., Garden Guild, Guides, Rangers, Hawthorns, Mothers' Union and others who have used and supported the Village Hall over the year. We thank too the Parochial Church Council, Hawthorns, Streetly Yarners, the Sneyd Arms and others who made donations which resulted in a total of £582.80 being raised towards the cost of £700.00 for the refurbishment.

## FAREWELL TO ARMS

Village pubs are more than just buildings, more than just businesses for breweries to make inordinate profits from their befuddled customers. They are centres of village life. And the key to their success is the landlord.

On 9 September 1968 a young couple, Geoff and Nora O'Connor moved into the Sneyd Arms with three small children. Nearly twenty-one years later they are leaving, the longest serving landlords the Sneyd has ever had.

When they came the final development of the Hawthorns was being completed. As a result there are as many students as villagers living in the village. How to serve both groups, to run both a village pub and a student pub was the O'Connors unique task. (There cannot be a pub quite like the Sneyd anywhere else in the country.) Through a mixture of firmness and friendliness they have achieved this near impossibility.

Villagers, students and academics are in the crib, the bowls and the cricket teams. They compete to-gether in pop quizzes and the like. They share tips for the horses and the Grand National sweepstake. To-gether they have raised large sums of money over the years for various charities from Mencap and Father Hudson's Homes to the Life Boat Institution and the North Staffordshire Aids Foundation. All this thanks largely to Geoff and Nora.

But these have been merely outward signs of a more significant contribution to village life. It is in the intimate and the personal that we discover our corporate identity. And no more strongly is this revealed than at times of loss. Many a wake has been held in the Sneyd for villager and customer, from Cleggie and Tommy Lawton to Ron Evans and Mrs

Power.

Joys too are to be found there - from the wedding party stiff in new suits and unaccustomed ties to exultant finalists drunk on their own success. A Thorns or Union Ball would not be the same without pre-Ball drinks in the Sneyd and the Sneyd would not be the same without their liveliness. All this exuberance without disturbance. There are no bouncers on the doors at the Sneyd because there has been no need for them.

And whilst speaking of the joys we must speak of the beer. It was during the O'Connors stewardship that real ale returned to the Sneyd. And the Guinness can not be bettered this side of the Irish Sea. The sign that proclaims fine ales and fine wines is at least in the first part true.

And then there is the work. Yes, work! Many a tutorial has been held there over the past twenty years, many a research topic firmed up over a soothing pint. And one must not forget the gossip - sorry, village and university politics. We often know what the Vice-Chancellor or the Chairman of the Parish Council has decided before they themselves.

But above all it is the friendships made and kept which mark out the local from a place one just goes to for a drink, which makes the English local unique. It is to the Sneyd that returning students and villagers come. For many it has provided an extended family of friends and neighbours - slow to judge quick to help.

That Geoff and Nora have created and maintained such a community is a tribute to their skills as publicans and to their essential humanity. Few have served Keele so faithfully and fruitfully for so long. We wish them well in their retirement from the licensing trade.

*Chris Harrison*

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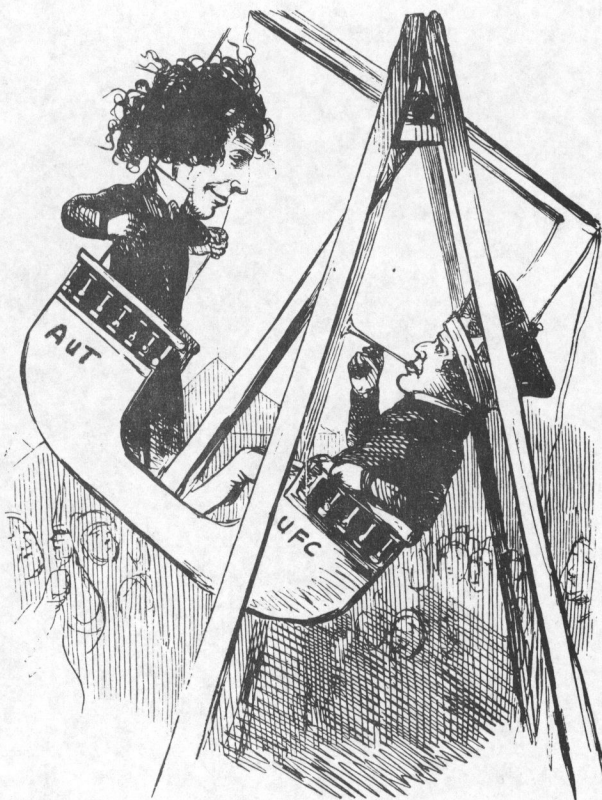
### SCHOOL NEWS ....

The Chairman reported that he had resigned as Parish Council representative from the Board of Governors of St John's School.

Mrs. Sue Law was elected to replace him. It was reported to the Parish Council that Mrs. Carrahar, presently Deputy Head of the school was to resign and that she would be retraining to teach mathematics in secondary schools. The Parish Council wished her every success. It was noted that there had been a 100% turnover of staff at the school.

### UNIVERSITY NEWS ....

#### AUT Action



University lecturers throughout the country have voted to continue their action for higher pay. A 6% pay offer had been made second time around after the first of 3% had been rejected. However, in order to minimise the effects of their action on their students, the academic staff have decided to set exam papers, thus allowing students to sit their examinations, but marks will be withheld. In some universities, the papers will not be marked until an increased offer has been made. Over the

years academics have felt strongly that their salaries have fallen well behind those of other professions. Given the ridiculous hoops that universities and polytechnics have been forced through by the Department of Education and Science over the last 10 years staff are, on the whole, adamant that they will not give in.

#### More Drama

The Drama Society will present Twelfth night as its outdoor Shakespeare production this year. Performances will begin on June 21st and continue until July 1st. Tickets are now on sale at £3.50/£3.00. For further details contact the Information Officer.

#### Exhibitions

Geoffrey Clamp is displaying his work on paper in the Concourse and Gallery of the Chancellor's Building from 23rd April - 27th May. The work is largescale and he describes it as being collage. He professes to be fond of the colour black. The arrangements and shapes he produces are bold but simple.

Doris Brown will hold an exhibition of water colours in the Chancellor's Building Gallery from 28th May to 8th July and John Wade, a graduate of Keele will show his "Portfolio of Portraits" in the concourse at the same time.

The Gallery is open from 9.00 am to 8.30 pm.

#### Needle Work

To mark Keele University's 40th Anniversary next year, the idea of a tapestry depicting the history of Keele, Keele Hall, to hang in the Great Hall, is being considered as a community effort. If the project goes ahead it is envisaged that it will take at least a year to complete. If there is anyone in the parish who can wield a tapestry needle deftly, and who has time to devote to such a project, would they please contact Angela Drakakis-Smith c/o Walter Moberley Hall or tel: 632799 as soon as possible?

STOP PRESS ... STOP PRESS ... STOP PRESS  
A reliable source hath declared that the University intends to sell Holly Lodge and thus evict the University Playgroup. Come on ye parents - both young & old, join the Save the Playgroup Campaign.