

# Stoneygate

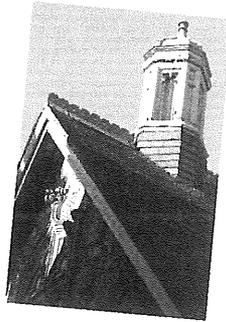
NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2005

## Conservation Area Society

Take a closer look at architecture's twiddly bits ...

"Curiosities in Stoneygate" - gargoyles, gateposts, gables and other oddities are the subject of our next

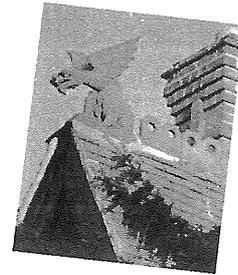


photographic exhibition. Come along and refresh your memory of these architectural oddities.



Place: Friends' Meeting House, Queen's Road.

Date: Saturday, 29 January. Times: 10am to 3.30pm.



Refreshments will be served.

## Creating a better place to live for tomorrow's citizens

"Planning a past for the future" was the title of a one-day course at Vaughan College on 6 November, organised by the University of Leicester in conjunction with the BA and Stoneygate Conservation Area Society (*Madeleine Cooke writes*).

It was chaired by Derek Raine (BA) and the speakers included Mike Taylor (English Heritage), Steve Wells (independent architect/planner) and Douglas Cawthorne (De Montfort University), with invaluable contributions from the floor by Fraser Robson (Leicester City Council).

The programme aimed to raise issues of contemporary concern and suggest ways in which we can all help ensure that we leave

future generations a place to live, work and play that is as good as, if not better than, that we ourselves inherited.

Rather than attempt to provide a verbatim report of the proceedings, I've chosen to highlight some of the issues which I found especially interesting and/or relevant to the particular concerns of SCAS.

- Our buildings shape us. The nature of our built environment (both the buildings themselves and the constructed landscape) have a profound effect on the quality of our lives. We all seek our

*See us on the web*

SCAS has a website (which we are aiming to update soon) and its address is ... one of those very long strings of symbols and things. Type "Stoneygate conservation" into Google instead; our site is first on the list.

own "defensible space",) whether we live in a royal palace, a Wilson home or a one-room high-rise flat.

- Conservationists are beginning to understand the need for more robust project analysis, as a basis for determining what aspects of the past are preserved and why – balancing visual attractiveness and social significance against practical sustainability.
- Most towns and villages have evolved as organic entities over time, on a largely ad hoc basis, in response to changing
  - Continued overleaf

# Visionary who left distinctive mark on city

*South East of Leicester including Evington, Stoughton and beyond.*

Helen Boynton's latest book describes a diverse and fascinating area, including one of the country's earliest industrial estates, in North Evington.

She writes lovingly of Arthur Wakeley, architect and entrepreneur, whose idealistic vision of what Leicester might become left a distinctive legacy for the city and the proportions of whose trademark chalet-style houses (example pictured) still delight the eye.

Dipping into any of Helen's books is like looking into a well-lit shop window, packed with goodies. Like all good writers, she leaves the reader greedy to know more.

What went on in the Art Deco buildings of the Tonic Tea Company or the offices of Crittall

Windows? Did you know that the cellars and a grotto and garden steps are all that remain of the baronial magnificence of Stoughton Grange?

Or that the equally short-lived Thurnby Court, with its underground stables, swimming pool and gas holder, was built for a Liverpool-born cotton broker turned American Civil War blockade runner?



What happened after the First World War to those legless young soldiers photographed at the "Warrior Homes?" Did they find appropriate "homes fit for heroes," built by Arthur Wakeley?

A must for anyone interested in local urban history, the book is available at £10 from Helen herself (0116 2706806) or Browsers Bookshop (0116 2701684).

*Madeleine Cooke*

## Church tours

Our Hon Treasurer, Canon Henry Evans, has arranged two tours so far: St James the Greater, London Road. Sunday 20 March, 2.30 pm (leader Dr Alan McWhirr,) and St John the Baptist, Clarendon Park Road. Sunday 8 May, 2.30 pm (leader Dr Helen Boynton).

To book a place, contact Odette Fogler on 0116 2705623.

## AGM

Another date for your diary: the 2005 meeting will be held at the Octagon, St John's, Clarendon Park Road, at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 25 May.

## Our committee: who to contact

**Chair:** Madeleine Cooke, 19 Woodland Avenue, LE2 3HG (270 6420).

**Co-ordinator:** David Oldershaw, 6 Central Avenue, LE2 1TB (270 0010, david.oldershaw1@bt.internet.com).

**Hon Treasurer:** Henry Evans, 16 Central Avenue, LE2 1TB (270 2169).

**Membership Secretary:** Odette Fogler, 5 Calbri Court, 37 Knighton Drive, LE2 3HD (270 5623).

**Media/publicity:** Matt Matthew, 83 Clarendon Park Road, LE2 3AH (270 3143, anthony.matthew@tiscali.co.uk).

**Planning matters:** Anna Reville, 8 Central Avenue, LE2 1TB (270 9885, anna.reville@tiscali.co.uk).

**Trees:** Caroline Cook, 338 London Road, LE2 2PJ (210 9685, colin.cook3@ntlworld.com).

**Newsletter:** Julia Killey, 11 Central Avenue, LE2 1TB (210 9077, hawcroft.killey@ntlworld.com) and Madeleine Cooke.

**Committee member:** Tom Copp, 12 Ronald Court, Avenue Road, LE2 3ET (270 4975).

We meet every other month, in the evening, in one another's homes and are keen to recruit new members with fresh perspectives and ideas.

If you feel that you can spare some of your time to help, please contact either David or Madeleine.

If you would like to join Stoneygate Conservation Area Society, please fill in the coupon on the back page.

As those of you who are already members know, Leicester Civic Society has been playing an active part in the affairs of the city for more than 30 years.

Its span of interest is largely complementary to ours. It stands "for protecting and preserving all that is best in the heritage of the city and improving the environment for present and future generations."

It believes, too, that "lots of things go wrong if

## Meet another group with a philosophy very like ours

worried people stand back and do nothing."

The society has a well-established programme of summer tours and guided walks in Leicester and other places of interest, and organises regular winter meetings and illustrated talks.

The committee has generously offered SCAS members access to future events at members' rates, a reciprocal arrangement that must benefit both societies.

*Madeleine Cooke*

## Creating a better place for tomorrow

### □ From Page One

- circumstances. Little attention has been paid to managing change. This cannot go on.
- Now, more than ever, sustainability (in terms of maintaining natural resources and protecting the natural environment) is the key challenge.
- Changes in the structure of society mean a continued growth in the size of the population; more individuals (of all ages) living alone; a rapidly ageing population; a continued demand for larger houses, especially among our "Asian" communities; more people needing affordable starter homes; and a general reluctance to rent rather than buy.
- Our present housing stock represents a substantial part of our future. Much of what has been built over the last 30 years will be with us for the next 170 (a truly sobering thought). We don't enjoy demolishing buildings and the concept of impermanence is unpopular and/or largely misunderstood. In general, we don't like the idea of prefabricated houses, however well designed.
- The vast growth in suburbia, together with the demolition or vast urban areas to create new road systems, have had profound effects on our environment. If low-density urban sprawl continues at the present rate, the whole of the UK will be urbanised by the year 3000.
- What will it look like? Anodyne sub-Arts-and-Crafts, in response to what the national housebuilders (our major arbiters of public taste) know they can sell, with a bit of lawn, a double garage for extra storage and plenty of parking.
- Exciting new-builds and conversions are at a premium, and usually expensive – from £4 million worth of Terry Farrell design in London to around half a million in the provinces. (It was especially heartening to see two exciting houses designed by Steve Wells, in Evington Lane in Leicester and the Mountsorrel Conservation Area. It can be done.)
- The majority of energy consumed is used to heat and ventilate domestic and other buildings or move people around from place to place. How can we harness science and technology to help counteract this profligacy? Steve showed us some solutions in terms of eco-friendly houses, but much more work is needed from the big builders.
- Architecture and planning issues are back in the forefront of public debate. How does this affect our backyard? What can we do to help shape the future in this conservation area? Only by continuing to raise issues as they occur and ensuring that our concerns reach the appropriate decision-makers, in both public and private sectors. And most importantly, not just by saying "no" to change but by supporting alternative, more appropriate, ways forward.

More 'twiddly bits' photos from our exhibition



## Planning matters

August – December 2004

As ever, a large number of planning applications concerned the pruning or felling of trees.

There have been a number of applications which have been investigated and considered by the SCAS committee. They include:

10 Woodland Avenue: proposed house in side garden – approved.

16 Knighton Road: development to rear – public inquiry held on 16.11.04, outcome awaited.

15 Knighton Drive: extension to side and rear – refused.

31 Knighton Drive: extension to rear and conversion to 14 flats – decision awaited.

7 Stanley Road: garden of Eastfield, proposed 54 flats – decision awaited.

76 Clarendon Park Road: change of use to 13 flats – decision awaited.

Remember, if you are concerned about a planning matter, contact the Development Control Team at New Walk Centre or your local councillor or SCAS for advice.

Planning decisions are taken by the city council's Development Control Committee, which is made up of local councillors. The committee meets on alternate Tuesday evenings and is open to the public.

*David Oldershaw and Anna Revill*

### *Stoneygate Conservation Area Society*

JOIN US!

I/we wish to join the Society/renew membership and enclose cash/cheque for £5 (per household per year) as from 1 April 2004.

Name .....

Address .....

Tel .....

Please make cheques payable to Stoneygate Conservation Area Society.

Send to: Odette Fogler, Membership Secretary, 5 Calbri Court, 37 Knighton Drive, Leicester LE2 3HD (tel 270 5623)