

Salisbury Cathedral Close Preservation Society

"Rus In Urbe"

Patron: Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Heath K.G. M.B.E. M.P.
Chairman: Sir Robin Ibbs K.B.E.
Secretary: Mrs Alison Pinkerton O.B.E.

March 1998

BULLETIN No 17

In this Bulletin are **two** important dates for your diary, advance news of a further event in the Autumn and an update on matters regarding the traffic management and the Close environment.

Annual General Meeting Monday April 20th 1998 at 6.00pm

The meeting is to be held in the **Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum** lecture hall. The Agenda for the meeting is enclosed as is a subscription renewal form for those members who have not arranged a Standing Order payment. Here is your opportunity to come and express your views about recent changes in traffic management and other Close environment matters and to let your Committee members know where these and other issues need attention. The Chairman has invited members to take a glass of wine with him after completion of the business meeting.

Society Garden Party at Braybrooke House, 57 The Close on 27th June 1997

Once again this event is to be held in the beautiful garden of Mrs Kate Christopherson from 10.30am until 5.00pm. Do come and join in what will undoubtedly be an enjoyable occasion with a variety of new attractions being planned. Contributions for the stalls, such as cakes, preserves and gifts, will be gratefully received. Any member who would like to help on the day for a few hours will be very welcome. Please contact Catherine Fisher (tel 01985 850218)

(?CL to confirm times given and any additional information)

Annual Society Lecture

This year the lecture is going to be in the Autumn so as not to conflict with the Festival and other events. The date has yet to be finalised but a popular speaker has agreed to talk on "Constable and the Close" (DL to supply date?)

Traffic Management in The Close

From previous Bulletins and the Chairmans report at the Annual General Meeting last year, members will be aware of the traffic surveys undertaken by the Society's Traffic Working Party led by Major John Hardiman. These surveys and the report compiled by that Working Party have proved a valuable source of information for the 2 sub groups formed from the "Cathedral Authorities and Council Working Group on Traffic Management in the Close" (mentioned in the last Bulletin).

Members will recall that as a result of the planning application by the Dean and Chapter for the temporary use of the tennis courts in the South of the Close as a car park, the Council required certain undertakings to be enforced, including the clearing of parked cars from the east side of Choristers Green and the formation of that Joint Working Group . From this Joint Group two smaller working groups were set up, one to look at the traffic and parking demands on the Close, the second to look at the management of traffic and parking within the Close. The Society was well represented on the 2 groups and also on the full group by the Chairman, Professor Johnston, John Hardiman, until his illness, and Ronald Briggs. A final report is being prepared and will be available but the stated aims of the first working group will give a flavour of the final content of the report. They were:-

- to end the use of the Close as a through way
- to reduce the volume of traffic coming in and out of the Close
- for public parking in the Close to cease (when this becomes feasible).

About the same time that this Working Group concluded their report the closure of the High Street Gate, as a consequence of the work on pedestrianisation of the High Street has had a considerable effect on the traffic flow in the Close. The High Street Gate is due to be opened

again on March 9th 1998 and the traffic will then flow as before. Your Committee has organised a series of traffic surveys whilst the High Street Gate has been closed to find out just how many cars are entering the Close under the more restricted circumstances of the Harnham Gate, how children are getting to the schools and how traffic flow and parking elsewhere in the Close has been affected. The intention is to review the parking and traffic flow once the High Street Gate has reopened.

The Cathedral Authorities have applied for planning permission for a number of changes in the Close, including some already undertaken, such as the new road across the Lower Marsh and the parking bay markings (which it is intended to replace with stone sets as time and funds allow). New and extensive traffic calming measures, new and uniform signage, a new map of the Close and dog litter bins are included in these proposals. The Society has written to the planning Authorities urging that signage and dog litter bins should be kept to the minimum. There has also been a separate application from Comtel who wish to install 4 cabinets at various points in the Close to which the Society has objected suggesting alternative siting. There is a danger of the accumulation of "clutter" with all these changes. The Cathedral Authorities planning application also includes the installation of "Dragons Teeth" at the Harnham Gate which members will remember the Society agreed to help fund to prevent the illegal entry of cars who persist in ignoring the "No Entry" signs, thereby endangering pedestrians and cyclists entering and leaving the Close by this Gate. The question of possibly continued use of the Harnham gate as the major entrance to the Close has arisen since it has considerably lessened the impact of traffic at the north end of the Close. It may not however be the easy solution it might first seem. The Harnham Gate does not allow the entry or exit of vehicles of the size of large lorries, dust bin carts, fire engines etc. The High Street Gate is not limited in this way. Moreover, the Harnham Gate itself is on a skew with De Vaux Place so there is real difficulty for pedestrians, and particularly children, to see cars coming from either side of the Gate. Sadly car drivers using this entrance when it is controlled by lights are unwilling to wait for the green signal and near collisions have already taken place as they are also unsighted. No doubt much discussion will take place over the ensuing months as to the best solution but the traffic surveys by the Committee will be an important contribution to that debate and ensure that there is a factual backing to the arguments.

Tree Planting

The final report of the Landscape Working Party, on which the Society was represented, has gone to the Dean and Chapter. The contribution made by the Society both in expertise and in funding some of the recommendations is well recognised by the Cathedral Authorities. We can look forward to seeing the young trees in leaf this Spring. The cypress trees, the largest of which was paid for by the Society are growing apace since the tender loving care (mulching and watering), recommended by Priscilla Mackay for all the young trees which were suffering from the drought in the late Spring of last year, has been given.

New Building in the Close

A number of plans for new buildings for the three schools in the Close have been under discussion over the past few months. Most of the new buildings proposed are to replace dilapidated existing buildings and should not significantly affect the appearance of the Close. In the plans for Leadenhall and the Cathedral School there is an undertaking not to increase the number of pupils. Applications for planning permission for these 2 schools and for Bishop Wordsworths school will be carefully scrutinised by the Society. Planning permission has been granted for some proposed developments at Sarum College. The implication for the Close environment from heavy lorries by all these building works, and in the case of the Sarum College the removal of earth to allow the excavation for an underground chapel is considerable and will need careful programming if it is not to disrupt the tranquillity of the Close.