

Salisbury Cathedral Close Preservation Society

"Rus In Urbe"

October 1996

BULLETIN 14

This Bulletin gives a brief resume of the Annual General meeting and reports the recent developments in the Close.

Annual General Meeting July 12th 1996

Fifty-five members attended the meeting. The Chairman in his report reaffirmed the objectives of the Society as being to preserve and enhance the beauty and atmosphere of the Close. The main immediate focus was on the management of the traffic and parking problems but this was not exclusive and the tree planting programme was increasingly important. He referred to the differing views held by members of the Society on some of the traffic issues and said that it was the Committee's duty to arrive at positions that are acceptable to the majority of the members. He felt that during the past year the Society had made a useful contribution to the wellbeing of the Close. This had been done by seeking to help and cooperate with the Cathedral authorities who have the executive power but at the same time maintaining our own approach on particular issues. The Society through its Working Party on traffic management led by John Hardiman had undertaken a valuable survey of the traffic and parking. The information collected had been shared with the Chapter Office who had also contributed data and as a result the Working Party were invited to help in discussions about the issues raised and in the proposals to solve them. The car permit scheme had been an outcome of this joint working. He referred to the contentious question of turning the tennis courts into a car park, the Society had objected to the planning application for a permanent car park but were prepared to go along with a temporary application for a three year trial period to break the present log jam on traffic flow and parking. As part of that application a proposal had been made to set up a Working Group to consider the wider issues of parking and traffic flows in conjunction with District and County Council participants. The Chairman had the assurance of the Chapter Clerk that the Society would be represented on that Group.

The Chairman also reported on the progress made by the Dean's Working party on the plans and implementation of new tree planting. He felt that the contribution made by the Society through its representative Priscilla Mackay had softened the effect of the original plans by preserving a number of trees and planting the new small leaved limes, which the Society had paid for, in a less regimented way than had at first been proposed.

The Garden Party held once again by kind permission of Kate Christopherson, and the new enterprise of Society lectures, had been popular, enjoyable and profitable events. It was hoped that these could be repeated in the coming year.

Generous gifts to the Society had been received from the estate of Sir Philip Shelbourne and in remembrance of Geraldine Symons.

The Chairman then threw the meeting open for discussion and a number of points were made by members on both traffic and other matters many of which the Chairman undertook to raise at his regular meetings with the Chapter Clerk.

Following reports from the Treasurer and Membership Secretary the existing members of the Committee were re-elected as no further nominations had been received. The Chairman emphasised that any Society members who felt they had a contribution to make to the work of the Committee and willing to serve on it should make themselves known. The Meeting ended with the Chairman inviting members to enjoy a glass of wine with him.

Introduction of the car entry permits

New annual permits were issued for 1500 cars during August and the scheme to monitor the entry of cars with permits started on September 1st 1996. Many of the permits are issued for the cars of parents of children at school in the Close and these do not allow parking other than for delivering or picking up children. It is understood that the introduction of the permits has been trouble-free although some copies of permits have been detected and the cars' owners referred to the Chapter Office.

Use of the tennis courts as a temporary car park

Planning permission has been granted for this by the District Council. The permission is subject to a number of conditions which include the elimination of the parking for cars in areas of the Close such as the east side of Choristers Green and by the entrance to the churchyard beyond the Close constable's box. The setting up of the Working group referred to in the Chairman's report at the AGM is also required. The conditions have to be drawn up in a legal document. There has not yet been any change in the parking congestion.

Proposal to convert the Lush House car park to a coach park.

At a recent Committee meeting of the Society it was agreed that the implementation of this proposal by the District Council seemed to be premature in view of the setting up of the Working Group to consider the traffic management in the Close and the interrelationships with traffic management in the town. The Chairman has written to the Chairman of the Council to express this view.

Installation of a telephone in the Close constable's box

As part of the better management of traffic the ability of residents and others in the Close to alert the Close Constable on duty, of visitors and workmen coming to properties, has long been needed. The suggestion for a telephone link to the constable's box came from a respondent to the Society's traffic survey. An answerphone has now been installed so that contact can be made and the constable informed. The installation cost of the link has been funded by the Society.

Mr John Walkman the new chief Close Constable

The Society gives a warm welcome to Mr Walkman who took up his duties at the beginning of September. Already his presence at the Harnham Gate in the morning when children are being delivered to school has effectively deterred those drivers who regardless of others insist that they have a right to enter the Close through the Harnham Gate thereby causing holdups and increasing hazards for pedestrians.