



WESTON VIEW

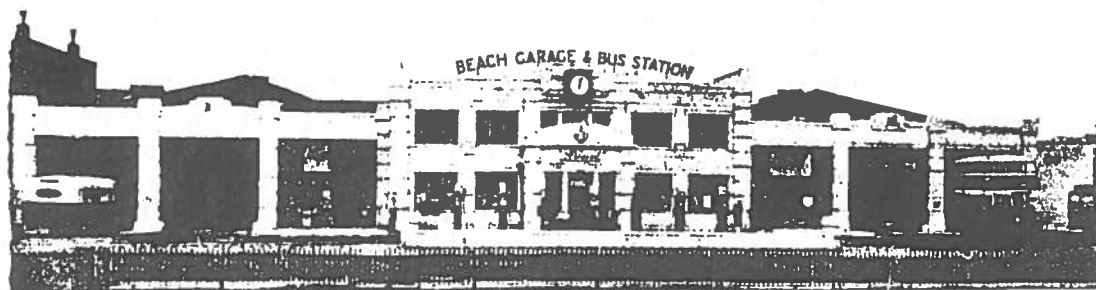
September - October 1987

Number 31

Ten pence

Delivered free to Members of Weston-super-Mare Civic Society

TERMINUS!



"Bristol"



Badgerline

BADGERLINE'S DECISION TO CLOSE THE 60 YEAR OLD BEACH ROAD BUS STATION AND SELL THE SITE FOR HIGH-RISE BLOCKS OF FLATS HAS UPSET EVERYONE IN WESTON FROM COUNCILLORS DOWN. Woodspring Council has deferred consideration of the plans in the hope that common sense will prevail. We look at the problems that have been created for Weston, and possible solutions to our town centre transport difficulties.

For a newly privatised business, Badgerline almost seems to be going out of its way to alienate local people.

Perhaps it could learn a few lessons about public relations: like being more willing to carry information about other companies' timetables, so that one can plan long journeys properly.

The decision to close the Beach Road Bus Station and sell the site was a commercial one. No doubt it makes business sense to capitalise on such a valuable asset. The depot for vehicle maintenance hardly needs to occupy a prime site.

But does it make good business sense to treat the customer in such a cavalier fashion? Woodspring has been put in a difficult position by Badgerline's action in closing the Station and having buses wait in the street. The Council is right to try to salvage some more civilised arrangements for the benefit of passengers. Although it appears Badgerline did consult Woodspring officers in advance, they have now declared that they are only interested in a site on the Beach Lawns. In that case, why are they not planning to incorporate passenger facilities on the redeveloped Bus Station site? It hardly seems reasonable to capitalise on the whole site and then insist on occupying public open space opposite!

The Society opposed plans to spoil more of the Beach Lawns, which it described as 'adding insult to injury'. Environmentally, we want to see this end of the Beach Lawns improved, nor further downgraded. From the point of view of bus passengers all round the year, the Beach Lawns are in any case not very convenient.

We suggested that the Council should insist on exploring better alternatives, and we are pleased that this is what the Leisure and Tourism Committee decided to do. Talks are to involve Woodspring, Avon, the Police and Badgerline, together with long distance coach and bus operators (but not day coach operators) to seek alternatives.

Several members of the Leisure and Tourism Committee considered that the Locking Road car park would be a better site, and we agree. We have always thought it would be a good idea to have the bus station, railway station, and large car park close together, by the main road into the town centre. It would be a more convenient site all year round, and more acceptable environmentally.

What's more, the more we can do to prevent traffic unnecessarily ploughing through the congested town centre and sea front area the better.

We call on Badgerline to adopt a more public-spirited attitude with regard to the travelling public, and not simply dump the problem on the Council's doorstep - or rather on the streets. The issue is not whether one supports or opposes privatisation of the buses. Whether publicly or privately owned, a bus company must be business-like, but equally it must avoid being arrogant just because it enjoys a monopoly. The public is entitled to proper facilities, secured after proper consultation. The company should be serving the passenger - not the other way round. The public is not here simply to make profits for the new company. In the long run, if Badgerline can take a longer term view, they will find that it is in the company's interest to heed what the public and the Council are saying to them.



The Beach Garage and Bus Station in its original form had garage accommodation for 300 private cars, and repairs were carried out there. Note the row of petrol pumps. The vehicle entrances are nearer the centre of the building than in later years.

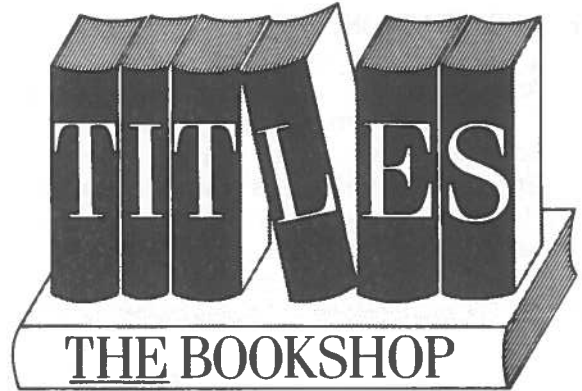
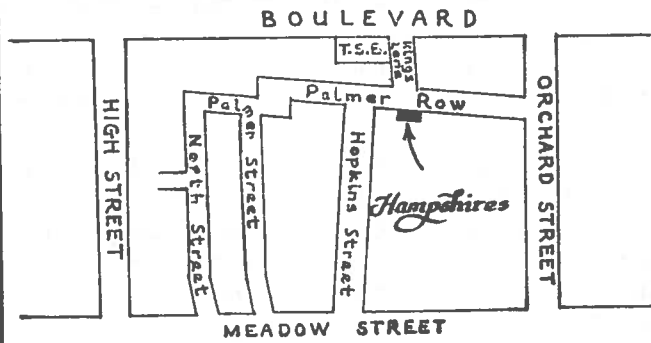
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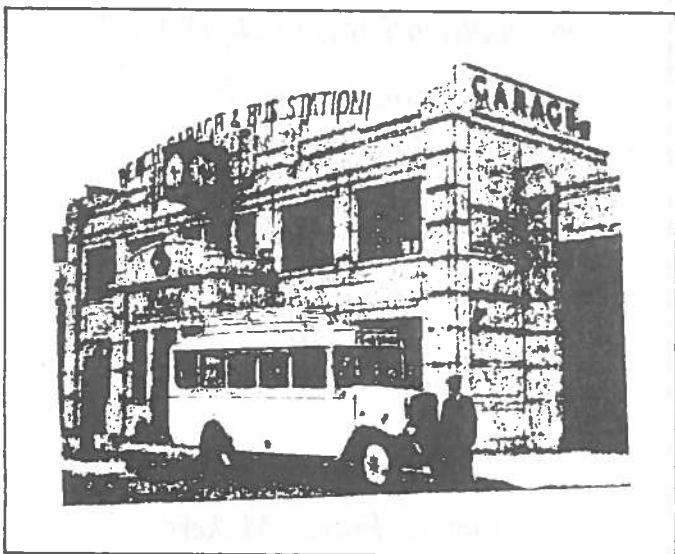
THE BUS STATION SITE

As regards the future of the Beach Road Bus Station site, we regret that Badgerline have not made more effort to pursue developers who could put the site to uses related to the town's role as a seaside resort, rather than going for the easy option of yet more flats.

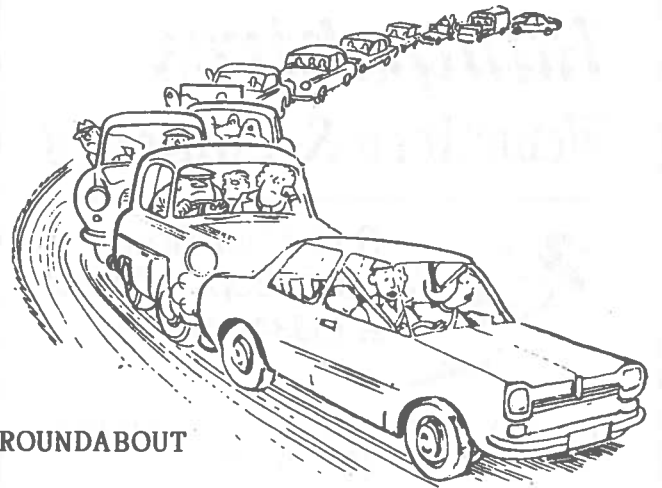
In a sane world we should be discussing the future of the Carlton Street car park and the Bus Station site together. This 'mega-site' is the last offering scope for major development, following the building of the Tesco store. Such an approach would make it easier to include resort uses on the Beach Road frontage with residential development behind. Another multi-storey car park, suitably concealed, would also be useful here.

The development actually proposed is quite out of scale. It overtops even the Grand Atlantic Hotel, itself an outstandingly large building by sea front standards. The Local Plan lays down that developments along the sea front will not normally be allowed to exceed four storeys.

Once again, Badgerline - in rushing into a narrowly commercial deal for disposal of the site - seem to have ignored the wider community interest and not allowed time for proper debate and planning. The Council is right to insist on negotiations aimed at securing a better scheme.



The Beach Bus Station as shown on early publicity material.



ROUNDABOUT

Reflecting on the benefits of having transport facilities sited close to each other in the Locking Road - Railway Station area, we are rather bemused at the ramifications of the new traffic system in this part of the town centre.

Highway engineers are a law unto themselves, but it does seem that new traffic systems become more complicated than ever. Whether things really get any easier for the motorist is a moot point.

The opening up of such a large open space creates interesting new perspectives, but it is a pity if so much of what is now revealed is to be wasted dead ground. It is also a shame that the one building remaining in absurdly splendid isolation is the W. H. Smith depot - not a building whose parting would be much mourned.

Why don't roads simply go somewhere these days? Why do they have to veer and twist and lurch along? Our experience of driving round here is that things are not improving, from a motoring point of view. And if the motorist is not helped, why is it that new roads always seem to be the result of paper calculations carried out without reference to the character of the area they are to occupy?

If this latest layout is intended as permanent arrangement, a number of changes will eventually need to be made to what is in effect the introduction to Weston for many visitors. The Smiths depot will need to be removed to an equally convenient but less conspicuous site. More trees and shrubs will need to be planted, and in a way that emphasises the positive features of the locality and minimises the more regrettable.

...wish you were here...

Weymouth

A sparklingly clean resort, smaller than Weston but much busier. A mile of almost unspoiled Georgian and Victorian houses along the prom, with a big park at each end. Clear beaches with bathing huts and plenty of boats for hire. The 'pier' here is a natural headland, with a big pavilion where just about everything happens. There's a fort dating from the Napoleonic Wars which the local Civic Society has restored, and a boating harbour seething with life. Just off to Cherbourg on the steamer...



Tenby

Very struck by the floral displays. Never seen such luxuriant masses of flowers, in tubs, in isindero boxes, hanging baskets etc. Some of the streets and courts are quite breathtaking for the colour and profusion. They avoid making the mistake other towns fall into - spreading the flowers too evenly and thinly. Their trick is to mass the displays into 'highlights.' You move from one to another as you walk around the town - this is really what exploring a town is about, a series of experiences.



AN OCCASIONAL SERIES OF VIEWS FROM SEASIDE RESORTS AROUND THE BRITISH ISLES.



WINTER GARDENS —

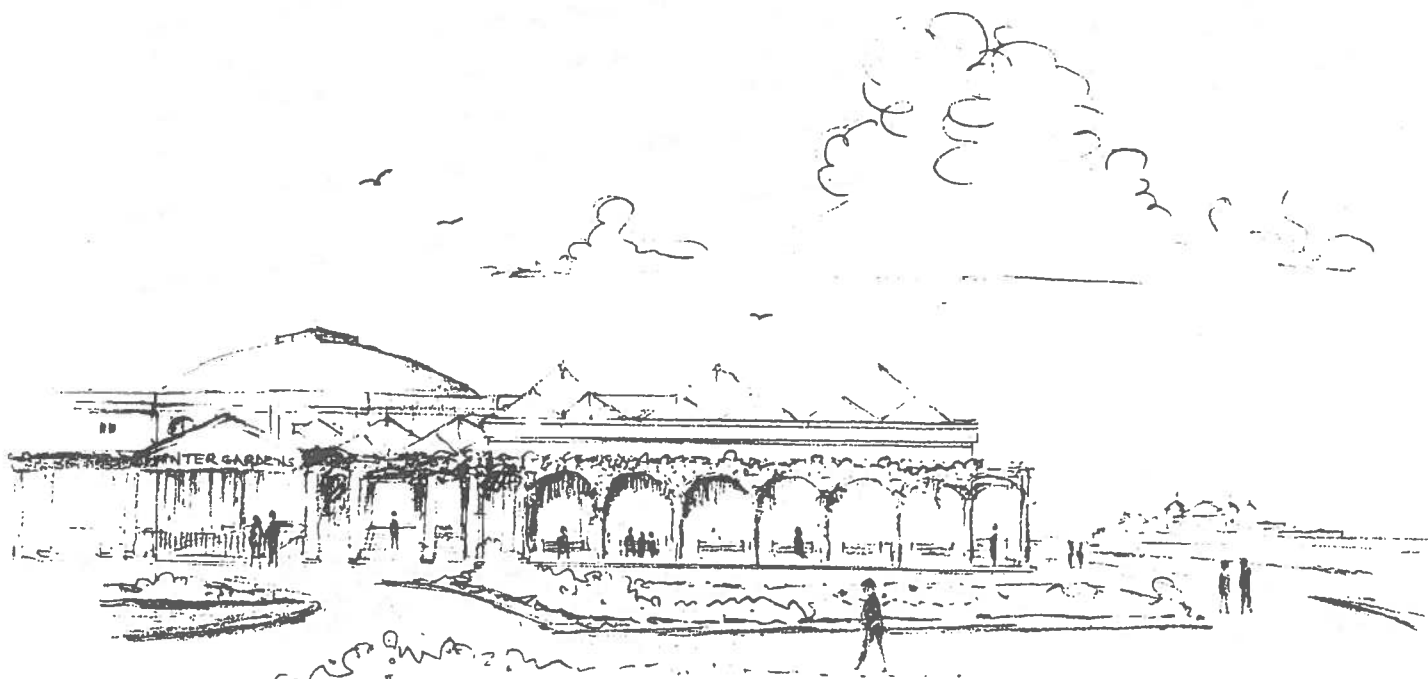
A CHALLENGE TO GOOD DESIGN

The Winter Gardens Pavilion is a difficult building to run, and does not cater adequately for conferences or other similar events. Following negotiations with Royal Life over their new Shopping Centre, it is proposed to design an additional multi-purpose hall.

We support this initiative, which will make the Pavilion a more useful amenity. However, to design a suitable extension will be no simple matter in view of the nature of the site and the character of the existing and proposed new buildings nearby. We offer the following suggestions:

- * The Starlight Room extensions of the 1960s should be demolished.
- * There should be a general refurbishment of the original Pavilion, designed to enhance its period character.
- * The new hall should be sited on the northern side of the pergola.
- * It should be a single storey building.
- * It should relate to the whole complex architecturally.
- * Unity could be achieved by using colonnades as a design feature, especially facing High Street.

- * The waterfall and pergola could be given a transparent roof, creating conditions for a true Winter Gardens with lots of new planting; this could also be used as a feature to bring the new hall into unity with the whole.
- * Spider Lane should become a more impressive pedestrian route, ideally taking in some land from the former Model Village site; the fence along the Berni Royal site should be replaced with a more suitable boundary opening up attractive views to the north.
- * A new Tourist Information Centre should be located in part of the Pavilion, convenient for all-year-round use by those attending events or approaching from the town centre.
- * The Pavilion should also cater for the general public; catering and other services should be of a high standard, and full use should be made of the views to be enjoyed from the Pavilion.
- * The heavy canopy over the sea front entrance should be removed; if canopies are required they should be symmetrically placed and properly designed.
- * Signing should be carefully designed throughout the complex.



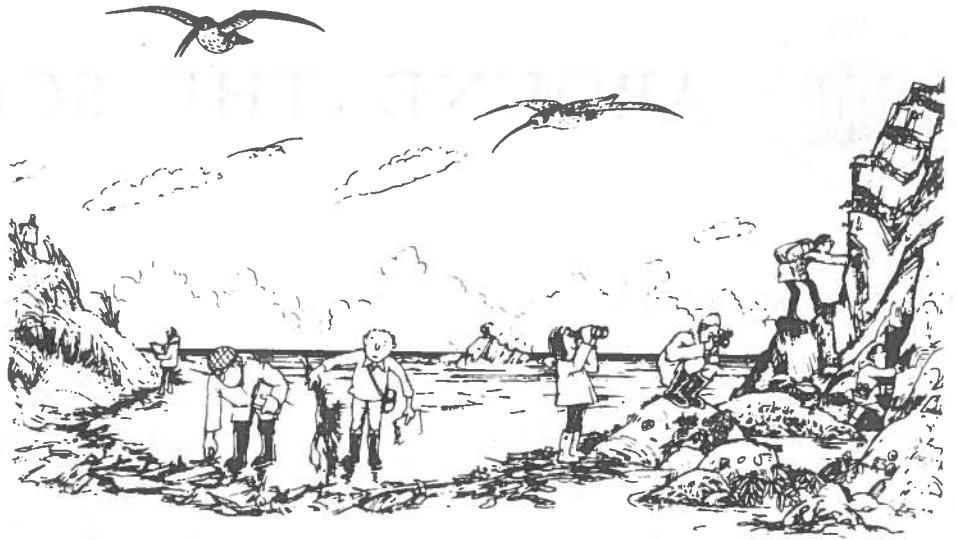
COASTWATCH

Following successful Coastwatch days held at Clevedon and Weston, another was held early in August at Oldbury on Severn. Once again, volunteers turned out to juggle with maps, clipboard and coloured pencils on the windswept mudflats of the estuary.

Fortunately, the weather was kind to us, and some 15 kilometres of coast were surveyed during the afternoon, and over 1,250 hectares of different habitats were mapped.

As reported in the last edition of Weston View, this work in Avon forms part of a nationwide project to map the extent of different habitats along the entire length of the British coast. Reports received from the Nature Conservancy Council indicate that, compared with many other counties, the response from the public in Avon has been particularly good. Now only a few miles of Avon's coastline, between Portishead and Aust Cliff, remain to be mapped.

Much of this success can be attributed



to the efforts of Alec Coles, who has co-ordinated the work so far. Unfortunately, Alec is leaving the area to take up a new post. However, the work will continue, and two more Coastwatch days are to be held. The next will be at Portishead on September 26th, followed by one at Severn Beach on October 10th.

So, if you fancy an afternoon on the coast, why not come along and help record our coastal heritage? All you need is common sense and a pair of wellies!

For further information contact the new Coastwatch Co-ordinator, Paul Lane, at the Heritage Centre, Tel. 415679.

DIARY

Apart from the Autumn Fair indoor events take place at the Heritage Centre, 3-6 Wadham Street.

For details of all our adult classes, please see the enclosed Programme of Autumn Events at the Heritage Centre.

Thursday, October 1st
2.30 p.m.

THURSDAY CLUB. Collecting for Pleasure and Profit. Talk by Joyce Phillips. All are welcome. Admission 40p for Civic Society members, 50p for non members.

Saturday, October 3rd
9.00 a.m.

CIVIC SOCIETY COACH TRIP TO BUILDING A BETTER BRITAIN. Book in advance. Details on Page 10.

Monday, October 19th
7.30 p.m.

Knightstone and the Role of Spas in Leisure Towns. An illustrated talk by Dr. Howard Smith. All are welcome.

Saturday, October 24th
2.00 p.m.

Civic Society **AUTUMN FAIR** at the Boulevard United Reformed Church Hall.

Thursday, November 5th
2.30 p.m.

THURSDAY CLUB. Houses and Gardens. An illustrated talk by Ken Boobyer, National Trust.

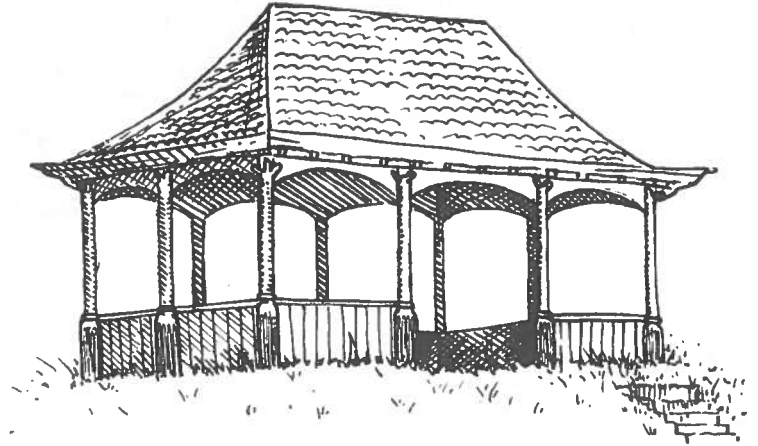


AROUND THE SOCIETY



THE HERITAGE PROJECT

The Society's Heritage Project has recently been renovating the shelter at the top of Ashcombe Park. This was one of the park shelters which Woodspring Council was considering demolishing because of vandalism and the cost of repairs. Our team has re-roofed the attractive shelter, and is treating the main timber structure with wood stain. The materials were agreed with Woodspring and chosen to reduce the impact of vandalism and minimise the cost of future maintenance. The Project is also to repair the lower shelter in Grove Park this autumn.



AUTUMN FAIR

Our annual Autumn Fair will be held on Saturday, October 24th at the Boulevard United Reformed Church Hall. These regular Fairs are an important element in our fund raising programme and we look to maximum support from Society members.

Please use the enclosed leaflet to let us know what you will be able to supply for sale. A special effort to stock the Cake Stall would be appreciated - cakes sell well but we never have enough. The Plant Stall is also popular, so please keep it in mind when reviewing your gardens, glasshouses, window boxes....

Help with sorting out the stalls on the Saturday morning, and manning them in the afternoon from 2.00 p.m. will also be very welcome. Let us know how you can help.

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The Avon Poetry Festival will be taking place at The Blakehay during the month of November, and a varied and attractive programme has been arranged. Full details can be found on the enclosed sheet, the other side of which tells you all about autumn events at the Heritage Centre. Please do all you can to bring these events to the notice of your friends. Further copies of the programme can be had from the Heritage Centre if you have a convenient window in which to display it.

NO REST BETWEEN COURSES

This autumn sees a return of our highly popular series **Discovering Our District**, and in addition to the usual daytime slot we are putting on a parallel set of evening meetings. Under the guidance of a Civic Society team, **Discovering Our District** offers an introduction to the history of our local landscape. Field visits will be arranged: we hope that those who attend the evening course can link in with these. Both courses begin on Thursday. September 24th and take place at the Heritage Centre, but please enrol at Weston College of Further Education. Do this without delay: a great deal of interest has already been shown and the size of the classes had better not exceed the number of chairs!

Consult the enclosed programme of autumn events for details of other adult classes to be held at the Heritage Centre. We also enclose a list of Thursday Club meetings. For your convenience, we list in the Diary on Page 7 those of our autumn meetings which do not form part of a course.

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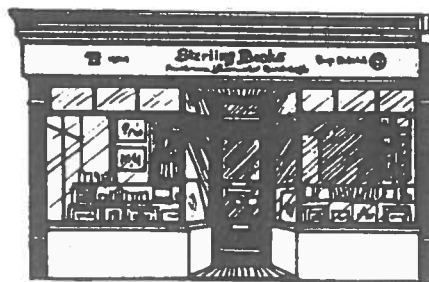
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**COME AND JOIN IN THE
CIVIC TRUST'S 30th
ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION
October 1 - 3**

This year sees the 30th anniversary of our parent body, the Civic Trust, who have been largely responsible for the changes in the public's thinking about our historic towns villages during the last three decades. Our Civic Society is one of more than 1000 local groups registered with the Civic Trust, and Weston has benefited in a number of ways from their expert advice and the grants which they have helped to make available. We are glad to be able to congratulate the Trust on the success of their first 30 years.

The anniversary is to be marked by a special exhibition - **Building a Better Britain** - at the Business Design Centre in Islington from 1st -

3rd October. This is housed in the attractively restored and extended 125-year old Royal Agricultural Hall, a stone's throw from the famous Angel.

Saturday, October 3rd is a special Societies' Day, on which all members of local amenity groups are invited to attend the exhibition free of charge. Weston Civic Society will be taking a coach party of members and other interested people to London on that day, at a cost of £6.00 per head. We will leave Weston Central Library at 9.00 a.m., and will return by 8.00 p.m., with some free time in London. Admission is by ticket only, which we will arrange for you in advance.

This should be a very enjoyable day out, and we extend a warm invitation to anyone who may be interested in joining us. Please book as early as possible to avoid disappointment, by returning the tear-off slip below, or by contacting the Heritage Centre (Weston 412144). See you on the coach!



To : The Heritage Centre, 3-6 Wadham Street, Weston-super-Mare.

NAME(S)

ADDRESS(ES)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(S)

I/We would like to book place(s) on the Weston Civic Society coach trip to 'Building a Better Britain' on October 3rd. I enclose payment of £ (£6 per head).

N.B. Seats must be booked in advance, and will only be regarded as booked once the fee has been paid.

IN THE NEWS

ON THE LEVEL

Great minds think alike! We were planning to comment on the appearance of some of the new stores off Winterstoke Road, but the *Weston Mercury's* Rambler beat us to it. On August 7th Rambler's article, headed 'Creating a Blot on the Landscape', drew attention to the 'garish collection of colours' used by architects to try to distinguish one steel shed from another.

One is bright blue, and another is a brilliant red - 'like a giant fire station', says Rambler, but whoever heard of a fire station with *stripes*?! The unfortunate people who have to live and work in the glare of these monsters, let alone those who overlook them from the hillside, do not feel

that they have been well served by the planning process. Rambler contrasts the newly opened Hutton Moor Sports Centre, where the cladding is green. This is easy on the eye when viewed from close up and blends with the background when seen from a distance. The views, from near and far, suffer from the retail stores' obtrusive colours. Could the planners discuss better colour schemes with the firms concerned.

DIARY EXTRA: Saturday, November 14th. Extra-Mural Day School at Bristol University: **Recent Work on the Industrial Archaeology of the Bristol Region.** Details from Dr. J. Bettey (Bristol 303618) or Rob Iles (Bristol 290777 x 6272).

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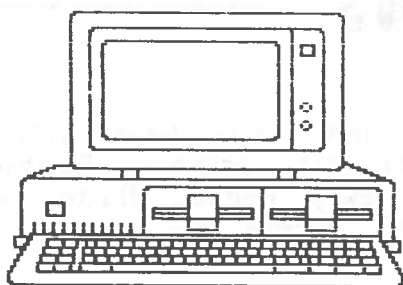
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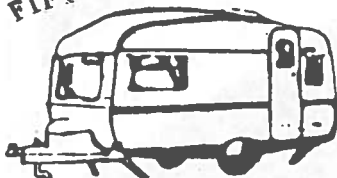
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CLARA'S COTTAGE, WOODSPRING MUSEUM

We made a mistake in our report of the opening of Clara's Cottage in our last edition. The Society did not donate the fireplaces, two of which were already in the cottage and a third in the Museum collection. The Society did provide the old sinks and a new front door, and in exchange the Museum gave our salvage scheme the internal doors which have been removed.

Sorry about that! However, we were right about the cottage being a fascinating extension to the Museum, and well worth a visit!

WESTON VIEW is published by
Weston-super-Mare Civic Society
at 3-6 Wadham Street, Weston-
super-Mare, Avon. Phone 412144.

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BLAKEHAY

Autumn Events

AVON POETRY FESTIVAL AT THE BLAKEHAY

John Clare and John Keats

Saturday, 7th November

Despite their humble background and frustrated love affairs, these two poets produced a body of poetry which has delighted readers from the early 19th century to the present day. Tutor : Sandra Hopkins
10 am - 5 pm (Lunch and refreshments available) Tickets : £5. 90

The Tempest

Monday, 9th November

The Compass Theatre Company from Sheffield in a touring production of one of Shakespeare's best-loved plays. A fantasy or an allegory of modern times? Magic and wisdom, songs, laughter and tears O brave new world that has such people in it!
7.30 pm Tickets : £4. 00

City Lights - The Beat Poets

Sunday, 15th November

A revue centred on San Francisco and the poetry and jazz of the Beat Generation. Actors and musicians who were much acclaimed at the Bath Fringe Festival, in a sparkling entertainment.
7 pm Tickets : £2. 50

Uroboros Ensemble - Words and Music

Friday, 20th November

Some of Britain's most distinguished instrumentalists - including pianist Allan Schiller - in an informal, cabaret-style entertainment. Three musicians and three narrators including actor John Abineri, star of television's "Robin of Sherwood". Works by Debussy, Liszt and Satie and others and original verse and music. Director : Gwyn Pritchard
7.30 pm Tickets : £4. 00

Poetry Workshop - A Writers' Evening

Monday, 23rd November

Readings of original work by poets from Avon Poetry Festival workshops hosted by Weston-super-Mare Writers' Group. Presenter : Jean Hathaway
7.30 pm Donations

Blake at the Blakehay

Saturday, 28th November

A birthday celebration in honour of the poet and artist William Blake born this day 230 years ago. Stephen Parr, who is a published poet from Bristol, will set the scene historically and socially; Oliver Bernard, well-known Norfolk poet, will discuss Blake, the man and his writing. Organiser : Paul Thompson
7.30 pm Tickets : £2. 00 including wine and birthday cake!

The Blakehay
all enquiries to
23 Wadham Street
Telephone 415679

Refreshments are available at all events.
Car parking is available at Grove Park.
Wadham Street is near Grove Park and the Playhouse Theatre.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE HERITAGE CENTRE

Autumn Events

September

- 22nd
Tues 1.45 - 3.15 pm. **Art History** begins. Ten week adult class led by Phil Stabbins. Enrol by contacting Weston College of Further Education (Telephone Weston 21301).
- 24th
Thurs 10.00 - 12.00 noon. **Discovering Our District** begins. ten meeting adult class led by Weston Civic Society team. Some field trips. Enrol by contacting Weston College of Further Education.
- 24th
Thurs 7.00 - 9.00 pm. **Discovering our District** begins. Eight meeting adult class led by Weston Civic Society team. Enrol by contacting Weston College of Further Education.
- 25th
Fri 10.30 - 12.00 noon. **Enjoying the Theatre** begins. Ten week adult class led by Mrs N Reed. Enrol by contacting Weston College of Further Education.

October

- 1st
Thurs 2.30 - 4.15 pm. **Thursday Club. Collecting for Pleasure and Profit.** Talk by Joyce Phillips. All are welcome. Admission 40p for Civic Society members, 50p for non-members.
- 1st
Thurs 7.30 - 9.00 pm. **George Eliot and Henry James** begins. Ten week adult class led by Philip Beisly and Bob Smart. Enrol at the Heritage Centre.
- 6th
Tues 7.30 - 9.00 pm **Tudor England** begins. Ten week adult class led by Roger Ashley. Enrol at the Heritage Centre.
- 19th
Mon 7.30 - 9.00 pm. **Knightstone and the Role of Spas in Leisure Towns.** Talk and slide show by Dr Howard Smith. Admission Free.
- 24th
Sat 2.00 - 4.00 pm. **Weston Civic Society Autumn Fair** at the Boulevard United Reformed Church Hall, Waterloo Street. Admission 10p.

November

- 5th
Thurs 2.30 - 4.15 pm. **Thursday Club. Houses and Gardens.** A talk with slides by Ken Boobyer, National Trust. Admission as above.

December

- 3rd
Thurs 2.30 - 4.15 pm. **Thursday Club. Through the Year.** Slides of flowers and country scenes with music. John Nixon. Admission as above.

Christmas Event to be arranged. See local press for details.

The Heritage Centre
Open 10-5 Mon-Sat
Admission Free
Telephone 412144

Refreshments are available at all events.
Car parking is available at Grove Park.
Wadham Street is near Grove Park and the Playhouse Theatre.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE CIVIC SOCIETY
(THURSDAY CLUB)

PROGRAMME 1987/88

- SEPTEMBER 3rd 1987 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Mr. Philip Beisly will address the Meeting.
- OCTOBER 1st 1987 MRS. JOYCE PHILLIPS. "Collecting for Pleasure and Profit".
- NOVEMBER 5th 1987 MR. KEN BOOBYER, NATIONAL TRUST. Slides of Houses and Gardens.
- DECEMBER 3rd 1987 MR. JOHN NIXON. "Through the Year". Slides of Flowers and Country Scenes, accompanied by music.
- JANUARY 14th 1988 MR. HARRY DOMMETT. "Some Aspects of Local History".
- FEBRUARY 4th 1988 MR. BRIAN GOSLING. "Woodspring Talking News for the Blind".
- MARCH 3rd 1988 MR. NIGEL KELLY, Librarian, Woodspring Central Library.
- APRIL 7th 1988 MISS JANE EVANS, Curator, Woodspring Museum. "Worlebury Hillfort".
- MAY 5th 1988 MR. WINSTON THOMAS. "Aspects of 19th and early 20th Century Burnham-on-Sea", with slides.
- JUNE 2nd 1988 MR. BRIAN AUSTIN. "Some Stories of People and Events in Weston pre-1860".

All Meetings will commence at 2.30 p.m. and conclude at about 4.15 p.m. and will be held at the Heritage Centre, Wadham Street (close to the main entrance to Grove Park and two minutes walk from High Street). There are several convenient car parks close by. An admission charge of 40p. for each Meeting will apply to Civic Society members, and 50p. to non-members.

