

# Coventry Ring Road—Love it or Hate it?

with archive film and speakers including Colin Knight

On Monday, October 14

at the Shopfront Theatre, City Arcade  
starting 7.30pm. Light refreshments

All welcome. £1 for visitors



coventrysociety

October 2013

## Friargate - who's calling the tune?



A change in any junction on a city's ring road is bound to have a knock-on effect, often well away from the confines of the junction itself. Junction One with Tower Street is a case in point where a main route from the centre exits onto the ring road between phases of the traffic signals. The effects are worse at peak times with the capacity of the traffic island to accommodate queuing traffic is often a road safety matter that has never been properly resolved.

Now another junction change is about to be implemented at Warwick Road. A design that concerns us despite assurances from the Council that consultants have proved the new road system will work. We are not convinced. So what's behind the need to bring about dramatic changes in the way traffic will be managed here? How good will it be for rail travellers, bus users, residents, pedestrians, cyclists, not least motorists.

While Coventry Society is very much in tune with the concept of the Friargate development and the extension of Greyfriars Green on a raft across the ring road, there are concerns from people who have lived in the area for generations. Satisfactory answers have yet to be given.

Some of the issues: opening Park Road as a through route with

its many businesses including medical and child activities to facilitate taxi movements, the people of Humphrey Burton's Road/Stoney Road who already see their road used as a rat run, difficulties for worshippers entering and exiting Queen's Road Baptist Church. And of course the many road users currently making a right turn onto the ring road who will have to take a more devious route either by the junction at Ikea or add to the back-ups of traffic that occur at Junction One.

We commented on the problem of transferring the bus hub from right outside the rail station to Warwick Road and these concerns are echoed by Centro. What do they say. "The front of the station currently provides bus operators with good passenger access and allows buses to terminate or truncate their journey at the station.

Centro consider that a turning facility will need to be incorporated into future design work as there is concern regarding the loss of the turning circle provision as part of the proposed highways works.

Centro believe that a turning facility for vehicles terminating at the site is required for not just scheduled services but rail replacement services and also for special event services to various locations in Coventry and Warwickshire." As far as we know there is no redesign to meet the needs of the bus operators and travellers.

The case for bridging the ring road with a new raft is very clear—a direct route for pedestrians through an extended Greyfriars Green. Surprisingly the end result will provide little, if any more green space, and unfortunately there will be two road crossing points for pedestrians instead of just the one. Some members ask the question: "Is this an improvement?"

So, is the new traffic plan in the best interests of the people or is it aimed to give maximum floor space to the developer regardless of the end result?

Friargate will be good for the regeneration of Coventry but the devil is in the detail.

► The story behind the location of our rail station—see overpage

## Batting for the century

Opening St Mark's Church on Stoney Stanton Road for Heritage Weekend drew large numbers of visitors to see the Feibusch mural. There was considerable interest in the work of Coventry Society and it's good to report that we recruited eight new members over the weekend. Your committee has been intent on reaching the magic 100 members but that figure was breached as the weekend progressed.

Thanks to those who manned the church and talked to the steady stream of visitors.

A first class result for the Society.

### Contacts

Postal address:

77 Craven Street, Coventry CV5 8DT

Chairman's tel: 024 7640 2030

Email: [info@coventrysociety.org.uk](mailto:info@coventrysociety.org.uk)

If Twitter is your thing, you can follow us at

<https://twitter.com/#!/CovSoc>

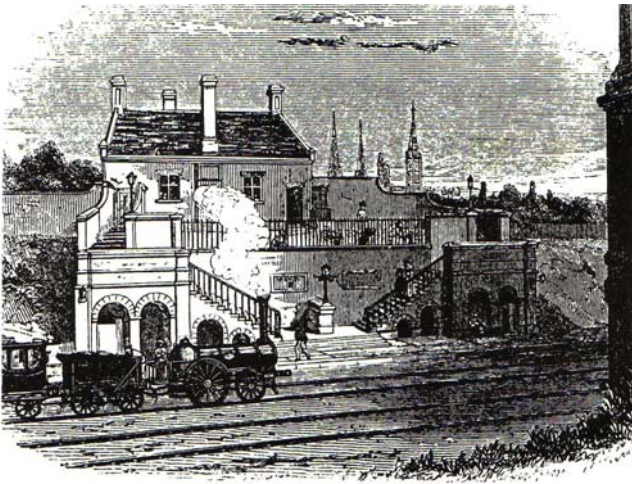
We also have our own page on Facebook.

You can also follow us there at

<http://www.facebook.com/CoventrySociety>

More news and views on our website: [www.coventrysociety.org.uk](http://www.coventrysociety.org.uk)

# Carnegie centenary



## First station

When a railway linking Birmingham with London became a serious possibility the Corporation were anxious that the city wasn't by-passed. There was a real chance this might have happened when one survey recommended a route via Banbury and Southam that would have passed several miles to the south of Coventry centre. However Robert Stephenson's weight was put behind a different route that passed a quarter of a mile to the south of Coventry. He had the line constructed in a cutting to maintain a gradual incline and at Warwick Road a bridge was built with a rudimentary but elegant station alongside (engraving above).

According to local records Stephenson might have been persuaded to route the line nearer to the city centre but for a mistaken policy on the part of the Corporation. The City Fathers considered it inappropriate to provide land of high rateable value in the centre when there was less valuable land a quarter of a mile away. Hence, like so many other towns and cities the rail station is located outside the central area.

On March 23, 1838 the London and Birmingham Railway was advanced sufficiently for an engine and five carriages full of officials to arrive at Coventry from Rugby.

THREE historic public libraries in Coventry – all built by the Scottish-American steel magnate Andrew Carnegie – will mark a major milestone this month when they celebrate their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The three buildings – at Stoke, Earlsdon and Foleshill – first opened in October 1913, before the outbreak of the First World War, and were Coventry's first suburban libraries in a rapidly expanding city. Each library was built in a similar red-brick style and they were paid for by Andrew Carnegie, who spent a large part of his fortune on philanthropic causes, including the building of 3,000 public libraries throughout the world, 380 of which were built in Britain.

Carnegie famously visited Coventry in June 1914 and several historic photographs show his grand arrival outside Stoke Library.

As part of the anniversary celebrations, Carnegie's visit to Coventry will be re-enacted on Saturday October 19<sup>th</sup> when a classic car, borrowed from Coventry Transport Museum, will carry a Carnegie lookalike to each of the three libraries and Cllr Kershaw, cabinet member for libraries, will present each venue with a certificate from the Carnegie Institute to commemorate the anniversary.

The car will make a slighter longer stop outside Foleshill Library, where modern traffic conditions are slightly less hectic than at Stoke or Earlsdon, to allow the press and public to take photographs.



A large variety of events will take place in the Carnegie libraries throughout the week commencing October 14<sup>th</sup> but the main focus of the anniversary celebrations will be on Saturday October 19 when all three libraries will stage talks, displays, storytelling, music, magic and more.

The aim of the celebrations, say managers, is to showcase the changing role of libraries over the century and to highlight the vital role still played by libraries today.

Full details of events will be available at individual libraries.

*John Marshall*

## Champions for trees

People with an interest in protecting and promoting the city's trees are invited to join the Coventry Tree Warden group. It will be part of the UK Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme, bringing together local people dedicated to their community's trees – in towns, cities or the countryside.

The Tree Council works with local authorities, voluntary organisations, parish councils and local partnerships to set up and develop Tree Warden networks. Today there are over 8,000 Tree Wardens in communities throughout the UK, devoting a total of over 1.8 million volunteer hours a year.

Tree Wardens can get involved with a range of activities, from practical projects such as planting and caring for trees to gathering information about local trees and developing imaginative projects to encourage others - including schoolchildren - to value their local trees and woods.

For more information contact Tim Wetherhill, Arboricultural Services Officer with the City Council on 7683 1283 or by e-mail at

[tim.wetherhill@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:tim.wetherhill@coventry.gov.uk)

**Castle Yard** entrance in the years between WW1 and WW2. The stocks were sited on the pavement outside St Mary's Hall until they appear to have rotted away. The cathedral glass can be seen in the top of the photo and the iron railings have yet to be taken for the war effort of course.

