



# BOURNE CIVIC SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

December 2019

Registered Charity No 512420



**Welcome to a new member  
Mr Jan Lewandowski.**

Wake House  
2020

Monday 20th January

The Stamford Mercury Archives

Jonathan Smith

Monday 17th February

Steve Gullari

Bourne Castle

Please Note Subscriptions are due  
early

January

AGM

Monday 16th March

New Committee members are always  
welcome

Our Web site is up and running and up  
to date

Mr David James is the web site  
Manager.

December Quiz

Monday 16th December

Jonathan Smith.

**The Committee would like to wish all members  
A Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.**

Frederick Charles Kenneth Wharton – (21<sup>st</sup> March 1916 – 12<sup>th</sup> January 1957)

The extraordinary life and career of Ken Wharton, a 1950's motor racing driver, and garage owner who was born in Smethwick, is to be published as a limited-edition illustrated biography in 2020 by author, Jason Wharton.

From humble beginnings as a mechanic, Ken Wharton completed in off-road trials, hill climbs, rallies, sports car racing, and also Grand Prix. He won the British Hill climb Championship four times between 1951 to 1954, the Brighton Speed Trials in 1954, 1955 and 1956, and the Tulip Rally in 1949, 1950 and 1952. On 4 July 1954 with Peter Whitehead he won the Reims 12 hour race in a jaguar D-Type. Wharton died when his Ferrari Monza crashed in a sports car race at the Ardmore Circuit in New Zealand in January 1957.

With the Co-operation of Ken Wharton's family, the book will outline his early years, humble origins, the start of his career, war experiences, his personal life, as well as his tragic early death. There will be a photographic section researched from archives around the world using photographs which by and large, have not been seen before. Wharton's extensive motor racing record will be researched and presented in tabular form. Lastly, there will be notes on the famous cars that Ken Wharton raced, illustrated with period photographs.

An Article by Richard Morrison of the Times Newspaper.

The country is doing so brilliantly in every other respect that I feel churlish about drawing attention to a continuing tale of gloom and doom namely the death of the High Street. I do so, though, only to cheer you up. It's a paradox. It might even be a miracle because it involves the government coughing up genuinely new money that hasn't been announced three times already. Yes, last week two government departments – culture and communities, to give them their shorthand names – announced that they were pooling their resources with a small top-up from the lottery, to create a £95 million fund reviving "historic high streets". It's the largest single amount any government has spent on the built heritage, and Historic England (which will supervise the scheme) has already named the 69 high streets that will benefit. They are well spread too, from Tottenham in London (notorious as the place where the 2011 riots started) to Wigan in the north and Plymouth in the west.

You may be sceptical. I was at first. Of the many reasons usually cited for the alarming decline of high streets – ranging from the huge expansion of online shopping and the cost of parking in town centres to punitive business rates for retailers—the dilapidation of the buildings may not seem so important. It is, though. Squalor spreads. Dereliction is catching. A single boarded - up shop blights a whole row. Big - name retailers feel tarnished by association and move out to the warm, well – policed environs of the out- of – town shopping malls. Affluent shoppers follow. And so the downward spiral continues.

Then there is the Heritage issue. Many high streets were built in the heyday of highly decorative, elegantly proportioned Victorian architecture. Yet over the decades those graceful shopfronts have been all but obliterated by garish neon signs and horribly incongruous doors and windows. That's not just an aesthetic problem. It's a strong repellent to quality shops and their customers. It signals a community that really doesn't care how its town looks.

Historic England's scheme won't solve all the problems. If, however, we can begin reviving 69 high streets for about the same cost as a couple of decent Premier league footballers, what's not to like?

## A Castle in Bourne

If I were to mention to you the word 'castle' what would spring to mind? Would it be a very impressive building spanning many square miles with lots of defensive towers and walls? Maybe a draw bridge and portcullis, or even a large moat wrapping itself around the perimeter as an extra defensive measure? Or would you go bigger and think of a Disney style castle?

Truthfully, when we generally think of the word castle, we do in fact think of something rather big, grand and impressive, such as Dover castle, but no matter what your imagination conjures in connection to the word 'castle', the reality is that castles appear in many shapes and sizes. Some are very impressive, like the Tower of London, but there are others, even though still impressive, can be a lot smaller like Bodiam castle.

These places are very lucky to have such beautiful castles still in existence for us to visually enjoy, unlike here in Bourne because sadly the castle no longer exists. This unfortunately causes lots of problems to the point that some people don't believe a castle existed here at all, which is a real shame because there is a lot of evidence if one looks hard enough.

So, how can we tell that there was a castle on the Well Head site in Bourne, and what type of castle would it have been? Would it have been a grand castle like that of Dover or would it be a less imposing building? By studying the Well Head site, we can reveal to you that there was a castle in Bourne but sadly it was not a grand castle like that of Dover. Unfortunately, it is the size of these rather impressive castles that are partly to blame why the castle in Bourne is seen in a negative light. People simply want to believe that all castles were grand buildings, however, Bourne castle would have been a small building in comparison to the likes of Dover castle. Be that as it may, if we were to look at the local church which had been built around the same time, one would imagine that the castle would have been a very impressive building regardless its size. Furthermore, when one looks at Sleaford castle, Castle Bytham, Folkingham castle and Clare castle in Suffolk one will quickly establish that Bourne castle was indeed of a normal or even, might I say, a standard size for the time. In fact, from real evidence, we can state that Bourne castle was impressive enough to draw royalty with a visit from the King in 1330.

So, how can we tell that the castle was no Disney drawing? It is thanks to a geophysical survey which was undertaken in 2005. From the survey, we can see the outline of the castle and from the outline we can see that it was not large at all. Unfortunately, we do not have a full picture of the Well Head site to date because the geophys was limited to a certain area within the centre section of the Well Head. However, from this geophys, and other evidence, we have been able to recreate the outline of the castle in the form of a model. The model, with all evidence and information in connection with the castle, will be on display very soon at the Bourne Heritage museum. From all of this information you can learn all there is to know about our castle, what it may have looked like, and who lived there.

The model shows the Well Head site over the course of its history, from the beginning of the castle's life to modern day Bourne.

This year we have been speaking to Bourne United Charities about having another geophys to reveal other parts of the site which I am pleased to announce they have granted. The next step will be to speak to geophys Charles Hibbitt who performed the last survey and the English Heritage for their permission to perform the geophys, since the site is classed as a scheduled monument.

The geophys will take place on the northern side of the diagonal pavement in the centre section of the Well Head. It will also include the mound which we believe will show some interesting results, and hopefully for the first time in Bourne's history we will be able to see the outline of the castle's keep. This is an exciting time and I am looking forward to sharing my findings with you

Even though the castle no longer exists, it's amazing how exciting it feels to find new information about our heritage, especially when the subject has been shrouded with uncertainty for such a long time. I feel we are living in a time of revelation and I say this because the castle in Bourne was once seen in our recent history as a myth, but through hard work and perseverance the 'myth' status is fast becoming a statement of the past.

Steve Giullari (history enthusiast)

### Our Mission Statement

It is the aim of the Society to make sure that new developments are of the highest possible quality and developers are made aware of the issues surrounding their schemes. Good design is only possible through a full understanding of any scheme's environment and urban context. We seek to safeguard our existing heritage and the many listed buildings from demolition or neglect.