

Bull Head Street

Wigston Magna

Story : Howard Bennett

Pictures : Neville Chadwick



Little changed in half century



Apart from the disappearance of the Travellers Rest and a string of cottages, Bull Head Street has changed little over the past half century.

Mal Griffith

The tiny cottages, although few in number, still line the street where farmers drove their cattle along their way to Leicester Market.

A familiar landmark was the old fountain, just opposite the Queens Head and now replaced by a traffic island.

But while two petrol filling stations add that light touch of modernisation to this piece of 'Old Wigston', the memories of yesteryear are still vivid in the mind of Mr Alex Wignall.

Alex was born in Bull Head Street 71 years ago and still lives there, though in another house. He served with the Royal Scots during the First World War in France and Belgium and on returning home had a variety of jobs – among them, coalman, foundryman and working for a brewery.

But Alex has a message for the powers that be:

“Stop mucking the place about”

“The Council keep pulling down these old cottages and shops, saying that they need the land immediately for re-development and then leave the site.”

“In Wigston there are far too many eyesores caused in this way”.

Alex is one of a group of old Wigston residents who spend their lunchtimes at their 'local'. The Horse and Trumpet chatting about the old times.

Another who remembers “better times” is 89 year old Mrs Elizabeth Mawoy who lived in her tiny cottage, 49 Bull Head Street for the past 56 years. She remembers only too clearly paying 3s 3d a week rent, compared with 18s 6d today.

THE GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

But while Bull Head Street has its characters it also has its personalities. Not least of these is Mal Griffiths, the former Leicester City footballer and Welsh International who now keeps the Queens Head.



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Down Memory Lane circa 1920



THE GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In the fourth and final of our Memory Lane views loaned by Mr. David Buckby, of Dorset Avenue, South Wigston, we feature Bull Head Street.

A terraced cottage is in the foreground and on the left is the Queen's Head public house. The building opposite, on the bank, is, we think, an off-licence, for we can just make out a sign saying "Ales", painted on the wall.

Next door is an imposing building resembling a church. Perhaps a reader could tell us about that building which has since fallen victim to the bulldozer, as have most of the other cottages seen in the photograph.

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Down Memory Lane



Our Memory Lane spot this week illustrate Wigston's changing face. This photograph of Bull Head Street, before the fire station and police station were built, was taken in 1949. It belongs to Mr. Bill Ward, a former Wigston man who now lives in Kingsmead Road Leicester.

Mr. Ward tells us that the properties were demolished in 1975 when Bull Head Street became a dual carriageway.

"The hand gate in the centre of the picture gave access to Ross's Walk, a footpath which happily is still in use," says Mr. Ward.

"The board affixed to one of the houses advertises A. T. Lowe & Co., Builders and Contractors, the house being occupied at the time by the proprietor, Mr. Arthur Lowe." Mr. Ward remembers, with obvious fondness that the bicycle was bought in 1929.

THE GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Wigston plans for £150,000 hotel with 50 bedrooms

Wigston Planning Committee has granted outline planning permission for a £150,000 type residential hotel on a site at the junction of Bell Street and Bull Head Street.

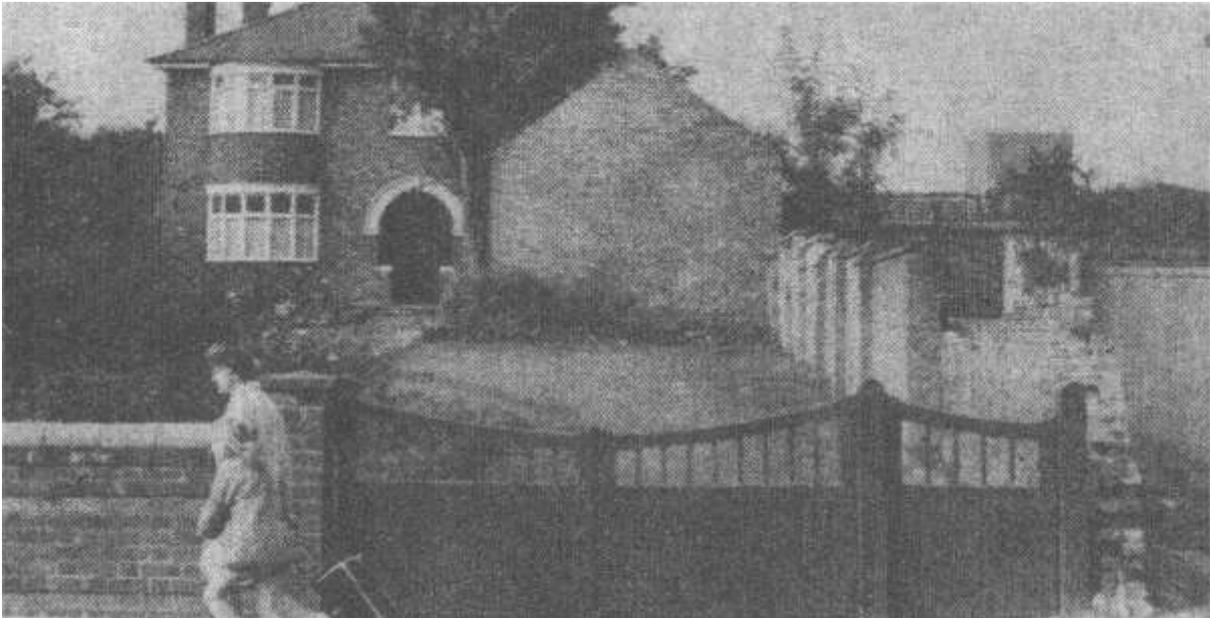
The scheme, as submitted envisages shops with the hotel project and an adequate car park to meet all requirements.

Wigston Urban Council, on Tuesday, approved outline planning permission for the scheme.

There were three applicants in connection with the scheme.

They are Mr J P Ray, proprietor of a fish and chip shop at The Bank. Mr W A Stenton part owner of shop premises in Bell Street and Mrs D S King whose private house in Bull Head Street is involved in the land area needed for this venture.

Mr Stenton who has lived in his flat above his shop premises for 36 years, told the Advertiser about the scheme.



A view of the front garden and home of Mrs D S King, Bull Head Street, Wigston Magna. Half of the garden will be needed for Wigston by-pass extension purposes, and the rest (including the house) is involved in the proposed site for the residential hotel.

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