

THERE ARE PLACES I REMEMBER

With issue 72 we kick off a new series exploring Beatles locations around the globe and we hope our readers will actively participate by contributing articles about their hometowns or locations they have visited. In part 1 of the series, we feature a place not too far from London but next issue we will explore The Beatles in Washington DC.

A Mad Day Out at Knole Park, Sevenoaks, Kent

On 31 August 2019 a group of Beatle fans known as “The Mad Day Out Gang” visited Knole Park in Sevenoaks, Kent. The Beatles had filmed their ‘Strawberry Fields Forever’ and ‘Penny Lane’ videos there in early 1967. The Beatles first went to the park on Monday 30 January 1967 to film the night scenes for the ‘Strawberry Fields Forever’ video. The videos were produced by Tony Bramwell. Tony brought in Peter Goldman to direct the films. Tony and Peter, along with the film crew, stayed at Bright’s Hotel in the town, which sadly no longer exists. During a stroll in the town the next day Tony and John visited a shop called “Ye Olde Antiques Shop” next to the hotel. It was here that John found the poster that would be the influence the song ‘Being for The Benefit of Mr. Kite’. The poster was an advertisement for an appearance in Rochdale of Pablo Fanque’s Circus Royal in 1843. The Beatles also had tea at The Zed Music Café. It was here they borrowed some champagne glasses for the film shoot. The glasses were never returned as they were smashed in the video.



The Zed Music Café today

John Lennon with the Mr. Kite poster, Ascot, 1971

During the afternoon of 31 January, The Beatles returned to Knole to complete the filming of the ‘Strawberry Fields Forever’ video. Most of the video was shot in front of a dead oak tree close to the fairway of hole 7 of the golf course in the park. There is one such dead oak tree still at the site, but unfortunately the park archives cannot confirm that this was the actual tree used in the shoot. Many of the trees in the park were destroyed during the great storm of 1987. The one that survives does have a private roadway behind, so could be the one. However, we cannot be sure.

The Beatles at the Oak Tree, January 1967 and the same possible tree today.





Filming Penny Lane at the archway 7 February 1967

The Beatles then returned to London to work on tracks for *Sgt. Pepper* and commence filming on the 'Penny Lane' video at Angel Lane, Stratford, but then return to Knole Park on Tuesday 7 February to shoot the remainder of the video. The video clips at Knole were filmed close to the site of the 'Strawberry Fields Forever' video near the Owl House in the park. The Beatles were filmed riding horses through an archway from the Owl House, which is relatively unchanged today. They were also filmed at a dinner table close to a pond which backs onto hole 3 of the golf course. The site of the dinner table was close to where the cameramen are seen in the first picture below. The pond today is overgrown.



Penny Lane video (note the position of the pond)



The overgrown pond today.



The archway today



The Mad Day Outers at the archway 2019

The BBFC would like to thank the "Mad Day Out Gang" for their help with this article. A special thank you should go to Junko Poole for organising the event and her husband Eddie, who was the chauffeur for the day. (We are now calling him Alf!). Knole Park is owned by the National Trust and you can find more information from their website below. - <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/knole>

We are interested in any sites connected with one or any of The Beatles where our members have visited, and we invite you to share your memories and recollections with us. Please contact editor@britishbeatlesfanclub.co.uk with your memories or articles.