

Chesterfield and District Civic Society

NEWSLETTER 2008

2007-8 Talks

This last year, as with other years our talks organisers provided a varied and interesting mix of speakers. In September Helen Loizou gave an enthusiastic presentation on what proved to be the ill-fated Solar Pyramid. "Changes in the Park" by Janet Murphy gave a most interesting insight into this part of the town's history in October and to complete the calendar year a home-grown event took place in November (see below). In February Graham Bell kindly stepped in a short notice and led us through the "Past, Present and Future of Chesterfield Rugby Union Club. "Tales of a gasman" by Stuart Brittain in March was a diversion showing a side of life not experienced by most of us. In April David Howes tested our memories of Chesterfield with many 'before' and 'after' photographs. The annual presentation "Update on Planning in Chesterfield" by Mike Hayden showed us what the town may look like in the future. It was appropriate to follow this with "Some Local Houses" by Keith Lysons returning us to 16th/17th century architecture. Local and family history were brought together in the last talk of the season "Granny's Old Tin Box" by Marjorie Dunn.

A night on the Town

As November is the last meeting before Christmas two of the Committee members decided it would be a pleasant change to organise a light hearted quiz. Preparation began early in the year with a trip into Chesterfield on a Sunday morning when the sun was shining and everything looked wonderful. Photographs were obtained of some of our well known and not so well known buildings and landmarks in the hope that everyone would find something of interest in the quiz. A good evening was enjoyed by all, with an informal setting, lots of mince pies and as much tea or coffee as required. Maybe some time in the future the ladies will venture out again with the camera to find more places to test your knowledge, we will have to wait and see.

Annual Trip - A lazy afternoon along the canal on the John Varley

On a very wet Saturday afternoon 19 members and family stepped on to the John Varley narrowboat to enjoy a couple of hours relaxing ride from Lockoford Lock to Mill Green and return. It would be true to say that the wet weather did not spoil the afternoon. An interesting commentary was given by Mr Paul Unwin as the boat gently moved along the water. The canal was as pretty as a picture with colourful flowers and wildlife to view as we negotiated the locks and had our attention brought to points of interest. Everyone enjoyed the afternoon with one member of the group even having a go on the tiller!

Blue Plaque for Eyre Chapel

The Society commissioned a blue plaque for the Eyre Chapel this year. It has been passed to the Eyre Chapel Trust, who will arrange for it to be placed on the building offering information to visitors to the Chapel.

New Civic Society Leaflet

Some of you will recall that it is quite a while since the original leaflet was published so it was with a little trepidation but much enthusiasm that the Committee began to explore the possibility of a new publication. After much deliberation a draft leaflet was prepared and approval given for the print to go ahead. The new leaflets were received in June 2007 and immediately circulated to as many outlets as possible, including the information centre, college, library and work places. Although not as glossy as the first version it states the aims and objectives of the Society, lists the Blue Plaques around the town and gives details of where and when we meet. It is hoped that more people will pick up a leaflet, learn of our existence and come along to enjoy an evening listening to one of our speakers. If any of you know of any other suitable places to display our leaflet please let us know.

Chesterfield Town Trail

At last Chesterfield Borough Council has produced a new Town Trail. It too is very glossy and very different to the original one produced by the Society with the beautiful line drawings. However the new Trail is to be welcomed and can be purchased at the Tourist Office for £1.50.