

Chesterfield and District Civic Society

NEWSLETTER 2009

2008-9 Talks

The organisers of our talks continue to provide a varied and interesting programme to entertain and inform us. In September Clive Hart spoke of the Medieval Towns and Castles of Derbyshire including Bolsover and Peveril. In October Alva De Chiro gave an interesting insight into ordinary family life in Victorian and Edwardian times generally and particularly concerning the life of her Great Aunt who became a nun. The November meeting (our last before Christmas) was nearly a disaster as the booked speaker was unable to proceed with her talk. Our valiant organisers managed to find a replacement speaker only to be told a few days later that this speaker could not do it after all! At short notice David Kesteven agreed to come. David is Head Gardener at Renishaw Hall. His light-hearted informative talk was a joy and inspired us to suggest an evening guided tour of the gardens as the Society's Summer Outing. This has proved to be particularly apposite having received the sad news of the death of Sir Reresby Sitwell, a Life Member of the Society, at the end of March.

February brought the snow and as the meeting was scheduled for 10th we were not sure it would take place. However a call to Mr Eggleston in Barnsley revealed that there was no snow there! In the event 12 members and 2 visitors made their way through the inclement weather and enjoyed a fascinating talk on Police DNA and Police Forensic. This new area of work is now being used to solve a number of outstanding serious crimes, some from many years ago. In March Clive Holliday's London from the Monopoly Board led us through the streets, past the hotels and around the pubs that feature in this popular board game. Always a welcome speaker, Sonia Preece returned in April to inform and amuse us describing the history and workings of Stainsby Mill. May saw the annual visit of Mike Hayden, Planning Officer for Chesterfield Borough Council and Helen Carrington, THI Officer (see below). This interesting evening helped us to understand the Council's plans for the future of the town and the appearance/upkeep of buildings.

Civic Society links

Through the year members of the Committee represent the Society on local bodies and at meetings. This year these have included the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust, Town Centre Masterplan and Market Hall Feasibility Study. We are in contact with Dronfield Civic Society and, with NEDIAS, we have objected to the demolition of the Victorian schools in the centre of Clay Cross. As usual throughout the year we have reviewed Planning Applications sent to us by CBB and NEDDC and made representation where we have thought it necessary.

Chesterfield Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)

The Society has two places on the Steering Group of this initiative the aim of which is to provide a grant scheme for properties in a target area of Chesterfield Town Centre that looks to repair and regenerate both the historic fabric and economy of the town centre. The THI is funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund, Alliance SSP and Chesterfield Borough Council until 2012. Up to £2.14million will be invested in the town centre. Grants are available to: repair the fabric of the buildings; restore authentic architectural details and to bring vacant floor space back into use. The steering committee makes the grant decisions. It is made up of Chesterfield Borough Council, CBC Heritage Champion, Chesterfield Civic Society, Hasland and St Leonards Community Forum, local schools, local people, Federation of Small Businesses, Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Chesterfield Town Centre Forum. The first projects have been completed, these are 11-15 Packers Row and Chocolate by Design, 21 Packers Row. A project underway is Asoka, 19 Holywell Street. There are other projects at the planning stage.

NB The Society is still without a Chairman. If any member would like more information on this role please contact a member of the Committee.

READING THIS AND NOT A MEMBER?

Contact either 01246 211200 or 01246 854180