



NEWSLETTER March/April 2018



Workhouses

Suzanne Bingham

Tuesday 20th March 7:30pm. United Reformed Church. Rose Hill

Summer Meetings

At the February meeting we asked members and visitors if they would like meetings to continue through the summer. By an overwhelming majority the vote was in favour of meeting in the summer months. Therefore the committee have decided that meetings will be held in June, July and August this year. Once the speakers are arranged a new calendar will be issued.

We also asked about the December and January meetings and asked which people would prefer to drop. Here the vote was less clear cut and we will be asking again which people would prefer.

Railways of Chesterfield

A talk by Glynn Waite

April 17th 2018

The Brontes in Derbyshire

A talk by Marjorie Dunn

May 15th 2018

New exhibitions at Chesterfield Museum

Other Stories

An exhibition in partnership with Derbyshire LGBT+ exploring the personal stories and social history of the LGBT+ community in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire.

2nd February – 7th April 2018

Joseph Syddall

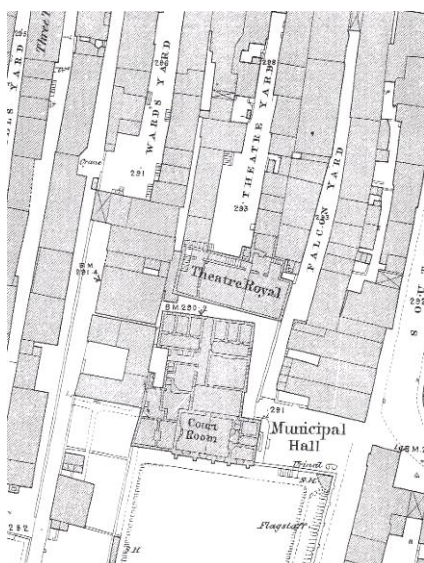
An exhibition of selected artworks from Chesterfield Museum's Joseph Syddall collection.

14th April 2018 – 3th June 2018



Did you know that?

A little known fact about Chesterfield Bowling Green is that in 1873 the Corporation offered the site of the bowling green and the Municipal Hall to the committee that were looking for a site for the proposed Stephenson Memorial Hall, which would have meant the end of the bowling green. Fortunately for the Bowls Club, the committee decided against the offer. One of the reasons given was that it was too far away from the station. Also given the rapidly deteriorating condition of the adjacent Dog Kennels area and the limits of the site it is not surprising that the committee declined the offer.



In 1910 there was again a threat to the green when the Mayor, Councillor C.P. Markham, was anxious to clear the area known as the Dog Kennels. He presented to the Council the land on which Markham Road was constructed between Park Road and South Place. He also referred to another road which would involve either the demolition of the Municipal Hall or the destruction of the bowling green. This would eventually become New Beetwell Street. For his part he would be happy for the road to go through the Municipal Hall.

The Municipal Hall was originally constructed in 1850. However in the 1870s it was much extended to provide additional accommodation for the police including the cells, offices and police superintendent's house. The extension was demolished in the 1920s to make way for the new police station leaving the original Municipal Hall which was demolished about 1974.

The Castle Inn

In September 1782, John Saxton of the Castle Inn and Post Office advertised in the Derby Mercury that he had greatly enlarged the Castle Inn by fitting up a 'number of new beds' and he had laid in a stock of wines of the best vintage. He also offered 'post chaise and able horses'. Unfortunately he was not able to enjoy the improved business for very long as a year later his widow Sarah was advertising that she intended to continue the business. However she did not remain in charge for very long as in November of the same year she married Gilbert Bluett. In 1785 he asked if 'Civility, Choice Liquors, a well stor'd Larder, together with the necessary Attendance of the Master & Mistress' was what their customers wanted then he offered his services to the 'Nobility, Gentry, Clergy and Gentlemen in the travelling line' He added that 'as there had long been wanting in this town, a House where the Public could be accommodated with Wines, Foreign Spirits, Compounds and Sweets in small Quantities' and he had laid in a large Assortment.

Competitors of the Castle were the Angel and the Falcon. The first mention of the Angel dates back to 1749 when Mr Clinton, presumably a travelling salesman, was selling Imperial, Royal and Golden Snuff. The landlord of the Angel was William Cowley. In 1779, following the acquittal of Admiral Keppel after being court martialled, a large bonfire was made in the Market Place opposite the Old Angel, where the gentlemen of the town met and drank Admiral Keppel's health, with many constitutional toasts. Four pieces of cannon were brought from the foundry of Messrs Smith & Co. to the Market Place, which were fired several times, amidst the acclamations of a great number of spectators.

Unfortunately there is confusion over the name of the inn as it is referred to as the Angel and the Old Angel, which are likely to be the same building as Cowley was landlord in each case. Cowley died in 1782 and the inn was taken by Joseph Hinde who disposed of his stock to Thomas Ostliffe in 1787.

In January 1788 the Castle Inn was offered for sale. It was described as being situated in the West Square in Chesterfield with eight dwelling houses or tenements at the upper end of the yard leading to Saltergate, in the possession of under tenants. Clearly this Castle Inn is not the better known one on Low Pavement. Although when Saxton was there it was described as the Post Office, Job Bradley was now the Post Master. The building was described as having several parlours, a coffee room, a dining room, used also as an assembly room, with a great number of lodging rooms. The yard contained a barn, stables, hay-chambers, corn chambers, coach-houses and a garden.



The narrow yard between the former Post Office and the NatWest building marks the site of the original Castle Inn.

The three bays on the right-hand side of the former Post Office building stand where the left-hand side of the Castle building.

The roadway became the High Street following the erection of the Market Hall in 1857.

The following March Bluett moved his establishment to Low Pavement renaming the building the Castle Inn and Post House. He then laid out a large sum of money in building and furnishing a very elegant Assembly Room and other accommodation for the reception of his friends and the public. Unfortunately the work caused him to run into debt and he was declared bankrupt. The Inn was let to Matthew Green of Sheffield. Fortunately the sale of the Castle Inn in 1791 raised enough money for Bluett to pay his debts and shortly afterwards he was running a hotel in Matlock with a warm bath attached. Matthew Green didn't stay very long either, closing the business and offering it for sale in 1794.



The façade to the Castle Inn on Low Pavement

There is no indication when the property which was the Castle Inn was separated from the rest of the property i.e. Castle Yard. It was probably about this time as in 1796 the estate attached to the Castle Inn (but not the inn itself) was sold including the Assembly Room and a cockpit. The Castle Inn continued until it was closed 1910 for compensation of £1250.

In May 1789 Thomas Ostliffe advertised that he was moving to the Angel and (Old) Castle Inn lately occupied by Bluett as the house that he lately dwelt in was being shut up. The former Castle was renamed the Angel.

Book Review

Richard Bradley. Secret Chesterfield

This latest addition to the 'Secret' series of guides to English towns is a wide ranging selection of snippets from the history and traditions of Chesterfield. The very breadth of the material makes it much more a book to dip into rather than read straight through, and it does not pretend to give any new insights into the town's history. I suspect that very little will be new to members of CADLHS, but the author writes well and entertainingly, and easily engages the reader. I particularly enjoyed the chapter on 'Customs, Folklore and Legends' where his obvious enthusiasm for this aspect of Derbyshire was infectious.

Though the history of the town is hinted at rather than fully described, the progress from medieval market town to manufacturing town is clearly outlined, and the importance of the surrounding coalfield in this progression. The individual descriptions of the industrial players is selective rather than comprehensive, but that is to be expected in a book of 95 pages. Despite this limited space the author still manages to include the Racecourse, the saving of the Peacock, Fredericks ice-cream, the Donkey Racecourse and the infamous well-dressing of Diana, Princess of Wales.

The Donkey Racecourse is a good example, to me, of a weakness of book. There is some reliance on Facebook attribution, which by its very nature gives no idea of the credibility of the source. This is a pity in an otherwise widely researched and documented book with an excellent bibliography. In general though, an enjoyable and sound introduction to Chesterfield, which will appeal to both residents and visitors to the town.

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