



Chaddesden Historical Group Newsletter



Autumn 2008

Issue 11

Editorial

Welcome to the Autumn 2008 issue. We would like this newsletter to reflect the interests of the members of the group. Please forward any suggestions you might have to a member of the committee.

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Willersley Castle

On Wednesday 11th June 2008, 20 members of the Group visited Willersley Castle. Lunch was taken in one of the dining halls before a strenuous walk through the grounds to admire the views with our guide for the day.



In 1782 Richard Arkwright bought the Manor of Willersley from Thomas Hallet Hodges for £8,864. At the time there was no big house, just a few farms and "Derwent House", a building that stands off the drive to the castle.

On taking possession of the Estate, he set about planting many trees, which have contributed to the great beauty of the area to-day. In 1786, with help from architect, William Thomas, Arkwright began building Willersley Castle on the slopes of Wild Cat Tor, which is four hundred feet above sea level. A huge limestone rock was cleared away at a cost of £3,000 before construction of the house could begin.

The parkland stretched down to the River Derwent and beyond that the massive limestone cliff of the Scarthin Rock, which obscured his mill from view.

Arkwright never actually moved into Willersley Castle because, in August 1791 a fire caused by a stove overheating damaged the building. Reconstruction was not completed when Arkwright died in 1792, but specific instructions were left in his will for Richard Junior to complete the Mansion House his father had erected.

His son carried out his father's wishes and moved into the Mansion with his family in 1796 and the family continued to live there until 1922.

In 1927 a group of Methodist businessmen bought Willersley Castle as a Methodist Guild Holiday Centre, and opened its doors on the 5th May 1928.

During World War II the castle was used as a maternity hospital by the Salvation Army, which had relocated from the east-end of London. Over 4000 babies were born at Willersley between 1940 and 1946.

Willersley Castle is now a popular Hotel and still possess its tennis courts, bowling green, swimming pool and games field, all could be seen.

Sir Richard Arkwright's final resting-place was in the family chapel he had started to build near Cromford Bridge. As the Chapel was not finished upon his death, Arkwright was buried at Matlock Church, where he lay until the new Chapel, now St Mary's Church Cromford, was completed.

Tony Bowler



Chaddesden Park Carnival—1946?



The Big 1 Carnival on Chaddesden Park is nothing new as can be seen from this photograph from the 1940s. Morley Road Youth Club took part in a Fancy Dress Football match as part of this post war carnival.

Can you recognise the member of our group that took part? (Clue He's still a very keen football supporter, Derby County of course.)

Chaddesden Residents

At times searching the web can provide interesting information about Chaddesden and people who lived here. The link below takes you to an article by Don Shaw, the well known Derby playwright.

What I didn't know is that as a child he lived on Arridge Road in Chaddesden. In this article he talks about his visits as a child to Dr Edgar Rudge a popular GP in Derby from 1922-1962. If you have more information about these Chaddesden residents or can remember the surgery please get in touch. We are always interested in information about local residents and our past.

"Dr Rudge lived in a house in Nottingham Road, Chaddesden, at the junction with Reginald Road. A large wooden hut was attached, kept warm by a coke stove. Patients turned up – there was no appointment system – and he signalled his next customer by ringing a bell, once for Dr Rudge and twice for his partner, Dr Plant."

http://bygonederbyshire.co.uk/articles/Monocled_doctor_dispensed_in_a_simpler_age

Police Presence in Chaddesden

I can remember the police houses in Chaddesden on Valley Road, opposite the infant school; this wasn't a new initiative. The 1881 census records a Constabulary based at Chaddesden with PC Samuel Stanley and his family living there. Does anyone know where it was? As Chaddesden changes it is important to record this local knowledge.

Speakers List 2009

This is now available on West Park's Community Website, together with previous newsletters.

