



Chaddesden Historical Group Newsletter



December 2009

Issue 16

Editorial

Welcome to the Christmas 2009 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. Articles on Chaddesden are always appreciated.

Tony Bowler
Chairman

John Crosby
D Chairman & Treasurer

Deryck Morley
Asst Treasurer

Linda Crosby
Secretary.

Sid Marson
Speakers Booking Sec

Ken Garner
Photographic Archivist

Marie Garner
Asst Photo Archivist

Pam Bowler
Holder of Raffle Prizes & Newsletters

Sandra Rainsford
Raffle

Andrew Bailey
Archivist

Dear Members,

Thank you for your support and interest over the year. A special thank you to all who came to the Open Session in the Summer and to those who contributed to making the event such a success. It shows that there is an interest in the history of this area.

Can you please help us to produce a booklet featuring the memories of people who have lived and still live in Chaddesden? We hope to interview as many people as possible and would love to have members of our group in the 'cast' list.

Please contact Andrew Bailey (Our new archivist) John Crosby or Deryck Morley who will be able to advise more on the subject. Thank you. Tony Bowler (Chairman)



Chaddesden Folk



Looking through the archives of the Guardian, a Chaddesden hero is mentioned in the issue of 10th January 1929.

On the 9th January 1929 a Birmingham bound train travelling in heavy fog crashed into a goods train that was being shunted across the line.

The Guardian reports how *"When the collision occurred Molson crawled from among the shattered woodwork of his van and although his arm was broken worked for hours dragging out injured passengers. He bought eight people from one of the telescoped coaches. This coach was one which was piled up. Scrambling and slipping up the frost covered, splintered woodwork, Molson managed to pull the imprisoned people with his uninjured arm through doors and window, to pass them down to the Post Office officials who had rushed to help from the mail van. It was not until almost all the passengers had been removed that he would allow himself to receive treatment at the hospital.*

Speaking of his own escape Molson remarked: "I was exceedingly lucky to get off as lightly as I did. The crash appeared to throw me through the bottom of my van, and I seemed to pick myself up in a field."

Do you have any information about this brave train guard from Chaddesden?

Chaddesden - Christmas Customs

Few Christmas customs go back many years; the Christmas tree was introduced to England by Prince Albert in 1841. However there were local traditions. In the 19th century the Wilmot family gave a fat beast to the poor of Chaddesden, plus also it was customary to "relieve the poor with soup for the first six weeks in the new year, three days a week (Derby Mercury 19th January 1831). This custom had been in existence for at least 40 years.



For more information about the group, details of the speakers and planned visits, please contact Linda Crosby, the Group's Secretary on 01332 676425 or by e-mail at linda.crosby2@ntlworld.com.





Majestic Cinema Wiltshire Road Chaddesden



A useful website for those interested in cinema history is <http://cinematreasures.org>. Ken Roe reports that *"the Majestic was designed in a sleek Art Deco style by local Derby architect L. Frederick Smith, with 1,332 seats and was located in the expanding Derby suburb of Chaddesden.*

It opened on 14th April 1938 with Gracie Fields in "Looking on the Bright Side" and was the first of three Derby cinemas to open in 1938 (the other two were the Regal Cinema (ABC) in the City centre and the nearby Gloria Cinema which was also in the suburb of Chaddesden).

The main architectural feature of the Majestic Cinema was a 70 feet tall fin-tower that was located to the left hand side of the facade. The cinema's name was on top of the tower in chrome letters inlaid with red neon. A large curved bay frontage had windows that let light into the circle foyer.

Inside the auditorium the lighting was from a series of four stepped coves in the ceiling and concealed lighting at the sides of the proscenium opening. There were some decorative grilles on the splay walls which were backlit."

Many of the residents of Chaddesden have fond memories of the Majestic, but how many can remember the events of 26th April 1959?

Terry Dene was making his first appearance before a live audience since his medical discharge from National Service.

The Guardian reported on 26th April 1959 that *"he had been slipped in as a guest star for the Dickie Valentine show at the Majestic Cinema, Chaddesden. The young men who barracked him – mostly wearing Edwardian dress shouted "Get back in the Army". When's your leave up brother? and Drop Dead. Fifteen managers were brought in from other cinemas on the circuit all over the North of England. The police came - accompanied by a jeep load of military police."*



Questions were raised in the House of Commons in May of the Secretary of War as to why military police were sent to the cinema? Mr C Soames (Secretary of War) answered that *"a sergeant and four men attended at the request of the civil police as a precautionary measure"*



Details of the event even appeared in the USA's Time magazine on the 19th May 1959. *"With five MPs guarding the doors and bobbies examining all fans for concealed tomatoes and eggs, Terry Dene appeared before a packed movie house in Derby. Dressed in a long, pale jacket and skin-tight pants, he began his hip-flinging comeback with Just One More Chance. There were hoots from angry men ("Get back in the army"), but the whoops from the ecstatic girls drowned them out."*

Can you remember any details of the events or the Teddy boys of Chaddesden? Alan Holmes was there on the night, with his drain pipe trousers, velvet collar and "brothel creepers". He remembers a full theatre and Dickie Valentine who was the top of the bill being listened to without any interruptions. When Terry Dene came on stage the chant of "left, right, left, right" started and continued throughout his act drowning out his singing.

Do you have any photographs of this time? Perhaps you have memories of when the Majestic closed on 28th April 1962 when 138 patrons watched the final show, Fanny, starring Leslie Caron, Horst Buchholz, Maurice Chevalier and Charles Boyer. Saturday matinees were also popular with the Majestic matinees being in the morning, the Gloria in the afternoon.