

Chesterfield

And

District

Family

History

Society



20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year

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## **C.A.D.F.H.S. OFFICERS and COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**E MAIL ADDRESS [mail@cadfhs.org.uk](mailto:mail@cadfhs.org.uk)**

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Mike Sims 4 Fawn Close Wingerworth Chesterfield S42 6PZ</b>
<b>Vice Chairman Members Interest Co-Ordinator</b>	<b>Marion Yeldham</b>
<b>Correspondence Secretary</b>	<b>Doreen Rodgers 2 Highlow Close Loundsley Green Chesterfield S40 4PG</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Keith Feltham 88 Top Road Calow Chesterfield S44 5SY</b>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	<b>Ray Batteson 17 Orchards Way Walton Road Chesterfield S40 3DA</b>
<b>Programme Secretary</b>	<b>Jo Gott 130 Station Road Brimington Chesterfield S43 1LU</b>
<b>Editor/ Magazine Co-Ordinator Members Interest Co-Ordinator</b>	<b>Carol Morris 26 Tunstall Green Walton Chesterfield S40 2DY</b>
<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>John Bradley Terry Cocking Pamela Kemp Roy Pidcock Neil Wilson</b>

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**NEW MEMBERS WELCOME TO THE SOCIETY**

No 899 Mr M J Harvey, 15 Baronsway, Whitkirk, Leeds W Yorks LS15 7AW

e.mail [mikeharvey303@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mikeharvey303@hotmail.co.uk)

LAUGHTON	Evelyn	Chesterfield	DBY	1901-1985
HUGHES	Ada Maud			
LAUGHTON	Frederick	Chesterfield	DBY	c 1877



**CORRECTIONS**

**Apologies to Mr Pindar (wrong e.mail address published previously)**

No 896, Mr M Pindar, 11 Loads Road, Holymoorside, Chesterfield. S42 7EF

e.mail [mike@pindar-design.co.uk](mailto:mike@pindar-design.co.uk)

BLANKSBY	Grace	Chesterfield	DBY	1800
LINGARD	Frederick	Chelmsford	ESS	1853
LINGARD	Frederick	Hereford	GLS	1853
NASH	Sarah Ann	Chesterfield	DBY	1850+
NASH	Thomas	Chesterfield	DBY	1850+
NASH	George	Chesterfield	DBY	1853
WHITCOMB	Grace	Chesterfield	DBY	1800+
WILSON	George	Chesterfield	DBY	1850+
WILSON	George	Newbold	DBY	1821
WILSON	Ann	Chesterfield	DBY	1863
WRAGG	George	Chesterfield	DBY	1850+

**Apologies to Mrs N Maxwell (wrong e.mail address published previously)**

No 881, Mrs N Maxwell, 29 Banks Crescent, Golcar, Huddersfield, West Yorks, HD7 4RQ

e.mail [har.max@gmx.co.uk](mailto:har.max@gmx.co.uk)

WIDDOWSON		Killamarsh	DBY	1700-1850
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## THE 2009 PROGRAMME

### Cadfhs Programme 2009 St Hugh's R C Church Littlemoor:

<b>April 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>An Elizabethan Lady's Wardrobe</b>	<b>Ms M Taylor</b>
<b>May 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>A 1000 years of the Broughton Family</b>	<b>Roy Smith</b>
<b>June 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>How the parish was run</b>	<b>Mrs S Preace</b>
<b>July 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>CADFHS 20 Years Celebration</b>	
<b>July 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Members Evening</b>	
<b>Aug</b>	<b>No Meeting</b>	
<b>Sept 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>The Family Markham</b>	<b>Tony Hallam</b>
<b>Oct 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Victorian Way of Death</b>	<b>Danny Wells</b>
<b>Nov 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Hulley's Buses</b>	<b>Andy Firth</b>
<b>Dec 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Members Evening</b>	

### FICHE COPIES FOR SALE March 2009

(These are hand written and are not indexed)

St Bartholemew (Whittington) (some gaps)			
BAPTISMS	1650-1902	(13 fiche)	£8.00
	1902-1912	(3 fiche)	£2.50
	1912-1922	(3 fiche)	£3.00
Brampton Methodist			
BAPTISMS (some gaps)		(4 fiche)	£3.00
St James the Apostle TEMPLE NORMANTON.			
MARRIAGES	1868-1919	(1 fiche)	£1.25
All Saints HEATH			
MARRIAGES	1760-1929	(3 fiche)	£2.50
St. Thomas' Brampton,			
BAPTISMS	1832-1944	(7 fiche)	£4.00
MARRIAGES	1832-1972	(11 fiche)	£6.00
BURIALS	1832-1974	(6 fiche)	£3.50
St Peter & Paul Old Brampton			
MARRIAGES	1756-1928	(7 fiche)	£3.50
MEMORIAL INSCRIPTIONS		(3 fiche)	£2.75
St. John's NEWBOLD			
MARRIAGES	1861-1920	(7 fiche)	£3.75
	1920-1937	(4 fiche)	£3.00

Christ Church STONEGRAVELS  
MARRIAGES 1914-1953 (3 fiche) £2.00

Holy Trinity CHESTERFIELD  
MARRIAGES 1854 1933 (6 fiche) £4.50

St. Paul's HASLAND/GRASSMOOR  
MARRIAGES 1851-1923 (3 fiche) £2.00

St Mary & All Saints CHESTERFIELD  
BAPTISMS 1761-1801 (4 fiche) £3.00  
BAPTISMS 1908-1934 (7 fiche) £4.50  
MARRIAGES 1761-1822 (6 fiche) £4.00  
MARRIAGES 1822-1844 (4 fiche) £3.25  
MARRIAGES 1844-1858 (4 fiche) £3.25  
MARRIAGES 1858-1871 (4 fiche) £3.25  
MARRIAGES 1871-1885 (5 fiche) £4.00  
MARRIAGES 1885-1901 (4 fiche) £3.25  
MARRIAGES 1901-1916 (4 fiche) £3.50  
MARRIAGES 1916-1933 (6 fiche) £4.50  
MARRIAGES 1933-1967 (7 fiche) £5.00

St Mary & All Saints CHESTERFIELD  
BURIALS 1761-1801 (4 fiche) £3.25

St Laurence (BARLOW)  
MARRIAGES 1754-1942 (3 fiche) £2.50

Derbyshire Times Extracts  
MARRIAGES 1880-1894 (3 fiche) £2.00  
DEATHS 1880-1894 (12 fiche) £8.00

1851 Chesterfield Town Residents Name Index (2 fiche) £2.00

Copies of the Microfiche can be obtained at the prices shown from  
Mr R Batteson, 17 Orchards Way, Walton Road, Chesterfield, S40 3DA  
Please make all payments to C.D.F.H.S. Prices include UK postage,  
Overseas orders must be paid in Sterling and should include 2 IRC's to cover  
postage.



## HISTORY FAIR

CADFHS had a stand at the Scarsdale Local History Fair on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008. The fair was held at the Winding Wheel and was organised and funded by the Victoria County History Trust in association with England's Past for Everyone, Derbyshire. The fair was held to launch a book about Bolsover, "Bolsover: Castle, Town and Colliery" written by Philip Riden and Dudley Fowkes. The book charts the changing fortunes of Bolsover from its rural origins to its post-industrial present. Material uncovered in research for the book is being made publicly available on [www.exploreenglandspast.org.uk.derbyshire](http://www.exploreenglandspast.org.uk.derbyshire).

There were over 40 exhibitors including; Beighton Historical Society, Bradwell Historical Society, Brimington and Tapton Local History Group, Chesterfield and District Local History Group, Derbyshire Family History Society, Derbyshire Record Society, Elmton with Cresswell Local History Group, Elton Local History Group, Friends of Spital Cemetery, GOONS, Holymoorside Historical Society, Hope Historical Society, North Wingfield Local History Group, Sheffield and District Family History Society, Spital Local History Group, St Helen's Local History Society and Staveley History Society.

The CADFHS stand was kept busy dealing with people interested in exploring their Chesterfield ancestors.



## MEMBERS MEETING 7 OCTOBER 2008

"Who Was Mrs Williamson? An 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
Genealogical Detective Story"  
Talk by John Titford illustrated with slides

John began by explaining why he became interested in the "Mrs Williamson" of his talk. Some six or seven years ago he purchased a hand written book. It contained a list of servants employed in the Derby area. He showed an example of one of the entries for 1833. This gave details of a Hannah David, a kitchen maid who worked in the Shirland/ Higham area. Over a period of seven years John and his wife transcribed the book which contained thousands of names of servants for the period 1833-1840. On completion of this task John was interested to know who had written the book as the writer had not put his/her name on it. The only clue as to the author was a slip of paper in the book addressed to "Dear Mrs Williamson". John was intrigued to find who Mrs Williamson was, where she came from and he took up the challenge to build up a picture of her.

He began his search in the directories for Derby and sure enough in Pigot's directory he found a Jane Williamson of 22 King Street, Derby who ran a register of servants. On a map of Derby he located 22 King Street which was a premises on the corner of St. Helen's Street. A 1967 photo taken from St. Alkmund's church (now demolished) shows where King Street would have been situated near to St. Helen's Street.

As John had found where Jane lived he then decided to consult the census. The register covered the period 1833-1840 so the first available census was that of 1841. The 1841 census is not the most useful as it does not give exact ages (adults age given to the nearest 5 years) and does not give an accurate place of birth. However, in view of the period being investigated it was the only one to use. Jane Williamson was duly found at 22, King Street, age 60, occupation given as Registered Office for Servants and place of birth "N" for not born in the county. Also present at the same address were Elizabeth Lee (20) and Ann and Elizabeth Colbean, female servants.

John is of the opinion that when looking at the census you should take a holistic view, and look at the surrounding entries. At no 21 King Street there was a Joseph Hall, age 50, a marble mason and at no 23 a butcher. He feels you should consider what kind of household you find. In "Mrs. Williamson's" case it was entirely female and the girls there could have been relatives.

The next step was to look at 22 King Street on the 1851 census. This revealed that Jane was no longer there so John then had to consider what might have happened from 1841-1851.

Again he consulted the Derby directories. Bagshaw's directory shows that Jane was at no. 22 from 1846 but gone by 1850. However the directories for 1851 then show a Sarah Massey with the same occupation at no 28. King Street. Joseph Hall (as seen in the 1841 census) was still at no. 21. This was a puzzle but John discovered that under an Act of Parliament of 1847 councils were allowed to renumber houses and that no. 28 was actually the same premises as Jane's no. 22.

So this narrowed the period of Jane's disappearance to 1846-1850. Had she died, moved away, or re-married? The most likely scenario was that she had died. John consulted the free BMD website, which he describes as "brilliant". He looked in the period 1846-1850 for the death of a Jane Williamson. He found various ones in Oldham, Newcastle and Rochdale but discounted them because they were not in the Derby area. He found one likely death in 1846 in the June quarter but before obtaining a death certificate decided to look at the obituaries in the Derby Mercury which has an index. Sure enough he found an

entry “ 1<sup>st</sup> April 1846, Monday, Mrs. Williamson, deservedly respected”. Obviously when Jane died someone cared enough to put this obituary in the paper. John then consulted “Chesney’s Dictionary of Dates”. This gives information about days of the week and from this John was able to work out that she had died on 30 March 1846. He then felt confident that he had found the right death and obtained a copy of the death certificate from the local registrar.

From the death certificate John found out more information. It gave Jane’s age as 76, her marital status as “spinster”, cause of death “cancer of the vagina”, and informant of death as W. Williamson of 8 Friarsgate, Derby. These facts threw up more questions. If she was 60 in the 1841 census then the age on the death certificate is older and why was she described as a “spinster” but called Mrs. Williamson?

John then decided to consult the IGI for 1770 (ie subtract 76 from 1846). He then decided not to pursue this line of research as he found there were too many Jane Williamsons to consider.

He then considered the W. Williamson of 8 Friarsgate who was “in attendance” at the death. Was this a man or a woman? Again John consulted the Derby directories for 1827, 1828, 1835, 1843, 1846 and 1847. He discovered that William Williamson had been a Haberdasher there for 30 years.

To find out more about William Williamson he looked at the 1851 census. Sure enough there was William aged 63 (some 18 years older than Jane) who had been born at Wirksworth. He was married with a wife Suzannah age 67 and two children John and Suzannah and a servant Sarah.

To discover more about the Williamsons John decided to consult the 1851 religious census (Methodists) held by the local Record Office. Here he found an entry for W. Williamson, Haberdasher and clerk, born Wirksworth. With this information he was able to examine the IGI to look for William Williamson’s baptism. He discovered his birth in 1787 and baptism in 1788 with father John and mother Ann. He then looked for their marriage before the baptism. He found that John had married Ann Bealy in 1781. As Jane had been born in 1770, 11 years before, it was unlikely that she was his sister.

When John had some spare time he consulted the Universal British Directory for 1790 where he found John Williamson, wheelwright at Wirksworth. He needed to establish whether Jane Williamson could have been his sister or half sister.

John advised that when you reach a “brick-wall” in family history research you have to consider whether one of your “facts” is wrong and then take away that fact and hypothesise.

In this case John needed to build a Wirksworth pedigree for the Williamsons. He consulted [www.wirksworth.org.uk](http://www.wirksworth.org.uk) and the work of Thomas Norris Ince 1824-1860 at the Society of Genealogists. Ince had constructed 1,000 pedigrees from documents and oral evidence. These have been transcribed and indexed by Sonia and Alec Smith and are free and available. Here John found a pedigree for the Williamsons. This showed that John William father of the Haberdasher (William Williamson) had been married twice. By the first marriage he had two sons Samuel a yeoman and George a tanner. By the second marriage he had two more sons, John and William. He then concluded that Jane Williamson was related to this family by marriage not by birth. She was not a spinster as stated on the death certificate but a widow.

The IGI shows that George Williamson married Jane Stokell in October 1794 at Duffield (between Derby and Wirksworth). After 1750 the original parish registers are on printed forms (as required by the Hardwicke Marriage Act). At this time people could only be married in an Anglican Church by banns or by licence. The only exceptions were Jews or Quakers. Records show that a George Williamson, butcher and bachelor married Jane Stokell, spinster. The licence was for 22 October 1795 and the witnesses were Fanny Plant and John Drewry. (The Drewry/Drury link was later to prove crucial)

In marriage by licence two important documents are required, an allegation and a bond. These are held by the Dioceses Office in Litchfield or are on microfilm in Salt Lake City.

The allegation at Duffield shows George Williamson of Duffield, Currier, of Derby, over 21 and Jane Stokell, over 20 of Duffield. The bond shows George Williamson and Jane Stokell (spinster). These documents both give the same dates as the marriage and were completed by the local priest on the day the marriage took place, but were these Jane’s relations?

At this point in his research John paused for serendipity to play its part. He consulted the card index at the Society of Genealogists for the rarer of the two names Stokell and found a marriage licence for the following. 23 November 1769, Holborn (London), J Stokell, bachelor 38 to marry Hannah Drury, spinster 30, by marriage licence.

Then on the IGI he found a birth for Jane daughter of John Stokell, 14 May 1769, St. Andrew, Holborn (London). Could this be the Jane who grew up to live

in Derby with a servant's agency? The girl's mother's name was Drury. The Drurys were a family from Derby.

The great card index revealed a baptism of Jane on 17 May 1769, daughter of John and Hannah, therefore she was illegitimate! The IGI also shows another birth of Mary 1772 to John and Hannah and in addition an Ann Stockeild born at Holborn on 25 May 1761, 8 years before the marriage allegation! The original parish records show that Jane was born in 1769 at Purple Lane in London. This goes to show that the issue of a marriage licence is no guarantee that a marriage actually took place.

Records at Salt Lake City show another allegation that John Stokell was to marry one Elizabeth Sprat some 6 years before.

In 1769 there were so many marriages at Holborn that the banns and licences are in two registers. However, the marriage is not in either. John Stokell married neither Elizabeth Sprat nor Hannah Drury! So Hannah had at least two illegitimate daughters Ann and Jane Stokell before the allegation and the marriage never took place.

On marriage certificates if the father is unknown people often give their grandfather's name. Additionally if there is no father's name on a birth certificate someone may tell them what their real father's name is and they then quote that even though they are illegitimate.

To summarise the hypothesis: Jane was born in London as the illegitimate daughter of Stokell and Drury. The Drurys were a Lincoln family. Sam Drury came to Derby and founded the Derby Mercury newspaper. Samuel Drury died on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1769. His will proved 19<sup>th</sup> August 1769 shows that he left £100 to his niece Hannah Stokell. 14<sup>th</sup> May 1769 is a significant date because in London Jane Stokell was christened, it is also the year that the marriage allegation was made between John Stokell and Hannah Drury. In other words John was a "toe-rag" only after Hannah's money!

John Stokell died in the workhouse and Hannah was left to bring up Ann and Jane so they all went to Belper to live. Jane married George Williamson, a coal merchant but he died age 54 in 1828. As a widow she set up the register of servants and when she died in 1846 Sarah Massey took over the agency.

It is interesting to note that in 2004 there was still an employment agency in business (Massey's Agency) named after Sarah Massey. The current owners were gob-smacked to hear from John of it being run by Jane in the 1840s.

John admits that he was sexist in not considering at the outset that Jane may have left a will. He did consult the calendars and duly found a will left by Jane a "widow". She left everything to her brother-in-law, William Williamson and asked that she be "decently interred" at Belper vaults near her "late dear husband".

The register of persons buried at Field Row Belper show entries for Jane's mother Hannah Stokell, who died in 1835, Jane's sister Ann born 1761 died 1833 and Jane's husband 1774-1848. There is also a gravestone at the chapel to Hannah Stokell "late of London", though sadly no trace of where Jane Williamson is buried.

In conclusion John said this was untypical research as it concerned the mother's family. The mother Hannah Stokell was crucial to solving the case as she came to Derby via London and Lincolnshire. People often say they specialise in Derbyshire research but this case proves you have to look beyond one area and the answer is often as far away as London. John was determined not to be beaten and in the end solved the mystery of "Mrs Williamson".

A vote of thanks was given by Ron Presswood.



#### MEMBERS MEETING 4<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008

"Christmas at Chatsworth" talk by Christine Robinson, Head Housekeeper at Chatsworth, illustrated with slides and artefacts

To set the scene for her talk Christine showed some views of Chatsworth in the snow. She explained that the foot and mouth epidemic of 2001 was not a good season for Chatsworth. To make up for the financial losses it was agreed with the Comptroller of Chatsworth that the house would remain open at Christmas in 2001 as an experiment. The event was a great success attracting over 79,000 people so it was decided to open the house at Christmas every year.

In the first year Christine and her housekeeping team started planning the event in August. They went to various garden centres looking for ideas and found figures of creatures like huskies and eskimos. During their research they discovered a company called KD Decorations in an old mill at Huddersfield. This company could supply Christmas trees all year round. They also had every type of display from the tasteful to the gaudy. One of the items chosen for Chatsworth was a kissing bough. This is now used every year and is hung from the stag's chandelier with fresh greenery.

In 2002 they found a company that supplied artificial Christmas trees to places like Heathrow, P & O line and Meadowhall, they even made fibreglass elephants!

Christine's team also found a recording studio that produced CD's for use in some areas of the house.

It was decided that each year there would be a different theme for the Christmas opening. One year the theme was for a Victorian Christmas. In the house a Dutch sleigh was used with a seated doll and a plaster dog which belonged to the then Duchess of Devonshire. In order to make the snow look authentic in the display wadding is used but care has to be taken to ensure it is flame retardant. Christine recalls the hottest day of the year when she was told "your snow has arrived"!

The employees at Chatsworth are often used to make the displays for Christmas. When the Victorian theme was used the seamstress made the costumes for the figures and the joiners made a fireplace from MDF that Christine had chosen from a picture of a Yorkshire range in a book. The electricians put an artificial light at the back of the fireplace to make it look real.

In 2001 the then Duchess decided she wanted masses of candles to light the house. This could have been a problem as the wax would drip on the carpets and there also could have been a fire risk. Various alternatives were considered and tried, in the end battery operated candles were chosen.

Visitors to the house at Christmas need to be fed and watered. The employees who run the carriage house restaurant have to estimate how much food will be required and have to ensure that they don't have too much over.

The farm shop at Pilsley also plays an important part at Christmas time. The amount of food they sell is enormous; 7,500 sausages, 5 tons of fruit cake, 22,000 mince pies (many more than Betty's at Harrogate) and 3,000 hampers are filled and sent out by mail order to such illustrious customers as Tom Stoppard, Cliff Richard and the Prince of Wales.

Father Christmas plays an important role at Chatsworth. In fact because of the sheer volume of children visiting him there are actually three Father Christmases. An Ice Maiden takes the children to him and gives him information about the child so that he can say things like "it was difficult to get the bicycle down the chimney last year", to make them feel special. On a more materialistic note many children bring an Argos catalogue with them to let Santa know exactly what they want!

Spring cleaning at the house starts in January when the house is cleaned and it continues 7 days a week in order that the house is ready for opening again in March. The state apartments are cleaned and any conservation work done. China, glass and carpets are cleaned. China is never immersed in water as this could damage it. It is washed in soap flakes and wiped dry.

Chandeliers are not taken down from the ceiling in order to be cleaned, as featured in "Only Fools and Horses". They are taken to pieces and cleaned. The biggest chandelier has 2763 pieces so a digital camera records each piece to ensure it is put back correctly. People might be interested to know a housekeeping tip, i.e. that gin is used to clean the glass.

One restoration project concerned a mirror dated 1703 housed in the state bedroom. It had woodworm and an expert from Sussex College undertook this tricky task. Masking tape was placed over the glass whilst the wood was repaired in situ. The original mirror cost £100, the restoration cost £80,000!

The ceiling paintings in the painted hall had developed dusky marks which were due to condensation. Cleaning these was difficult because of the height of the ceilings and special scaffolding had to be erected.

One of the rooms in the house contains 17,500 books and every year each one of these books has to be examined for damage, dusted and put back on the shelf.

Christine Thompson looks after the textiles and tapestries at Chatsworth. She is known as the "Velcro Queen". This is because she has developed a method of hanging tapestries using "velcro". This has two advantages, they are easier to take down in the event of fire and also prevent damage that occurs when they were hung by nails. Christine has become an expert in this field and the National Trust often contact her for advice on conservation matters.

Outside the house the wider estate needs maintenance too. The garden, park, woods, farms and tree felling all require attention. The sheep and deer are sold and the current untidy grass in the park is due to the fact that there are no sheep to crop it. The sheep are killed before winter because they would need feeding in the winter. The deer are also culled so that the herd does not become unsustainable. The venison is sold in the farm shop.

Chatsworth generates its own electricity. In 1800 it was the first house to be lit by electricity. In the 1930's turbines were installed. These were replaced in the 1980's by a new turbine and generator named appropriately "Andrew" and

“Deborah” after the then Duke and Duchess. Any spare capacity is sold back to the National Grid.

Fire is always a constant threat and as the nearest Fire Station is at Bakewell Chatsworth has its own fire team. They practise once a week and train in the use of breathing equipment. They take their role very seriously.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Duke was known as the “bachelor duke” as he was unmarried until he was in his 50’s. He had had an affair with the Duchess of Manchester but did marry her when her husband died. A photograph taken at a Chatsworth shoot shows him entertaining Edward VII and his wife Alexandra. Another old photograph shows a party of 160 guests hosted by the 8<sup>th</sup> Duke on 12<sup>th</sup> night. The entertainment included bobbing for apples, dancing, an 8ft cake and something called “glissade” which involved dragging individuals along the length of the dining table. This was the Edwardian’s idea of fun!

Children of the estate workers are entertained at a Christmas part. The party traditionally was held in the Great Hall but since the opening of the house at Christmas is now held in the Orangery. One of the photographs of the Christmas party includes a small boy of about 5. Christine proudly identified him as her son who is now 24 and 6 foot seven!

One of the reasons why Chatsworth is so successful now is that the late Duke of Devonshire established Chatsworth as a Trust. This was to mitigate the effects of death duties on the estate when his father died. The death duties that he inherited were paid by selling land, works of art and passing Hardwick Hall to the National Trust. The trust now receives income from its investments and the Christmas opening helps pay the running costs.

The current Duke and Duchess now live at Chatsworth. Their son, Lord Burlington, and his wife are expecting their first child in March. Daughter Selina and her husband have 4 children and daughter Jasmine is expecting her second child. Chatsworth is a family home looking forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

A photograph of Elizabeth Frink’s statue of a dog shows a stained mark. This is because the Dowager’s dog was jealous of it and used to lift his leg on it. The statue now lives at the Dowager’s house in Edensor where a notice in her garden reads “Beware big dogs”!

Among the artefacts Christine had brought along were two programmes found in a handkerchief box. One was a theatrical programme dated 5 February 1903 and the other gave details of a firework display held on the 4 February 1903.

A napkin showing the ducal coat of arms, family crest and laundry mark is one of a set of 72 dated 1872 with a table -cloth to match. It is possible that this napkin was used to “glissade” down the table on 12<sup>th</sup> night!

The year before last the theme of the Christmas opening was the 12 days of Christmas. A bay tree was used in lieu of a pear tree and Christine showed the artificial pears that were hung on it. They must have looked authentic because the slugs in the bay tree nibbled them!

Last year the Christmas theme was that of kaleidoscope. The Chatsworth joiner and electrician produced a kaleidoscope on rollers that was hand cranked with a three foot wide mirror and a large quartz crystal.

This year the theme is inspired by the silhouette illustrations in Jan Pienkowski’s classic Christmas book, “The First Noel”. It features scenes from the book, e.g. Journey to Bethlehem, Birth of baby Jesus and the Visits of the Shepherds.

The preparation for the Christmas opening is exciting but hard work and often involves a thirteen-hour day. Christine concluded her talk by saying that she hoped members would be tempted to go and see “Chatsworth at Christmas”.

A vote of thanks was given by Roy Pidcock.



## **Hector Feltham’s account of his journey from Paris 1940 (contd)**

Off we went again, making for Libourne, a town near Bordeaux. The bank had rented the Chateau Meynard ( ?) in the village of Condat, just outside the town. On the way we had to pass through the town of Bergerac, in the department of the Dordogne. On the outskirts of this town there is an immense powder factory, of which I had often heard, and it is said that were that factory to blow up, half the department would go with it.

Well, we were just going past this factory when we heard a ‘plane overhead. I was lying back on the lorry, and automatically looked up, - and then I nearly fell off the lorry – it was a German ‘plane, quite low, flying over us. He flew around all over the factory, but much to our relief, dropped no bombs, and finally disappeared.

When we arrived at the border-line dividing the departments of the Dordogne and the Gironde, we were halted by civilians wearing an armlet and armed with

shot-guns, - a sort of civic guard – who refused to let us enter the department of Gironde, as we had no pass. They were extremely adamant to their instructions, and neither our letter from the bank nor the name on the lorry would induce them to let the lorry pass. They finally agreed to allow three of us to go on foot to the nearest town, about two miles away, to endeavour to obtain a pass from the gendarmerie.

We obtained a visa from the gendarm's, who said that we were quite in order, that no pass was necessary and that we should never have been held up. We felt rather sore at the unnecessary waste of time, and we left one of our party in the town to find a restaurant and order lunch for us all, and went back to the lorry, only to find that the civic guard had disappeared, having received counter orders shortly after our departure!!! When we got into the town with the lorry, the pal we had left there to find food had been unable to locate a restaurant having any food, and we had to be content with what he had been able to find in the way of tinned stuff and biscuits.

We arrived at the chateau at Condat at about 4.30 in the afternoon, and were informed by our colleagues that all the British members of staff had left two days earlier to embark at Bordeaux for England, and that the British consulate was now closed, and that a notice had been put up on the door advising British nationals to go to Bayonne. We turned that lorry round in double quick time, and beat it for Bordeaux as quick as we could, leaving instructions that someone should telephone through to the office to advise them that we were on the way.

We got into Libourne again, and arriving at the bridge over the Garonne which must be crossed in order to get to Bordeaux, we were stopped by gendarmes who would let no one pass over the bridge either by car, on cycle or even on foot, unless they were provided with a movement order, which of course we did not have. There was absolutely nothing doing to get by, and we really thought that it was all up this time and that we were trapped, - so near and yet so far.

One of our chaps then had the idea of going to the local gendarmerie and having a final try, so we went there with the lorry and finally managed to persuade the officer in charge to give us a movement order, but only after considerable discussion. So back we went again to the bridge, and this time were allowed to pass, and our driver then "stepped on the gas" and we eventually reached Bordeaux.

It is a well known fact that a Bordelais can never direct anyone about his own town, and it was with great difficulty that we finally located our office, where we received confirmation about the British consulate being closed. There was apparently, but it was not certain, a train for Bayonne at 6.30 next morning, so

we set about trying to find some food, but it was useless. All we could get was a sandwich and a hard-boiled egg.

Bordeaux had been bombed by the Germans the previous night, and one bomb had fallen close to the office, and we fully expected to have a stirring night, but on our way back to the office after our “dinner”, we saw notices being stuck on the walls advising the population that Bordeaux had just been declared an “open town”.

We were up at 4 a.m. after having spent the night on the office floor and having been devoured by mosquitoes. We made our way to the station, a good two and a half miles away, and passed places where other bombs had fallen. On arriving at the station, we found at least a thousand people lined up before the booking offices. We got in one of the lines and waited. We had got about half way to the counter, when the employee closed up his window and disappeared. We got in another line, and when we did finally reach the counter, there were no tickets left for Bayonne – they had sold out – so we took tickets to Biarritz, the next station, and went to the train. We managed to get seats, but long before the train pulled out at 7.30 an hour late people were standing everywhere, and it was a very trying journey, the train stopping at every way-side station, and more people getting on all the time.

We finally reached Bayonne at about 3 p.m. and our first care of course, was to find the British Consulate. When we did locate it, it was to find, not a queue, but a howling mob crowding round the doors, not only Britishers, but people of all nationalities. Anyhow, Britishers were receiving first attention from the Military Attache and his staff, who were carrying on, for the Consul had apparently departed. We got in among the crowd, but at 4 p.m. the doors were closed, and we were told to come back at nine O'clock the following morning.

We then tried to get a meal, but this was out of the question, as there was nothing to buy in the shops in the way of eatables. However, we eventually found some biscuits at a little stall on the bridge, and later in the evening by a stroke of luck, we found a little restaurant in a side street who agreed to give us a meal, which was our first hot meal since leaving Chateaufort.  
(to be continued)

Keith Feltham. (copyright belongs with the Feltham Family)



## **Celebrating 20 Years of CADFHS**

As I start to write this article I find it hard to believe that later this year it will be twenty years since CADFHS was established. The idea to set up and start our own society here in Chesterfield came from a small group of Derbyshire Family History Society members who were finding it difficult to travel over to Alfreton during the winter months. With increased support and a desire for research specifically in Chesterfield and the surrounding area, a "Steering Committee" was formed. Today our catchment area, similar to the old Scarsdale Hundred, incorporates an area covered by the district councils of Chesterfield, Bolsover, North East Derbyshire and part of Amber Valley. Guidance from the FFHS resulted in a new constitution being drawn up and the first committee was headed by Ray Norton (Chairman), Malcolm Pearce (Vice Chairman), Maureen Pearce (Secretary) and Mike Sharratt (Treasurer).

St. Thomas' Church Hall was chosen as the first venue. The inaugural AGM took place on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1989 and a variety of speakers were sought to entertain us on local and family history topics at our monthly meetings. A special mention here must go to Jo Gott, our only Programme Secretary, who finds the speakers for all her time, effort and dedication to the society over twenty years.

Visits to Chesterfield Local Studies Library and the Derbyshire Record Office (DRO) were organised to enable our members to become familiar with the information available and where it was located. A quarterly magazine was produced, printed and despatched to all members here and overseas. Initially it consisted of only eight pages but now it is three times that size.

Last years membership was about 180, a total that has remained constant for many years. Open days have been a regular feature of the society and CADFHS has joined forces with local organisations and Radio Sheffield to stage exhibitions in Chesterfield, Sheffield and Buxton.

During the last twenty years the society has accomplished many things and I cannot hope to mention all of them. Two major projects immediately come to mind, the recording and photographing by the late Geoff Simpson of all war memorials in N. E. Derbyshire and the computerisation of the CADFHS Name Index. In October 2001 a project commenced with Derbyshire County Council to computerise this index which consisted of 60,000 paper slips taken from local records and housed in Chesterfield Local Studies Library. Although the project took a long time to complete it came to fruition in 2006 with additional online access on our website, [www.cadfhs.org.uk](http://www.cadfhs.org.uk). The society would like to acknowledge the late Malcolm Pearce and his wife Maureen for producing the

paper slips, John Beresford and his team of volunteers for converting this data to electronic form and to the Derbyshire County Council Library Service in making these records available on line.

Another “regular” to be praised must be Ray Batteson, not content with his duties as Membership Secretary for the last fifteen years Ray has found time to transcribe baptisms, marriages and burials from parish records held at the DRO for the benefit of family historians. These records once put onto microfiche for re-sale have resulted in extra income for the society each year.

CADFHS of course could not function without all the committee members who in different ways contribute to the running of the society.

When I first took over as Chairman in 1994 family history was not the big interest it is today. How times have changed. In those days “silver surfers” did not exist and there were no “free” or “pay per view” websites dedicated to helping solve genealogical problems at home. The inter-net was in its infancy and research relied on microfilm, microfiche and paper records. Visits to County Record Offices and Local Studies Library were essential to “thumb through” parish registers and search Census records on microfilm. There were very few “short-cuts” in those days. Family history societies were only just beginning to produce and make available transcribed records, lists of member’s interests and indexes. Family history really took off following the BBC television series “Who Do You Think You Are?” The last ten years has seen the whole process speeded up with the transcription of records and their corresponding indexes available to computer users following the increased subscriptions from “pay per view” websites. This interest from the public at large has increased numbers at our monthly meetings resulting in the committee having to find a new venue.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 the venue at Whitecotes Community Centre was taken over by the school from the Education Department of Derbyshire County Council. This resulted in a rent increase of 30%. The reasons given were that the previous hourly-rate was far too cheap and that there had been an increase in wages for the caretaker. The committee considered several alternatives but felt that their decision to remain on site was fully justified when the “total package” of facilities against cost was taken into account. However, in January 2006 CADFHS moved to the Hadfield Suite at the Parish Centre, Stonegravels or “Christchurch” as it was known locally. This only became a temporary arrangement due to the shape of the room and the poor car parking facilities. Fifteen months later we moved to our current venue at St. Hugh’s, Littlemoor, Newbold. The much larger room now allows CADFHS to spread out and give a better service to members who wish to carry out their research at monthly meeting as well as to those who want to borrow exchange magazines and

reference books from the library. Catering facilities are also much improved. With continued support from the membership this has resulted in an average attendance of 34 at our monthly meetings.

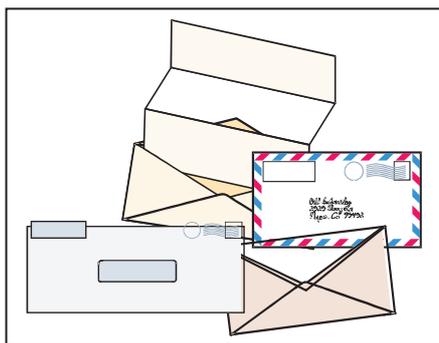
Correspondence, mainly e-mails from members and non members to our own website continue to keep the committee busy and members can now receive an electronic copy of the quarterly magazine, committee minutes and members interests on request from IT co-ordinator, Neil Wilson, thanks to his latest website improvements. I also have pleasure in announcing that a "Self Help" page has been added and is now available on our re-designed website, [www.cadfhs.org.uk](http://www.cadfhs.org.uk). This will enable members and non- members alike to place their research enquiries on our website and hopefully receive feedback from other family historians.

Our Library continues to purchase reference books, CDs and publications from the FFHS and it exchanges magazines with other family history societies to enable our members to track down that elusive ancestor. Several indexes to Census Returns and Bishops Transcripts for Bolsover are recent additions, together with further donations of microfiche records, wills and inventories from member Eileen Beech and a biography from the late Ernest Hopkinson.

On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2009 at St. Hugh's Church (10.00am to 4.00pm) we will celebrate CADFHS's 20 years by sharing member's research and rekindling memories from past and present members. I hope that members will get involved by including displays of their own family history or memorabilia. Please put this date in your diary, support the event and make it a day to remember.

Mike Sims (Chairman)

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### **Editors Jottings**

[www.cadfhs.org.uk](http://www.cadfhs.org.uk)

Now that the 1911 census is available have any of you found interesting stories you would like to share with other members. Please could you send them to me.

Bearing in mind that it will soon be CADFHS 20<sup>th</sup> birthday and that time passes very quickly I would like to reiterate the chairman's comments( see chairman's notes) asking for you to support us on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Please contact us on our web site so we can ensure there is a table available for you to display your memorabilia and/or family history's on.

Carol

## **REMINDERS**

One of the benefits of joining a Family History society is that you can make contact with other members who are researching your family names. Most Societies produce a list of Members Interest and the Chesterfield and District Family History Society produce theirs on microfiche each year. This is updated and distributed annually with the June magazine (As from 2008.) Other versions available are, printed, file on disc, or emailed, for members who prefer it are also available at extra cost.

Members Interests are listed alphabetically by surname, relevant dates and County using the Chapman County Codes. These were introduced by Colin Chapman and are a set of County Codes universally used by Family Historians to show the counties of the UK in an index without reproducing the full name. Eg DBY-Derbyshire NTT-Nottinghamshire. A full list of Chapman County Codes is reproduced on the back page of this magazine.

If you find another member is researching the same family name(s) as you, you can share your research and problems, and if you are lucky you may trace that elusive ancestor.

**Meetings will be on the first Tuesday of each month except August, when there is no meeting. They will be held at 7.30pm at St Hugh's Roman Catholic Church, Littlemoor. Chesterfield.**

**C.A.D.F.H.S. membership and Renewal is from September 1st to August 31st.** This includes free magazines in December, March, June and September for the coming year. New Members joining at any other times of the year will be entitled to back copies of these magazines for that year as compensation.

Committee members, the Library and limited research material is available to assist you in your search for ancestors and to answer any questions you may have from 7pm onwards.

A readers query column ( Help Wanted ) is available so that readers can publish their queries in the Magazine. This column is free to members, but non-members will have to make a remittance with their query on the basis of £2 (minimum) for 50 words maximum.(or donation). Dates count as one word.

Queries in block letters or typed should be sent to either the Editor, Chairman or the Secretary at the addresses inside the front cover.

**Please remember to show your name, address, and where appropriate your membership number. Readers are reminded that correspondence requiring either a reply or a receipt should be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. Overseas readers should send appropriate British Stamps or International Reply Coupons.**