



protecting and improving the environment

Newsletter 167

December 2015



Fantastic community spirit at the Boat and Horses
in the Rylands during Heritage weekend

In this issue: Flora, walking, maps and Heritage Open Days

EDITORIAL

The Heritage Open Days were such a wonderful success in September, we wanted you to see the sights and sounds beautifully captured by members in a full colour centre spread!

Among other varied articles and coverage, I have included brief details of the outcome of the AGM which took place on 13th November.

Karen Attwood

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CONCISE BRITISH FLORA IN COLOUR

Committee member Jean Cameron uncovered a fascinating article from a parish magazine. I quote from the article:

'When on the 1st January 1903, the Vicar of Beeston wrote in his introductory letter to the new parish magazine, that 'Mr Martin was ordained Deacon on St Thomas' Day (21st December 1902), and took up his residence in the Parish on December 22nd', he little suspected that his new curate was the W. Keble Martin who was to achieve fame in 1965 with the publication, encouraged by the Duke of Edinburgh, of *The Concise British Flora in Colour*, with 1486 species drawn and coloured by Martin himself. This was the result of a lifelong interest in botany. The drawings began in 1899 and were continued (at times with difficulty) throughout a life devoted to parochial work until (and even after) he retired at the age of seventy-two in 1949. He finally died in 1969.

In his autobiography Mr Martin writes of his time in Beeston. He had a rural upbringing, but wanted to work "in some big industrial parish. So my main life's work began when I was 25 years of age, in Christmas week 1902 in the large parish of Beeston, an industrial suburb of Nottingham. I was to take the Valley Mission district, to do not less than 30 visits a week, to look after the sick people, to study quite a lot and to teach at the Valley Mission and its Sunday School, with about 500 scholars...opposite to the entrance of the Humber Works, which mostly made bicycles in those days."

He goes on to say: "In the first early summer we enjoyed a nice trip with some of the young men who were first Sunday School teachers. There was a long bicycle ride into the Derbyshire Peak District and the Via Gellia, where we saw children with arms full of Lilies of the Valley. Another form of recreation was the hiring of a boat in the River Trent. This provided a renewal of sculling exercise. It also took me across the river to Clifton Hall, where kind friends kept tame brown owls. They also had a tame monkey, which had a horrid habit at dinner time of

sitting on the back chair of any visitor and pretending to find extras in the hair of his head.”

In the August 1906 parish magazine noted that the Rev W K Martin would be leaving about the middle of September. Mr Martin lived for another 63 years, dying probably the most famous of the clergy to have been connected with Beeston Parish Church.
The Concise British Flora in Colour, had a foreword by HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Ebury Press and Michael Joseph 1965. The book of 231 pages cost 35 shillings and it is not surprising that, with its lavish illustrations, it reached the best seller lists.
With thanks to Jean Cameron. The original article was written by Dr Philip Wheeler in the Parish Magazine, and he in turn was inspired by Miss Margaret Cooper who owned Martin’s autobiography.

We will be following up on the theme set by this article in the next issue. We hope to include a comprehensive update about all the work going on in the borough, including green corridors and wild flower planting.

BEESTON BID: AN OBITUARY

Central Beeston’s business community voted decisively in September to discontinue Beeston BID – (for the unfamiliar, short for Beeston Business Improvement District). Of 222 votes cast only 87 were in favour of a second term, meaning that BID’s five year life will end on 31 December. Already office doors are shut and the three staff made redundant.

BID was set up in 2010 to make Beeston a better place to live, work and shop. It was one of many similar BIDs across the country dedicated to giving an independent voice to local business communities. The volunteer Board and small team brought vitality and colour to the town over a difficult period of transition, initially with Tesco and then the tram. It is not immediately clear why they have been denied a chance to build on this success in more stable times.

An irony is that this decision comes at the very moment Beeston is becoming more visible as a place on the up. This summer we won Rising Star status in the Great British High Street awards and a Silver Award for floral displays. Even the Sunday Times spoke of Beeston as

a place to watch. Awards like this are a mark of success in branding the uniqueness of Beeston through *I Love Beeston* and *Lets Go to Beeston*. Cultivating a sense of identity is hard work and long-term, as are less glamorous tasks of promoting small businesses, encouraging local initiatives, training and marketing.

Now is just the time when the business community needs an independent voice to focus on the long-term future, to build on success and to cultivate a uniqueness of place. There is everything to play for in the town centre now we have the tram, but who is going to stand up for the business community when there is no focus for consultation or any obligation to consult? Where will the passion, the vision and support for Beeston come from, even the monitoring of footfall?

No doubt Broxtowe will look at how the BID legacy might be taken forward, but it is likely to do so in the competing context of Stapleford, Eastwood and Kimberly and against a climate of cuts. The real irony is that the Beeston business community has rejected an opportunity to act together to shape a future for itself.

The Civic Society, dedicated to the success of Beeston, has also lost a friend.

Peter Robinson

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TEN YEARS OF PLAQUES: 2005-2015

When this Society responded in July 2005 to an appeal for plaque subjects we were not expecting a long term commitment. English Heritage had announced in June a rolling-out of its London based blue plaque scheme into the East Midlands with a closing date of 31 August 2005. John Beckett explained their thinking in an article *Blue Plaques in the East Midlands* in our December 2005 Newsletter, Issue 127.

This response led to continuing contact with English Heritage over an extended period of transition, as English Heritage reviewed its direct role outside London in favour of encouraging local groups to take their own initiatives within local partnerships.

Joyce Brown was our Chair and Robin Phillips Editor of the Newsletter at the time, but it was Robin who took plaques forward from the start until late 2009. That is after the establishment of what we have come to know as the Plaque Group. He helped set the tone of the scheme

based on changing English Heritage Guidance and provided a sound base for the collaborative venture with other societies that has followed. The Group's first plaque was fixed on 25 August 2010 to commemorate Thomas Barton and the last, the thirty-fourth, at Beeston Station on 8 October 2014.

The Plaque Group met last – for the thirty-sixth time - on 9 October 2015 to consider the *Plaque Guide* and web based production issues, leading to the appointment of Jonathan Tait as designer. The Guide is likely to be launched in Spring 2016 for maximum impact over the summer period.

Come and hear more about the Blue Plaque Story at our Christmas meeting in the Pearson Centre at 7.30pm on Friday 11 December and celebrate with a glass of wine.

Peter Robinson

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PLANNING

As a member of the sub-committee responsible for looking at and commenting on planning applications I have noticed that there seem to be fewer planning applications submitted than there used to be, and that many of them are for domestic extensions, and that the National Planning Policy Framework has to some extent changed the way planning applications are dealt with.

However this should not be taken to mean that the Civic Society should not have a watching brief, but that we should keep a wider remit.

Planning is not just about individual planning applications, it can incorporate economic development, Green Belt issues, Local Plans, Planning Policies, and Conservation. We as a group try to take every opportunity to get involved in these other planning issues and members will be aware of our involvement to date in the town centre Phase 2 proposals.

The latest update on Phase 2 which I have heard (at a Beeston West CAT meeting) is that Councillors have now decided on some kind of cinema based economy plus focal points. All the land currently being used by TWA will not be returned until February 2016, and the City Council still own some, if this does not come back to Broxtowe on favourable terms then that land may have to be excluded from the site.

The Council has no in-house expertise so they have appointed specialist advisers to handle the site. They are not able to negotiate with one developer as the process has to be competitive. Next there will be "Soft Market Testing" marrying the views of the public, councillors, and developers. The Council will be reliant on the developers to provide money, and any proposed development has to be viable. The European procurement process is used to choose developers, then terms will have to be agreed.

The chosen advisers spoke to councillors at the last town centre meeting. It is hoped builders will be on site 2017 and everything finished by 2018, but this may be ambitious.

The empty site is likely to be used for temporary car parking or a market site as a short term solution. There is only a very small budget to cover any works and Developers will want an "oven ready" site, as this is the most attractive with the least risk attached.

On public involvement, we were consulted on principle, the next opportunity will be when there is a planning application, and all design matters will be in the hands of the developers until then.

So perhaps the most interesting and involving part of looking at planning for the Society is not only commenting on individual planning applications but also now attending various council meetings as an observer, and reading and commenting on policy documents.

The Society have been continuing to comment on other planning applications which have gone to the Council's planning Committee for decisions to be made. At the meeting on 7th October discussing a proposal for development in the Green Belt for 5 executive flats at Moss Drive in Bramcote, councillors were divided. Some felt that there would be significant benefits to making an exception to the strong presumption against inappropriate development unless in very special circumstances. There was even a proposal that the inclusion of the site in the Green Belt should be subject to review. However after lengthy discussion, listening both to the objections of local residents and a statement in support from the prospective developers the majority voted to agree to the officer's recommendation to refuse permission. Decisions on two further applications were deferred. Councillors felt they could not make a decision on the plans to demolish a bungalow on Bridle Road and replace it with two dwellings without a site visit.

After strong objections from Historic England, the Ancient Monuments Society and the Council's own Heritage Adviser officers had recommended that plans for the Grange (the former police station) be turned down, councillors accepted the principle of housing on the site and did not feel that it was necessary to retain the 1950's building. They asked though that there should be further negotiations with the developer with the aim of minimising the impact of three storey flats on neighbouring residential properties. Accordingly they voted unanimously for deferral.

Finally can I urge any member of the society with a little spare time, enthusiasm for these sorts of matters and an interest in the built environment to get more involved with what we do. I'm afraid as an active member of many years it is beginning to feel like use it or lose it and after 40 successful years, and with big changes on the horizon that would be an enormous shame.

Caroline Penn

BEESTON MAPS

I have been creating maps on and off for many years, mainly walking maps relating to Lenton, where we lived from 1979 until November 2014, when we downsized to Beeston, but we have been shoppers and regular visitors to the town since 1996.



Robert hard at work on Heritage Open Day

I created the first

'Beeston Pubs & Cafés

Map in 2013 for the Beeston WEA Writing Class I attended, after we wrote a collection of 'foodie' stories and poems (yet to be published) and it grew from there. I put a copy on my blog and it got picked up by Matt at *The Beestonian*, then the *Nottingham Post*, who both published it. I then extended it south to include Beeston Marina and west to include the Fusion Café and Chilwell Creative Corner. It has been used by the Civic Society, Students, The Beestonian, Oxjam and the latest version has gone to Italy.

I also decided to add the blue plaques I noticed around Beeston and the map grew like topsy, to the point where it has become a 'Marmite' map, which some love and others hate.

I grew up in Wembley and the first maps I ever understood were diagrammatic London Transport underground and bus maps, which I started to keep from about the age of five. My mother used to say I could read a map before I could read a book and have always been fascinated by how maps are scaled and distorted, especially bus maps.

I believe we all map the world we know in horizontal and vertical lines and bring the locations which are important to us closer and place less important locations further away.

I have the ambitious (for me) idea of a linear map for the Borough of Broxtowe inspired by the 17th century map maker John Ogilby, but at present it is still an idea in my head and as pencil lines in a notebook (where all my maps begin). I suspect it will come to fruition in stages and change just like my first Beeston map.

I am currently working on several other maps relating to Nottingham for different people. It was Judy Sleath who asked me to adapt my Beeston map for use as part of the 2015 Heritage Open Days and I was happy to oblige.

I am also a local historian of sorts, having produced and published *Local History Magazine* with my wife, Susan Griffiths, from 1984 until we retired in 2006 and our active involvement with Nottinghamshire Local History Associations goes back to the 1980s. I have just stood down as organiser of the NLHA Angel Row History Forum in Nottingham Central Library after five years.

You can see some of my maps at: beestonweek.blogspot.co.uk

Robert Howard

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NEW MEMBERS

We welcome all our new members and look forward to meeting you at one of our forthcoming meetings.

More details on page 18.

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Heritage Open Days photographs



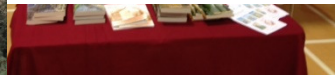
Guided tours of the Council Chamber



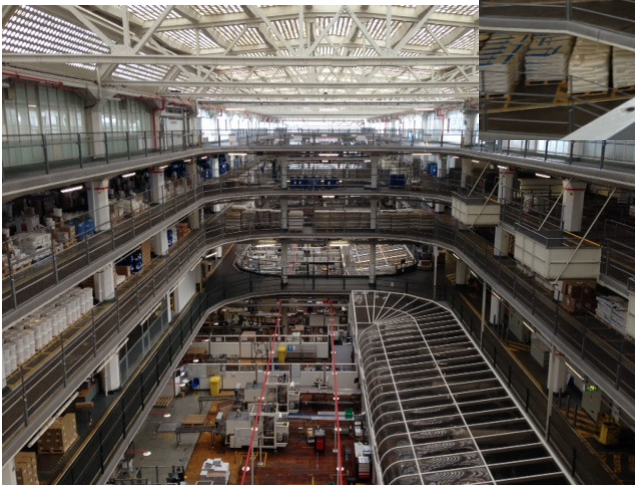
Morris Dancing in the Square



earson Centre



Visit to Boots D10



PITY THE POOR PEDESTRIAN

It's not that I don't feel sorry for cyclists as they deal with impatient motorists and are snared by tram tracks, it's just that I worry pedestrians tend to get forgotten about in the debates about cycle lanes and accommodating car traffic and public transport. Cycling can be a risky business but for every cyclist killed on our roads, nearly four pedestrians die. Surely the first priority of any highway layout must be to allow pedestrians to get from A to B safely and as directly as possible?



I wouldn't go quite as far as Jeremy Hardy's quip "Roads are for cars, pavements are for people, and canals are for bikes," but I do get upset when I see pavements being divided up into separate lanes for people and cyclists or simply being designated for both and we're supposed to sort it out between ourselves. Is it too much to ask to be able to walk along a pavement without having to keep an eye out for a lycra-clad speed merchant who could whizz up to me at any moment, and fearing abuse if I accidentally wander out of the stick man lane into their path? Yes, cycle lanes need to be created and cyclists allowed to travel safely, but this shouldn't be at the expense of pedestrians. This means that cycle lanes should always only be drawn on the carriageway and road schemes adjusted accordingly. If this simply isn't possible, then better to forego the cycle lane than to force pedestrians off their pavements.

I've walked to work in every job I've had since 1989. People often remark on how lucky I am to live near to my place of work so as to allow me to do that, as if it's some freakish circumstance that can't be repeated by most people. Well, no, actually it isn't a result of random good fortune; for me being close to my place of work has been an important factor when choosing where to rent or buy and could equally be so for others as well. Walking is a conscious choice for me and society benefits from that choice in terms of reduced environmental cost and the convenience for everybody else of my not competing for bus/tram seats or road/cycle lane space. There would be considerable advantages all round if more people chose to walk to work or to the shops. All I suggest to encourage this is for people to be able to walk along our pavements unhindered.

Robert Dowling

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CHAIRS AGM REPORT 2015 (this is a partial summary of two reports sent out by Judy prior to the AGM, I have omitted several issues which are covered elsewhere in this newsletter.)

We have had another good year! Many new members have joined us, we have spent a lot of time promoting the Civic Society at various events, the Carnival in July being a major event when we advertise the Heritage Open Days.

I started Coffee, Chat and Cake mornings at The White Lion on Station Road, a very popular place for community events. This gives members and indeed visitors a place to come informally to chat about things and just to one another, it has been very popular.

Planning and Conservation. We are still very active in looking at planning applications and this year have made many representations to the planning committee. We have formed 2 subcommittees for Planning and Conservation

The Pearson Centre. We are now in our new venue and I hope you are all pleased with it, it is large and bright and easy to get to.

Heritage Weekend was a triumph yet again and many thanks must deservedly go to the small band on the subcommittee including Eileen Atherton and Richard English. Two members are now standing down, Barbara Selwood and Joyce Brown and we owe them a debt of thanks for all the hours they have put in to make every year better. We distributed 11,000 copies of the comprehensive booklet with 50 venues to visit and many group visits were oversubscribed.

Website. Thanks to Owen we now have a thriving website and we also have a Twitter account. Members can join through our website and pay via paypal as indeed can any current member who does not pay by Standing Order. Any photos you have of Beeston will be gratefully received for the picture gallery. Please keep looking and send any remarks to us that you wish to make.

Subscriptions For those of you who joined this year, thank you, and may I tell you that those of you who joined in June or after do not need to pay again until next October 2016, I hope you will consider doing a standing order as this makes it so much easier for the Treasurer. Please ask at any meeting for your National Trust ticket if you have not already had it from us.

Art Competition

I organised this competition, this having happened a few years previously but then stopped presumably due to lack of support in the organisation of it. It didn't start off very well and I was quite disheartened by the number of entries, but on the day itself it came good as people went home and returned with more pictures to hang. It was visited by many people and some good comments were written by the visiting public about it, it is worth doing again. I have already booked the library for next Spring but it seems it (the Library) might be reburbished (again?) so the date may change as of course it will be closed during this time.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your support and messages after I announced in my previous report that I would not be standing for Chair again. I have been persuaded by many that we have an exciting time ahead and this is not the time to leave, especially with a major town development coming soon and the unexpected demise of BID which will leave a vacuum, who will speak for Beeston now? I therefore decided to stand again because I want to build on the success of the past with the 6 remaining current members and 5 other Beeston supporters have also thrown their hats into the ring to stand as committee members and we can hopefully carry the Civic Society forward into the digital age with fresh ideas and great enthusiasm.

We have some challenging times ahead, we need to engage in social media to reach our audience so let us all, members included, work together for the future and prosperity of Beeston.

Beeston Civic Society is all about looking to the future.

Judy Sleath

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AGM

This took place on 13th November 2015.

The final decision about the Executive Committee, after much debate about the future of the Civic Society and its constitution, was the re-election of Judy Sleath as Chair, Caroline Penn as Vice Chair, Eric Kerry as Treasurer and Eileen Atherton as Secretary.

In addition existing members Jean Cameron, Tina Launchbury, Dr Peter Robinson and Barbara Selwood were re-elected and new members voted in were Clive Southern, Matt Turpin, Gav Slater and Karan Simpkins, with Katherine Brown and Helen Stevenson being co-opted in their absence.

Thanks were extended to resigning members Dick Hutchinson, Michelle Patel, Owen Rees and Rosemary Sillis.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for membership 2015/6 –notice for those members who have not yet paid. Our new fee is now £10 for one person and £15 for two people in the same house.

Please:

Pay by cash or cheque at our next meeting on December 11th at the Pearson Centre

or by cheque to The Treasurer c/o 4, Penryn Crescent, Chilwell, NG9 5NZ or by visiting your bank, using sort code 72-03-54 a/c number 04224202

or you can pay on PayPal via our website which is

www.beestoncivicsociety.org.uk

or via internet banking using the above account sort code and account number.

EVENTS

Committee member Peter Robinson wrote to **Professor John Beckett** about the Beeston walks he hosted on Heritage Open Weekend:

“Many thanks for another excellent walk. You kept your audience of 50 or so informed and entertained for two hours. How do you do



it? There were many new faces there too, all curious to know more about Beeston's past and getting to know each other on the way round. It was a great way to end theHOD weekend."

MEETING REPORT - CIVIC VOICE September 2015

All members of Beeston and District Society are now members of Civic Voice, a national movement incorporating over two hundred community groups across the country with members who have pride in of the place they live in and who are seriously concerned with their built environment.

The National Chairman is Griff Rhys Jones and the Central Office is in Liverpool.



Ian Harvey's presentation

Ian Harvey (from Central Office and himself unapologetically from Liverpool!) addressed our Beeston audience with animated generously illustrated examples of local group activities throughout the land.

Some areas had focussed on the study and listing of local buildings of special interest. There was a focus on local amenities in some areas or on the preservation of

open space in others. In general there was concern with local development plans including both the architectural style and density of new building.

Organisation and manning of Heritage Days were popular activities in which many groups – including our own – and played an important role in enriching whole communities.

Further, it was particularly interesting to note that many of the local movements embraced care for the wellbeing of their own members in their annual programmes. This was happily demonstrated by the speaker in his telling photographs of the local social group gatherings!!

Civic Voice undoubtedly receives recognition nationally and receives support from other organisations including the National Trust. Most importantly, Civic Trust is called upon to give opinion on such relevant local and national issues being discussed at Parliamentary level. The Trust's widespread local contacts make unique countrywide data available which may well influence important Governmental decisions on the way we live.

Jean Cameron

VISIT TO TRAM CONTROL ROOM on 6th November

As a committed tram supporter, it was with bated breath that I joined the Civic Society outing, organised by Barbara Selwood, to the NET Tram Control Room at Wilkinson Street, on 6th November.

After alighting from a 36 minute tram trip from Beeston and assembling on the platform, the participants sought sanctuary from the rain and wind and were given a very warm welcome by Service Delivery Manager, Trevor Stocker. An interesting preamble allowed us to study the performance statistics of the week before – they were very impressive, close to 100% for a number of measures, despite a car being driven on to the tram line by accident on Wednesday morning. We were then ushered into a room lined with banks of screens simultaneously showing many different views of the tram network, including platforms, junctions, car parks and customers pressing help buttons.

There were 32 trams out on the lines during our visit, all quietly observed and controlled by three operators in the control room and our discussions were accompanied by chirpy customer service ladies, brightly responding to customers queries, including a reunion of gold topped walking stick with its owner. It was a very modern environment, computers monitoring the exact position of each tram at any time and a system designed to spot problems and issues immediately, with mechanisms in place to immediately send feedback to drivers and customers.

It's apparently too early to draw conclusions on what regular travel patterns or passenger numbers might be, but Trevor was positive that the Toton/Beeston route has been more heavily used than Clifton.

I know the construction process was disruptive and horrible but I was pleased to see an operating company proud to serve and committed to excellent service.

Karen Attwood

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HERITAGE OPEN DAYS – plea for help next year

One of the HOD organisers, Barbara Selwood, wrote an open letter to all members, which is printed in full here.

'We hope that all of you who wished to, and were able to, visited many events during HOD 2015 and enjoyed them.

Now that we have 'taken the bunting down' and cleared away the 'tables' etc from HOD, we will look back at what has been achieved.

We would appreciate any feedback from those of you who were able to attend events, the negatives as well as the positives and how we can improve next year, if at all, plus any further suggestions for events/venues.

We are looking for some more people to help us on the HOD sub-committee. The tasks fall into fairly clear areas:-

- Initially contacting potential people and venues – phoning, emailing and/or visiting. (Jan - Mar)
- When the list is established we need to collate the information from them which is then put into a booklet or other means of conveying it to the public. Careful proof reading is required at this stage. (April- May)
- Once booklets, or other, are available – distribution is required. (June – Aug)
- We could also do with someone who has good PR skills, helping us to get our message out to the public – in all ways possible, including making use of IT and social media.

We look forward to receiving your responses in the near future.'

Barbara Selwood

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES – Beeston & District Civic Society meetings and speakers

These meetings will take place in The Pearson Centre and will start at 7.30pm.
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11th December 2015

TheBlue Plaque Story, Peter Robinson

8th January 2016	Beeston Town Centre Developments, John Delaney & Michael Bruce.
12th February 2016	Beeston Transport, including NET
11th March 2016	Hope Nottingham, Nigel Adams
8th April 2016	General Open Meeting

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Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual authors and not the official stance of Beeston and District Civic Society unless explicitly stated.

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The next Newsletter is due to be published in March 2016

CHILWELL HALL AND THE CHARLTON FAMILY

214-218 High Road, Chilwell, NG9 5DB

Recent excavations suggest long occupation of the Hall site, possibly to pre-Roman times, with the first recorded building, the Martell Manor, dating from 1300. This passed by marriage in 1420 to Sir William Babington, Chief Justice of England 1423-1436. He rebuilt the house and associated chapel shortly after 1420.

Chilwell Hall is primarily associated with the Charlton Family (1270-1942). Initially Middlesex merchants, mining interests in Breaston brought them to Chilwell in about 1620. They rebuilt the house in 1652 and again in 1803, greatly extending the estate.



Chilwell Hall frontage c 1912



*Thomas Broughton
Charlton crest, 1857*

Charltons were active in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire for over 300 years, as landowners, in the military and as magistrates. At least two were appointed High Sheriffs of Nottinghamshire. Reform Act Rioters threatened the Hall in October 1831 and from 1843 it was home to Thomas Broughton Charlton and his wife Fanny Dora Walter, grand-daughter of the founder of The Times newspaper.

It was the Shell Filling Factory, built partly on Charlton land in 1915, that led to the break-up of an estate covering 1200 acres by 1901.

The Hall was demolished in 1933 after the family moved to Croxall, Staffordshire, where the last of the line died in a fire in 1942. Part of Chilwell Hall boundary wall and some garden trees survive on the High Road frontage.

Peter Robinson

