

CASTLE DONINGTON MUSEUM TRUST

NEWSLETTER

Registered Charity 1058715. February 2011 No 66 Accredited Museum 2028

A C C R E D I T E D
M U S E U M



MUSEUMS LIBRARIES ARCHIVES
COUNCIL

DEATH OF MISS HETTY CARR

Diary 2011

Friday 11th March

Annual General Meeting to be held at the Catholic Church Hall at 7.00 p.m. To be followed by a talk by Philip Heath on "Mystery Buildings".

Wednesday 16th March

Coffee Morning, 17 Hastings Street 11.00 a.m. till 1.00 p.m. £1 entry, Raffle, Bring & Buy, Cakes.

Tuesday 5th April

Museum Lunch, Donington Manor Hotel, 12.30 for 1.00 p.m. £13.25

Monday 2nd May

May Market through the village. Museum open with Tombola etc.

Saturday 25th June

Midsummer Barbeque in the Stone House garden for members. 6.30—9.30 p.m. £6 per person.

Tuesday 5th July

Museum Lunch, Donington Manor Hotel 12.30 for 1.00 p.m. £13.25

Saturday 13th August

Tea in the Garden To be held in the garden of the Quaker House, Barroon, 2.00. to 4.30 p.m. £3.00

Friday 16th September

Cheese and Wine evening. Catholic Church Hall, 7.30—9.30 p.m. £4.50 /£5

Tuesday 4th October

Museum Lunch, Donington Manor Hotel, 12.30 for 1.00 p.m. £13.25.

We were all greatly saddened to hear of the death on Saturday 19th February of Hetty. From the very earliest days of the Museum she has been one of our staunchest supporters; supplying information, loaning her treasures for exhibition and eventually offering to lease to us part of the Stone House as a Museum building. She literally enabled us to start all the work which we hope will continue for a very long time.

Her memories of the Castle Donington of her childhood and youth remained vivid in her memory and it was one of her great pleasures to talk

about it, and our pleasure to listen.

As she grew more frail, she went to live in a Nursing Home in Shepshed, and her visitors would sometimes find her showing the other ladies old photographs, and telling family stories. Her audience was always very attentive.

Hetty was a great character, friendly, intelligent, generous, and kind. She had many friends and all will miss her. We, the Museum people though, are in deep debt to her for her kindness to us. We appreciate so much the major part that she played in our development.

ANOTHER SEASON— ANOTHER EXHIBITION.

This year the Museum celebrates the wide variety of Churches and church buildings in our village along with Lockington and Hemington.

There will be information on the history of the parish churches of Castle Donington and Lockington

There were several non-conformist groups in Castle Donington, which became a centre in early years for the circuits and meeting groups of the different denominations. The first of these were the Quakers, started by Leicestershire man George Fox, who travelled widely to enlighten people in the new "inner light" which meant more to

him than the Church's doctrine.

Then came the Baptist and the Methodist movement and also the Congregationalist. They all built meeting houses in this place, most of which were considered both at the time and now, to be both beautiful and handsome. Not many local Baptist churches can compare with the beauty of our own, now sadly closed and due to be turned into dwelling houses. Objects, books and memorabilia from each church will be displayed, some from the museum's own collection and others generously loaned by the church authorities. The Baptist banner will, of course, be on display, we have said so much about it, that you just HAVE to come and see it for yourself.



Baptist church, Bondgate. Photo. N. Grist.

GORDON COOK.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of our friend Gordon Cook.

Gordon was a friend and supporter of the Museum in so many ways. When the Museum was first conceived it was Gordon who immediately made the money available to cover the whole of the 99 years rent. For that, we shall be ever grateful.

He promoted and supported the Museum whenever he could and was, when asked, only too pleased to supply any fabric for our exhibitions.

Gordon will be remembered for his friendship and generosity.

Our sincere condolences go to Anne and her family and we hope to see them at our future events.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES !

Every year we organise a calendar of fund-raising events and we are eternally grateful to all our members and friends who support these activities. Our “overhead” expenses are high because of the standards of care for the Collection required of an Accredited Museum and, with one notable exception, we have no help with meeting these.

The exception is our Parish Council which makes us an annual grant towards these costs. The remainder comes from your subscriptions, donations from visitors to the exhibitions, the Museum Shop and the coffee mornings, slide shows, raffles etc that you kindly support. Because of the age and nature of the Stone House, heaters and de-humidifiers have to be run constantly throughout the year and our electricity bills average £450.00 per quarter, nearly £2,000. Without your help, we would not survive. Thank you—we hope you think we’re worth it!

We are able to apply for grant aid for capital projects and, during 2010 we completed the work to improve facilities and equipment for the volunteers who work every week in the Barn to conserve, record and collate the Collection. This was thanks to a Lottery Heritage Grant of just under £10,000—one of the largest we have had. The County Council Shire Grant Scheme provided £300.00 to finance our work with the schools (the

Children’s Collection exhibition that is now an annual event) and the Flagship Project run throughout the year by Renaissance (now part of the Arts Council) in which we have been very much involved, gave us £600 to pay for training sessions for our volunteers by a Museum professional and £500 for essential equipment identified as a result. In previous years we have had grants from the District Council, East Midlands Airport Community Fund, the Association of Independent Museums (for professional conservation work to the Baptist Sunday School Banner) and the Co-operative Society’s Community Fund.

Most of the outside support and training we have enjoyed over the years has come from Public Bodies—the Museum Development Officer, the Curatorial Adviser and the Museum Forum are all provided by the County Council; the Arts Council and East Midlands Museum Service are funded by Central Government. We can only hold our breath while the powers-that-be decide where cuts will fall. Leicestershire County Council has always been very supportive of Heritage and the Arts and we have benefited from this but there is no doubt that belts will have to be tightened. It is good to know that we have built a strong team.—We will survive!

A CASTLE DONINGTON INVENTOR

by Bruce Townsend

Probably the feature most people associate with the Georgians above all else, is their liking for fine clothes. Rich fabrics and flamboyant colours were favoured by men and women alike and ornate trimmings such as silver buckles and buttons were essential accessories for the wealthy. Cuffs and collars were usually trimmed with lace, but in the eighteenth century this was extremely expensive, as it was all produced by hand. Only the wealthy could afford to bedeck themselves with this ultimate extravagance.

The inventors and frame smiths of the East Midlands, had already shown their aptitude for devising ingenious pieces of textile machinery such as Arkwright's cotton spinning mules or Strutt's elastic "Derby Rib" stocking machine and even earlier, the frame work knitter first made in Calverton. It was natural therefore that their attention would now turn to easier and cheaper ways of producing lace. This was to take more than fifty years, before the process was perfected, but along the way were many small but significant steps made by individuals which, if successful, could earn the inventor handsome profits.

One such entrepreneur was Simon Orgill, who found a way of adapting an earlier idea called the Dawson Wheel—a type of cam to produce a version of machine made lace superior to others of the time. The landowners of Castle Donington appear to have been reluctant to allow the

construction of new factories in the early 1800s but Orgill located one promising location in the middle of the village which was privately owned and whose occupant was willing to lease for the purpose of lace making. The properties we know today as No 3—9 Borough Street had formerly been a farm, but as a result of an unfavourable allocation of land in the Enclosure Award of 1778-9 were no longer serving that purpose. Samuel Follows, the original farmer had died, perhaps of a broken heart, and his son, William was living in the farmhouse with his widowed mother, Sarah and perhaps his wife.

The large double fronted house and associated farm buildings were suitable for adaptation to Orgill's "manufactory". Perhaps an added bonus was that Follows was an Attorney or Solicitor, as we would call him today and was prepared to back the enterprise and find others prepared to help its development. Sarah Follows probably owned all four properties, but the part with a frontage to Borough Street (No 3 and 5) were not included in the deal and may have already become shops.

Orgill's patent was granted on February 3rd 1807 and by March 19th an agreement was signed by him and by John Wilson, to whom he had sold the patent rights. Sarah and William Follows and another Donington man—Thomas Oldershaw, Samuel Follows (William's brother?) were also involved in the enterprise. The business flourished and Or-

and William Follows were able to buy out their partners by 1811, but in 1813 Follows died and Orgill was faced with finding the value of William's share of the business. An accommodation was reached with Samuel Follows and a loan obtained from Joseph Drake of King's Mills and possibly from John Bakewell and an Edward Ansell, although this is not certain. Fate had thus dealt Orgill an unkind blow and his earlier financial success had suffered a severe setback. But worse—much worse—was to follow.

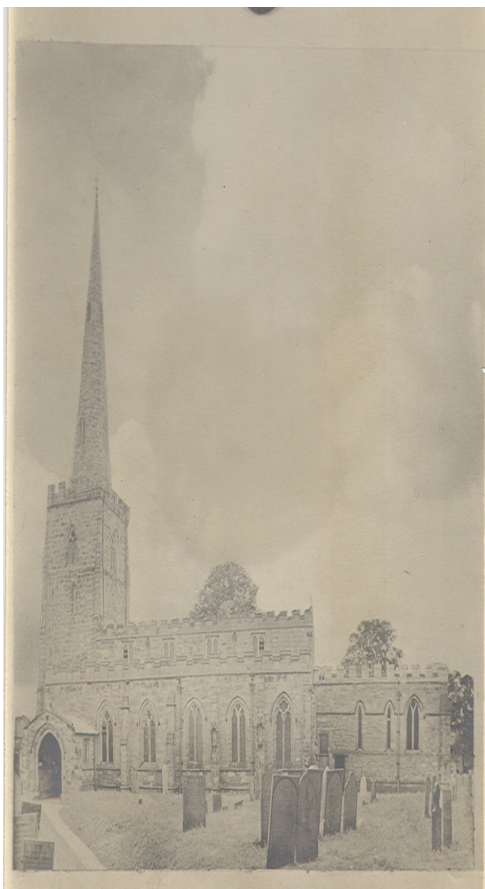
Textile workers in the area had suffered badly from the new machines of all types which were affecting their meager incomes and rendering many of them jobless. Despite the strenuous measures taken by the authorities they were wrecking machines all over the area in surprise night raids. The Luddites were on the rampage! In late March or early April 1814, they turned their attention to Orgill's factory and he was ruined. Whilst one of the journalists of a reactionary Nottingham newspaper was named by Orgill as the ringleader of the attack, there is no proof that he was ever convicted of the offence. The factory reverted to domestic use and Orgill's business ceased to exist. He may have later become involved in Jonathon Woodward's lace factory in Delven Lane, but if so, it was in a minor role.

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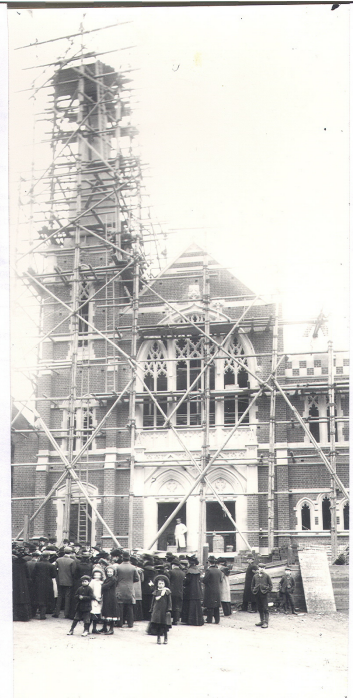
Contact Tel No 01332 812711

Website :
www.castledoningtonmuseum.org.uk

Coffee Morning,
Wednesday 16th
March, at 17, Hast-
ings Street, 11.00—
1.00 p.m. £1.



St. Edward's Church at the time when all the headstones were still standing.



RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A very large Pulpit Bible presented to St Edward's Church after alterations in 1877.

A collection of bills and invoices from a former Castle Donington business.

A record of burials from a local carpenter.

Boyden's and Wheildon's bus tickets from the 1950s.

Left: An Elkington photograph of the topping out ceremony on the Methodist Church in 1906.

CURATORIAL CORNER

Working in the museum is really very varied and interesting; I had a look around the room this week, and everyone was occupied in a different way. There was somebody writing, filling in forms, another was fixing photographs into an album, a third was working on the computer, while a fourth was sewing numbered tapes into a selection of hats. Don't ever think that we all sit doing the same thing week after week. Our photographer was downstairs photographing her way through every object we own. (It will take her years!) and then she has to put all her pictures onto the computer. There were others working downstairs preparing walls for the new information boards, and the sound of a Hoover whined somewhere in the back-ground. What was I doing? Sitting, looking round the room of course. Somebody has to keep an eye on things.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 11th March at the Catholic Church Hall, at 7.00p.m.

There will be a short period for Museum business, followed by tea and biscuits, and the opportunity to pay your subscriptions if you have forgotten to do so.

Afterwards, around 7.45 p.m.

an illustrated talk

will be given by

Philip Heath,

"Mystery Buildings"

which will give an insight into the history of places like Weston Hall at Weston on Trent, and Swarkestone Hall. This second half of the evening will be open to the general public, price £2.50 per head.

