CHESTERFIELD TOWN CENTRE TOUR

Historical Tales & Traditional Ales

A SELF-GUIDED PUB HERITAGE TOUR



£3.00
2ND EDITION

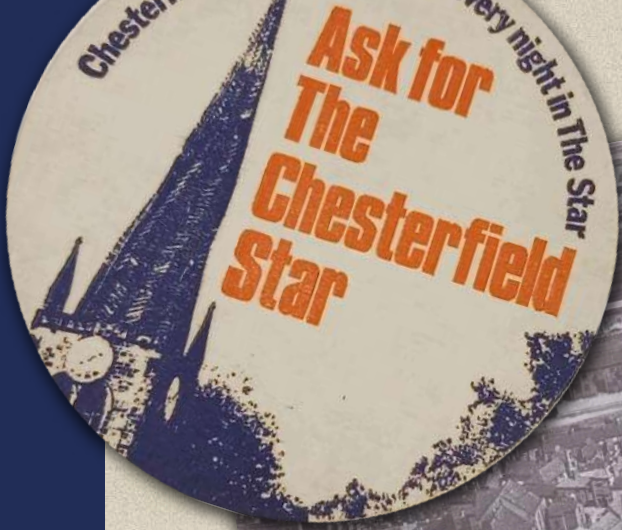
CHESTERFIELD
GREAT HISTORIC
PUB TOUR

CHESTERFIELD PUBS
PAST & PRESENT

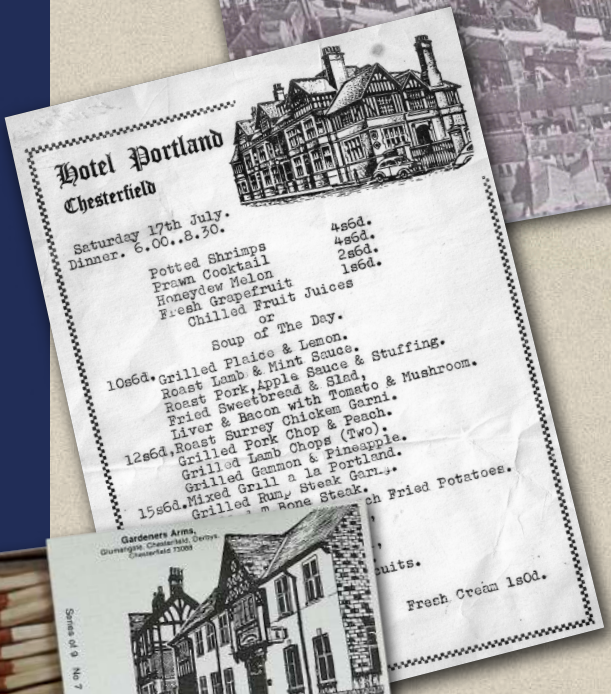
UPDATED FOR 2026/7 WITH NEW PUBS & NEW STORIES

"Pubs are magical gateways to the past. Not just buildings, but enchanted shrines where thousands of voices and stories echo throughout time"

CHRIS FOX



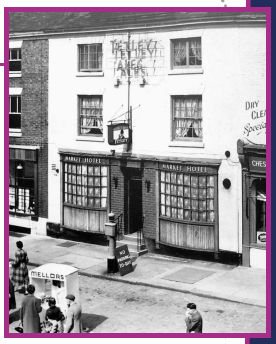








AN INTRODUCTION (OF SORTS)



Pubs are important. A simple statement but one worth remembering in these uncertain times. Our public houses have served our communities for decades and even centuries. Witness to life and death. War and peace. Love and loss. There through the best and worst of times. Standing proud, with open doors and a warm welcome, against the relentless march of time. Sadly, not all pubs have survived. Lost to progress (not always good), hardship (of which they are often the first to feel the pinch) and the changes in our society (though they have also endured and evolved).

This however is not a call for last orders but rather a celebration of everything that is great about our pubs and this wonderful Town Centre, they call home. The booklet is a time machine, that will take you back to a world, that whilst different, is strangely familiar too. Packed full of strange tales, devilish folklore, murderous scandals and most of all hope. The knowledge that the pubs are still here. Still open and still as good as, if not better than all those years ago. The completely but not always 100% true history of our ale houses and the long list of quirky characters that have propped up their bars. For a relevantly small district, there have been many dark deeds and unusual happenings in Chesterfield. A long list of weird and spooky stories that would definitely be a job for Mulder and Scully. Fitting for a town that lies in the twisted shadow of the Crooked Spire. Pubs are one of greatest sources of the tall tales we tell. These ancient buildings have many secrets. Whispers flow through their wooden beams and impish critters roam in their cellars mostly unseen. Goblins, Imps and Gremlins get up to all manner of mischievous deeds. You might just catch a glance of one them out of the corner of your eye, if you're unlucky. Or maybe, you've just had too many gin and tonics.

The historical content and stories for this booklet have been curated by Shaun Stevenson from the **Chesterfield Great Historic Pub Tour** and it's been a joy to work with him again on this exciting project (For more details check out the bios on the inside back cover). It must be said too that pubs are not just buildings. They are so much more than bricks and mortar. Even in these increasing digital times, pubs still bring people together. There's nothing more social than your local. This booklet unites 8 great Chesterfield Pubs and tells the story of their lives. Let us take you on a journey through Chesterfield's Historical Tales & Traditional Ales. It's watering holes and grand hotels. Each of the pubs has a long and fascinating history. And, while the legitimacy of Templar Knights, secret tunnels and Old Nick up the Spire can be debated, the legacy of the pubs cannot.

We should be proud of our pubs and town. Feel a kinship with the hundreds of people that have stood each side of their bars. With your support and ongoing custom our pubs will no doubt have a long and glorious future. We hope you enjoy this booklet. Maybe you will find a new favourite pub or rediscovered one of the old classics. No doubt you will pick up a few chilling tales and fun facts, which you can use later to impress your friends and family too. **CHEERS, CHRIS FOX**

PLEASE TAKE CARE, BE SAFE AND BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS AT ALL TIMES WHEN USING THIS BOOKLET

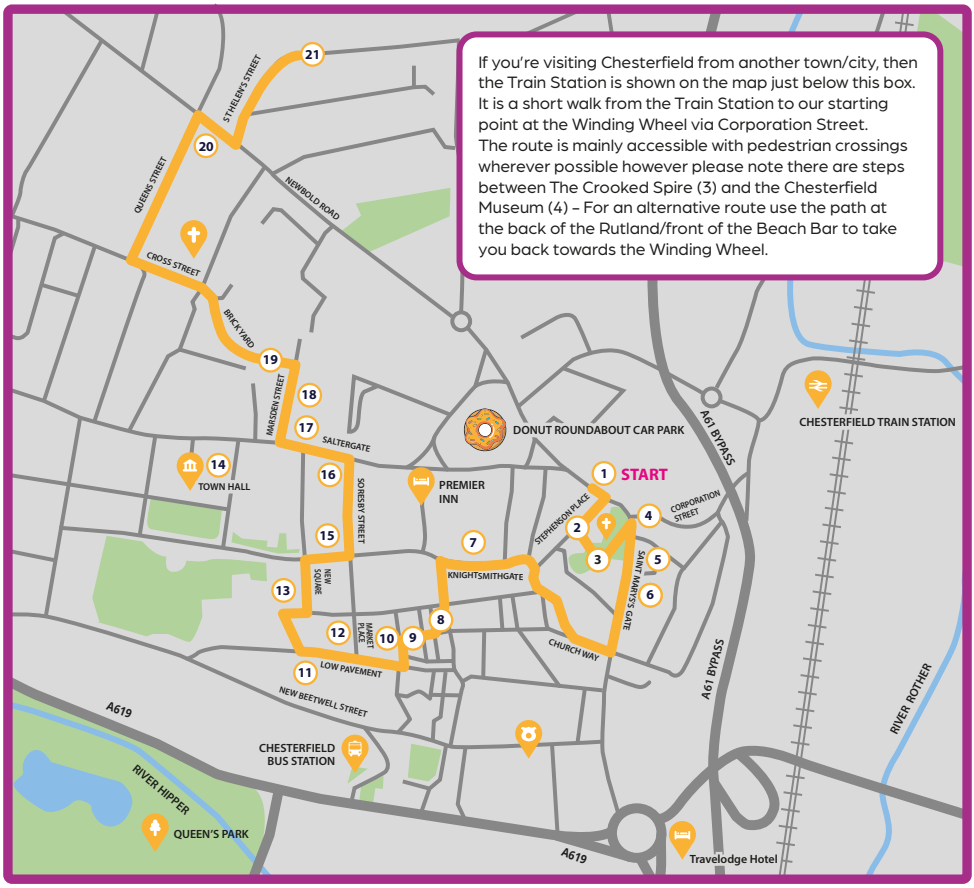
- **Take care crossing any roads and use pedestrian crossings where available.**
- **Respect the needs of local people and businesses.**

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- **By using this booklet you accept full liability for any loss, damage, injuries, claim, costs or expenses, demands, proceedings or damages of any nature whatsoever, including but not limited to direct, indirect or consequential losses, which may arise in consequence of using this booklet.**
- **All the information featured is reported correctly to the best of knowledge. We the creators of this booklet will be not liable for any historic or modern inaccuracies.**
- **All adverts are subject to change. Please check social media and Google for opening times of the businesses featured.**
- **Please drink responsibly. For guidance and advice about your relationship with alcohol please visit www.drinkaware.co.uk**

Historical Tales & Traditional Ales

Follow the route marked by the **orange line** below, starting at The Winding Wheel . Please be aware of your surroundings at all times, especially if you need to cross any roads. This map is a walking route. Not all roads are suitable for cars and maybe part of pedestrian zones or one-way systems.



CHESTERFIELD PUBS & LANDMARKS

1. THE WINDING WHEEL
2. THE RUTLAND
3. THE CROOKED SPIRE
4. CHESTERFIELD MUSEUM
5. SAINTS BAR
6. THE PIG & PUMP
7. THE VICTORIA CENTRE
8. YE ROYAL OAK
9. CATHEDRAL VAULTS / MARKET SQUARE
10. MARKET PLACE
11. PEACOCK INN
12. MARKET HALL
13. THE MARKET PUB
14. THE TOWN HALL
15. THE QUEEN'S HEAD
16. THE CORNER HOUSE
17. GASOLINE AMERICAN BAR
18. REAL TIME LIVE
19. ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS
20. CHESTERFIELD ARMS
21. THE NEPTUNE

WINDING WHEEL THEATRE ❶





The Picture House opened on 10th September 1923 with Frank Keenan in "Hearts Affair'' and Buster Keaton in "The Playhouse", by the Chesterfield Picture House Co. Ltd. It was built in the mock Tudor style, popular in the 1920s. Inside the auditorium there was a Neo-Classical style of decoration, with seating for 1,328 in stalls and circle, which still retains its original folding seats.

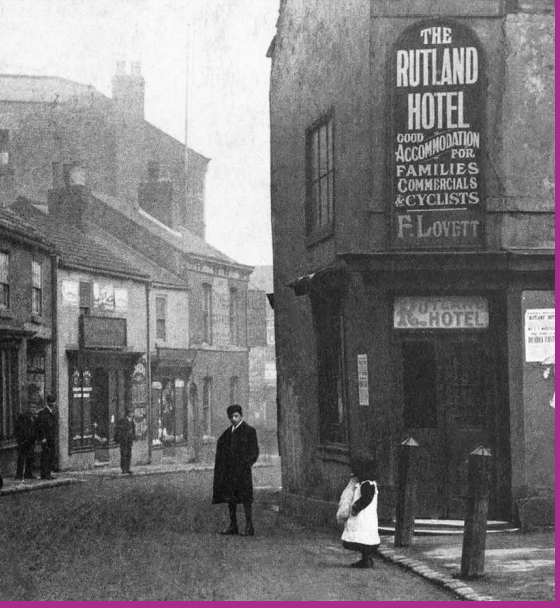
The cinema was equipped with a Jardine 3Manual/23 stop Concert organ which was opened by Edwin Booth. It was on this instrument that Reginald Dixon had his first organ instructions, he later became one of the UK's most famous organists.



Located to the left of the cinema, there was a large café/restaurant which still has the CPH logo, and a ballroom with a stained glass central dome in the ceiling. The Picture House was closed for a period in 1930, when the auditorium was extended to the designs of Sheffield architect Harold Sheppherd, who had originally designed the cinema. It re-opened on 7th July 1930, with an increased seating capacity of 1,559, screening the talking picture "Paris", starring Jack Buchanan. From 9th November 1936, the Picture House was taken over by Oscar Deutsch and became part of his Odeon Theatres Ltd chain. It was re-named Odeon in 1937.

The restaurant was closed in 1969 and the ballroom was converted into the 'Fusion Disco', later Jingles, the stained glass dome was rashly painted black in the process. In 1975, this had closed and had been converted into a bar and exhibition space. The Odeon closed as a cinema on 19th June 1981 with Kurt Russell in "Escape From New York" and "12th Squadron Buccaneers".

The building lay unused until 1987 when it was purchased by Chesterfield Borough Council and refurbished as a concert, conference and exhibition hall and banquet facility named The Winding Wheel. From October 2000, the Winding Wheel was designated a Grade II Listed building by English Heritage. **SHAUN STEVENSON**





2 THE RUTLAND The history of the Rutland Arms has proved somewhat difficult to decipher. What we do know for sure is that there were originally three buildings along what is now called Church Walk that had a connection to the pub.

At the eastern end is the classic red brick town house that was owned by Samuel Dutton, who was Mayor of Chesterfield eight times between 1818 and 1845. On the west side, was a shop and then a rather rough looking building that stood on the original route of Knifesmithgate. Stephensons Place and Cavendish Street were built much later, Knifesmithgate joined Holywell Street across from where the Winding Wheel is today.

In 1866, the unfortunately named Mr Fidler took on the building on Knifesmithgate calling it The Rutland Arms. In 1870, the shop was incorporated and the business was renamed The Rutland Hotel.

Perhaps due to its proximity to the Crooked Spire graveyard, the pub is reportedly haunted by many different ghosts. The most compelling story is the tale of Hannah Owens, who was a servant girl at the hotel in 1875. After a night out drinking with a friend, and clearly in an emotional state, she hung herself in the backyard water closet, with a clothesline, the following morning. Her ghost has appeared many times, most commonly as the White Lady who glides down the stairs and across to the bar.

In 1882, two men were drinking in the pub, George Coles, who got into an argument with an acquaintance called John 'Boney' Flint, who was a professional boxer, over a pint. Flint struck George at the base of his skull with a stick. George left to fetch a policeman. When George returned, Flint punched him in the side of the neck. George collapsed and swiftly expired. Flint was eventually convicted of manslaughter, despite previous convictions for violence in Sheffield.

In 1906, plans were made to redevelop the eastern end of Knifesmithgate. The Rutland Hotel stood in the middle of what would become Stephensons Place and needed to be demolished. An ingenious plan was conceived whereby the shop in the middle would be pulled down, and the new pub that we see today was built in its place to accommodate the road widening plan. Once complete, the licence would be transferred to the new build and the old corner property could then be demolished, leaving the resulting plot a rather unusual triangular shape.



HORRID HISTORY

The Rutland twice had a narrow escape from being destroyed by fire when the three storey building across the alleyway at the rear of the inn was destroyed by spectacular fires in 1900 and 1916.



In 1923, the landlord was Joe Humphries, wicketkeeper for Derbyshire County Cricket Club, member of Chesterfield Cricket Club and first class cricket umpire. He died in Chesterfield, just a few days before his 70th birthday.

In 1921 the pub was bought at auction by Tennants Brewery of Sheffield for £5350.

The electric trolley bus system was extended down Stephensons Place in 1927, the cast iron tram stop on one corner of the pub was installed and remains to this day.

In 1961, Michael Copeland met his third murder victim, George Stobbs, just outside the Rutland, committing that night, what the papers called the carbon copy murder, due to its similarity to the Bubble Car Murder a few months earlier.

Also, that same year, Whitbread purchased the owners of the pub, Tennant Brothers of Sheffield, and extended the Rutland into the red brick house next door. The former home of Samuel Dutton had been used as the Verger's house but was sold by St Mary's and All Saints. It is slightly higher which is the reason for the steps inside the pub.



Barbie Smith told us,"I met my husband in the Rutland in 1981, he was the piano player at a birthday party for my friend. We left together at 6am after a memorable lock in and we've been together ever since. The Rutland had two rooms back then. The bar was on the right hand side as you came in the front door, (where the middle door and windows exist today). Part of the dividing wall had been removed and a small bar installed so that the barman could serve the back room. If you look on the floor, you will see the square which used to be the opening to the cellar. If the police came knocking, the landlord would put us down the wooden steps and close the hatch, with the last one holding the till drawer till the coast was clear. Happy days! The piano was against the back wall in the back room on the right of the present bar. The landlord was Pete Shaw (legend) before he ended up at the Aquarius".

The Rutland became a Hogshead Alehouse in the mid 1990s, under the stewardship of the Randall family, and was well known for its excellent food.

In more recent times, the pub was owned by Stonegate and following a succession of unsuccessful tenants, it was leased by Spire Inns. They invited Martin and Dawn Alvey to run the pub from May 2023.

Shortly after their successful reopening, the Pub People purchased the building, retained the management and intend to continue renovating this thoroughly traditional pub, voted Chesterfield CAMRA Spring Pub of the season for 2026. **SHAUN STEVENSON**

Something to look for is a map of all 110 Town Centre pubs past and present, created by Martin and displayed above the open fireplace (Photo right).











TheRutlandPub

therutland

THE RUTLAND ARMS

Local Cask Ales

Dog Friendly

Wines & Spirits

Quiz Nights

Open Fires & Games

Live Music

EVERY FRIDAY FROM 8:00 PM

OPENING TIMES

Mon & Tue 3pm - 11pm

Wed & Thur 12pm - 11pm

Friday 12pm - 12am

Saturday 12pm - 12am

Sunday 12pm - 11pm

23 Stephenson Place, Chesterfield, S40 1XL

01246 931870

therutlandpub@outlook.com







ST MARY AND ALL SAINTS 3

The spire of St Mary's and All Saints Church is famously known as the Crooked Spire. It reaches 228 ft (70m) and leans by 9 feet 6 inches, and is certainly a prominent landmark when approaching the town from almost any direction. In 1093, William II confirmed the granting of a Chesterfield Church to the Dean of Lincoln, although the charter mentions a church in Chesterfield during the time of Edward the Confessor. These churches were probably built of wood. The church now stands in the north east corner of what would have been the Roman fort. Work began on the present building in 1234 when it was dedicated to All Saints. This dedication may have been changed to St Mary and All Saints after the Reformation of 1547 which led to the suppression of Chesterfield's medieval Guilds, of which the Guild of the Blessed Virgin Mary was the oldest.

This is the largest parish church in the county and the only Anglican parish church in the country with two Lady chapels; only the cathedrals of Canterbury and Bristol also have two. The church was refurbished in 1843 under the direction of Sir George Gilbert Scott. The box pews were removed and the galleries reduced, with only the west gallery remaining, making the interior much lighter. In December 1961, a fire started in the organ. Fortunately, the thick oak trap door of the organ loft was closed which held back the fire from the tower. As a fireman with a hose reached the ringing chamber, just below the spire, the trap door in the floor succumbed to the flames, fell into the transept and the chamber was engulfed by the fire below. Seconds later and nothing could have been done to save the spire and the bells from the inferno.

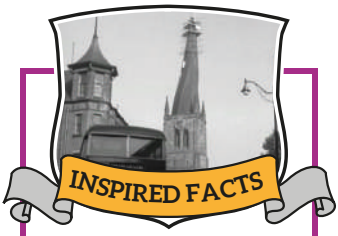
Of particular interest inside the church is the saxon font from around 700 AD, the Foljambe monuments, and the window, celebrating the 750th anniversary of the church, which depicts the development of the town. It is possible to ascend the tower to the base of the spire to admire the view on certain days during the year. Most fascinating of all, is that the spire is not actually fixed to the top of the tower and instead relies only on its own weight to keep it in place.

So, why is the crooked spire crooked? The original design was a straight spiral, much like a unicorn's horn. But, as the wooden spire was being built at the time of the Black Death in 1349, a theory has been put forward that the original craftsmen may have died. As a result, less experienced men completed the job and they made the mistake of using green timber. However, seasoned oak is too hard for the chisels and cutting tools at that era.The spire only became crooked when 32 tonnes of lead was added to the wooden structure in the 1600s. The daily expansion and contraction of thelead by the warmth of the sun causes it to lean 9 feet 6 inches to the north east.

Of course, more colourful explanations are common, including the tall tale about the devil himself. He supposedly landed upon the spire and wrapped his tail around it in order to leer at a beautiful virgin getting married in the church. This folklore also asserts that the spire will straighten up again, the next time a virgin bride walks down the aisle.

In 1898, Charles Markham, famous local industrialist and mayor, suggested that the lead could be replaced by copper, with the whole project being funded by the scrap value of the lead. As the copper would be one fifth of the weight, this would probably prevent the spire from leaning any further, but his suggestion was declined and the spire continues to become more crooked each year.

In 1923, an expert from London called Forsyth claimed that the spire had broken its back and insisted that the bells remain silent as the next windy day could bring the whole tower down. Well Mr Forsythe, it's still here over 100 years later! It has proved to be a masterstroke in increasing Chesterfield's name awareness and marketing potential in the tourism industry.



FACT CHECKING

St Mary and All Saints Church is so big that it's often mistaken for a Cathedral. It's in fact the largest church in Derbyshire. To be technically correct, the Spire is not crooked but rather it is twisted. The Twisted Spire doesn't quite have the same ring to it does it?



PHOTOGRAPHY SPOTLIGHT
Sean Morgan Photography. Visit www.seanmorganphotography.co.uk or search for Sean Morgan Photography on Facebook/Instagram

4 **THE CHESTERFIELD MUSEUM** is part of the George Stephenson Memorial Hall. Built in 1879, to commemorate the life of the railway engineer, creator of the Rocket Steam Engine and adopted son of Chesterfield, George Stephenson. He spent his final years at Tapton House, overlooking the railways he had helped to create. The building was commissioned by engineers who designed it as an educational facility, the section that now contains the museum became the first public library in Chesterfield in 1880.



A museum for Chesterfield was first looked at seriously in the 1920s. The Borough Records and Museum Committee, formed in 1921, had the responsibility of looking after the town's historic documents and objects with a view to creating a museum and in 1925, when Tapton House was given to the town, it looked like becoming a reality. Tapton House, however, was to become a school in 1930 and it was decided that 'the establishment of a museum be postponed until a more opportune time. By the late 1980s, plans for a museum in Chesterfield were finally underway and in May 1994, after many years of planning and anticipation, Chesterfield finally opened its town museum. Chesterfield Museum is temporarily closed with ambitious plans to refurbish and reimagine the Grade 2 listed Stephenson Memorial Hall, which is home to both the Museum and Pomegranate Theatre.

In March 2026 , it was announced the museum will relaunch as 1435 – a transformed cultural venue where people and stories come together. The new name pays tribute to one of George Stephenson's most significant innovations: the standard-gauge rail track. Set 1435mm apart, these rails became the international benchmark for travel, carrying people, ideas and opportunities around the world. That spirit of connection underpins the vision for 1435, which will welcome visitors through arts, culture and heritage while building new links across the community.



EAT YOUR VEGGIES

Civil engineer George Stephenson (1781–1848), was known as the "Father of the Railway". A life-sized bronze statue of his likeness stands outside of Chesterfield railway station (See photo left) . He also was the inventor of the cucumber straightener. An elongated glass funnel which was placed over cucumbers at an early stage to encourage the fruit to grow straight and true.

5 SAINTS BAR This building dates back to 1614 when the land was purchased by Mr Gilbert Heathcote, having previously been the site of a tenement belonging to the Bishop of Lincoln. The oldest parts of the Heathcote family home were almost certainly constructed before Gilbert's death in 1634. Two of his grandsons born in the house were Sir Gilbert Heathcote and his brother, Caleb. Sir Gilbert, named after his grandfather, was a successful businessman, who went on to become one of the founders of the Bank of England and Lord Mayor of London in 1711. Coincidentally, his brother Caleb, who had sailed to the new world, became mayor of New York also in 1711. The first and only time that these global cities simultaneously had brothers elected as Mayors.

Sir Gilbert did not have the best of luck at his Lord Mayors Parade. He chose to ride his own horse, who became spooked by the large crowd, tipping his rider onto the street. As bystanders went to his aide, it was discovered that Sir Gilbert had broken his leg. Possibly, due to this event, it was the last time that the Lord Mayor of London joined the parade in anything other than an open coach.

In 1898, the property was purchased by the influential Shentall family and received an external makeover, which included the dated plaque above the door. Ernest Shentall was Mayor of Chesterfield 1913–1919, and was knighted in 1918. The house became largely a warehouse for fruit, vegetables and flowers, a busy and bustling place. Shentall was a man known for his generosity towards the poor and was the driving force behind the World War One memorial on the north side of the Crooked Spire. His generosity was remembered by the naming of Shentall Gardens, in front of the Town Hall.

After the Shentall family sold the property in the late 1980s, it was repurposed and opened as a bar and restaurant called Heathcotes around 2000. It was followed by S41 and for a short time, was known as The Distillery, before laying empty for a number of years.

In 2025, the building was purchased by the Wattam family and a local businessman, Arvinder Singh, who refurbished and reopened in March 2026, as Saints Bar. The refurbishment was painstaking due to the building's grade 2 listed status. There are many internal architectural features that require careful preservation. In contrast, the bar and cellar equipment was installed by Heineken and is state of the art. Each line is chilled to the point of delivery so that every pint arrives at the perfect temperature.







Before the bar was opened, a paranormal investigation team visited to explore the property in November 2025. Much of the information acquired on the night came from the team's clairvoyant, Rob, who was kept in the dark about the location prior to arrival. Rob picked up on the name of a former regular customer who occasionally checked in on the bar. This may have been Jason Davey, although Davey may have been a nickname, a man who passed away in his 60s.

Upstairs, the ghost of a young woman called Lizzy, was discovered in the first room. She was apparently of a nervous disposition who preferred it when the boss was away. In the main front room on the first floor, there was the ghost of a man named Bryan or Ryan who was described as work shy. It seems he may have spent his days gazing out of the window at the churchyard and busy street below, this is something he continues to this day, so keep an eye out for him. Also, in the same room, there was a spirit of a young girl. Paranormal investigators often bring toys for the benefit of interactions with child ghosts. When the random word generator spoke the word 'doll', the team decided to put their doll on the floor. With the team and some of the owners sat in a circle around the doll, it was seen by several individuals to momentarily move of its own accord, as if the spirit had unsuccessfully tried to pick up the doll.

Amusingly, Rob picked up on the beautiful grand piano being out of place. It was salvaged after serving for many years in a local church. In his head, Rob could hear the theme tune from Postman Pat and asked if the piano had been given a name, to which the answer came, yes, Patricia. **SHAUN STEVENSON**






SAINtS

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IN THE HEART OF CHESTERFIELD

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HISTORIC GRADE II LISTED BUILDING

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6 THE PIG & PUMP/THE WHITE SWAN The Pig & Pump was formerly known as the White Swan and stands so close to St Mary's and All Saints Church that its history is closely entwined with the Crooked Spire. During the 12th century, St Hugh, the Bishop of Lincoln, effectively gave the Church and the land that it stands upon to the townsfolk of Chesterfield. St Hugh was canonised twenty years after he died in 1220, he is the patron saint of sick children and shoemakers. This title is entirely appropriate given that St Mary's Gate was formerly Sowtersgate, sowter being an old word for a shoemaker.

St Hugh was often depicted in Christian iconography with an image of a white swan at his side. On the day St Hugh was enthroned as Bishop an unusually large hooper swan appeared in his garden. It was aggressive to everyone except St Hugh and became his unofficial bodyguard, even watching over him as he slept. The White Swan public house is almost certainly named for this reason.

The origin of this pub is steeped in mystery. A 14th century malting oven was discovered by archaeologists in 1970, despite being an excellent example of its kind, it was reburied under the car park. The previous incarnation of the White Swan was probably built in the 1700s and called the Swan Inn, it had its own yard and six cottages. Even then, the locals called it the Mucky Duck, displaying the typical Derbyshire irreverent humour.

A man called Mr Twelves was the landlord in 1822, and later, the Swan Inn was offered for sale in 1839 having its own brewhouse and stabling for 12 horses. When the railway station opened in 1840, the stabling was appreciated by wealthy individuals wishing to leave their horses in good hands, whilst they travelled to London and Birmingham.

By 1845, Mr Wardle was in charge. Around 1852, the former landlord of the Black Bull (a lost pub from Lordsmill Street), Mr Brailsford, was landlord at the Swan. In 1860, Mrs Garrett, wife of the Reverend Garrett complained to the authorities that women of ill repute frequented the Swan and his license was revoked for a full 12 months. Brailsford died in 1883 and the pub was sold for £1,130 to a Mr Sipson, who also owned the Bulls Head in The Shambles. Just 4 years later, Mrs Sipson discovered a fire in one of the bedrooms. A garment hung on a wardrobe had caught the flame of a candle but fortunately the fire brigade turned up in good time and the total damage amounted to just 15 pounds.

In 1902, partly to enable St Mary's Gate to be widened, the building was demolished and rebuilt by John Smith's Tadcaster Brewery, complete with the swan emblem on the front of the building, and in the windows, which remain today.

In February 1910, an attractive thief called Kate Smith awaited her next victim in the pub. When James Gallimore, a coal miner from Warwick Street, Birdholme came in, she greeted him with "I'm coming, love". Taken aback by the familiarity of the woman, James was generous enough to purchase her some whisky but when she asked for a sixpence for more, he refused. Undaunted, Kate threw her arms around the miner before leaving, taking with her the 4 shillings that had been in his pocket. James then reported the crime to Sergeant Birchall, who arrested Ms Smith, of no fixed abode. The court did not believe her pleas of innocence, largely due to previous convictions, and she was sentenced to three months.

Outbuildings at the rear were used as a boxing club in 1911, an education in pugilism was offered by one professor Jack Dixon, a man with some obvious flair. In 1936, Mrs Poppleton advertised her dance studio which was in the function room on the first floor.

During the 60s, 70s, 80s and even into the 90s, the pub was known as a live music venue. Most notably, the Sheffield band Pulp rehearsed and played here, reportedly writing and first performing their hit Common People, in the pub.

This was at a time when the layout was significantly different. An entrance hall contained the stairs and a corridor to the kitchen and toilets. A tap room and lounge were accessed through doors on the right hand side of the corridor. A centralised bar with its back to the corridor served both rooms, with a partial dividing wall at the halfway point.



In 1998, the pub underwent major refurbishment when it became open plan with a new bar position and changed its name to the Avenue. Six years later, it was sold and opened as Simply Chinese, an oriental restaurant in 2004. The restaurant traded for eight years before it closed, allowing another major refurbishment in March 2012, when it was renamed the White Swan again.

In 2018, it became the Pig & Pump, a name chosen to attract attention to the real ale offerings and sausage and mash specialities menu. Since then, the menu has expanded to include some great burger choices, tapas options and even Sunday lunches. **SHAUN STEVENSON**


PIG & PUMP
PUB • KITCHEN


CHESTERFIELD'S TRADITIONAL PUB WITH A TWIST
Warm & welcoming atmosphere, Doggie friendly too!
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Delicious homecooked & locally sourced menu
running all day everyday!
Tapas & Burger Board Deals
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Live music every weekend from 9pm
Seasonal Cocktails, Outside Area, Superb Staff
What more could you ask for !!!


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16 St Mary's Gate, Chesterfield S41 7TJ






7 THE VICTORIA CENTRE (photos top) was built by the town council on the former site of a forging works and the cemetery of the Elder Yard Chapel in the 1920s. Some human remains were moved to a communal grave at the back of the Chapel. It was built in the mock Tudor style that had been adopted by John Smiths Brewery and others who had renovated their public houses in the handsome black and white style. Originally, the building had shops on the ground floor, under the colonnade, designed to keep shoppers dry.

Upstairs, there was a cinema and a billiard hall, which was the domain of Joe Davies. Joe was world snooker champion from 1929 to 1946 and the first player to register a break of over 100 in a competitive match. The billiard room was later fitted with a sprungdance floor and was a popular dance hall and nightclub. Many of the black and white buildings in Chesterfield were originally pubs. This was due to licensing laws being strengthened in the 1920s. Public houses could be closed down if they were not 'fit for purpose'. The result of this was a number of brewery companies rebuilt several of the town centre pubs around the same time. **SHAUN STEVENSON**



To the front, left is The Golden Fleece which was originally opened in 1762 on Knifesmithgate. The pub was consumed by J B White and Sons, a wine merchant on the High Street, in 1864, becoming High Street Vaults. At this time, the alleyway leading from the High Street went right through to Knifesmithgate and was a popular cut through that avoided the busy Packers Row. A 1939 expose in the Derbyshire Times detailed the extensive renovation and reopening of the Golden Fleece. Like many pubs in Chesterfield, there are rumours of tunnels leading to the Crooked Spire from the Golden Fleece. Whilst there is some brickwork in the cellar that suggests this might be possible, an attempt to unblock the potential passages has not been made.





8 YE ROYAL OAK Local folklore hints that the Royal Oak dates back to the 12th century and was used as a meeting place by the Knights Templar. There is no evidence to support this assertion, although it is entirely possible that there was a pub on this site as the Shambles in which it stands was present during that time. Any trace of a building that old has long been lost or replaced.

The Royal Oak is a Grade II listed building and the oldest inn in Chesterfield, and one of the oldest in Derbyshire. The brick part of the building dates back to at least 1684, when it is recorded that a piece of land was sold in order to 'build an extension to the Royal Oak'. In 1660, many pubs were renamed The Royal Oak following the coronation of Charles 2nd – the heir to the throne who had hidden in a hollowed out oak tree in 1651. This means that the pub may have been called something else before 1660.

A reference to the pub appears in a conveyance report of 1772 when it was attached to the timber frame building that now forms the top bar. This timber-framed part of the present inn was originally two butcher's shops, which were owned by the Duke of Devonshire until they were purchased by the Batteson family, owners of the Royal Oak, in 1844. The shop on the east side was let to Joseph Redfern, landlord of the inn at the time, and the other remained a butcher's shop. In 1845, the tenant, George Collis, was brutally murdered by his business partner, John Platts. His body was chopped up, dragged in a sack, and dumped in a cesspit at the rear of the nearby Falcon Inn, on Low Pavements. George's remains lay undiscovered for more than a year and when eventually found they still contained a silk handkerchief bearing George's initials. John Platts was arrested and, in April 1847, he was hanged in Derby Gaol.

In 1866, the landlord was John Churchwell. He was fined £2 and costs for permitting drunkenness and lost his licence for a year.

It was renovated into its current form after being purchased from the Batteson family by William Stones Brewery in 1897. The top bar, including the windows, remains largely untouched since then. The restoration was carried out under the direction of Alderman T P Wood, a wine and spirit merchant of Chesterfield, he was a director of William Stones Ltd at the time. The Tudor look was adopted by the Stones Brewery and many of their local pubs were given a black and white facade.

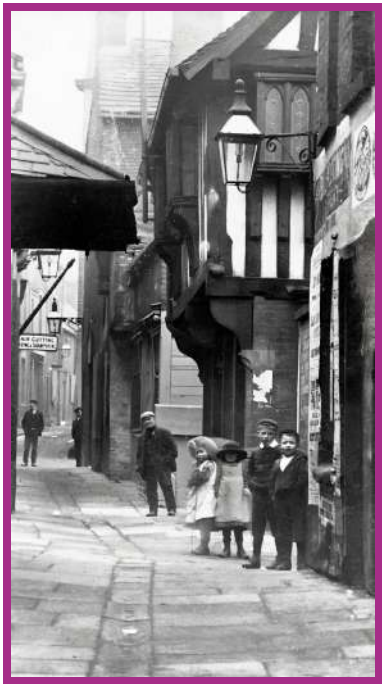
In 1904, when the landlord wanted to renew the licence, the court was told of an objection. Within a radius of 25 yards of the Royal Oak, there were three other fully licensed houses. Within a radius of 100 yards, there were no fewer than 23 pubs, and within a 150-yard radius there were 31 licensed premises. The police opposed the renewal on grounds including non-necessity, an excessive number of licences, public undesirability, difficulty of police supervision, and two recorded convictions in 1903. Despite the Chief Constable stating he had a high opinion of the tenant, the magistrates refused the renewal, although they stated they had "no objection whatsoever to the tenant." An appeal against the decision was noted, and recognisances were fixed at £50.



There are many "shambles" across the country. The word comes from the olde english "scamol," specifically meaning shelf or stool, but used for slaughterhouses and butcher shops, particularly in cramped conditions (The photo bottom left shows the channel down the middle which would have been used to take the blood away from the butchers).

Fortunately, plans to demolish the building in 1929 and in the 1970s did not happen, and the Royal Oak survived. There is still an extensive cellar below the bar floor, complete with the butcher's slab that George Collis must have been chopped up on and a trapdoor down to what is allegedly one of Chesterfield's many underground passages.

Ronald Sutherland became the landlord in 1958 and installed the double-sided bar in 1960. A further tragedy to befall the Royal Oak occurred on Good Friday of 1963. Gerald Sutherland, the 18 year old son of the landlord, was discovered dead in the kitchen. He had been to watch Chesterfield Football Club that afternoon and then had been drinking with his friends in town before returning to his home around 10.30pm. He was discovered by his mother at 11.45pm, the room was full of gas and a length of tubing had been attached to the gas fire. Suicide seemed likely but it seems there was no final note. Ronald was the landlord for 21 years, retiring in 1979.



Around the turn of the millennium, a lady called Estelle Williams was preparing to lock up, the landlord having gone home. Wanting to get to the nearby late night venue called The Green Room by 12.30am, she hurriedly washed out the glass ashtrays and left them drying on the bar, while the last of the punters were finishing their drinks. With time running out, Estelle started cutting corners and admitted out loud that dusting the rack of optics would have to wait until she was in tomorrow. Moments after she had ushered the stragglers out of the door for the top bar, she heard an almighty crash of glass. Assuming it was the ashtrays falling to the ground, she rushed back through to the other side, but there was no glass on the floor, and the ashtrays were as she had left them. Confused, she checked inside and out but could not find so much as a shard of broken glass. Delayed and disturbed by the incident, Estelle never made it to the Green Room that night. The next morning, she arrived and asked the landlord if he had found any broken glass. As she explained the events of the night before, the landlord's father, who was having a casual drink, overheard and asked if Estelle had neglected to polish the optics. "How did you know that?" Estelle asked. To which he replied that Harry, a previous landlord, haunted the building following his death in a road accident. Harry was apparently very fastidious about that particular job and was merely making his displeasure known. "I don't believe it. I've been dobbed in by a ghost!" exclaimed Estelle.

The pub was purchased by Stonegate and for many years, up until the pandemic of 2020, the landlord was Paul, who left to take on The Hidden Knight (The old Welbeck Inn).

In September 2021, Stonegate ran out of willing managers, the pub closed and was put onto the market for £295,000, but was later reduced to £195,000.

In January of 2025, Meg and Patrick, former teachers, bought the pub and renamed it Ye Royal Oak in the hope that this will attract tourists and locals to the well hidden pub. It has proved to be a great success since reopening.





It is also considered one of the most haunted buildings in the area. The ghost of George Collis and a murdered coachman occasionally make their presence known by hurling objects at people. **SHAUN STEVENSON**

In 2025 whilst doing some restoration work, an old sign for Stones Ales (Stones Brewery founded in 1868 in Sheffield) was uncovered and can be viewed on the pub's wall near the outside seating area (photo left).






Ye Royal Oak
Free House

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HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHY

Cathedral Vaults – One of the missing pubs of the Market Square (See right).

THE MISSING PUBS OF THE MARKET SQUARE 9

PAUSE TO READ ABOUT THE MARKET SQUARE OR RETURN TO THIS SECTION LATER Chesterfield once had an extraordinary plethora of public houses for the townsfolk to enjoy. Prior to 1908, when tap water was first chlorinated, everyone would drink beer as the water could contain diseases. Even the children drank beer, although it was a special low alcohol brew, known as kinder beer. The vast majority of ordinary working folk had little more than a place to sleep, so spending the evening in the local pub was far more enjoyable than the cramped conditions at home. Also, as the town centre was densely populated and the public houses were many, you could almost stumble out of one pub and fall straight into another. **For example, the market square used to have as many as eight pubs, only one of which remains today.**

McDonald's – This was the location of the **Three Tuns Inn**. A tun is a very large cask for holding beer, 252 gallons, and an easily recognised item to paint on the sign board that an Act of Parliament required to be displayed outside every public house. The site had been given to the town corporation by Thomas Large who had a dye-works here. In 1664, the corporation pulled it down and built a malt and brew house, cooper house and stables, as well as the first of a number of inns to occupy the plot. The last, built in 1794 was demolished in 1913 to make way for a wider Tontine Road. The licence was transferred to the newly built Queen's Park Hotel. The Market Square end of the road was pedestrianized in 1980**. Low Pavement Colonnade Entrance – The Castle Inn** had a similar colonnade to prevent visitors arriving by stagecoach from getting wet when it was raining. The Castle Inn was built around 1636, and replaced a house that had been owned by Chesterfield's first mayor, Ralph Clarke (1598). A man called Thomas Secker grew up next door in humble surroundings. He went on to become Archbishop of Canterbury in 1758. The Castle Inn was actually known as The Royal Oak prior to 1797, was leased to the Chesterfield Brewery, and later bought by Truswells of Sheffield. It was closed on 7th April 1910 under the compensation scheme of the early 1900s.

Crown and Cushion – The only pub in the Market Square that is still serving today. It used to stand at the top of Wheeldon Lane, the main access to the market from Boythorpe. At the River Hipper end of this thoroughfare was the disparagingly named 'Dog Kennels' area of Chesterfield. This was a slum district that was eventually eradicated by the 1920s. The pub was closed for the building of the Low Pavements Shopping Centre which was opened in 1981 by Prince Charles and Diana, Princess of Wales. The pub was renamed **Joplins** (The Royal couple did not have a drink inside during their visit). It was recently refurbished and the name reverted back to the Crown and Cushion. **The South East Corner of the Market Hall –** This was where a pub called the **Cross Daggers** stood. It was demolished to make way for the Market Hall in 1854. The landlord, Robert Fletcher took the market company to Court as he felt he had been forced out. The court agreed and instructed the market company to pay him damages of £254, 11 shillings and 4 pence. He then moved to the Star and Garter in New Square. There were two other pubs in Chesterfield called the Cross Daggers, one on Glumangate and the other on Beetwell Street opposite the Police Station, both were demolished many years ago.

North East Corner of Market Hall – The Market Hall Vaults occupied the NE corner unit of the Market Hall, which was built in 1857. The influential temperance movement was successful in closing many of the pubs in Chesterfield and this one was closed for compensation on 2nd April 1906. The monetary value paid was £1020. **Nat West Bank – The Star Hotel** (not to be confused with the Star and Garter in New Square) was primarily a hotel. The final proprietor was Samuel Hadfield, a former butcher from Winster. The hotel was purchased in 1892 for the building of a bank, and many useful items were auctioned by Botham & Sons. It was demolished in 1894, the bank that replaced it was rebuilt in the late 1960s and had one of Chesterfield's first escalators. **Primark (left hand side) –** This was the **Wheatsheaf Hotel**, it is not remembered by many, although it was a fixture of the marketplace for over 150 years. In 1828, the landlady was Elizabeth Naylor demonstrating that the pub trade was open to management by women, long before equal rights legislation. It was closed on 27th September 1965 and demolished to make way for the Littlewoods store development. **Primark (right hand side) –** This was the location of T P Woods Vaults, which was a Wine and Spirit Merchants shop with adjoining vaults. T P Wood himself would become an alderman of the town, famous for his almanacks and the driving force behind the creation of the Queen's Park. The building had a colonnade similar to the Castle and Cathedral Vaults. It was also demolished to make way for the new Littlewoods store in 1967.

Peak Pharmacy – Originally called **Cathedral Vaults** (see photo left), it was a Hollis of Pilsley Brewery pub. By 1869, it was owned by J B Fox and called Foxes Vaults, selling Butlers Ales. In 1938, it belonged to Hay and Sons of Sheffield and later by the Hope and Anchor Brewery. For many years, it was known locally as **'Pretty Windows'**. This was due to the stained glass casements on the front and also because painted ladies were known to flaunt themselves to passers-by. Due to structural issues, the building was rebuilt in 1976 by the Britannia Building Society, but has now been a pharmacy for many years.





10 THE MARKET PLACE In 1204 a charter was granted by King John allowing the burgesses of the town to hold markets on Tuesday and Saturday and an eight-day fair on the feast of the Holy Rood on 14th September. The original market lay between the parish church and Holywell Street. There was no room for development there so a larger Saturday market was opened on the western edge of the town. The principal trade was in wool. Additional days for fairs were granted for horses and cattle.

When Celia Fiennes, an early travel writer, visited the town in 1697 she found a thriving market selling corn, provisions and all sorts of wares. She was particularly impressed by the quality of Chesterfield beer, describing it as the best in the country. In 1828 the range of buildings between the Market Place and New Square was demolished. Until the borough was extended in 1892 market tolls provided the biggest share of the council's income. Cattle continued to be offered for sale in the Market Place until a new cattle market opened in 1900. Additional markets were introduced in 1926 (Monday), 1965 (Friday) and the Flea Market (1980s). **SHAUN STEVENSON**



11 There are only three true timber framed buildings left in Chesterfield. The oldest is the former Peacock Inn, built around 1500. The second is the Royal Oak pub in the Shambles we highlighted earlier. The third is a former coaching inn, the Falcon, on the corner of South Street. For many years the timber frame of the Peacock Inn was hidden behind a plaster façade. After heavy restoration in 1978 the timber construction was revealed. On the 9th May 2026 the former Peacock Inn was reopened as Prego under new ownership. Alongside restoration work, Prego introduced a refreshed café experience, with new furnishings and an upgraded courtyard area. Since taking ownership, extensive restoration work was carried out, including uncovering and restoring original oak flooring hidden beneath industrial carpet in the first-floor Tudor room.



TICKET TO RIDE

Pictured above is a tram heading to New Whittington. The date would have been around 1904. You can see the tram shelters in front of the Market Hall and to the left is Sorbo Lounge, which for many years was Chesterfield Post Office.



UNDER THE DOME

In the mid-1960s the clock tower dome on the Market Hall became unsafe and was removed. The building itself, like many in Chesterfield, was blackened by years of exposure to smoke from domestic and industrial chimneys. The building was cleaned and the top was replaced with a new fibreglass dome as part of a restoration in the 1980's.

12 **MARKET HALL** Chesterfield Market Company was formed in 1853 with the intention of building a market hall. The building was opened in May 1857, with a covered area for the corn and butter markets. There were 24 shops around the outside with cellars underneath the shops and market. On the first floor was a large room used both as a magistrates' court and as an assembly room used for meetings and public entertainments. On the second floor there was a newsroom for the Mechanics Institute, and eight rooms for offices and a boardroom. The Clerk of the Market lived in the building. The Post Office was here from 1870 until 1886 and the Duke of Devonshire presented the clock in 1867.

The ground floor was extensively reconstructed in 1904. The building survived plans to demolish it in 1939 and 1978. Instead the building was cleaned and an extension built on the western side. This was rebuilt in 2013 when the building was refurbished.

As well as markets, the square has been the venue for mass meetings, parades, events, proclamations and also a visit from Prince Charles and Diana, Princess of Wales in 1981.Today, some market stalls are open six days a week, with a full market on Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays and an Antiques Market every Thursday, even through the winter. Monthly farmers and artisan markets are very popular, as are the themed events, suchas the annual medieval and 1940s market. **SHAUN STEVENSON**



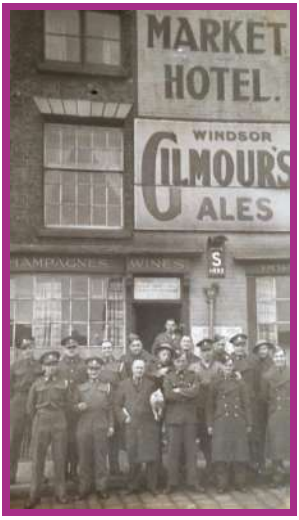
13 THE MARKET PUB stands on the northern side of New Square, which was originally called Swine Green, and as the name suggests, it was the local pig market.



Raising a pig used to be far more common, it was an excellent way to turn household waste into meat for the family and a little extra income. Normally, you would sell your pig to a butcher for a combination of cash and/or a portion of the meat. You would then buy a piglet from a pig trader, who were sometimes less than honest. Piglets were sold in sacks, which were often hung on hooks. This method was the best way to handle the lively piglets as catching them was difficult, even in a pen. The sacks were known as a pig in a poke, a phrase that isn't used often these days but essentially meant a situation where you didn't know what you were getting. Sometimes unscrupulous sellers would have a number of sacks with a stray cat in them. If the purchaser decided to check the contents of the sack, they risked having the piglet escape but occasionally they would let the cat out of the bag, a phrase used for revealing the truth.

In 1864, Thomas Evinson moved into a grocers in the prominent row of five terraced shops and established himself as a Wholesale and Retail Dealer in Ales and Porters for Samuel Allsopp and Sons (who eventually merged with Ind Coope). In 1869, Thomas expanded into the shop next door and created a pub called Post Office Vaults (1869–1872).

The flamboyantly named Frederick Farnsworth took the pub on after Evinson's death in 1874. In 1881, he appears to have changed the name to the New Square Inn, the Market Inn, then the Market Tavern, possibly in an attempt to stave off his eventual bankruptcy.



In 1892, Alfred Redfern became the landlord and gave the pub a new name, the Market Hotel. He hosted an exhibition of cage and wild birds in the Market Hotel Music Hall. This was a large wooden room at the rear of the building, used for music recitals. Unfortunately it later caught fire destroying a valuable piano. It has to be said that fires often consumed expensive items that were entirely fictitious and solely employed to inflatethe insurance payout.

In the early 1900s, the Market Hotel was an important meeting place for many local industrial philanthropists who would exchange new ideas and innovations, as well as planning the redevelopment of Chesterfield's slum areas, known as the 'dog kennels' just across the square, behind Low Pavement.

In 1933, Wilfred Barker was the landlord, he had the tenancy through the Second World War. The pub was partially commandeered by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Munitions and a large Anderson-style Air Raid Shelter was built at the rear in Schofield Yard, which is still there today.

A full licence was granted in February 1949, when the Market was owned by Tetleys. Ena and Douglas Moseley took on the pub in 1954. They removed the wall dividing the lounge and tap room in 1970. They were very popular and long serving tenants that older residents still remember. The division between the two original shop units can still be seen inside the pub where one half has a stone-flag floor and the other has wooden floorboards.

Today, it's owned by Greene King and leased by another man called Douglas and is well known for its remarkable food produced in a kitchen only ten feet by four feet wide. We recently uncovered a modern ghost story from the market pub. A former employee called Amber says that one evening she was alone in the pub and experienced an unseen presence that was audibly mumbling somewhere nearby. Amber searched and found nothing out of the ordinary but then the entity peeled back the corner of a stack of napkins she was using. This event seems to have opened a window as other members of staff n ow see strange humanoid shapes in the cellar that always remain headless.

Stranger still was the visit in June 2025, of train enthusiast Michael Portillo. He was filming one of his Railway TV shows, and, having visited the burial site of George Stephenson at the nearby Trinity Church, he apparently enjoyed a chicken, bacon and leek pie at the Market Pub. **SHAUN STEVENSON**





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14 **THE TOWN HALL** is situated on Rose Hill, overlooking Shentall Gardens and the War Memorial. Construction of the building commenced in 1935 and was completed in 1938. The building was designed by Mr Hope of Messrs, Bradshaw, Gass and Hope. The tender for the build was granted to Robert Carlyle Co. Ltd. of Manchester in June 1935. The building cost £142,500 and was opened by the Duchess of Devonshire on 6 April 1938. It is built from orange brick and Portland Stone in the classical style, commanding an excellent view across the valley. The interior has beautifully crafted walnut panelling and furniture that was specifically designed for the building even down to desks, chairs and cupboards. An Egyptian theme runs through the decoration and there are lotus flower motifs in the ceilings.

An extensive refurbishment, at a cost of £2.7 million, was completed in autumn 2018. Through the removal of interior walls, the works created extra space which enabled the Derbyshire Register Office and other public sector organisations to be accommodated in the building.

Works of art in the town hall include a portrait by Henry William Pickersgill of Richard Arkwright.



15 **THE QUEENS HEAD** **The stone property on the corner of Glumangate and Knifesmithgate which is currently operating as the Odyssey Greek Restaurant was probably built in the mid 1700s and for many years, was known as the Queens Head. From the 60s to the 80s, it became a Berni Inn and had a restaurant on the ground and first floor.**



On Boxing Day of 1966, it was the last place that Mavis Hudson was seen alive. She was discovered strangled at the back of the abandoned Scarsdale Brewery on St Mary's Gate. The killer was never brought to justice and the case remains Derbyshire Constabulary's oldest unsolved murder.

CHESTERFIELD'S BLACK & WHITE BUILDINGS 16



Pictured above is **The Corner House**, which became the Manhattan (originally called The Fountain, and later the Miner's Arms) on the corner of Glumangate and Saltergate.

As you may have observed whilst following this booklet, Chesterfield town centre features an impressive collection of Mock Tudor "Black & White" buildings. This is a direct result of the 1897 reconstruction of the timber framed section of Ye Royal Oak by William Stones. The directors were impressed by the result and began to add Tudor revival facades to their pubs as they rebuilt and refurbished. Despite looking hundreds of years old, the first of these was The Buck (now Einsteins) in 1910.

Scarsdale, Chesterfield and Brampton Breweries also joined the architectural fashion. Even the Borough Council made use of the popular style for some buildings until the late 1930s. Key locations are Knifesmithgate, including the Victoria Centre, which we passed earlier and the upcoming Gasoline Bar (formerly, The County Music Bar) which is our next stop.

The Scarsdale Brewery commissioned local architects Wilcockson and Cutts to rebuild the Miner's Arms, surrendering 7.5 feet of land to round off the corner. The current 1923 date stamp and brewery initials (SB and MA) are still visible on the gables.

The Corner House Era: Renamed the Corner House Hotel, it famously served as the headquarters of the Chesterfield Football Supporters' Club in the 1920s.

Manhattan Bar. (1979 – 1998): A popular drinking spot in the 80s and 90s, the pub is fondly remembered by locals for its disco lights, dance floor, DJ sets and vibrant atmosphere.

Later Use: The building later housed the Thai Pavilion restaurant. In 2025, Chesterfield Borough Council granted planning permission for the building to be transformed back into a bar (hopefully to open in the near future).





17 GASOLINE AMERICAN BAR was formerly known as The County, 83 Saltergate. The name Saltergate derives from the horse drawn traders bringing salt, cheese and fabrics from Cheshire into the town down this thoroughfare.

The pub was built in 1864 at considerable expense by Charles North, complete with the rather unusual feature of an integral post box. Its first landlord was Thomas Chester, who began operating in April but didn't acquire a beer licence until September of that same year.

A chapter of the Ancient Imperial Order of Oddfellows was established at the pub in 1864. This was a nationwide charitable organisation that suffered a number of factional splits since its inception in Manchester in 1810. Members were known for their generosity as well as their hearty consumption of food, drink and fine cigars. George IV, Queen Victoria's father, happened upon a meeting of the order in London and insisted on becoming a member. The Oddfellows still exist today, based in Manchester, their city of origin. They also have an active chapter further down Saltergate that meet regularly.

In 1866, Thomas Chester advertised the opening of a fine billiards room with two tables and all necessary equipment, manufactured to the highest standards.

In 1867, members of the Chesterfield Cricket Club met in the County to formally discuss the creation of a football club, something to keep the members of the Cricket Club active during the winter. It seems that a team called Chesterfield may have been playing matches as early as 1863 and the football club today assert an 1866 foundation date. At first, the cricket and football club shared the Recreation Ground which later became the home of Chesterfield FC and known as Saltergate. Until the appropriate buildings were established, the County was their headquarters and changing rooms. The players would clean up and change after the game in a two-storey washhouse that formerly occupied the yard at the back. It seems unlikely that this arrangement was welcomed by the women that worked in the washhouse.

William Stones became the owner and as with many of their pubs they refreshed the facade with a mock Tudor frontage around 1920.

The previous tenant, Brian, experienced various unsettling supernatural events, culminating in a serious incident. His staff had reported sightings of someone hideously deformed in the cellar, with a face so ugly that it could not be determined if this was an old man or an old woman. One busy Saturday night, Brian hurriedly went down the wooden stairs into the cellar. The next thing he knew, he was in a heap on the floor in terrible pain. One of the wooden treads was broken, which suggested that this was the cause of the fall. However, some thought that he had been pushed by the terrible entity and the tread had been broken by Brian's body as he fell. Either way, Brian had broken his neck in two places and spent months in a steel frame while his spine healed. Unfortunately, Brian cannot remember what had happened but confesses that he has never been the same again.

By 2016, the interior was in need of refreshment and the new landlord, Philip Deacon, had a grand idea to reform the venue as The County Music Bar, installing a stage and state of the art PA system. Many local bands played their first gig at The County.

In 2022, Philip rebranded to Gasoline American Bar, which concentrates on music from the US, sports, live music and occasional line dancing. The pub is actually much larger than it first appears with plenty of space in the back yard beer garden and games room. Philip currently has a five year lease from the owners Admiral and they actively promote craft beers and lagers. They also boast an excellent selection of pub games, a free jukebox and, since 2023, their own football team called Gasoline FC. **SHAUN STEVENSON**

18 **REAL TIME LIVE** **on Marsden Street was originally constructed in 1869 as a Methodist Chapel. The chapel closed in 1964, and the premises were then occupied by the Conservative Club throughout the 1980s. There was a first-floor function room with a bar that was used by many local bands. Following the club's closure, the building was converted into several nightclubs, including Marsdens and Club Erotica, after which there was a long period of dereliction.**

Before reopening as Rock Shots, a major refurbishment was undertaken by Brian Richardson, formerly of The Old Feathers. There was significant structural damage, including a massive hole in the dance floor, with Brian and some of his workmates sleeping on the property in makeshift beds during the work. Brian reported seeing the ghost of a man in a fancy waistcoat, a big black bushy beard, and a stove pipe hat, who spoke to him, saying: "We ain't finished yet". Once open, customers reported seeing this same ghostly character, with one lady claiming to have seen him in her back bedroom.



Mark Stevenson bought the club in 2012 and converted the downstairs into a music shop and installed a brand new bar and live music venue upstairs.



FOR THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK

Famous bands that have played in Chesterfield includes the Rolling Stones, The Walker Brothers, The Kinks, Roy Orbison, Gene Vincent and the Yardbirds, Cat Stevens, Jimi Hendrix. Pink Floyd, Bob Geldof and Engelbert Humperdinck, to name but a few.

Notable artists and bands from Chesterfield include Ben Ottewell (the singer/guitarist for the indie rock band Gomez who won the 1998 Mercury Music Prize), Mark Webber (Guitarist/keyboard player for Britpop legends Pulp) and Mark Shaw (Frontman for the 1980s chart-topping band Then Jerico).



ROCK 'N 'ROLL

Rock legend, Phil 'Philthy Animal' Taylor was born in Hasland, Chesterfield. He achieved fame as the drummer in heavy metal band Motorhead. Their iconic hit song the Ace of Spades is an ode to gambling and risking everything for the thrill of the game. Taylor died on the 12th November 2015.

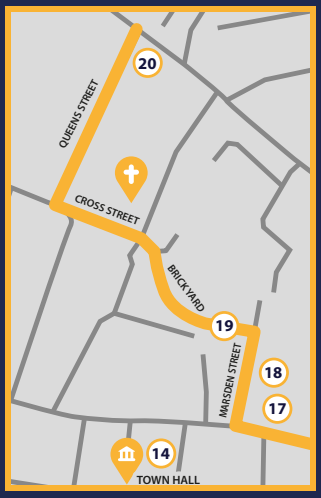
19 ROUTE TO THE CHESTERFIELD ARMS

From the Gasoline American Bar leave via the front door and go right (away from the Town Centre). Take the next right onto Marsden Street. On one side of the road is Real Time Live, a popular live music venue (See previous page) .

The next few pathways are a mini maze, designed to test how much you've had to drink...

Turn left onto Brick Yard and then continue across onto another footpath, Cross Street. To the side you will see the Annunciation R C Church, a lovely Grade II listed Catholic Church.

Finally turn right onto Queens Street. Follow the road down to find the Chesterfield Arms.









20 THE CHESTERFIELD ARMS

The Chesterfield Arms stands on the corner of Queen Street and Newbold Road, which was developed much later than the town centre.

The creation of the new Poor Laws enabled the construction of a workhouse nearby, opposite the Trinity Church in 1837. The workhouse later became Scarsdale Hospital, mainly a maternity unit. Today the main accommodation block has been converted into an apartment complex called Manvers Court.

The pub itself was built in 1857 and called the Chesterfield Arms Hotel. A succession of private landlords came and went, the Derbyshire Times recording the sale of some curious items during the departure of William Goodwin in 1869. This included: a two horse omnibus to carry 12 passengers, a splendid double-seated phaeton carriage, a joiners bench, cucumber frame, nine tonnes of hay, two heaps of manure, a noted greyhound "Smoker", a greyhound puppy, "Minnie", by "Smoker" and out of Mr Charlton's bitch "Fly", likely to turn out to be a first class dog, and a handsome liver and white Spaniel, a rosewood cottage pianoforte by Hopkinson, a stag's head, a ram's head and a fox's head – all excellent condition, a single barrelled gun, chimney glass (large mirror for hanging on the chimney breast) and a framed Lloyd's map of the British Isles.

The pub was acquired by the Chesterfield Brewery Company in 1872. This was logistically convenient as the Brewery was at the top of Brimington Road near the train station, less than half a mile away, but up a steep incline. The Brewery later became the Trebor Sweet Factory.

Originally, the pub had two entrances on the Newbold Road side; photographs of the old layout can be found on the walls, along with the original stained glass "Off Sales" windows above the side door. For many years, the pub was an obvious choice for a pre-match drink for Chesterfield Football Club supporters as the Saltergate Ground was at the top of Queen Street and therefore, this was one of the closest pubs.

Due to fighting becoming prevalent between the fans of opposing teams, the government introduced new laws in 1967 and the FA requested better segregation of supporters. A logistical problem for the Chesterfield Constabulary was apparent when large groups of away fans needed to be escorted from the train station to the football ground, right past the Chesterfield Arms. The Industry public house next door was allowed to cater to the thirst of these away fans resulting in tense situations and minor skirmishes.

Some of the famous clubs who have visited Saltergate include: Tottenham Hotspur (1970), Glasgow Rangers (1979), Liverpool (1980), Manchester City (1985), Nottingham Forest (1997), Chelsea (1997) and West Ham United (2006). Hooliganism, on the scale of the 70s and 80s, is thankfully a thing of the past. This includes the Chesterfield Bastard Squad, who were the Spireites Firm. The police's logistical issue involving the Chesterfield Arms was resolved when the football club moved to Sheffield Road in 2010. Chesterfield fans still find time to call in for a pint before the match.



PHOTOGRAPHY SPOTLIGHT
The Chesterfield Arms by Stephen Hewitt.
Follow on Instagram: @stevenahewitt1



The current management team Josh and Emma Clarke have been at the Chesterfield Arms since October 2017 and initiated their own small scale brewery called "Resting Devil" in 2022, in the back room of the pub, formerly known as The Barn. The name "Resting Devil" is in reference to the many folklore tales concerning the Crooked Spire being twisted by the devil in various ways. The most famous yarn being that the devil wrapped his tail around the Spire so that he could bend over and leer at a beautiful virgin bride entering the church, twisting the Spire as he stooped. The story continues that if a virgin bride ever gets married at the Crooked Spire again, the Spire will straighten up. It's true to say that we have been waiting for some time.

The Resting Devil beers incorporate names inspired by other myths and legends. These include – Banshee, Chupracarbra and the Crooker. The Crooker is an English Bitter (specifically, a Best Bitter or Extra Special Bitter). The legend of the Crooker is a chilling piece of Peak District folklore centered around a dark, sentient tree—often said to be an old, twisted willow or oak—that grew on the banks of the River Derwent near Darley Dale. According to local tales, the tree wasn't just leaves and timber; it was an evil, predatory spirit. It possessed long, gnarled branches that looked like misshapen, grasping arms. Travelers walking along the riverbank at night would find themselves suddenly ensnared by these shifting limbs. The Crooker would actively wrap its branches around unsuspecting victims, dragging them off the path and pulling them down into the deep, murky waters of the river to drown. It was a classic cautionary tale used by locals for generations to warn people—especially children—against wandering near dangerous, fast-flowing riverbanks after dark, transforming the natural hazards of the water into a literal boogeyman. **SHAUN STEVENSON**

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THE CHESTERFIELD ARMS

BREWERY. OUR OWN IN HOUSE
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21 THE NEPTUNE BEER EMPORIUM, at 46 St Helens Street, Chesterfield was opened as the New Inn in 1862 by Robert Dean. It had formerly been a post office and had previously been used as a haberdashery shop and also a chapel of rest for an undertaker. Mr Dean himself had previously been in charge of The Mallet and Tool, which stood on the land later occupied by the Victoria Centre on Knifesmithgate in Chesterfield's town centre. The name was changed to The Neptune not long after opening and it seems that the locals have called it The Neppy ever since.

On 28th September 1882, landlord William Bargh (also a farmer and milk dealer) committed suicide, for reasons unknown, by hanging himself in an outbuilding adjoining the Inn.

In February 1886, the landlord was George Revill who, mysteriously, left the district around April 1889. In May 1893, former landlord Francis Brailsford, was still lodging at The Neptune. In the dead of night, as if he was sleepwalking, Francis left the pub in just his nightshirt and was found drowned in the canal basin off the nearby Sheffield Road the next day. The coroner's inquest verdict was suicide.

Joseph Wall was the landlord between 1895 and 1900 and between 1912 to 1928, a man called Harry Bale was the landlord. In 1941, Leslie Jepson became the landlord and may still have been in charge in 1951, when a full liquor licence was granted. For much of the pub's life it had been a Tennant Brothers of Sheffield pub but in 1961, they merged with Whitbread.

In the 1970s, the regulars of The Neppy formed a Ferret Club, purely for convenience. The licensing laws at the time allowed pubs to open beyond their normal operational hours to cater for organised clubs and societies. This allowed the Neptune Ferret Club to enjoy the extended hours; we don't believe that any actual ferrets had a significant role to play in the Club's activities. The Ferret Club survived until 1995 when the laws around opening times were changed.



In 2015, it was purchased by Garry Norton, the bass player for local 80s alternative rock bands The Gentry and The Shallows. The pub was apparently in a poor state and Garry invested over £100,000 turning it from an unloved local to a real ale destination pub. It became a free house with the new name, The Neptune Beer Emporium. "Traditional Northern Tapas" was very popular on Sundays, consisting of a Yorkshire pudding, filled with roast potatoes, peas and gravy. This savoury treat became a firm favourite. Garry was eventually rewarded with the Chesterfield CAMRA Pub of the Year Award in 2020 and 2021.

In 2022, another professional musician, Sally Ruane, drummer with The Suffrajetz, and her partner, Jason Davies, took over the Neptune. They maintained the pub's excellent reputation, rotating the cask ale lines and presenting a busy live music schedule. In 2024, the wooden, diagonal pattern bar surround was created using reclaimed pallet timber. Improvements to the yard at the back of the pub continued, covered areas, comfortable seating and even a tv, were installed. This gives the pub a much greater capacity than one might imagine based on the unassuming frontage.



In 2026, Lisa Lucie Locket, committed to managing her own pub and signed a three year lease on the Neppy. She had previously been Manager of the Devonshire Arms at Baslow.

The pub maintains its nautical decor but also displays a collection of hand drawn famous football grounds, with the artist willing to sell individual pieces to anyone interested.

SHAUN STEVENSON





THE NEPTUNE

THE HOME OF REAL ALE AND LIVE MUSIC
WONDERFUL ALE WITH WONDERFUL PEOPLE

We're all about the beer at the Neptune
We have 8 changing cask ale pumps alongside real cider, lager, craft beer and Belgian beers on draught
ITS ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE AND OUR LOVE FOR LIVE MUSIC

Monday 4pm - 9pm • Tuesday 4pm - 10pm
Wednesday 4pm - 10pm • Thursday 4pm - 11pm
Friday 2pm - Midnight • Saturday 12 Noon - Midnight
Sunday 12 Noon - 10pm

46 ST HELEN'S STREET
CHESTERFIELD S41 7QD
www.the-neptune.com
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Fantastic Beasts (and why you shouldn't find them)...

Inspired by some of the spooky tales so wonderfully told by Shaun in this booklet, I decided to partake in some amateur **Goblinology** (The study of Goblins and other ill-intentioned Gnomes). Now, first I must admit that I don't have any official qualifications in this area. I most certainly didn't attend any wizarding schools or study any fantastic beasts. And, to be honest, I'm not even sure Goblins even exist. But, there seems to be much evidence that these elusive and mischievous critters are real. Especially when it comes to our pubs and their dark, damp cellars.

First, take the common **Clurichaun**, a roguish, beer loving cousin of the Irish leprechaun. This playful fairy is well known to haunt breweries, wine cellars and pubs. It is said that they protect the pub's finest wine in exchange for a few pints of the owner's best ale. Which seems a fair deal. A Goblin tax, if you will. Clurichauns are described as being great practical jokers. Expect to find a whoopee cushion on your bar stools and fake plastic flies in your pints. Despite this, they are strangely loyal and tend to look after their adopted family. Not to be confused with the domestic **Hobgoblin** or the more Northern **Boggart**, my research is teaching me that there are more goblin-like creatures than I ever imagined.



Which leads us nicely on **imps**. These small, troublesome supernatural creatures are legendary in the nearby city of Lincoln. According to local folklore, Satan himself sent two unruly imps to Earth to cause chaos. The little critters wreaked havoc before heading to Lincoln Cathedral. There, a guardian angel was sent to stop them and when one imp tried to fight back by throwing rocks, the angel turned him into stone. You can still see the petrified imp, perched high on a pillar in Lincoln Cathedral. There's even a link to Chesterfield, with the naughty imps said to be the ones responsible for twisting the Crooked Spire before heading to Lincoln. An unlikely story, we all know it was the Devil himself. In Lincoln, you can find imps everywhere. There is even an Imporium, a gift shop where you can buy a handmade imp ornament. It's all very **imp**ressive (I'm sorry, I just couldn't resist).

We are fast discovering that British and Irish folklore is deeply intertwined with the history of our public houses. All kinds of ghosts and creatures have found refuge in our ancient taverns, both friendly and terrifying.

Back to Chesterfield and we've already covered the many ghosts that have haunted our pubs. The whispered rumours of a network of hidden tunnels and passageways under the town. The Microbrewery, **Resting Devil**, continues to produce ales that tie into infamous folklore tales. And yes, the Devil still hasn't returned to 'uncrook' the Spire.

We can also enthusiastically recommend the **Chesterfield Folklore Society**, who can be found on Facebook and Instagram (search for@chesterfieldfolkloresociety) and meet up monthly in Chesterfield's old inn, **Ye Royal Oak** (Photo right). **CHRIS FOX**





PHOTOGRAPHY SPOTLIGHT
Ye Royal Oak from their Facebook page.
A Summer's Day, June 2026.

THE RUTLAND THEN & NOW...



SPECIAL THANKS...

This booklet was produced with the support from all the pubs that feature and printed copies are available from them whilst stock lasts. Thank you to Suzi Stevenson, Julia Keeling, Martin Alvey, Sean Morgan, Helen Gerrard and Stephen Hewitt. And, finally thank you dear reader for picking up this booklet and supporting our wonderful public houses.

www.christopherfox.co.uk

GRAPHIC DESIGN

This booklet was designed by Chris Fox (See bio to the right). A portfolio of Chris' work can be found at www.christopherfox.co.uk or by scanning this QR code.

SCAN ME

CHESTERFIELD PUBS
PAST & PRESENT

ONLINE RESOURCES

A digital PDF version of this booklet is available to download for free at www.christopherfox.co.uk/project/historical-tales-and-traditional-ales. Updates about the The Chesterfield Great Historic Pub Tours can be found at www.micropubadventures.co.uk/great-historic-pub-tours. Local pub news can be found at www.chesterfield.camra.org.uk.

THE 'GREAT MINDS' BEHIND THIS PROJECT



SHAUN STEVENSON Much of the history content for this booklet was curated by Chesterfield born, Shaun Stevenson. He has a degenerative eye condition which lead to him being almost completely blind by the time he was 40 years old. He opted for early retirement and developed an interest in the local history of Chesterfield's pubs, when it was suggested to him that he create a historic pub tour. The Chesterfield Great Historic Pub Tour has been running since 2019, but was forced to suspend during the Covid pandemic in 2020. Since then, his hobby of hosting pub tours has taken off with the introduction of a Brampton Mile Pub Crawl in 2023 and a Bakewell Pub Tour in 2024. Shaun also co-hosts, alongside Martin Alvey, popular Ghost Hunts at Halloween and Christmas, as well as an annual Murder Trail in March. Shaun has an incredible ability to regale his tour goers with both the history in this booklet and other anecdotes on his tours.



CHRIS FOX This booklet has been designed by Chris Fox. A graphic designer from Chesterfield, Chris is a rock music lover (Ghost are a current obsession), biscuit connoisseur (Granola bars are a favourite) and all round geek (The only good war is Star Wars). Passionate about supporting pubs, their history and futures, Chris is proud to team up with Shaun on this booklet.

Said Chris: "It's been a joy to work in this project and share the stories of the pubs history. Shaun really is a superb storyteller and we hope you enjoy finding more about them. Plus, why not treat yourself to a couple of shandies as you visit the pubs featured too".

Visit **www.christopherfox.co.uk** for more of Chris' design work.



COVER STAR **The front cover of this booklet features an illustration of Ye Royal Oak by Helen Gerrard. Helen is an artist and illustrator living in Spital, Chesterfield. She is known for her quirky paintings of local landmarks and scenes in acrylic on canvas, which are available as cards and prints. Helen also illustrated and co-wrote the popular children's book, The Bee Polisher – which is available in paperback, as an ebook and as an audiobook, narrated by John Otway.**

Helen's Chesterfield scenes are available as cards and prints from Delightful Decor on Falcon Yard in Chesterfield or can be ordered online. Prints and cards of Ye Royal Oak can be purchased from the pub itself too. Helen is also available for private and commercial commisions – contact hvgerrard@hotmail.co.uk for more information.

Follow Helen Gerrard on Facebook: www.facebook.com/helensmermaidtales



CHESTERFIELD
GREAT HISTORIC
PUB TOUR

BRAMPTON MILE
GREAT HISTORIC
PUB CRAWL





BAKEWELL
GREAT HISTORIC
PUB TOUR



CHESTERFIELD
GREAT HISTORIC
PUB TOUR

This booklet is very much an extension of the Chesterfield Great Historic Pub Tour. Created by Shaun Stevenson, the current tour covers three areas: Chesterfield Town Centre, the Brampton Mile and Bakewell (With additional seasonal events).

If you enjoyed reading this booklet and the stories featured, then the tour goes into even more detail. The tour is constantly updated with new historic facts and tales. For further details visit www.greathistoricpubtours.co.uk.

It's a wonderful afternoon and you won't regret it!

SCAN ME