

33rd

Peoples' Gala & Demonstration

Monday 3rd May

MAY DAY
2010

Chesterfield & District TUC

£1

Welcome to
Chesterfield & District Trades Union Council's

33rd People's Gala & Demonstration

Monday 3rd May 2010

DEMONSTRATION

Assemble at

CHESTERFIELD TOWN HALL

at 10.30a.m. March Off at 11.00a.m.

(See inside of back cover for route)

RALLY

NEW SQUARE: 12.00 p.m.

Speakers:

Billy Hayes
(Communication Workers' Union)

Cheryl Pidgeon
(Midlands TUC)

Musheir El Farra
(Sheffield Palestine Solidarity Campaign)

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Morning Star for peace and socialism

The Morning Star is the only daily newspaper owned and controlled by its readers within the Labour, Trade Union, and Co-operative Movement.

The Morning Star can be purchased *daily* from any newsagent priced at 60p.

The paper is also on display within Chesterfield Library on a daily basis.

daily paper of the left



MAY DAY at a GLANCE

10.30 a.m.	March Assembles at Town Hall
11.00 a.m.	March Off
12.00 a.m.	Rally & Speeches in New Square
1.00 p.m.	'Dole Not Coal' film in NEDDC's Council Chamber
1.00 p.m.	Sheffield Socialist Choir in the Market Hall
12.30p.m. - 4.15 p.m.	Live Entertainment in New Square
2.00p.m.	'The Iron Wall' - film in the Market Hall

Refreshments available all day in the Market Hall provided by Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres, as well as an Exhibition of photographs from the Miners Strike

Acknowledgments

The Chesterfield & District Trades Council would like to thank all the organisations that give their support to the May Day Gala. At the time of going to print it is not possible to produce a list of contributing bodies. But needless to say without their generosity and solidarity, May Day would simply not be possible.

Thanks go to the many scores of volunteers. Their solidarity and hard work in organizing May Day ensures the event runs smoothly. The Chesterfield May Day Gala does great credit to the capacity of the Trade Union and Labour Movements to campaign, inform and entertain.

We also thank our speakers for their support and contributions, the many organisations whose involvement gives May Day the breadth of popular appeal which it enjoys, and we thank you for attending and supporting May Day, maintaining its status as the largest and most popular May Day event in the region, if not the country.

James Eaden (President), Barry Johnson (Vice President), Shay Boyle (Secretary), on behalf of Chesterfield & District Trades Union Council.



**Leading the
march this
year**

**The Ireland
Colliery Band**

A May Day Message from the President of Chesterfield & District Trades Union Council



James Eaden

Welcome to the Chesterfield 2010 Mayday march and gala. Our programme this year is dedicated to celebrating the role of women in the trade union movement, past, present and building for the future.

This Year's Mayday takes place against the background of the financial crisis which has swept through the capitalist system over the last 18 months and the General Election due to take place later this week. When it came to bailing out the billionaire bankers last year, money was no object. But now all of the three major parties are united in their determination to have a massive round of spending cuts. Our political masters want ordinary working people to pay the price for corporate greed through attacks on jobs, wages, pensions and services.

Many working people have been disappointed and frustrated by a Labour government which pandered to interests of the big bankers, failed to regulate the financial markets and followed the US into disastrous wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet the prospects of a Tory government led by the "Bullingdon boy" Cameron, financed by the tax exile millionaire Ashcroft, quite rightly fills many with horror. Whoever wins the election we know that we face a fight to defend the interests of working class people.

The trade union movement has to unite and resist the attempts by employers and the government to attack our class. The positive news is that across our movement we have begun to see real signs of organised and effective resistance by groups of workers. Militant action by construction workers defended jobs at Lindsey Oil refinery.

All-out action stopped pay cuts in the Leeds refuse service and stopped redundancies at Tower Hamlets College in London. Postal workers took resolute and well-supported strike action to fend off the worst of an employers' offensive. Recently civil servants have been fighting against cuts in their redundancy terms and BA cabin crew have recorded huge votes for action.

Wherever there have been proposed cuts to public services such as hospitals and education we have seen large and very well supported community campaigns for example in Glasgow and London. These are the seeds of the sort of united resistance to the cutbacks that we need to see developed across the whole union movement.

Chesterfield Trades Union Council is committed to supporting all workers fighting back. Let's hope that May Day 2010 marks the continuation of solidarity and resistance.

James Eaden

The struggle goes on

This year's May Day celebrations take place just before the General Election. Whatever our criticisms of the performance of the Labour Government, we must look closely at the alternatives for the working class.

For those in doubt, it is important to recall that Tory Ministers regarded mass unemployment as "a price worth paying." Given the current weakness of the economy, an incoming Tory Government would doubtless regurgitate this approach. Despite all the spin, rebranding and airbrushing, the Tories cannot change. They are the traditional enemy of organised labour. We must never forget this.



Billy Hayes

Current Government Policy

Of course, many in our movement will point to the mistakes and failures of Labour over the past 12 years. But, at the risk of being crude, a Tory Government would retain and expand everything that is wrong in current Government policy. It would not however introduce legislation such as, the minimum wage, devolution, the Irish peace process, increased statutory and paid holidays, dozens of pieces of equality legislation, rights for agency workers, Sure Start, etc. We have to press for a more progressive policy from Labour.

Astonishing Turnaround

Last year we witnessed an astonishing turnaround in the manufacture of public opinion. In the depths of the recession, it was fairly unexceptional to hold the view that the economic crisis was due to the irresponsible behaviour of financial institutions and private markets. Only Government action prevented a complete slump.

Yet within a month, the Tories, and their many media allies, created a wave which insisted that the decisive economic problem was Government borrowing; and that there must be brutal cuts in public sector spending.

Suddenly, it was not bankers and financiers who were the culprits. It was workers in public services whose conditions were supposedly being artificially supported.

Private Sector Failure

Here, we must say, the Labour Government reacted very badly. They should have taken a stand on the effective use of public money to address private sector failure. Instead they panicked in the belief that Tory politicians might steal a march in opinion polls. The drivel from Cameron and Osborne, about creating debts for our grandchildren, was given credibility.

The basic analysis behind the Tory position is wrong. Remember they opposed Government action to stabilise the financial markets and the use of public money to keep the economy afloat.

Consumer Spending

Since the recession began parts of the economy have performed in different ways. There has been a small drop in consumer spending. There has been an increase in Government spending of 1.8% since early 2008. But what has dragged down the economy is the massive collapse in private investment. GDP has fallen by 6% - but private investment has fallen by 24%.

The real cause of the public sector deficit is the collapse in tax receipts to the Treasury from the rise in unemployment, and from reduced corporate activity.

The Treasury's estimated budget deficit for the year is £128 billion. This represents 9.1% of GDP. But if tax receipts had held up at previous trend rate, this would have created an additional £114 billion for the Treasury. So virtually the entire deficit is because of the collapse of tax revenues.

Additional Investment

The answer here is simple. The Government has to stimulate and promote additional investment in the economy to expand GDP. As the private sector won't do this, it has to be public sector spending which expands the economy.

Expanding the economy creates additional revenue for Government, via tax receipts. It also stimulates consumer demand through additional employment. The net result is a reduction in the Government deficit, and an expansion of GDP.

However, if the Tory policy of cuts is adhered to, the economy will go back into recession and the deficit will not be reduced. But for their rich friends, this would be a "price worth paying," because wages would fall and private sector profits would increase.

So, it is vital that the whole Trade Union and Labour movement continues to press for an expansionary economic policy from an incoming Government.

Injust War

Of course, there are some wasteful areas of Government spending which could be cut. A nuclear replacement for Trident will cost £97 billion across its operational lifetime. ID cards would cost £5.6 billion. Commissioning two additional aircraft carriers and war planes would cost around £30 billion. And the unjust war in Afghanistan is likely to cost around £5 billion this year.

The General Election does offer a stark choice for the country. But there is also a stark choice for Labour's policy. Will it tail along behind the Tory cuts agenda? Or will it expand the economy, raise living standards and offer a socially progressive programme. We must campaign to ensure that Labour follows a progressive economic policy.

Billy Hayes

The Late Barbara Castle of Blackburn

Later this year, we will celebrate the centenary of the birth of the late Barbara Castle, Baroness of Blackburn. Barbara was born here in Chesterfield on the 6th October 1910. She was the daughter of Frank and Annie Betts. Her father was an H.M Inspector of Taxes and in times gone by it was customary not to allow Inspectors to remain too long in one place, in case they became too familiar with the local business community.

Unfortunately, Barbara passed away on 3rd May 2002, at the age of 91.

As a result of research carried out by the Chesterfield & North-East Derbyshire Pensioners Action Association and, following discussions with the Chesterfield Borough Council: The Council agreed to provide a permanent memorial to Barbara, to commemorate the invaluable contribution that she had made to society during her lifetime.

The memorial takes the form of a Scandinavian maple tree and an appropriately worded plaque has been affixed, courtesy of the Borough Council.. The Rt. Hon.Richard Caborn MP carried out the tree planting ceremony on Friday 29th November 2002.

The memorial tree and plaque are located adjacent to the Chesterfield tourist information office which is close to the Crooked Spire Church..

Cameron Philpot



New memorial in Derbyshire

The Spanish Civil War was a brutal conflict between 1936 and 1939. It is seen by many as the precursor to the Second World War, with democracy standing up to Franco's fascism. The Tory government of the day pursued a policy of non-intervention but this played into Franco's hands as Hitler and Mussolini had no such reservations. They backed him with armaments, aircraft in particular, and military advisers. However, some 2000 volunteers from Britain and Ireland fought for the Spanish republic as part of the International Brigades.

Tom Gaunt was born on 8 November 1907 and described in records as a miner, labourer and soldier. He was one of a handful of volunteers from Derbyshire and arrived in Spain on 20 December 1937, having spent two years in the British Army prior to that. He was posted as killed in action in Aragon in March 1938.

On 31 October 2009, a memorial plaque was unveiled by local MP Dennis Skinner at an event held at the Parish House in the former mining town of Clowne, where Gaunt was born. Dennis spoke passionately about the sacrifice of the International Brigaders and the continued need to confront and defeat fascism today. Other speakers included Dolores Long, from the International Brigades Memorial Trust, Karl Reid, Chair of Clowne Parish Council and Mark Grayling, Secretary of the Chesterfield and District Branch of the Co-op Party which had funded the project. The ceremony was closed by IBMT Committee Member, Hilary Jones, who read the moving John Cornford poem, A Letter from Aragon. It was a fitting tribute to an almost forgotten local hero.

The plaque, which was designed by Mick Jones, can be viewed by arrangement. Contact Denise Cameron, Clerk to Clowne Parish Council, The Parish House, 48 Mill Street, Clowne, Derbyshire S43 4JN. Telephone 01246 811586, email Denise@clownepc.co.uk

Mark Grayling



The plaque is unveiled

Palestine - the BIG issue



Never have the Palestinians more needed our sympathy and active support. For them this is the worst of times. After Israel's horrific assault on Gaza a year ago which left 1,400 Palestinians dead and over 5,000 injured, Gaza remains under siege with people desperately short of food, electricity, clean water and essential medical supplies. The Palestinian economy has been virtually destroyed and Israel prefers to import foreign guest workers than employ Palestinians.

There are now 500 000 settlers illegally occupying Palestinian land which is more than double the number at the time the so called peace process began. Every day, Palestinians have to live with house demolitions, burning of their olive trees, detention of children and the use of welfare to discriminate against Palestinians inside Israel.

Israel has illegally occupied Palestinian land for 43 years. The Zionists have built a separation wall which not only protects illegal settlements but creates Palestinian ghettos. Inside Israel, Palestinians are second class citizens and Israel denies the right of return to refugees driven out and dispossessed during the process of colonisation.

Israel has been able to act with impunity because of support by successive governments in the United States. Our own governments bear a heavy responsibility. The good news is that active solidarity from the grass roots is growing all over the world and especially in Great Britain.

Trade unions are playing an important role, affiliating to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, encouraging the TUC to take up the issue and calling on members to support a campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel. This campaign is a growing response to a call from the whole of Palestinian civil society made in 2005.

Successful actions have included a refusal by South African dockers to unload an Israeli ship and pressure on French company Veolia to withdraw from a contract with Israel. South Africans can easily see the parallels between Apartheid and the discrimination against Palestinians. A movement as powerful as the anti apartheid campaign needs to be built.

Supporters have called for an academic boycott, an end to arms sales to Israel and divestment from companies like Caterpillar which make bulldozers to demolish Palestinian homes.

However most action has been focussed on getting stores and shoppers to boycott Israeli goods. This is something everyone can do. Israeli goods include fruit, vegetables, herbs, wine and beauty products. Some are produced on illegal settlements. So next time you shop, check the label. If it reads Israel or West Bank don't buy ! The BIG campaign is already biting in the UK and Scandinavia. You can help to make it bite harder and if you want more information or to join in activities in Chesterfield, come to the Stop the War/PSC stall on Mayday.

Val Graham

Viva Cuba!

People within the British labour movement, as well as others around the world, have long been aware of the tremendous improvements in the lives of Cuban people since the Revolution.

Yet how many of us knew, as we watched in horror the devastation wrought by a hurricane on neighbouring Haiti, that Cuba was offering medical assistance within five hours of the disaster? La Paz hospital in Port au Prince, staffed by Cuban medics, was treating 600-700 severely injured patients a day and running three operating theatres round the clock. This was possible because Cuba already had a substantial medical team operating in Haiti as part of its practical international solidarity work. Our British mainstream media ignored this in their reports, just as they have ignored the training by Cuba of many medical students from poorer countries. Cuba is currently training 500 Haitians as medics.

At home, Cubans are helped by a system of community-based health workers practising preventative care. All health care is free, while the direction of medical research is based on needs of the people, rather than on drug company profits.

The Cuban education system is renowned throughout the world. Cuban teachers take their world famous literacy techniques to countries throughout the developing world. In Cuba itself, every child is in school with free uniform, food and health care. As higher education is free, graduates there, unlike British students, begin their working lives without the burden of large debts. Paid leave from work and job security are available to adults undertaking education, because learning is seen as a lifelong entitlement.



Classroom assistants in a pre school centre

Since the Revolution, women in Cuba have made tremendous gains, which impact also on family and cultural life. Women make up 35% of the Cuban National Assembly, while 22% of Government Ministers and Vice Ministers and 49% of judges are women. Equal pay for equal work and qualification is a reality. Abortion is free on demand. There is a highly developed system of pre school care and education, with all women entitled to a year's paid maternity leave. Maternal mortality and infant mortality are the lowest in the Caribbean and Latin America.

How were these advances achieved? At the time of the overthrow of Batista and the establishment of the new government and system in 1959, the position of women had been very different. Cuba had been used as the playground of US gangsters, bankers and politicians (some of them all three at once). Prostitution was rife in Havana and other centres. The culture was one of demeaning women and this was not just an imposition from the US. The machismo culture was deep rooted, and resulted in widespread discrimination against women as well as homophobia. This situation needed focused, determined and sustained attention, so with the Revolution barely a year old, the Federation of Cuban Women was established – and went out recruiting – basing their recruitment on the need for women to take control of their own lives and to set the pace of the Revolution and its Development Strategy for the Government to keep up with.



Sex education diversity campaign

A first priority of the Revolution was the mass literacy campaign that has become a model used now throughout the developing world. It depends on thousands of volunteers and specially trained workers to take their skills where they are most needed. It is also built on the practical experience that those who needed literacy could see its liberating nature, and its importance not just for the individual but also for the common good. The Federation of Cuban Women threw itself into this work. Women were absolutely critical in the success of the literacy campaign – and they never

looked back. By dealing with all the real social issues facing women – work, family roles, political control, education, health – the Federation now has around 3 million members, which is around 85% of women over the age of 14.

Perhaps one of the most ambitious and significant achievements was (and is) the legislation of 1975 introducing The Family Code, which recognised that until fundamental change was brought about within the family, with both men and women equally sharing responsibilities, decision making and household work,

women's equality would remain unachieved, despite all the advances in education, work, politics and economics. Thirty five years on, it is recognised that the Family Code has yet to be fully implemented, men have yet to be convinced and persuaded to share domestic duties. So the Federation has plenty of work remaining.

We need to be clear that the position of women, as with all the other social achievements in Cuba, cannot be understood without the realisation that they can only occur within the context of their social and political system that puts the needs of the people first, and which is prepared and determined to defend that priority against all the threats, blockades, sanctions, political and economic blackmail thrown at them by the political masters of "the free world".



A woman painter & decorator in a Havana school

A current example of such hostile acts is illustrated by the case of the Miami 5. They were Cuban intelligence agents who travelled to Florida and uncovered information about plans being hatched by Cuban expatriates for future terrorist attacks on Cuban soil. This information was handed to the US Government, but rather than arrest those planning future attacks, the FBI arrested the 5. In 2001 the 5 were convicted in a Miami court, in the State where Cuban expatriates wield enormous political power. Families of the 5 have been denied visas and access to their husbands, fathers and sons. The Federation of Cuban Women is campaigning for family visits to the Miami 5, and is working towards their ultimate release.

You can play your part in these campaigns by visiting the Cuba Solidarity Campaign stall on May Day and signing postcards urging President Obama to grant visiting rights to families of the Miami 5. You can also ask prospective MPs about their views on Cuba. These simple acts of international solidarity can be your contribution to building another world where human need is placed before profit.

Moz Greenshields & Hilary Cave

Mesothelioma - the silent killer

Mesothelioma is a devastating industrial disease caused by exposure to asbestos. It has no respect for age or gender and can be caused by relatively low levels of exposure to asbestos.

Mesothelioma is still a male dominated disease, about 5 times more men than women are diagnosed with mesothelioma. This is due, in the main, to the fact that jobs men have generally worked in more likely to bring them into contact with asbestos. However, the Health and Safety Executive state that one-quarter of women have worked in jobs at some time during their lives likely to have exposed them to asbestos.

Sandra worked for Boots during the war; she made gas masks and inserted an asbestos filter. She was 85 years of age when diagnosed with mesothelioma.

There is also an increased risk of developing the disease if they have lived with someone who has been exposed to asbestos.

The South West Public Health Observatory Study revealed that 23 per cent of women diagnosed with mesothelioma had husbands or fathers who worked in occupations linked to exposure to asbestos.

Tamsin was sadly one of our youngest victims of mesothelioma. She developed mesothelioma in July 2009, at the age of 43.

Her grandfather worked at British Steel and would bring his overalls home which Tamsin washed. This was her only known exposure to asbestos. Sadly, Tamsin died only a few months later in November 2009. She left a partner and young children.

According to the Health and Safety Executive, those apparently unexposed cases account for 60 per cent of all mesothelioma cases in women and 15 per cent in men. This is higher than the overall rate in women in most other countries, suggesting that many of these 'unexplained' cases were caused by unrecognised environmental asbestos exposures that occurred in certain situations because of the widespread use of asbestos during the 1960s and 1970s.

There has recently been a landmark case, in which, for the first time, a Council has compensated a Teacher who had not worked directly with asbestos. Previously it would have been explained as environmental exposure.



Widows continuing to fight for Justice for Mesothelioma victims

Joan Henry's family was awarded damages. The case revealed that there was not a significant incidence of exposure to asbestos but alarmingly the disturbance was described as natural 'wear and tear' such as pupils disturbing asbestos with bags, rulers etc. The case hopefully will mean that other victims who have worked in professions not normally associated with exposure to asbestos will be compensated.



Widow Val Pepper supporting cyclists on their 'Breathtaking Journey' to raise awareness of Mesothelioma and the dangers of asbestos

Celia was diagnosed with mesothelioma in August 2009 at the age of 55. She had worked all her life as a Registered Nurse at various hospitals. During her work as a nurse she had to walk under tunnels between wards and departments, where pipework under the tunnels was lagged with asbestos. Renovation work and alterations were also undertaken at various hospitals whilst Celia carried out her duties.

Janet was diagnosed with mesothelioma in 2008. Her only exposure to asbestos was as a Teacher pinning children's work to the ceiling and walls. Renovation work was also carried out at one of the schools.

Many widows have been involved with awareness campaigns and campaigns for justice on behalf of victims of asbestos related diseases. They often feel that they wish to carry on the fight in order that their partners did not die in vain. Many widows have been involved with the Health and Safety Executive campaign and given their personal stories to warn maintenance workers that they are still at risk from exposure to asbestos.

Gloria was 54 when she was diagnosed with mesothelioma in 2007. She had worked as an assembly worker manufacturing car parts. Gloria was heavily involved with the campaign to end the postcode lottery in the treatment of mesothelioma. However, she was denied the drug Alimta, the most effective chemotherapy drug in the treatment of mesothelioma. The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) refused to recommend the drug because it was too costly. It was a long hard battle and Gloria spoke out in the media to campaign for the drug. Finally NICE recommended the drug on 23rd January 2008 and Gloria received treatment. Sadly for Gloria it was too late and she lost her battle to mesothelioma in November 2008, 4 months after finishing her course of Alimta.

The majority of people the Derbyshire Asbestos Support Team helps are men. However, women have played a vital role in raising awareness to the dangers of exposure to asbestos. The cases of women sadly diagnosed with mesothelioma highlight that anyone is potentially at risk from developing this cruel disease and sends a warning that all asbestos is dangerous. Furthermore, surviving partners carry on the fight to continually raise awareness and fight for justice.

FREE Concert - MONDAY

Another year and living in “interesting” times as we do it’s great that the District TUC May Day revels in the form of great music and entertainment together so vital always ... So enjoy the music and the sun - find a great time together anyway.



Rory McLeod

www.rorymcLeod.com

Hailing from many years on the road this well loved performer will regale with tales of the world, tales of the road and all along with an irrepressible personality. On guitar/Spoons vocals and even trombone if the mood takes him, it’s not often you get such an all round entertainer as Rory....don’t miss!

12.30pm

Achanak

www.achanak.co.uk

You have in this band the godfathers of Bhangra, hugely entertaining and in fact the leading lights of the UK Bhangra scene for over 20 years, when they hit the stage you can feel yourself transported across the seas to India to be part of its rich culture and above all have a damn fine time.

2.45pm

3rd MAY - New Square

at we're able to bring you the ever wonderful Chesterfield and
inment to hopefully bring the sun out and enjoy a day of
agers crossed, and hey even if it's a little cool or moist we'll have a

Resin8

From Algeria and Brighton come this fabulous duo, mixing synths and guitar with sounds from the east, a perfect accompaniment to our tribal belly dancers you might see dancing around the streets today on Mayday. Expect exotic dark rhythms with great fun thrown in to an electronica feast of sounds



1.30pm



MC Ian Smith
As usual the intros
and slightly
entertaining bits
between the
bands will be via
our music
organiser Ian
Smith who also
programmes the
music so if you
really like
anything and you
want more info on
any of the artists
just ask on the
day!

Working Women

This is a tribute to un-famous stalwarts of the working class movement. To the women who have fought in their own campaigns, or alongside men, - and often enough, against sexism among men.

Famous people are ordinary too. It is the circumstances which propel a Betty Heathfield into the limelight. It is the lifetime of activity which puts such a person on hand when needed.

Alice Wheeldon of Derby sold used clothes for a living. Her daughter Hettie taught scripture at Ilkeston school. Unlikely revolutionaries one would think. However they had been working class suffragettes, and they were against the militarism of first world war. They sheltered conscientious objectors fleeing the country.

The authorities became alarmed. Wars demand volunteers. *Agent Provocateurs* were used to incriminate the Wheeldons. Two narks, claiming to be pacifists, befriended them and got them convicted of a plot to assassinate the Prime Minister! When State Security is threatened any story will do. A tall story? Hardly - Alice got 10 years gaol, but was released after Lloyd George demanded a review of their cases – once the war was safely over, and no more lambs were needed for the slaughter.

Most activists escape such notoriety thankfully, but their work is no less vital. Without the day-in day-out pressure for improvements, to raise confidence in our own abilities, to create an expectation that we shouldn't take things lying down, there would be no heroines.

Many women fought side by side with husbands or sons. Ann Astwood was one of the first women in the country to hold a senior position in a large company – Robinsons. She was also partner to Harry Hicken the Derbyshire Miners' Leader – in the home, and in the struggle too. Ann it was, who when police raided the Welfare during a strike, escaped with the names and minutes stuffed down her blouse.

Women worked at Sheepbridge Stokes during the war as “dilutees”, replacing men on lathes and capstans. Mrs Johnson from Dronfield, wife of a grammar school teacher, “worked like a man” for the war effort.

Mary MacMahon, sister of Mick and John Kane, who broke the scab Spencer union during the Harworth strike, became a long standing labour councillor in Staveley. MacMahon Avenue was named in her honour. When Mick led a strike at the pit, the Staveley Co. evicted the family from their pit house. Having neither job nor home, the whole family, from toddlers to “old Mick” - Mick's Irish father, ended up in the Workhouse.

Workhouses imposed demeaning restrictions on destitute inmates. The Kanes, the men in the men's dormitories, the women in the theirs, set out to restore inmates' self respect. To show that they were in the Workhouse because of economic crises that were no fault of their own. The workhouse authorities were never more pleased than

when a house was offered! The toddlers became Mary and Bridget. Mary, a GI bride, and a peace campaigner in the USA – helping “draft dodgers” during the Vietnam war. Bridget a member of Staveley Cooperative Women’s guild – and an actor with Win Clark in the Left Book Club Theatre Guild, which campaigned for “Aid for Spain” during the Spanish civil war. Bridget’s daughter has a Foreign Office reply to Staveley Guild when they protested at Britain recognising the Pinochet coup which crushed Chile’s democracy on 9/11 - but 9/11 1973.

Comprehensive Education

Kath Westacott, a teacher and Communist Party secretary, developed the strategy for comprehensive education in Chesterfield, which gained wide support when discussed throughout the trade union movement. Her efforts for council tenants paralleled the struggles of the Clay Cross “first” and “second” elevens – the councillors surcharged and disqualified for refusing Edward Heath’s demand that rents must go up. Kath gave many of us a Socialist education and an understanding of society. An historian, she drew out the lessons of earlier struggles against Capitalism. The celebration of International Women’s Day was Kath’s initiative but County Councillor Jill Jones (who died as we went to print – an obituary will be produced for next year’s programme) expanded it massively during the miners’ strike, taking over the football ground.

Beryl Barker, a battler herself in Sheffield factories, became a wife and mother – endlessly supportive of Bas’s commitment to working class struggle, but active herself for the Morning Star bazaars. Betty Heathfield had a long apprenticeship – organising dances with Brenda Wynn and others to attend International Youth Festivals, later along with Kath Westacott, organising the Woodcraft Folk, the Coop’s children’s organisation. Glenda Wynn was a TASS delegate, secretary of the Trades Council, CND secretary, Morning Star bazaar organiser – and jazz fan.

Another long term Labour councillor was Mrs Clegg from Eckington, a Quaker and much respected peace campaigner, especially against nuclear weapons.

Miners’ Support Groups

The highpoint of women’s involvement was of course the miners’ support groups, where hundreds learned skills they’d never have dreamt of – public speaking, organising, campaigning, picketing, street collecting, facing police brutality and the courts, and living on nothing for a year. It could be invidious to name some but not others. Fortunately many accounts have been published to record the heroism of these women, and prominent among them of course, are Betty Heathfield and Toni Bennett.

Maggie Davis was a full member of the “team Davis” which developed so many openings for disabled people like themselves to live independently, with the facilities they need, the right to equal participation in all life’s activities, and to enjoy the respect due to every person. Maggie has also been a lifelong CND activist and feminist.

The first ever life member of Chesterfield Trades Council, was nurse Win Barker. Win was a member of the Community Health Council and of the Labour Party. She was a prime mover in the establishment of Clay Cross Community hospital.

Tenants' struggles have produced more women activists. ALMOs and other devices to break democratic control of public housing are facing a fight back – and women appear in the forefront.

We haven't seen battles fought by women as at Grunwick or the equal pay strike at Fords. But Chesterfield women have been quick to show solidarity. Perhaps women are more sensitive to the horrors of war and the injustices of colonialism. Women have traditionally been in the forefront of the peace movement and solidarity campaigns for Spain, Vietnam, Chile, Cuba, South Africa, Venezuela, Palestine, Iraq, etc. Ever dependable names such as Win Clark, Joan Wynne, Glenda Wynn were there year-in year-out.

This account is merely an introduction. I was asked to prepare it because I had known so many of the women we show our respect for here. But it is a taster. Missing are the councillors whose time and energy serve their electors, but whose work within committees is out of the public eye. Missing are the women shop stewards who placed their courage in the service of their members, but whose work was done quietly in the workplace.

Missing too, are the legions of women, low paid, single mothers, carers, the disadvantaged of all descriptions who manage to budget, to hold home and family together despite life's adversities.

They are a few of Chesterfield's activists but thankfully, throughout history and throughout the world there are millions of others.

If all these talents could be brought together, organised - what an unstoppable force! It will come!

Joe Clark

Wortley Hall

Wortley Hall Conference/Holiday Centre



Wortley Hall sends May Day Greetings to the Chesterfield & District Trades Union Council, and to all those who participate in the May Day Rally and Gala

Wortley Hall is now owned and controlled by its Shareholders who are all members of the wider Labour, Trade Union and Co-operative movement.

*Wortley Hall supports the Labour and Trade Union and Co-operative movement.
- why not support Wortley Hall?*

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Chairman: Mick Headon

Secretary: B. Clarke

Dancing in the street!

The Alpha Males Present: An Explosion Of Dance!

MayDay 2010, Chesterfield Town Center, Prepare yourselves for something a little different.....

The Alpha Males Present An Explosion Of Dance, Bank Holiday monday May 3rd brings an assorted array of different dance groups and styles, brought to you by world renowned Burlesque superstars "The Alpha Males".

There will be dancers present, and top quality high energy performances from Chesterfield's very own Hip Hop Dance Squad "Kinetic Styles" also Kickers Dance School, Nate Dogg's Dance Workshops, Genetic Energy Crew, Neos Angelos, SupaNova Dance, Steel City Rockers and many more!

Not to mention Sheffields Finest Premier Breakdance Performance Dancers, "The Urban Gladiators" and an EXCLUSIVE Performance of the NOTORIOUS "Alpha Males", 'BlackenStiens Monster' Piece, as seen at BRAM STOKER'S INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL.

Needless to say, this Mayfest is going to be one of a kind, so to indulge in an optical wonder of Flying Acrobatics, Fancy Footwork and Death Defying Dance, come down to Vicar Lane on the 3rd of May to watch, cheer, applaud and finally to get involved! Outside HMV, next to Ann Summers 10am till 4pm.

All The Best, The Alpha Males!

For more info call Jonny on 07875402129 or Email Jokernbs@aol.com

The Urban Gypsies Tribal Bellydance went down a bomb last year - so we've booked them again to entertain you on the march and in New Square.

You might even be tempted to join in!



The Urban Gypsies

Working women and the downturn

Recent decades have seen enormous change for women at work. Larger proportions of women than ever before are in employment and the number of women describing themselves as economically inactive as a result of looking after a home or family has been consistently declining – a trend that, in contrast to previous downturns, has continued during the recession. Over 1.2 million women who are economically inactive say they would like a job – a figure that is likely to reflect factors including unmet demand for more flexible working opportunities and for quality affordable childcare.



Cheryl Pidgeon

Downturn

The downturn has had a variety of impacts for working women. There are now close to 600,000 women facing involuntary part-time work, and over 250,000 in involuntary temporary work. More men than women have lost their jobs during the recession, and the rate of male unemployment has increased faster than the female rate. However, in many sectors (including finance and business services and hotels, restaurants and distribution and manufacturing) men and women have experienced similar proportional falls in jobs. The key reason that fewer women have so far been made unemployed is therefore not that their jobs are intrinsically safer, but that more (around 40 per cent of female employees nationally) work in public sector occupations where large scale redundancies have not taken place. Should large scale public sector cuts take place large numbers of working families therefore could face significant financial hardship (particularly in regions that already have high unemployment).

Economic Growth

The TUC believes that premature spending cuts risk sending the UK spiralling into a double dip recession, with mass job losses, lower tax revenues and an even greater deficit. We know that prioritising economic growth is the best way to get people working, businesses flourishing and boost investor confidence, while making immediate and sweeping spending cuts will serve only to stifle the economic recovery. Such deep reductions in public spending would also have severe impacts

for working women, leading to soaring rates of female unemployment, higher rates of female pensioner poverty and inevitable work intensification (both at work and at home) for large numbers of public sector employees.

To protect public services, support working women and ensure the economic recovery is sustained the TUC is clear that sweeping spending cuts must be prevented.

Across the Globe

From time immemorial women have struggled to raise their voice at work, in their community and across the globe but no matter how tough the struggle we must go on- out of respect for those who have fought for the rights we currently enjoy and sometimes take for granted, for those around us today who cannot fight so strongly and need our protection and collective strength today and for possibly the most important reason- for our children and their children so they too will be proud to carry on the struggle with the same pride and dignity for their children and brothers and sisters.

The TUC has produced a brilliant document entitled Empowering Women across the Global South - a truly inspirational document about the struggles of 8 inspiring women trade unionists who are involved in some way in the international development or solidarity work that the TUC carries out. From women who are political prisoners to women leading their union in the challenging circumstances, these stories illustrate how important the international trade union movement is to working women and how much of an impact our international work has.

Global Solidarity

The TUC is committed to supporting people around the world in their struggle to achieve decent healthcare, education, employment, freedom from persecution and discrimination and the right to a say in how they are governed. These development issues are an integral and historic part of the trade union movement's commitment to global solidarity.

The TUC is proud to give voice to these inspiring women trade unionists and is proud to be working in partnership with trade unions to increase the rights of workers and to reduce poverty across the global south.

In solidarity we must go on with our work - heads held high with pride - because it is truly the right thing to do. In solidarity to all - from my heart to yours - stay safe out there!

Cheryl Pidgeon - Regional Secretary TUC Midlands Region

Work Still Hazardous

With the decline of heavy industry, the type of work for both men and women has undergone changes. However, one factor that has not changed is that today's workforce is still subjected to hazardous conditions resulting in disease and ill-health.

In the past the Trade Union Safety Team (TRUST), has helped and supported many women who worked in factories. The weaving sheds, where women were predominantly employed, were noisy, dusty and the tasks were repetitive. TRUST helped these women to claim benefits and compensation for noise induced deafness, tinnitus, repetitive strain injury and chest diseases caused by cotton dust (byssinosis).

This type of industry may have declined but now many women work in occupations such as Call Centres and Retail (Government Office 2002). Call centres in particular have been associated with noise induced tinnitus and hearing loss. The main type of hearing damage sustained in call centres is acoustic shock. This has been described by trade unions as “the industrial injury of the 21st century”.



Shay Boyle's Workers' Memorial Day painting unveiled

CASE STUDY

TRUST has recently helped and supported a lady suffering from tinnitus who works in a call centre. We advised her to speak to her employer, explaining her problem and requesting that they take action to reduce her exposure to the noise. All workers wore a single earpiece and this was causing her particular problems because, not only was she trying to concentrate on the person to whom she was talking, but also the constant noise of other operators, along with the noise of the tinnitus, was causing lack of concentration and stress. On our advice she spoke to her employer who provided her with a double earpiece, which has had positive results for her. She also spoke to one of our tinnitus lay counsellors who also experiences tinnitus who advised her of ways in which to manage her tinnitus.

It occurs when there is a very high-pitched noise on the telephone line. This noise can be caused by problems with the electrical equipment. Hearing damage or tinnitus can also occur if there is a very loud noise on the other end of the line. Unfortunately, it has been reported that agitated callers have tried to cause discomfort to call centre operators by amplifying shrill noises and whistling down the line.

However, it is not just noise over the telephone that poses a risk of industrial deafness to those working in call centres. The level of ambient noise in their environment is often very high because of the constant noise of people talking.

Call centres have also caused repetitive strain injuries, eyesight problems, back injuries caused by poor seating provision and industrial voice loss.

Another occupation where there is a high percentage of women employed is cleaning. TRUST has supported a number of workers suffering from repetitive strain injuries caused by using industrial buffing machines or general routine cleaning. TRUST is currently helping a former cleaner who is suffering from breathing difficulties.

Although the last decade has seen a decline in manufacturing industry, traditionally thought to be dangerous, modern industry has not improved the working conditions for today's workforce as today's female workforce still suffer from a range of ill-health problems including noise induced hearing loss, tinnitus, repetitive strain injuries and breathing difficulties.

Joanne Carlin - Trade Union Safety Team

'The World is my country; to do good is my religion'

Emma Miller (1839-1917)

Across continents. A plaque outside the Winding Wheel and a bust in the Trades Hall in Brisbane, Australia commemorate a remarkable Chesterfield woman. Emma Miller, nee Holmes, socialist, internationalist and campaigner for women's rights was born in Parkers Yard which stood behind the present Winding Wheel.



Plaque near the winding wheel

Emma's father, a shoemaker, encouraged her political awareness. Daniel Holmes was a Chartist, part of a great movement of working people which arose in the 1830's and spanned the next decade. Chartists campaigned for political reform as the key to a better life for working men and women. At first Chartists demanded votes for all over 21 years but the demand for votes for women was quickly dropped. Today, 150 years later, socialists and trade unionists are organising around 'The People's Charter' whose demands are more clearly social and economic. Emma probably attended meetings with her father and she spoke of the last great Chartist demonstration in London in 1848.

Emma married three times, had children and worked as a seamstress. In the 1860's and 70's she supported attempts to organise trade unions and secure the vote for women as well as men. In 1878, the family emigrated to Australia and Emma became increasingly active politically.

Emma campaigned to improve the lot of working people, especially women, which sometimes brought her into conflict with men opposed to women working and trade unions who did not want to let women join. She fought above all for women's right to vote. She became President of an influential women's suffrage group in Queensland and women gained the right to vote there in 1902, 16 years before women in Britain. Emma was also active in the Australian Labour Federation and staunchly supported the Labour party at several elections. After 25 years of militant campaigning it was said of her that 'she could run a Labour revolution every three minutes' She spoke at large rallies well into her seventies and at 73 led a demonstration in support of the 1912 General Strike. Her last speech was given two days before her death age 78.

As an international socialist Emma spoke out against the First World War. She campaigned for peace and against conscription. She would not bend her principles and a belief in social justice informed her life. Emma inspired other women to action and never forgot her class.

Hundreds attended her funeral and many wreaths were sent, red for the socialist, purple, green and white for the suffragette. The bust was paid for by Brisbane workers and the plaque erected by a Labour Chesterfield Borough Council. The title of this article is Emma's proud epitaph. Her biography 'Proud to be a Rebel' by Pam Young is on sale at the Chesterfield Museum shop.

Women in the work place, the Equality Bill and equal pay

Last year's Office for National Statistics annual pay figures showed that the gender pay gap is narrowing- which is great news but it is still the case, 40 years after the 1970 Equal Pay Act, that for women working full time the pay gap is 16.4% and for women working part-time that gap is a staggering 35.2%.

These shocking statistics make it all the more disappointing that the Equality Bill, welcome as it is in many ways, is unlikely to make any difference to the confusion over equal pay.

Modernising a law that has been more or less unchanged since 1970 is clearly a "good thing" and much needed. But the Bill could have introduced strong measures to tackle discriminatory pay systems and to make it easier to pursue equal pay claims.

What we wanted to see was the ability of trade unions to run these cases on behalf of a representative job role, rather than individual women having to complete Employment Tribunal forms – with the risks that brings of victimisation in the workplace.

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and their families



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A positive move is the new protection for workers who talk about their pay. The Bill will ban secrecy clauses in public sector organisations which prevent people discussing their pay with colleagues by the threat of disciplinary action or even dismissal.

Such clauses keep workers, more often than not lower paid women, in the dark about what others are paid and make it much more difficult for trade unions to negotiate equal pay or to pursue equal pay claims at employment tribunals.

The Bill also gives the power for statutory regulations to require particular employers to publish data about men and women's pay in order that the existence or extent of any gender gap can be established.

But the power will only cover employers who employ more than 250 people.

What would have been more effective in tackling inequality in pay would have been compulsory pay audits in all workplaces, private and public. Transparency of the pay structure in the organisation can only be a good thing. But inevitably, the employers didn't want it. They used their usual arguments about the supposed damage compulsory pay audits would do to business and claimed that audits (and indeed trade unions) were not necessary in workplaces because they always act fairly as employers.

If that's right, an employer has nothing to fear from pay audits, or from giving its employees the benefit of having their union recognised in the work place.



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As the mother of three daughters I cannot accept that it may be another 100 years, at the rate the gender pay gap is closing at present, before they can know that they will earn the same pay as a man for doing work of equal value.

And then there is discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy. The number of tribunal cases pursued by women who have been dismissed when they announce they are pregnant, or who do not get the chance to prove themselves in a job because employers would rather take on a man who won't need time off for maternity leave, or won't be "unreliable" because they may need time off to look after children, continues to grow.

How long will it be before our society accepts that women have a right to be in the workplace and that having a child is not a hindrance to being a good employee?

Stop the War/Palestine Solidarity

presents

THE IRON WALL

**an eye opening film about
apartheid Israeli style
followed by questions and
discussion**

**Monday 3rd May at
2pm Market Hall**

**May Day greetings to
Chesterfield and the
people of Occupied
Palestine.**

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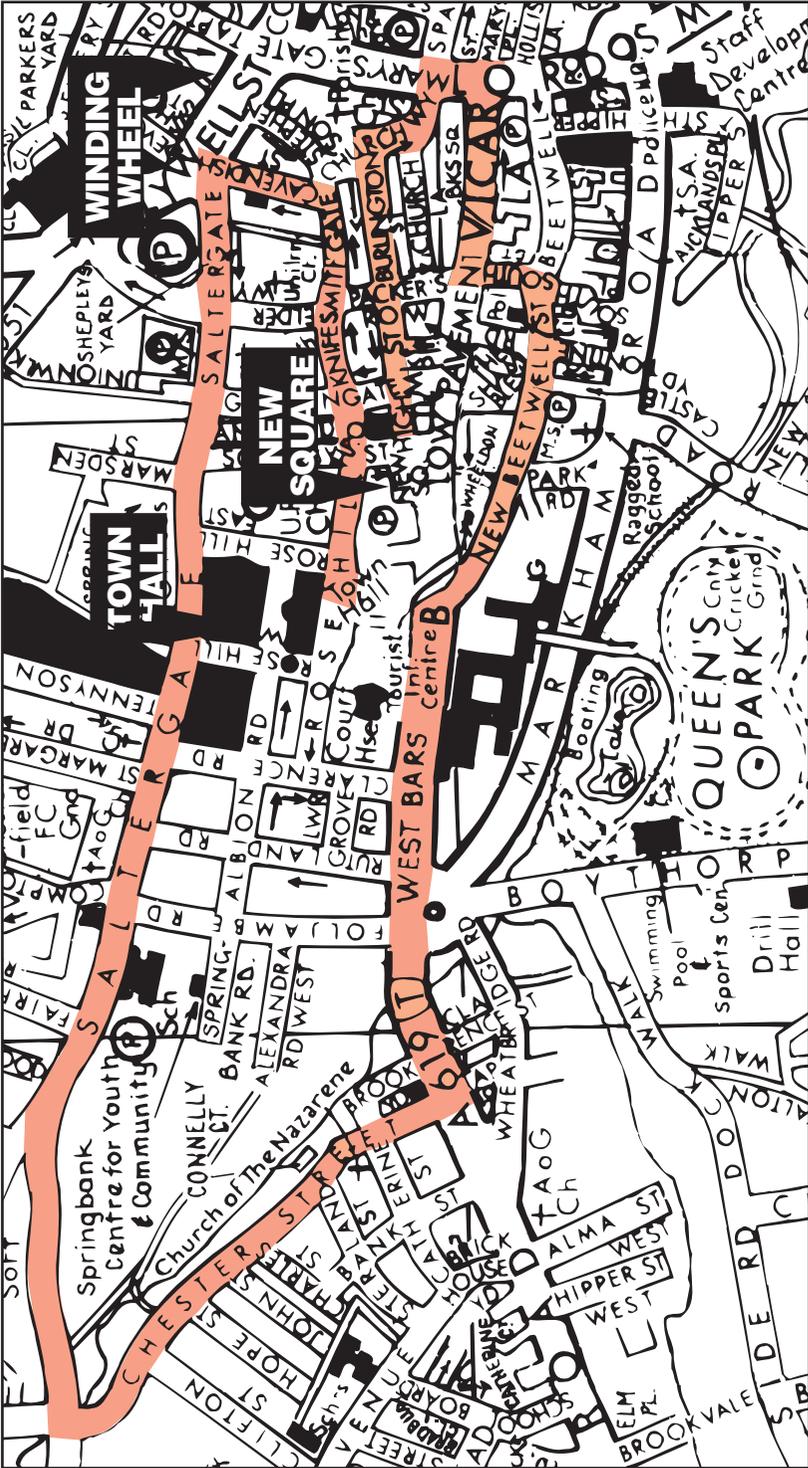
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SHEFFIELD SOCIALIST CHOIR



This photo was taken during the Sheffield Socialist Choir's trip to Cuba last November where we participated in a Cuban Choirs Festival. We are pleased to be supporting Chesterfield May Day once again and will be singing in the Market Hall at 1.00p.m.

**For information about the choir and its activities please
check out our website: www.socialistchoir.co.uk**



..May Day March Route..

THE PEOPLE'S ANTHEMS

THE RED FLAG

The people's flag is deepest red.
It shrouded oft our martyred dead.
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold
Their hearts' blood dyed its ev'ry fold.

Chorus:

*Then raise the scarlet standard
high!
Within its shade we'll live or die;
Tho' cowards flinch and traitors
sneer,
We'll keep the Red Flag flying here.*

With heads uncovered swear we all
To bear it onward til we fall.
Come dungeon dark or gallows grim,
This song shall be our parting hymn.

Chorus:

*Then raise the scarlet standard
high!
Within its shade we'll live or die;
Tho' cowards flinch and traitors
sneer,
We'll keep the Red Flag flying here.*

THE INTERNATIONALE

Arise! Ye starvelings from your
slumbers!
Arise! Ye criminals of want!
For reason in revolt now thunders
And at last ends the age of cant.
Now away with all superstitions,
Servile masses, arise! Arise!
We'll change forthwith the old
conditions
And spurn the dust to win the prize

Chorus:

*Then comrades, come rally!
And the last fight let us face.
The Internationale unites the human
race!*

We peasants, artisans and others
Enrolled among the folk of toil.
Let's claim the earth henceforth for
workers
Drive the indolent from the soil.
On our flesh too long have fed the
raven
We've too long been the vultures' prey
But now farewell the spirit craven
The dawn brings in a brighter day.
Chorus...

***“Until the Movement is marked by the defiant singing of revolutionary songs, it lacks one of the distinctive marks of a popular revolutionary movement: it is the dogma of the few and not the faith of the multitude”
James Connolly - 1907***