

Museum set to welcome 500,000th visitor!

CHARNWOOD MUSEUM is set to break through the half-a-million visitors barrier - just months after celebrating its 10th anniversary.

The Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council funded attraction, based in Queen's Park, Loughborough, has proved to be extremely popular since opening its doors on April 22nd 1999.

A total of 57,000 people visited the Museum in its first year, although that figure had dropped to around 42,000 in 2005-06.

However, the numbers are back on the increase - bucking the national trend - and in 2008-09, more than 53,000 people called in.

In 10 years, there have been more than 480,000 visitors to the Museum, which has delighted Cllr Peter Lewis, Charnwood's Cabinet member for Leisure and Culture.

That means more than 500,000 people are expected to have poured through the Museum's doors since it first opened by the end of this year.

Cllr Lewis said: "This is a superb, award-winning museum.

"It is visited by all ages from across the Borough. Schools use it for projects and for exhibitions.

"Jointly funded by both

Milestone is to be reached months after 10th birthday

Borough and County, this is partnership at its best, offering a quality experience for the whole community.

"It's a place about our past, but completely up to date with new ideas how best to make that past live for all.

"Don't just visit once - keep coming back. Nothing ever stays the same!"



Based in a 19th century building which was once the Loughborough's swimming pool and public baths, the Museum aims to create a sense of belonging among local people, while introducing visitors to the character and heritage of the Borough.

David Parsons, Leader of Leicestershire County Council, said: "We are pleased to work in partnership with Charnwood on delivering a first class museum. The current

collaboration with Loughborough University celebrating its centenary shows how the museum is working effectively with important local partners.

"The County Council also recognises the importance of the Friends of Charnwood who have supported the work of the museum and fundraised for over ten years."

The Museum was the first in Leicestershire to achieve the Visitor Attraction Quality Award - a mark of excellence

that it has retained for nine years.

There are four permanent exhibitions and up to 20 temporary displays each year - while art and craft workshops, lectures, talks and other special events are always extremely popular.

Visitors are extremely complimentary about the Museum.

In feedback received from customer satisfaction surveys, visitors said 'the exhibitions were well presented' and it is a 'great

little Museum that always has something new'.

Forthcoming exhibitions include a Pirate Invasion between July 11th and September 2 with lots of fun events for youngsters during the school holidays.

To find out more about Charnwood Museum, call (01509) 233 754 or log on to www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/heritage.

Alternatively, visit www.leics.co.uk/index/community/museums/charnwoodmuseum.htm

Centenary of higher education is celebrated this year

ONE hundred years of higher education is being celebrated in Loughborough in 2009.

A civic reception is being held in September to mark the anniversary being jointly celebrated by Loughborough College and Loughborough University.

The centenary marks the establishment of the Loughborough

Technical Institute in 1909, which went on to become Loughborough Technical College, Loughborough College of Further Education and, later, the current Loughborough College.

Loughborough University also emerged and progressed from the Loughborough Technical Institute.

A special book - Loughborough

College, A Centenary History 1909-2009 - has been written by local historian Professor Leonard Cantor.

It provides a rich insight into the changes in technical and vocational education over the past 100 years.

Professor Cantor also presented a special centenary lecture and Loughborough College Principal, Jim Mutton, said: "I'm proud of the

College history and the excellent book produced for the centenary."

Professor Shirley Pearce, the Vice-Chancellor of Loughborough University, said: "We are all immensely proud of Loughborough's long history of providing further and higher education and of the achievements of both the University and its predecessor Colleges over

the years.

"We are looking forward to celebrating our illustrious past, our present successes and what we are sure will be an exciting future."

To purchase a copy of Professor Cantor's book, contact Catherine Baker on (01509) 515 428 or email catherine.baker@loucoll.ac.uk.

Book marks anniversary

A SPECIAL book to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood is being produced.

The organisation was first established as the Charnwood Community Relations Council in May 1969 before becoming Charnwood Racial Equality Council in November 1996.

Last September, they became Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood to reflect the groups work on all equalities, including race, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability plus religion and belief.

A special dinner (pictured) was held at the Radmoor Centre at Loughborough College and the booklet is being produced to mark the important events over the group's history.

Varsha Parmar, from Human Rights Equalities Charnwood, said: "The world has greatly changed in the last 40 years and our community in Charnwood has welcomed many different cultures to become citizens of the Borough.

"The booklet will show some of the issues, problems and solutions that inevitably arise with change and which in the process have made Charnwood a tolerant and

outward looking place to live."

Cllr Peter Lewis, Charnwood's Lead Member for Community Cohesion & Equalities, paid tribute to the HR&EC's work.

He said: "Led by volunteer Trustees and a small but dedicated professional team, often struggling to maintain its funding to survive, this local organisation has seen huge changes in society over these 40 years.

"Today there are growing fears that extremists will use

people's doubts and uncertainties to foster their own political or religious agendas, often scapegoating individuals or

groups as 'outsiders' - by creed, colour, mental or physical disability, or different lifestyles.

"Our Borough Council, its Officers and Elected Members, deplore this. We work in close and robust partnership with HR&EC to ensure we're all one Charnwood - Charnwood together.

"Every citizen, as a human being, is entitled to equal respect."

To find out more about the work of Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood, log on to www.humanrightsandequalitiescharnwood.org or call (01509) 261 651.



BLAST FROM THE PAST: The original Loughborough College building in Greenclose Lane.