

The Beeston EXPRESS



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Broxtowe's first blue plaque unveiled at Bartons

TH BARTON, the founder of Barton Transport Ltd, is the first person from this area to be commemorated by a blue plaque.

The plaque was unveiled on Wednesday, August 25 by Sir Neil Cossons, former chairman of English Heritage. It is positioned on the landmark Barton's office building, familiar to so many people, at 61, High Road, Chilwell.

The object of the blue plaque scheme, run by English Heritage since 1986, is to celebrate people who have made an impact on their local community and beyond, and also to encourage a better understanding of familiar local places that go unmarked.

A number of blue plaques are planned for the south Broxtowe area over the coming months. The local scheme is a collaborative effort by the Beeston and District Civic Society, the Beeston and District Local History Society and the Stapleford and District Local History Society.

Thomas Henry (TH) Barton, a worthy first contender for the local blue plaque scheme, was renowned

for achieving firsts in many areas once he had created what was to become Western Europe's largest independent bus company.

As an enterprising engineer ahead of his time, his successes were legion: he was the first in the world to work on the then unnamed diesel engine; he was one of the first in the world to operate a timetabled bus service and he invented a new alternative fuel system for vehicles during the oil shortages of both world wars. He also applied himself to improving the service and comfort of his passengers, who in turn held his company in great affection. TH Barton was awarded the OBE in 1943 for his services to the passenger transport industry.

As guests assembled at the Chilwell 'garage' for the plaque unveiling, great-great-grandson, Simon Barton, said: "It gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone here today for the unveiling of this blue plaque – the first in the area – to TH Barton. I think it's quite typical of the man that, 64 years after his death, he is still achieving firsts!"

Never a dull moment

Ex-Barton employee Mick Blunkett, 62, had travelled over from Ilkeston for the unveiling ceremony.

"I worked for Barton's from 1969 until 1987," Mick said, "and I have such happy memories that even being here today brings a tear

to my eye.

"You were always treated like one of the family by Barton's; we were more than just a number. Every day was different, always a different bus. To drive some of

continued on page 2...



Free Heritage Open Days 2010 supplement inside
Thursday, September 9 - Sunday, September 12

Tesco looking for change

TESCO, currently building a new superstore in the centre of Beeston, has asked Broxtowe Borough Council if it can discard the planning requirement to provide a 'secondary access' from Station Road to the new Tesco car park. The store is being constructed on what was known as 'the old Shaw & Marvin site' between the High Road, Station Road and Middle Street and is due to open later this year.

Tesco Stores Ltd was originally granted planning permission in 2004 to build a store with a retail area of 5481 sq m and 382 parking spaces. In October 2009, the retail giant was granted revised planning permission to increase the retail area to 9185 sq m and to extend the car park to 440 spaces.

The 'ins and outs'

When preparing the revised planning application in 2008, traffic projections had suggested that the Middle Street junction would struggle to accommodate the increase in traffic. Tesco therefore included a secondary access off Station Road, but Notts County Council's highway department still had concerns over the junction capacity of Middle Street/Station Road. In order to resolve this issue, Tesco acquired additional land to expand the principal access junction on Middle Street and the 'left turn only' access was still included. However, Tesco now claims that the original justification for the access to the car park from Station Road is no longer valid and that Middle Street and Station Road have sufficient capacity without this secondary access.

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