

Chastleton House Celebrates 400 Years!

2007 sees the 400th anniversary of one of the most unusual houses in the care of the National Trust. Chastleton House has an unremarkable history; what makes it unusual is its timeless setting and atmosphere of undisturbed age and continuity. There are several exciting developments to look forward to in 2007.



Chastleton's historic clothing collection is coming out of storage and several items will be on show for the first time. A new acquisition, a rare 17th century Sheldon tapestry, made either at Barcheston or Bordesley, near Redditch, showing a detailed map of middle England, will be in display in the Middle Chamber. The stables will be returned to their original use.

A Time Capsule

Built between 1607 and 1612 as a lavish status symbol by Walter Jones, a wealthy wool merchant, the house came to the Trust in 1991 after 400 years of continuous ownership by an increasingly impoverished family. Their 'make do and mend' philosophy meant that this once grand country house remained virtually unchanged generation after generation, retaining contents and features which are now rare survivals.

When it acquired Chastleton in 1991, the National Trust adopted a ground-breaking approach to this unique time

capsule. From the soot-blackened ceiling in the kitchen to the peeling 1960s wallpaper in the Library and abandoned slipper bath under the rafters, the house has been 'kept as found' rather than restored to its former glory. Extensive repairs were carried out to protect it from the further ravages of time and the house is now protected by special conservation techniques.

Pre-book a Visit

With no shop or tea-room, the place exudes a timeless and genteel charm, greatly enjoyed by all who visit. During the winter months every surface, including textiles, and each individual item is carefully examined and cleaned. The house is then 'put to bed' for its winter rest.

Chastleton House exudes its own special atmosphere. A fire burns in the hearth, a cat keeps the mice down; there are no ropes or barriers in any rooms. Children are welcome; families can hire free Explorer Packs to help enjoy their visit. Because of the size of many rooms and the delicate state of the fabric of the house and its contents, the number of daily visitors is limited. Visits can be pre-booked until the day before your visit by calling: 01608 674355.

Why not join our team of volunteers? Opportunities from Room and Gardening Stewarding to Conservation and Events are available. Please contact the **Chastleton House Office** on: **01608 674355** for an Information Pack.