



## SPEAKER INFORMATION

# DON CHISWELL

<i>Speakers Name:</i>	Don Chiswell		
<i>Contact Address:</i>	2 Stanley Road, Peterborough PE1 1SZ		
<i>Phone Number:</i>	01733 569951	<i>Mobile Phone:</i>	
<i>Speakers Website:</i>			
<i>Sp-E-mail address:</i>	donchis@gmail.com		
<i>Lecture Titles</i>	From 'The Siege of Troy' to 'The Battle of Britain' (see list provided)  See the pdf file at the Preview website to see the full list of available talks at <a href="http://www.calh.org.uk/preview.htm">www.calh.org.uk/preview.htm</a>		
<i>Lecture Cost</i>	£40		
<i>Travelling Distance</i>	Up to 40 Miles	<i>Travel Expenses</i>	25p/mile see website
<i>Availability</i>	To be negotiated		
<i>Equipment Needed</i>	Overhead Projector and screen/appropriate wall		
<i>Add-information:</i>	Please contact direct for further information.		

Details of talks on a wide range of historical subjects, spanning some 3,250 years, are listed in approximate chronological order. Should you not find one to meet your needs, give me a call, as new subjects are being continually added.

### Full List of available Courses: (talk details at end)

<i>Lecture Titles</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Real Troy</li> <li>• Thermopylae and Salamis</li> <li>• Hannibal</li> <li>• Julius Caesar</li> </ul>
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## **SPEAKER INFORMATION**

- The Lives of the Roman Emperors; Augustus to Nero
- The Roman invasion of Britain
- Boudicca
- Hadrian's Wall
- King Arthur
- Offa King of Mercia
- Alfred the Great
- Harald Hardrada
- 1066; the year of the Conquest
- Hereward the Wake
- Cogs and Galleys
- The First Crusade
- The Third Crusade
- Eleanor of Aquitaine
- King John and Magna Carta
- The Crusades in Europe
- The Knights Templar
- The Battle of Bannockburn
- The Black Death
- The Battle of Agincourt
- The Longbow
- Richard III
- The Battle of Bosworth Field
- Inside the Medieval Mind
- Great Harry's Navy



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- Henry VIII the Renaissance Prince
- Katherine of Aragon
- Henry VIII and the Reformation
- The Accession of Elizabeth I. The Lion's Cub
- Mary Queen of Scots
- The Great Siege of Malta
- The Spanish Armadas
- Elizabeth's Sea Dogs
- Sir Francis Drake
- The New World
- The Gunpowder plot. of 1605
- The English Civil War in the Midlands
- The New Model Army
- The Battle of Marston Moor
- The Battle of Naseby
- Oliver Cromwell. God's Englishman
- Prince Rupert of the Rhine
- The Slave Trade
- The Bleinheim Campaign'
- Last of the Mohicans
- Nelson and the Invasion of Britain
- Napoleon's war in Spain- the Peninsular War
- 1812 Napoleon's invasion of Russia
- The Battle of Waterloo
- The Transport Revolution Canals, Roads and Railways



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1750-1850

- The First Industrial Nation
- The Prince Regent
- Burke and Hare and the Body snatchers
- Brunel and Stephenson the great engineers
- The Railway Manias
- The Great Stink
- Crimean war- Myths and Legends
- Darwin and Evolution
- Charles Dickens
- Custer and Crazy Horse
- William Morris and the Arts & Crafts Movement
- The Old Contemptibles
- Edith Cavell
- Financial fiascos and credit crunches
- Al Capone and Prohibition
- Operation Sea lion
- Valkyrie the plot to kill Hitler

Full List of available Courses: (talk details at end)

### **The Real Troy**

The city of Troy as depicted by Homer in the Iliad has been proven to have existed over three thousand years ago during the Bronze Age. Helen, Achilles, Hector and the wooden horse.....discover the truth behind the legends.

*Caring for the Future of Cambridgeshire's Past*



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### **Thermopylae and Salamis**

During the Persian invasion of Greece in the fifth century BC, King Leonidas and his 300 Spartans gained immortality defying the world's largest army and greatest king, at the pass of Thermopylae. At Salamis, the greatest naval battle in ancient times, the outnumbered Greek fleet led by Themistocles of Athens was to win a decisive victory and at the battle of Plataea King Xerxes' dream of world conquest was ended.

### **Hannibal**

Sworn enemy of Rome, Hannibal took an army through Spain and Gaul across the Alps to invade Italy. How was he able to campaign in Italy for 15 years with no support from home and destroy a succession of Roman armies sent against him? Ultimately why did he fail and how did Rome finally defeat Carthage to emerge as a world power.

### **Julius Caesar**

General, Politician, administrator, orator, a gifted man of letters, a man of great learning taste and personal charm Julius Caesar excelled at everything he undertook. His career was marked by a strange mixture of enlightened liberalism and cynical violence, with his energy, ruthlessness and determination inspiring both loyalty and undying hatred. Caesar's life bridged the stormy epoch that saw the transition of Rome from a Republic to an Empire.

### **The Lives of the Roman Emperors; Augustus to Nero**

The good, the bad and the just plain mad. The first five Emperors of Rome are among the most famous names known to us from antiquity: Augustus the first Emperor, Tiberius who lived in dissolute retirement, Caligula who had his horse made a Consul, Claudius the 'conqueror' of Britain and Nero who reputedly played



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and sang while Rome burned. The reigns of the Julio-Claudian Dynasty spanned a period of nearly 100 years and saw the establishment of imperial government controlled by a single individual.

### **The Roman invasion of Britain**

A look at the Roman invasions of Britain from Julius Caesar's raids in 55 and 54 BC-'I came, I saw, I went home again,' to the Claudian invasion of AD43. While the Emperor Claudius spent only 16 days in Britain, the conquest was to take some 40 years, with the province coming near to being abandoned.

### **Boudicca**

Boudicca's revolt in AD61 nearly destroyed Roman rule in Britain. Who was she? Why did she fail? Could she have changed our history?

### **Hadrian's Wall**

What was Hadrian's Wall? Why was it built? What was life like for the soldiers stationed on the Empire's northern frontier?

### **King Arthur**

He's our greatest folk hero-but did he even really exist? Looking beyond the myth for the real historical Arthur; the Dark Age warrior whose horsemen stopped the advance of Saxon invaders for more than a generation.

### **Offa King of Mercia**

the most powerful of the Anglo-Saxon kings prior to Alfred the Great, Offa was noted for producing some of the earliest English coins and for the defensive works on the border with Wales which still remain today-Offa's Dyke. Why has his story been all but forgotten?



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### **Alfred the Great**

Alfred should be remembered for more than his alleged culinary failure of burning the cakes. Warrior, statesman, lawgiver and man of learning Alfred was justifiably given the title 'The Great' From being the youngest son of the king of Wessex he was to emerge as the unlikely leader who checked the invading Danes, saved the Church and laid the foundations for the formation of England.

### **Harald Hardrada**

The exploits of Harald Sigurdsson, called Hardrada (Hard ruler), King of Norway were the stuff of Legend and were recorded in the Icelandic Sagas. His exile in Kiev and Byzantium, his return and rule of Norway, and his invasion of England warrant him the title of 'The last Viking'.

### **1066; the year of the Conquest**

What really happened? 1066 was to a momentous year in the history of England. It was to see three kings on the throne; three invasions and three major battles the outcome of which changed the course of history.

### **Hereward the Wake**

Hereward the 'exile' as he should correctly be known led the last resistance to the Norman Conquest, including the burning of Peterborough. Was he the heroic patriot depicted in literature or opportunistic robber?

### **Cogs and Galleys**

Contrary to popular belief England after 1066 was not only vulnerable to invasion, but was indeed invaded on several occasions during the Middle Ages.



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### **The First Crusade**

Pope Urban II's call for a crusade in 1096 on the pretext of liberating Jerusalem was to set in train a series of events which still reverberate to this day. What were the real motives of those who took part?

### **The Third Crusade**

The real story of the Third Crusade is far removed from that depicting a chivalrous contest between Richard the Lion Heart and Saladin his Saracen opponent. Perhaps the most famous of the Crusades in English history was marked by continuous infighting among the Crusaders; massacres; bloody sieges and battles which in end achieved little.

### **Eleanor of Aquitaine**

Wife to two kings and mother to two more Eleanor of Aquitaine would have been remarkable individual in any age, the fact that she a woman achieved all she did in twelfth century Europe is perhaps more remarkable still and explains her legendary reputation. Her forcefulness, ability beauty and charm enabled her as a patron of the arts, as a politician and a mother to exercise a pervasive influence for more than six decades.

### **King John and Magna Carta**

Was King John as bad as he has been portrayed or did he simply get a bad press? What led to the barons' rebellion and the invasion by the French. What was Magna Carta and why is it still seen as important?

### **The Crusades in Europe**

Crusades were not only called to free Jerusalem, but also against the Moors of Spain, the pagan peoples of the Baltic, the schismatic Greeks of Byzantium and



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against the Cathar heretics of southern France. Why were these Crusades called and what were the real motives of those who took part?

### **The Knights Templar**

Forget the DaVinci code. What were the origins of this order of warrior monks? How did they come to be the first uniformed standing army in the western world and pioneers of international banking? Why were they destroyed by the King of France?

### **The Battle of Bannockburn**

Forget Braveheart. What really happened at Bannockburn the most famous of all the battles of the Scottish Wars of Independence? How did Robert the Bruce's army come to fight and defeat the numerically superior English of Edward II and what were the consequences?

### **The Black Death**

'The Great Mortality' slew some third of the population of Europe in a little more than three years. Where did it come from and how did it spread? Why did this plague prove so deadly and what was its impact on England and the wider medieval world?

### **The Battle of Agincourt**

Agincourt perhaps the most famous of all the battles of the Hundred Years War with France, immortalised by William Shakespeare's play

Henry V. But what really happened? How did a starving dysentery ridden army, cut off in hostile territory defeat the numerically superior French who were closing in for the kill?



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### **The Longbow**

The history of the longbow; its origins, its zenith during the Hundred Years War against France and subsequent decline is interwoven with the history of England and Wales.

### **Richard III**

Hero or Villain? Good King Richard or England's black legend? Richard remains one of England's most enigmatic and controversial Kings. Was he the monster depicted in Shakespeare's play or a victim of Tudor Propaganda? The truth, like the man is perhaps more complex and more interesting?

### **The Battle of Bosworth Field**

What really happened? The battle of Bosworth was to be a momentous event in the history of England, it was to see the death of Richard III (the last English king to fall in battle) and the coming of a new dynasty the Tudors, yet strangely there are few accounts of the day. The battle's outcome was more due to treachery than tactics and is still the subject of contentious debate.

### **Inside the Medieval Mind**

Uncover the thoughts, superstitions and beliefs of Medieval people. The term Medieval is an invention of the Renaissance and today its use often has bad connotations. Those living during this period did not think of themselves as living in the Middle Ages and were perhaps not so different from ourselves.

### **Great Harry's Navy**

When Henry VIII came to the throne England's fleet consisted of only 5 ships, by the time of his death there were over 50 vessels. Henry's reign saw the laying of the foundations of English naval power



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### **Henry VIII the Renaissance Prince**

the early life of Henry VIII. How and why did the experiences of his childhood and youth change Henry from the popular and gifted prince into the bloody tyrant famed for his numerous wives in his later years?

### **Katherine of Aragon**

the first of Henry VIII's six wives, whose divorce led to Henry's break with Rome. While treated shabbily by her father in law Henry VII in her early years and later by her 'husband' she was to be Queen for 24 years, a longer period than that of her five successors combined.

### **Henry VIII and the Reformation**

Why did Henry VIII make himself Supreme Head of the Church in England and precipitate the break with Rome, when he still considered himself a Catholic? The Henrican Reformation was essentially political, yet set in train a series of events which led to the establishment of a Protestant Church of England.

### **The Accession of Elizabeth I. The Lion's Cub**

Elizabeth I is considered by many to be England's greatest monarch. Her achievements are perhaps even more remarkable given that she succeeded to the throne at all, after her mother had been executed by her father, she had been declared illegitimate and she had grown up amidst political intrigue and the religious turbulence of the Reformation.

### **Mary Queen of Scots**

Martyr or fool? Queen of both Scotland and France, married three times, mother to the future king of Great Britain James I&VI, deposed by her own subjects and imprisoned and later executed by her cousin Elizabeth I of England; Mary's life was



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beset by tragedy. However, perhaps by the manner of her death she fulfilled her own motto, 'In my end is my beginning.'

### **The Great Siege of Malta**

In 1565 Suleyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Sultan sent an army of 40,000 men and a fleet of 200 ships to capture the island of Malta. Led by their Grand Master the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, together with the people withstood a siege of nearly four months duration. The defeat of the Turkish Empire checked their expansion into the western Mediterranean.

### **The Spanish Armadas**

The Armadas (there were three more Armadas sent by Spain against Elizabethan England, following that of 1588) have entered into legend. Did Drake play his game of bowls on Plymouth Hoe? Was the proposed invasion of England ever a practical proposition? Why did the Armada flee a few fire ships at Calais? Why did it suit both sides to attribute success or failure to Divine intervention? Where did the myth of the smaller English ships originate?

### **Elizabeth's Sea Dogs**

The lives and times of Elizabeth I's sea captains including: Sir Francis Drake, Sir Richard Grenville, Martin Frobisher and Sir Walter Raleigh. Heroes in a heroic age, or self seeking rogues? What was the truth behind the legend?

### **Sir Francis Drake**

'El Draque' to his Spanish enemies, Drake was to become a legend in his own lifetime. While undoubtedly a superb seaman and navigator, and an audacious raider, he was to prove an unsuccessful fleet commander, regarded by many contemporaries as a self seeking rogue. What was fact and what was myth?



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### **The New World**

The colonisation of North America by the English during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would change the course of history. From the time of Sir Walter Raleigh's ill fated settlement at Roanoke Virginia to the establishment of the 13 colonies which were to become the United States, English colonists strove to create a 'New England' in the New World.

### **The Gunpowder plot. of 1605**

'That heavy and doleful tragedy which is commonly called the Powder Treason'. Why do we celebrate the demise of Guy Fawkes every 5<sup>th</sup> November? Who were the plotters and what were their aims? Could the plot have ever succeeded? Why does the plot have such a hold on our imagination? What was the truth behind the legend?

### **The English Civil War in the Midlands**

The First Civil War was to split families setting brother against brother, father against son and friend against friend. Nowhere was this more true than the Midlands where the loyalties between King and Parliament were most divided and in consequence the conflict fiercest.

### **The New Model Army**

The New Model Army was created in the face of opposition from within Parliament on whose behalf it was engaged in a civil war with the forces of the King. It was with this Army that Oliver Cromwell sided against his former Parliamentary allies and which pressed for the execution of Charles I, and subsequently maintained the Protectorate against its enemies until it was disbanded at the Restoration.



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### **The Battle of Marston Moor**

The largest battle of the English Civil Wars Marston Moor was fought between the combined armies of Parliament and their Scottish allies against the Royalists commanded by Prince Rupert. The battle began on the evening of 2 July 1644 and finished by the light of the moon with the last stand of the Royalist 'White coats' that fought virtually to the last man. Why the battle fought and what were its consequences?

### **The Battle of Naseby**

The decisive battle of the First Civil War, Naseby brought defeat to the Royalist cause. It was here that Parliament's Army, New Modelled (the New Model Army) fought their first battle. Why was the battle fought against the better judgement of the Royalist commander Prince Rupert? What part did Oliver Cromwell play in the battle? What were the consequences of the Parliamentary victory?

### **Oliver Cromwell. God's Englishman**

He was very much the product of his times in a world turned upside down by rebellion against the King. From being an obscure member of the gentry he was to emerge as the unlikely leader of the English Commonwealth. Loved and hated by his contemporaries, Oliver Cromwell continues to be a controversial figure.

### **Prince Rupert of the Rhine**

Son of Elizabeth of Bohemia, the Winter Queen; a soldier from the age of 14, Prince Rupert is most famous for commanding the forces of his uncle Charles I during the English Civil War. He also served as an admiral first against the Commonwealth of Oliver Cromwell and later following the Restoration, against the Dutch. What is perhaps less well known is his skill as an artist, his inventions and contribution to science as a founder member of the Royal Society.



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### **The Slave Trade**

The true story behind the Atlantic slave trade; how it began, worked and was abolished. From its origins in the Elizabethan Age until Abolition in 1807 millions of slaves were transported from Africa to the New World. How did the Abolitionists prevail over the powerful vested interests behind the trade?

### **The Bleinheim Campaign'**

Corporal John' Churchill was to march an army across Europe to the Danube at Blenheim where together with Prince Eugene he decisively defeated the forces of Louis XIV. The Duke of Marlborough as he became in recognition of his victory, had removed the French threat to Vienna thereby saving the Grand Alliance and shattered the myth of French invincibility.

### **Last of the Mohicans**

The battle for North America between Britain and France, which came to its climax during the Seven Year's War with Wolfe's capture of Quebec. How did the defeat of the French pave the way for the American Revolution and the creation of the United States?

### **Nelson and the Invasion of Britain**

Nelson through his victory at Trafalgar was regarded as having saved 'England' from invasion, although by the time of the battle the forces gathered for the invasion were actually marching east towards Austerlitz.

Could Napoleon's invasion plans have ever succeeded?

### **Napoleon's war in Spain- the Peninsular War**

An overview of the war which gave us the first guerrillas, the Duke of Wellington and contributed to the fall of the Napoleonic Empire.



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### **1812 Napoleon's invasion of Russia**

Napoleon's Russian campaign of 1812 was to mark the turning point in the fortunes of his Empire. The campaign and the disastrous retreat from Moscow were not only to cost the lives of over half a million of his soldiers, but destroyed the myth of Napoleons invincibility.

### **The Battle of Waterloo**

"A near run thing". The battle which finally ended the Napoleonic dream, if not the legend. Perhaps more a battle Napoleon lost rather than Wellington won.

### **The Transport Revolution Canals, Roads and Railways 1750-1850**

In a little over a hundred years the building of canals, roads and railways by the engineers such as Brindley, Metcalf, Macadam, Telford, the Stephensons and Brunel; together with their armies of Navvies, was to revolutionize Britain's transport system. This revolution facilitated industrial growth and urbanization changing Britain and the world forever.

### **The First Industrial Nation**

An overview of Britain's Industrial Revolution. How did Britain become the First Industrial Nation, gaining for itself, by the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851 the title of the 'Workshop of the World'?

### **The Prince Regent**

First as Prince of Wales, then Regent and lastly as King, George IV was frequently ridiculed by his contemporaries. His Regency and reign are justly considered to be one of the high points of English social and cultural life as well as one of the most extravagant and outrageous eras of our history.

Scandals ,insanity and posh pavilions Just part of the Regency story



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### **Burke and Hare and the Body snatchers**

Discover the true story behind the infamous Burke and Hare, the fear of the body snatchers and the measures taken to counter their trade. What happened when the body snatchers came to Peterborough?

### **Brunel and Stephenson the great engineers**

Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Robert Stephenson were contemporaries, both the sons of eminent engineers they were to become the greatest civil engineers of their time. While they came from contrasting social backgrounds, differed in their character and style of management and were potentially commercial rivals they became and remained friends to the last.

### **The Railway Manias**

During the 1830's and 1840's Britain was gripped by two 'Railway Manias' driven by a mixture of vision and greed which saw fortunes made and lost. 'The press supported the mania: the government sanctioned it: the people paid for it. Railways were at once a fashion, and a frenzy. England was mapped out for the iron roads' (A writer of 1851)

### **The Great Stink**

Victorian public health reform. How did the Great Stink of 1858 lead to the construction of London's sewerage system (much of which survives today) and what was its contribution to public health.

### **Crimean war- Myths and Legends**

Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. The Charge of the Light Brigade and the Thin Red Line. What really happened? How did the myths come about?



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### **Darwin and Evolution**

The story of Charles Darwin and the 'Origin of Species', the book which shook the world when it was first published in 1858 and remains the source of continued controversy. How did the voyage of the Beagle lead Darwin to develop his theory of evolution and why did he delay the publishing of his work?

### **Charles Dickens**

was not only the greatest novelist of his age, but emerged as a champion of the poor. What experiences in his early life shaped his character? How did his writings help change public opinion and aid the course of reform?

### **Custer and Crazy Horse**

George Armstrong Custer the flamboyant and dashing commander of the Seventh Cavalry was to meet defeat at the hands of Crazy Horse's Sioux and Cheyenne warriors at the Battle on the Greasy Grass-Little Bighorn 25<sup>th</sup> June 1876. Battle or massacre? Why does the conflict have such a hold on our imagination? What was the truth behind the legend?

### **William Morris and the Arts & Crafts Movement**

Morris, Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites

William Morris' life and work was to influence the Arts & Crafts Movement's spirit and ethos, raising the status of the applied arts and his Socialism gave a vision of a free and equal society in which art should be a part of everyone's life.

### **The Old Contemptibles**

The story of the British Expeditionary Force (B.E.F.) the 'contemptible little army' sent to defend Belgium at the outbreak of war in 1914. How did Haldane's reforms



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lead to the creation of this small professional army which against great odds and at a heavy cost halted the advance of the Kaiser's armies and denied them victory?

### **Edith Cavell**

“Patriotism is not enough” There are numerous places throughout the world with hospitals, car parks roads and even a mountain named after Edith Cavell, many of which have the most tenuous link with her. How did this come about? Why did a nurse from Norfolk become a national, even international icon? How does the legend compare with the history?

### **Financial fiascos and credit crunches**

The current banking crisis and credit crunch are far from unique events. The story of financial crisis from the South Sea Bubble to the Wall Street Crash suggests that we have been here before and learnt little from the experience.

### **Al Capone and Prohibition**

The career of Al Capone the most famous of the Chicago gangsters was the product of Prohibition the so called ‘Noble Experiment’, which sought to rid the United States of alcohol between 1920 and 1933, together with the American political system from which it arose. What combination of factors led to the introduction of Prohibition and why did it fail? Are there lessons to be learned today?

### **Operation Sea lion**

Hitler's plan for the invasion of Britain in 1940. What were the plans for invasion? Could they have succeeded? How did the British plan to repel the invaders? How did Churchill use the invasion threat and why did Hitler embark on a course of action to which there were only two outcomes, either of which was bound to lead to his ultimate downfall?



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### **Valkyrie the plot to kill Hitler**

The plot of July 1944 led by Von Stauffenberg was one of many attempts to assassinate Hitler. Who were the plotters and what were their motives? Why did the plot fail? Why was British intelligence opposed to Hitler's assassination?