



Buxton Civic Association Newsletter Issue 32 Spring 2016

PLAYING OUR PART IN THE TOWN

'Buxton on the Move' 2016 Transport Conference.

"Get rid of the traffic lights, make all road users equal," that was the message that Michael Cassini wanted to get over to 'Buxton on the Move', the 2016 conference organised by Buxton Town Team and hosted by the University of Derby to discuss how to improve Buxton's transport infrastructure.



As well as Michael Cassini, Buxton Civic Association were among the 20 organisations invited to give a presentation to the conference. BCA were asked to speak on Tourism.

Simon Fussell told the conference that 46,000 people visit Poole's Cavern every year, and 54% of them visit in the four months from May through to August.

For more than half the people visiting Poole's Cavern, the cave is the main reason for coming to Buxton. However, Simon went on to explain that some recent research indicates that an increasing number of people are parking in the town centre and walking to Poole's Cavern. Developing better public transport links throughout the town ought to be a priority. As well as reducing visitors' carbon footprint, it would go some way to reducing the pressure on parking spaces.

The conference provided a fascinating insight into the pull that the town has in attracting visitors from far and wide, as Simon Glinn from the Opera house explained.

The problems of congestion on Fairfield Road were highlighted with some excellent video interviews. The challenge now is to make sure that things change and improve.

Nestle—Station Road site

Dr Mike Monaghan has been involved with Buxton Town Team, The Buxton Group, Vision Buxton and Transition Buxton, with the brief to seek a consensus on possible uses for the empty Station Road site. Consultations were also held widely in the town before reaching their conclusions.

Mike commented; "It has been very important that we have brought together these groups. The combined strengths of these organisations is potentially much more effective in protecting and developing the heritage and the amenities of Buxton. We will be holding a meeting with Nestle in April to present our conclusions as to how the site could be developed".



The empty Station Road site. Photo courtesy of Buxton Advertiser.

Badger Vaccination Programme

We have been advised that Derbyshire Wildlife Trust will not be able to carry out their third year of badger vaccinations owing to a shortage of the vaccine.

Sett survey work will continue, however, to ensure that when the programme resumes there is an accurate picture of badger setts in the area and to make the vaccination process even more effective.

GRIN WOODS BUTTERFLY SURVEY 2015

Buxton Volunteers Conduct First Butterfly Survey—A Preliminary Report

by Simon Fussell

Steve Orridge and a number of volunteers from BCA conducted a butterfly survey from April to September 2015 in Grin woods. The results will be presented in a report which will be made available on our website. Steve is currently preparing for this year's survey.

Poor weather and below average temperatures were partly to blame for the lower than expected numbers of butterflies that were recorded, but interestingly the new ride that was created in March 2015 recorded the most butterflies with 116.

In total the survey recorded 314 butterflies, and a total number of species of 17. With a better summer Steve is hopeful that this total can be beaten and that more butterflies will be recorded.



The Forest Ride soon after it had been created back in March 2015.

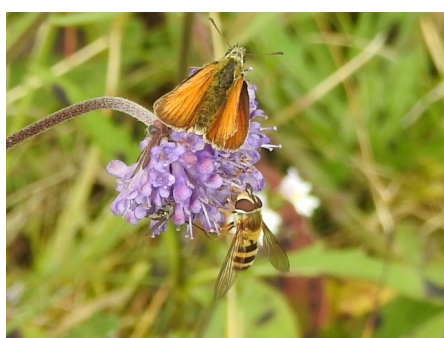
Below are a few of the species that were seen during the survey. All photographs courtesy of Steve Orridge.



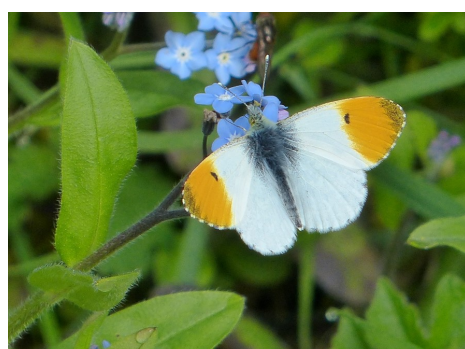
A Green Hair Streak



A Common Blue above and an Orange Tip below.



A Small Skipper





**Cover Price £15
BCA Members can
Order Today for the
special pre-
publication price of
ONLY £10**



Remember the Past, Shape the Future The First 50 Years of Buxton Civic Association

A new book, celebrating the fascinating history of Buxton Civic Association (BCA), is to be published in September 2016. The book has been prepared to celebrate BCA's 50th anniversary and charts the Association's campaigning development from the late 1960s until the present day.

Founded in 1967, BCA has been at the forefront of preserving Buxton's heritage assets, while helping to shape the future of the town. Today, BCA owns and operates Poole's Cavern, the town's most successful visitor attraction, while managing more than 200 acres of woodland in and around the town.

This hardback book contains more than 100 photographs, many in colour, which help to illustrate Buxton's evolution during the last 50 years. From the grand re-opening of the newly restored Crescent in 1975 (it closed again in 1991), to action shots of many of BCA's campaigns to make Buxton a more beautiful place.

Painstakingly researched by Olive Middleton and Trevor Donald, the book has taken almost four years to write and features little known facts from the Association's archives. It makes a fascinating read for anyone with an interest in, or a love of, Buxton.

"Understanding our past and the investments that we've had to make is an important part of making sure tomorrow's decisions are good ones," comments BCA Chairman Mike Monaghan. "This book will be of immense interest to all Buxton's residents, new and old, and is required reading for those with a part to play in our town's future".

There are few civic or amenity societies which can still claim to be relevant, solvent and making a genuine contribution to their Communities after half a century. Over the decades, BCA has gone from strength to strength, growing in confidence, relevance and ambition, and still fulfils an ever more important role in the life of the local community.

Email your order to:

communications@buxtoncivicassociation.org.uk Or call us on

01298 26978 to reserve your copy .

PLACES AND SPACES—BUXTON'S COALFIELD HERITAGE

'There's coal in them thar hills'

by Simon Fussell

Walking on the moors above Buxton, there is little evidence to the casual observer of the industry that for centuries toiled, struggled and sweated to win coal from the rocks beneath the surface. But if one stops and looks at the landscape, some of the traces left by coal mining can just be glimpsed. It was the story, human, geological, historical, of this forgotten industry that was told by Alan Roberts and Lyn Noble to a packed Buxton Civic Association, for their February members' talk.

A depression in the ground once formed the base for a 'gin', a winding engine that was turned round and round by a horse and its young human charge, braving the elements up on these unforgiving moors day after day. The boy was paid just 6d a day, and the horse presumably given just enough hay and oats as was needed to keep it in some sort of health to do its job.

Another depression marks one of the many shafts that litter the landscape, now filled in, but that once were part of an extensive and complex mining operation. Beneath the moors canals were dug to enable boats to bring the coal out of the mines, and everywhere water was a problem, constantly needing to be pumped out to make the passages safe for the miners.

Once on the surface, the preferred method to transport the coal to its destination was by pack horse. One can see the evidence, the deeply grooved "holloways", green now, but in the depths of winter these would be filled with mud, making progress slow and difficult.

Much of the coal, which was of a poor quality, was taken to help fuel the kilns of Grinlow. The poor quality led to the large ash and slag tips that now litter the hillside, but hidden by the trees planted in the 1790's.

Alan Roberts, co-author of 'The Coal Mines of Buxton' put the industry into its historic and personal context. The boy who led the horse round and round winding the buckets up and down on the moor top was Anthony Ashmore, as identified in records from the day for his 6d a day. We don't know the name of the horse. By comparison, visitors to the Card Room in the Crescent paid 5 shillings entry fee to look around and admire the architectural splendours of the building, funded in part by the rent from the coal licences.

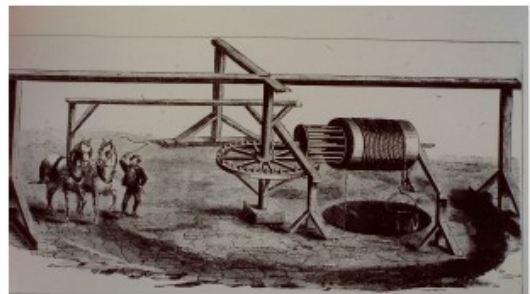
Lyn Noble then explained how a self-guided heritage trail walk had been conceived. It was first tested in the heavy rain and wind of an August afternoon, an experience shared by thirty members and friends of the Civic Association.

The walk has been designed to take the walker on an historical journey of the Buxton Coalfields, working back in time from the earliest recorded mining in the 16th Century up to the 19th Century with its winding wheels, levels and fire houses.

The effects of the mining can still be felt today, as Lyn explained why after particularly heavy rainfall, the river in the Serpentine gardens turns red. The water flows out of the Old Duke's level and is the result of the Red Iron Oxide that accumulated in that level.

The talk was rounded off with a singalong to an old miner's song "Dark as a Dungeon" with Lyn providing the lead vocals.

A Walking Guide to Buxton's Coal Mines



Uncover the story behind 300 years of
mining above Burbage

The walk crosses high moorland and is not advised in bad weather or poor visibility.

Suitable outdoor clothing and footwear is recommended.

The area is covered by the 1:25000 OS map of the White Peak or the 1:50000 OS map of Buxton and Matlock

The heritage trail walk of the Buxton Coalfields is now available as a guide from the Poole's Cavern shop.

BCA MEMBERS OUT AND ABOUT

Members Tour of the Crescent

by Mike Wilde

The tour, attended by 40 members and guests of The University of Derby and Buxton Civic Association, started in the Old Hall with a presentation by Richard Tuffrey, Principal Regeneration Officer from HPBC and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, and Liz Mackenzie who is the publicity and communities' liaison officer for the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa Company.

Richard is managing the Crescent Development on behalf of the owners of the building, and Liz is busy engaging enthusiastically with the general public and more specifically with the Chatsworth Estate, Derby University, local schools and others, to promote the project both nationally and internationally. The benefits to tourism in the area and revenues to local commerce in general of this huge undertaking cannot be underestimated, and the whole scheme, worth around £46m (funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Historic England, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership and developer Buxton Crescent Hotel and Thermal Spa Co Ltd), will be a huge boost to the area and has already attracted attention from as far away as Thailand.

We learned that at its peak, there will be circa 350 construction workers on site, all of them adding value to the local economy through the purchase of accommodation and other goods and services. The project will also provide educational opportunities, including work experience, across engineering and building trades and ultimately when in operation, the only UK spa and hotel management course. This has been made possible by a co-operation agreement signed by Danubis (the spa operator) and the University of Derby.

It is anticipated that the development will create the equivalent of around 140 full time jobs.

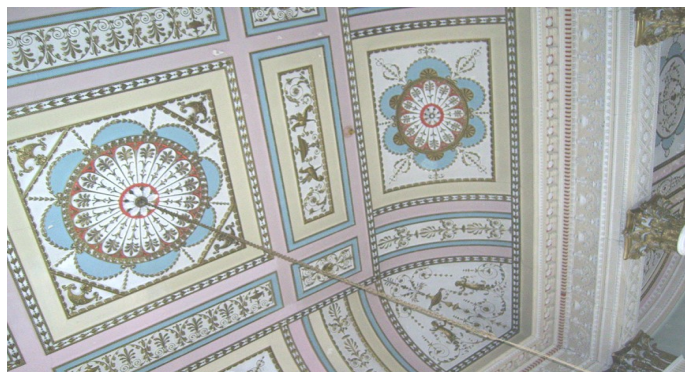
We were told of how the many problems of renovating the Grade 1 listed had been gradually overcome and that there was a high degree of confidence that work would begin this spring and the whole project would be completed in 2018.

We entered the Crescent by the original front entrance to St Ann's Hotel at the western end of the building. We picked our way through electric cables and across uneven floors, being mindful too of the current residents of the building nesting in the ceiling rafters. Amongst the areas we were shown was the original ladies' bathing pool that will be restored to its former glory. Some members of the tour could remember learning to swim here and childhood memories were shared.

We saw one of the largest rooms proposed for conversion into a luxury hotel guest room which looks out across the old Pump Room (built 1894 for the 7th Duke) towards the Slopes and Cenotaph. The refurbishment plans are very grand and will present many challenges to the designers when they come to decorate and furnish it as there are no right angles in the room (being a wedge in the central crescent shaped edifice).

The most impressive part of the building was the very grand function room with its high ceiling, large dance floor and magnificent columns. (The close secret of the precise materials used to construct the columns was shared with the group by Richard). It is intended to hold 60 days of scheduled public events every year in this splendid room as well as it being in regular use as part of the new hotel.

It was really encouraging to hear the enthusiasm of everyone concerned to get this project finished and we wish the project every success in delivering the new Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa.



Detail from the ceiling in the Ballroom—Buxton Crescent

For more information please see Mike Wilde's article, **The Background to the Crescent** at www.buxtoncivicassociation.org.uk

EVENTS

Members' Talks Programme

April

Update on the Crescent

21st April 7.30pm, Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre

Liz McKenzie and Richard Tuffrey will be talking to us about the Crescent Development, giving an update on the progress so far and what is happening on the community front.

May

Buxton's Diamonds

19th May 7.30pm, Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre

Roy Starkey, past president of the Russell Society, geologist and mineral collector, seeks to distinguish between Buxton diamonds and other quartz occurrences in the Peak District.

June

Places and Spaces Project

16th June 7.30pm, Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre

The Places and Spaces team will be holding an exhibition featuring five of the projects that they have been working on over the last year. These include developing a mini website to enable information about the project to be shared and to foster discussion about the projects. We are planning an exhibition on the Artillery Range at Harpur Hill to mark its 100th anniversary, so there will be plenty for everyone to enjoy.

BCA Members' Talks

Our talks programme is open to members and non members and is currently free. They start at 7.30pm and are held at Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre.

Other Events

Social Dog Walks



Meet at Poole's Cavern visitor centre at 10.00am on the first Sunday of every month. Everyone and their dogs welcome.

Town Treasure Trail

To celebrate the 49th year of BCA we have organised a social afternoon on Sunday 22nd May which will feature a Town Treasure Trail. This is a treasure hunt around Buxton competed in small teams of 4-5 people staggered throughout the afternoon. It will take approximately two hours at a walking pace and it starts and finishes at The Old Clubhouse. Entry is £1 per person to cover costs. Teams can be pre-arranged or organised on the day. Each team will need a digital camera/camera phone.

In order to know how many teams will compete and the timings of the day, please help us gauge interest by letting us know if you plan to come along. The trail has been tried and tested and is recommended as "good fun!". The trail is for residents/locals as you'll need to know Buxton to solve the clues. It is ideal for families or a group of friends.

Get to know your fellow members, see Buxton through different eyes, test your treasure hunting skills and have some fun.

Sunday 22nd May, 12.45pm at The Old Clubhouse.

Things to bring: £1, camera, snacks, and a raincoat. (Well it is Buxton!)

CHERISH THE PAST

It was Forty Years Ago!

by Alan Walker

During a recent hunt through BCA archives for information relating to the planning of our refurbished toilets, I realised that exactly forty years ago contractors were building the foundations for the first Civic Association Visitor Centre.

In 1976 having acquired the cavern from Jessie Allcock, a direct descendant of the first cavern custodian, Frank Redfern, work started to clear the site of the dilapidated Victorian museum. The old buildings were put to the bulldozer and bonfire but soon appearing from the ashes rose the modern centre which still forms the core of our facilities today. For the fortieth anniversary we will be able to offer superb toilet facilities currently being upgraded by NSJ Contractors Ltd with valuable assistance and advice from Bench Architects Ltd.

Pictured here is the laying of the foundation stone ceremony held in May 1976 with the honour of the trowel bestowed on the famous archaeologist and Geologist Dr Wilfred Jackson.



Brian Lawrence is currently working with a number of volunteers to bring some order to BCA archives, so we hope to be able to bring you a regular 'From the Archives' feature.

If you have some memories of BCA that you would like to share then please contact Alyson Philips or Simon Fussell, who will be delighted to hear from you.

GET COOKING

COMMUNICATIONS

Remember the Past

Recipes from Old Buxton

by Olive Middleton

The recent discovery of a pre-First World War booklet contains not only fascinating advertisements from shops and businesses in the town, but for many dishes of the time sent in by residents.

Comprising savoury and sweet dishes as well as household remedies, it was discovered by the proprietors of the Lee Wood Hotel and made available to BCA. The booklet was printed in 1912 for the benefit of The Home of Rest Furnishing Fund, which was in West Street. Moreover, it contains the name of each contributor and the name of the house or road where they lived.

BCA's intention is to publish one recipe in each of our Newsletters and feature them on our website. So keep a sharp eye on the news page each month on www.buxtoncivicassociation.org.uk. Should you have any memories or information about the contributors mentioned or where they lived – or indeed a favourite recipe of your own – do let us know. It may be that we can make use of them in a future publication.

The headings for each section are: SOUPS, FISH, ENTREES, MEAT, PUDDINGS, SWEETS, SAVOURIES, VARIOUS, INVALID COOKERY and MISCELLANEOUS. Here for your entertainment is the very last one! It takes us right back to the era of Donkey Stone, Rag and Bone Men, Dolly Blue and home-made starch. . .

“FOR WASHING UP”

Mix a pennyworth of bath-brick, 2 ozs of dry soap powder, 2 tbsps of whitening well together, fill a tin with the mixture and punch some holes in the lid. Use for all greasy things. This quantity will last about a month and costs 3d.

Footpath Finder Reminder

Have you ever been out walking locally and noticed that a footpath needs repairing? Perhaps you have had to climb over a broken stile, or seen a sign that has been vandalised?

There is a wonderful website for reporting these problems. It is very easy to use and you can zoom in to show exactly where the problem is on the map provided.

The address is;

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/rights_of_way/default.asp

Buxton Civic Association

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