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Buxton Civic Association Newsletter Issue 30 Winter 2015

PLAYING OUR PART IN THE TOWN

BCA SUPPORTS SOLAR SEEKERS – IN BUXTON

by Alyson Philips

The Methodist Church features in the background of so many photographs of the Market Place, standing as it has, in such a prominent position since 1849. Recently it has been centre stage owing to a decision to install solar panels on its large and therefore highly suitable roof. Buxtonians will remember that it was modernised internally, as well as being re-roofed, thirty years ago. These improvements revitalised a building that is used by a hundred regular worshippers and also up to six hundred people from our community in a variety of ways each week.



The Methodist Church on the Market Place

The new challenge is to promote a greener world, putting into action agreements reached at the Paris Climate Summit in December 2015. Thousands of small schemes will be working alongside the global pledges made by our politicians.

The Conservation Officer in the Planning Department at High Peak Borough Council initially recommended refusal owing to the visual damage in a conservation area.

John Anfield, a spokesperson for the project said, "We felt that if the solar panels were not on the market side then the 'visual damage' would be limited."

"We were grateful to BCA for their support for the solar panels and, with forty letters of support from individuals, when it went to committee it was approved by a majority vote. The Church submitted a Heritage Assessment Table which indicated that there would be no impact on the core heritage areas of the Opera House, Dome and Palace Hotel."

The importance of saving energy and supporting new initiatives won the day.

The Methodist Church hopes to save money on its energy bills as well as doing its best to promote a greener world.

FACTS ABOUT SOLAR ENERGY

Since the introduction of the Feed-in-Tariff in 2010...

- * There are now more than 650k such solar installations on the rooftops of homes and businesses in Great Britain.
- * ...10% of which are in the North West.
- * The cost of solar panels has dropped by 75 per cent over the past five years.
- * 1.5% of total UK electricity is generated from solar power, up from less than 0.01% in 2010.
- * Since 2010, households and businesses with solar panels have been paid by the government for every kWh they generate, known as the feed-in-tariff. Feed in tariff payments are guaranteed for 20 years. They are due to be cut by 87% in March 2016.
- * The average cost of a household solar installation is now around £5k with payback in 6 to 9 years.

Architects drawing of how the solar panels will look when installed, on page 2.

ANNUAL REVIEW FROM THE CHAIRMAN

by Dr Mike Monaghan

I would like to send my very best wishes to all staff and members of the Association for Christmas and the New Year.

2015 has been a successful and an eventful year for BCA and 2016 looks like being similarly busy.

We are fortunate that owing to the foresight of previous boards and the exceptional work of the staff over many years, we currently have a sound financial footing which combined with a steadily growing membership gives us the opportunity to widen our range of activities.

One example of this is our Places & Spaces project. This campaign largely run by volunteers has been busy identifying local sites and places which are neglected or under threat and are now seeking to work with owners to improve them.

We are also now increasingly working with other organisations in the town such as Vision Buxton, Buxton Town Team and the Buxton Group; the combined strengths of these organisations is potentially much more effective in protecting and developing the heritage and the amenities of Buxton.

As you will see elsewhere in this issue we now have regular talks and events – all those which we have run so far have been very well supported. The cafe at Pooles Cavern is beginning to be a favoured venue for groups in the town to meet for lunch or an evening function as well as for a growing number of regular visitors.

One of the most pleasing accolades we received this year was from Visit England. They carried out an unannounced visit to the Visitor Centre and Grinlow Wood; we achieved a highly commendable score of 83%. Particularly noteworthy were the glowing compliments to the staff.

But we don't rest on our laurels. The toilet area in the visitor centre is in need of upgrading and we are currently evaluating quotes for this job which we hope to start in the New Year. We also have plans to do further work on improving paths in the woods.

The organisation is in good heart and as we approach our 50th anniversary we can be proud that we are fulfilling the hopes of that brave group of pioneers who set the organisation up.



Dr Mike Monaghan addresses the AGM last summer

Methodist Chapel solar panels—continued from page 1



Extract from drawing by Martin Maclean Architects

Dark black, with contrasting grey panels, which will make the shape of a cross on the roof.

CANINE CAPERS IN THE WOODS

By Simon Fussell



As the incongruously named storm, Desmond, battered away at Cumbria and parts of Scotland, it was just a normal wet and windy December Sunday in Buxton. Undaunted by the miserable weather, five dogs and their owners gathered, some a little reluctantly, at Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre for the final Social Dog Walk of the year.

On the first Sunday of the month a small group of dogs and their owners meet up and do a short, one and half to two hour walk, around the country park or occasionally further afield to the Goyt.

Anyone is welcome, as long as they bring a dog, preferably a well-behaved and reasonably social dog. It's a great way to work off the excess of Saturday night or to justify a Sunday lunch.

As we set off through Grin woods, several dogs tried to rush ahead, pulling their owners up the steep steps. Today's walk was a simple circular one, out to Ladmanlow and then back to the Visitor Centre via Solomon's Temple.

The weather was not too bad until we got out onto the open and exposed Stanley Moor, and then Desmond's younger cousin unleashed a double whammy of strong wind and driving rain. The sort of rain that found its way through the layers of waterproofs and made you feel damp and miserable.

All the dogs seemed to be enjoying themselves despite the weather. Bryan, a very large dog, had to be helped over the first stile, but once he had got the hang of leaping, it became second nature and he positively looked forward to the next one.

Sponsored Walk for Canine Blood

Bryan's 'human', Mike Highton is planning a sponsored dog walk to raise awareness and funds for The Canine Blood Bank. We have agreed to help out and we will probably have the walk on the first Sunday in March. There is a web-site at <http://www.petbloodbankuk.org/> and we will have further details on our own website, early in the New Year.

Mike explained that not all dogs can give blood.

"They need to be over 25kgs and under eight years old, so the number of dogs that can donate is limited. A sponsored walk is a great way of raising awareness."

Battling the elements

We battled on and eventually made our way up to Solomon's Temple and that's when the fun started.



It might have been the wind or the slippery ground underneath. More likely it was Lilly the Collie racing off down the hill after her Frisbee, which caused the other dogs to try and bolt after her. That's when the falling over began.

The walk back down through the wood brought some relief from the rain and the wind. It was with a feeling of relief that we all made it back to the car park, wet and muddy but feeling a little bit smug. The hot chocolate in the Café at the Cavern was well deserved.

CAN DO PEOPLE

FURTHER ADDITIONS STRENGTHEN THE BOARD

by Simon Fussell

ALAN ROBERTS

Alan Roberts joins the board, having first joined BCA soon after its formation in 1967. He came to live in Buxton in 1960, to undertake research at what is now the Health and Safety Laboratory and he was the head of the Laboratory at his retirement.



He has experience and expertise in planning and will support the planning group in the work that they do in monitoring applications and proposed developments.

Alan has published several books on local history, including the 'Coal Mines of Buxton' and has been one of the guiding forces behind the 'Places and Spaces' project.

ANDY BANKS

Andy has lived in Buxton for nineteen years and been a member of BCA for the last ten.

He will bring to the board his considerable experience in environmental issues, having recently retired from Eco-Bat Technologies Ltd, one of the world's largest lead recycling companies.



Andrew Banks

He is keen to support BCA's continuing involvement with our Peak Park Environmental Quality Mark.

He is a member of RSPB, and is interested in wildlife protection and conservation.

A keen road cyclist and mountain biker, he also enjoys long walks in the countryside.

ADAM BENCH

Adam Bench is a registered architect and historic building consultant. He is a conservation specialist with extensive experience in the analysis and repair of historic structures. His knowledge and experience will be invaluable to BCA in supporting a number of current projects, including the restoration of the fountain on Market Street and the canopies on Spring Gardens.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

Commenting on the appointments, Chair of BCA, Dr Mike Monaghan said, "We are delighted that Alan, Adam and Andrew have agreed to join the board. They bring considerable professional experience and expertise in a number of fields and will further strengthen the board and support BCA as it continues to expand its links with the local community and play an increasingly important part in Buxton's future."

BCA ARCHIVES

A TREASURE TROVE—OUR SPENDID ARCHIVES

by Brian Lawrence

We have an unexplored treasure trove – our archives. These have been accumulating for nearly fifty years. They are now fascinating historical documents. Lots of photographs, souvenir booklets, and, of course, financial reports and committee minutes.

Work has begun on sorting these thousands of items, by assigning a category to each (e.g. Cavern, Woods, Legal, Events), and creating a digital index of these items. But there are so many items: it would take years to finish this.

So, we have decided to use our office Printer/Scanner to scan each item (mostly A4 size documents), 250 at a time, using the machine's automatic scanning system. The scanned images go direct (online) to the office computer. That's the easy part.



This is where we need volunteers. Each volunteer would be sent an email containing 250 scanned A4s. This is what is needed:

1. Using their own home computer, the volunteer would assign a category (list supplied) to each document.
2. That category identification would then be marked on that scan. Thus, the paper document would become digital, to be stored electronically, and easily found and seen.
3. At the same time, for the indexing part, the volunteer would make a separate digital note of the document's category, and a very brief description of the contents.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Thus, the volunteer would create two digital folders: categorised documents, and an index to all these. This digital work by the volunteer would then be emailed to the BCA office, to be stored on our computer system there, and backed up on an external hard drive or Cloud.

There are lots of possible uses for our archives, once digitalised and indexed this way. We could arrange exhibitions of specific aspects (e.g. Woods, Events, Photos, Cavern, People). The material would be made available to researchers (universities and others). Our own members might wish to look at specific items.

A short training session for volunteer archivists would be held at the end of January. The work is actually a simple process, easily learned after a few attempts.

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

If you are able to help, would you please email me at: briansiam@yahoo.co.uk If you would like more information, either email me or telephone me at: 01298 26146.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Woodland Volunteers

In addition to the work on the archives we are also looking for volunteers to support the work that we do in the woods. The woodland volunteers meet once a month, and undertake a number of different and vital tasks in the woods.

Membership and Communities Volunteers

The Newsletter is an important part of our communications with members and we are always looking for contributions. These can be in the form of an article or perhaps photographs from our woods or something from the town.

We are also looking for members keen to join the Membership and Communities Group to help develop projects and activities.

Membership and Communities projects include working on attempts to restore the Fountain on the Market place, and the possibilities of bringing back canopies to Spring Gardens.

Our Places and Spaces Project is continuing to develop and members are welcome to get involved. Further details can be found on our website. If interested email us at;

communications@buxtoncivicasociation.org.uk

EVENTS

TALKS PROGRAMME

22nd January 2016 at 7.30pm at the Visitor Centre

Peter Phillipson Director of BCA and ecologist



Peter will talk about the wild forest in southern Poland and Belorussia, home to the last herd of European Bison.

18th February 2016 at 7.30pm at the Visitor Centre

Lyn Noble and Alan Roberts



An illustrated talk on the history of the Buxton coalfields and its role in history of the town.

17th March 2016 at 7.30pm at the Visitor Centre

Steve Orridge



An illustrated talk on the butterflies and moths of Grin Low. Steve will also be discussing the results from the first butterfly survey carried out in Grin Low in 2015.

TRIPS FOR MEMBERS

Tour of the Crescent

A guided tour of the Crescent has been arranged for 14th January 2016. There are only 25 places available and these will be allocated on a **first come first served basis**. Members will have received details in the post along with an application form.

SPONSORED WALK

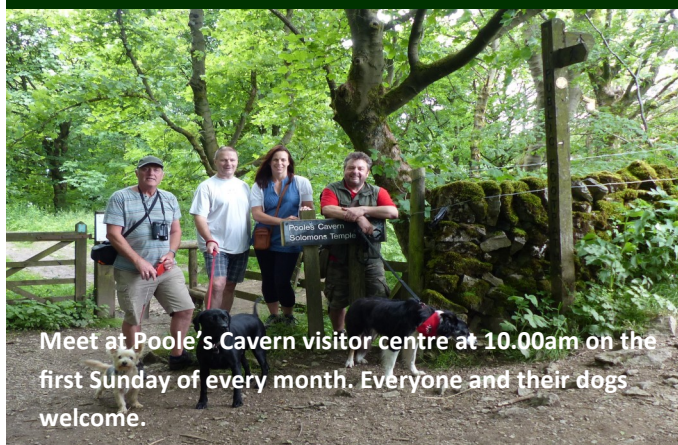
As mentioned on page 3, Poole's Cavern visitor centre will be hosting a sponsored walk for the canine blood bank. We will announce further details in the New Year. The charity was launched in 2007. A thousand dogs a year require blood transfusions but only dogs larger than 25kg and under eight years old can become donors.

NATIONAL TRUST VOUCHERS

Through our membership of Civic Voice, the umbrella organisation that provides support and advice to Civic Societies throughout England, we are able to provide free passes to over 400 National Trust properties.

If any member of BCA is interested in visiting a NT property please do get in touch and we will find out if the property you wish to visit is covered. The passes are available to members of Buxton Civic Association.

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.

CHARITY EVENT

ALL IN A GOOD CAUSE

by Patty Hoskins

For the last three years my friends and I have been using the café at Poole's Cavern for our evening fund-raising events. It is a fabulous venue that has always met our needs for a warm, comfortable atmosphere, seating for about 40 people, great kitchen facilities and above all, a truly flexible attitude from all the staff as we made our arrangements and, what seemed to me, numerous last minute requests.

The charity we raise funds for is the West Africa Fistula Foundation (WAFF) based in Sierra Leone. WAFF is a small charity run by an American surgeon whose main objective is to provide the badly needed surgical treatment for fistula and also to establish a skilled, working staff from within Sierra Leone. The women are usually on the ward for up to nine months and we have requested that the money we raise goes towards the patient rehabilitation program that has been set up to restore the women's self esteem and dignity.

Our latest function happened to be on that snowy, icy evening in November. The event was a wine tasting evening - our third one - presented by Rosie Bainbridge.

In order to soften the lighting we brought our own fairy lights, a couple of table lamps and tall angle-poise lamps. My friends and I provided a light taster menu to go with each wine, we had a raffle and a book sale. The evening was a happy, comfortable, animated and a very successful fundraiser.

Our next fund-raising event in Poole's Cavern cafe is a meal and live music performed by Breeze and Wilson (bring your own drinks) on April 16th 2016.



"The evening was a happy, comfortable, animated and very successful fundraiser."

The Café is available to hire for occasional evening events—Ed

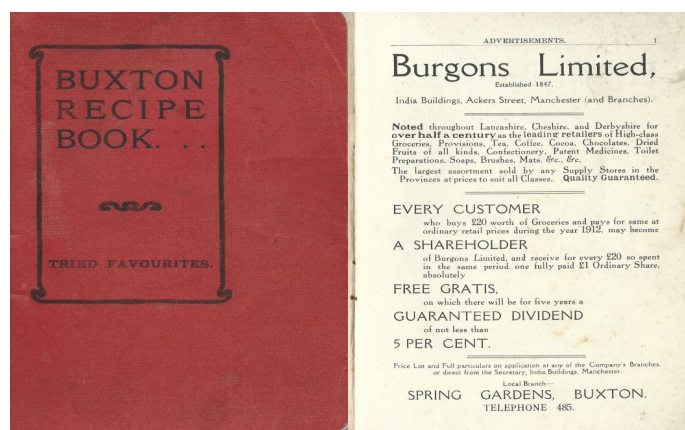
PROJECTS

BUXTON RECIPE BOOK

By Olive Middleton

A surprise discovery has come to light which has led to the plan for a joint fund-raising project with Buxton Civic Association, thanks to the proprietors of the Lee Wood Hotel.

In brief, what has been unearthed is a recipe booklet printed in 1912 by Burgons Ltd whose 'supermarket' was on Grove Parade. It was produced from recipe contributions made by Buxton and district residents of the time and who were clearly patrons of the store.



As well as a collection of recipes from 1912 supplied by individual householders in Buxton, the booklet also contains a series of adverts from businesses and traders working in the town at that time.

It would be wonderful to reprint the booklet with recipes from Buxton households and current adverts. We have written to the householders that featured in the original booklet, and asked if they would like to contribute recipes but we would be delighted to include contributions from BCA members.

If you have a recipe that you would like to contribute email it to communications@buxtoncivicassociation.org.uk.

A selection of images from the book will be available from our website in January 2016.

CAFE

COMMUNICATIONS

THE BEST BREAKFAST IN TOWN

CONTINUING OUR QUEST FOR THE BEST BREAKFAST IN BUXTON

by Our Secret Diner (Guess who?)

It was a tough assignment to discover the best cooked breakfast in town, but one that I selflessly agreed to undertake in the interests of gastronomic research. After a brisk walk in the woods to build up an appetite, I found myself seated in front of a full English at the café at Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre.



I had visited several of Buxton's finest café's on my quest, and I had saved the café at Poole's Cavern till last . Everything had been freshly cooked, and though there was plenty on the plate the emphasis was on quality not quantity.

The bacon, crisp with the right combination of fat and lean, the sausages tasty without being greasy , complimented with perfectly cooked fried eggs.

Perhaps there could have been a little more toast, but that is a niggle and not a criticism . My companion, Lilly the Collie, had no complaints other than the fact that she had to share mine and I was not feeling very generous.

As well as a full English there is also a veggie option, and the food is sourced locally. 9/10

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

General Manager:

Alan Walker at Poole's Cavern 01298 26978

Board Members

Chair: Dr Mike Monaghan

Secretary: Martin Wragg

Treasurer: Brian Shawcross

Planning: Jonathan Davey, Nigel Manning, Alan Roberts, Adam Bench

Woodlands: Peter Phillipson

Community and Membership: Mike Wilde

Newsletter: Alyson Phillips

Archives and Editing: Brian Lawrence

Environment: Andrew Banks

Editor Alyson Phillips
Email communications@buxtoncivicassociation.org.uk
Twitter BCA1967
Contact BCA, Poole's Cavern, Green Lane, Buxton, SK17 9DH

