

Buxton - A Perfect Festival Town

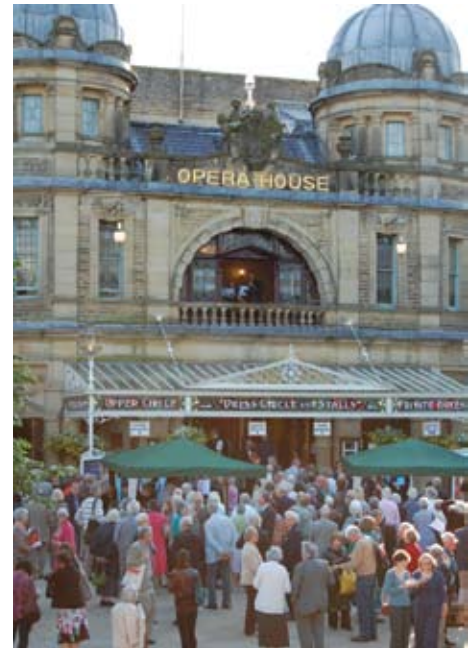
This summer, Buxton played host to record numbers of visitors during its Festival season. Both the Buxton Festival, Festival Fringe and Gilbert and Sullivan Festival have reported increased ticket sales.

Said Johanna Dollerson, press officer for the Buxton Festival, “Buxton itself plays a huge part in attracting large audiences to the Festival. It has so much to offer both performers and audiences: stunning architecture, good quality accommodation and wonderful surrounding countryside. Our opera singers love coming to Buxton and are happy to return year after year. The literary series is also able to attract top class speakers because of the beauty of the town. This year Shirley Williams brought her whole family who, in spite of the rain, loved every minute of their stay. We were worried that this year would see a reduction in ticket sales because of the recession, but amazingly they increased by 10% as many people chose to come to

Buxton instead of taking a holiday elsewhere.”

This has also been the case with the Festival Fringe. Stephanie Billen, Fringe chairman comments, “The Buxton Festival Fringe, which runs alongside the Buxton Festival, celebrated its 30th anniversary this year, having become a major draw for performers and audiences alike. A key attraction is the town itself, with many of its fine buildings becoming Fringe venues. These included the University of Derby’s stunning Dome; the basement of the historic Old Hall Hotel, which offered a lively programme of entertainment; the Pavilion Gardens, which hosted the open-air Fringe; and Poole’s Cavern together with its Nice Venues marquee, which hosted some stunning drama.”

The guided walks in Grinlow Woods also attracted many visitors and next year the Buxton Festival hopes to



Buxton Festival

include the new Ring of Trees walk in their outdoor programme.

The Gilbert and Sullivan Festival had a similar story of record audiences for its 16th annual festival. During the three weeks of the event there were 22 fully staged performances and 70 fringe events. The G&S attracts a truly international audience with companies and visitors from all over the world including North America, South Africa and Japan.

This year the town was enhanced even further with lovely public and private floral displays, all part of the town’s entry to the EU Entente Florale competition. One of the tireless organisers, Jean Pendlebury, gave BCA members a tour of some of the highlights.



Tideswell Male Voice Choir at Buxton Festival Fringe. Photo: Donald Judge

Members' Events

Greenmoor Garden Party & Teddy Bears' Picnic Gives Boost to Ring of Trees Project

The sun shone, the crowds gathered, strawberries and cream and cakes were demolished at top speed, and best of all a profit of close to £600 was made for The Ring of Trees, on Sunday 14 June.

Olive Middleton, whose daughter and son-in-law hosted the event in the lovely grounds of their Arts & Crafts home, was delighted with the garden party's success. "We were very pleased to welcome High Peak Mayor and Mayoress, Tony and Mary Bingham," said Olive, "They really entered into the spirit of the occasion. The Mayoress got down on the rug to inspect at close quarters every outfit when judging the Best Dressed Teddy Bear from an astoundingly varied collection."

The marquee provided shade from the sun but wasn't needed to keep off the rain, which was mercifully absent. Treasure Hunts, ball games and stands provided plenty of interest and the young people helped with the teas under the capable supervision of Paula and Denny from Poole's Cavern Café.

Chairman Paul Dinsdale welcomed the official guests with a speech about BCA's work and a very happy afternoon was enjoyed by members and friends in lovely surroundings.



We were deeply saddened by the loss of Tony Bingham, our thoughts and sympathy go out to his wife and family.

Past Events

This summer saw three very enjoyable and informative guided walks:

- Dawn Chorus walk in Grinlow Woods led by Richard Knisely-Marpole

- A tour of the Pavilion Gardens, inspecting the mature trees and learning the principles of Victorian planning, led by Monica Gillespie, High Peak Tree Inspector

- A guided walk around some of Buxton's EU Entente Florale competition's best gardens and floral displays, led by Jean Pendlebury.

In spite of terrible weather an enthusiastic group gathered at the Visitors Centre to listen to Poetry, Piano and the Derbyshire Dialect, by Philip Holland.

Philip, a farmer for 40 years in Earl Sterndale, entertained us with his own poetry, ditties and haiku accompanied on the piano. Presented in a light

hearted manner, these pithy pieces gave many a pause for deeper thought.

Suggestions for future walks, talks and other events are always welcome; please telephone Trevor Donald with your ideas on 01298 27946.

We would welcome your help on the Community Committee to plan events and take care of the membership; please contact Ken Smith on 01298 74374 if you would like to make new friends and are able to spare a few hours a month.

Events at Poole's Cavern

The Story of Beechenhill Farm, Ilam, and our Journey into Organic Farming, by Sue Prince

1 October 2009 - 7.30pm

Visitor Centre

Sue is well known in Derbyshire as an accomplished speaker. We look forward to hearing her story.

There will be no charge but she will welcome donations to the Wetton and Alstonefield First Responders.

Halloween Terror Tours

29 - 31 October - 6.30, 7.30, 8.30pm

Ghostly characters dramatise the Cavern's past.
£7.50 adults £4.50 children

Santa's Grotto

12 - 13 and 19 - 20 December

Bring your family and friends. Take part - volunteer
Santa and helpers needed phone Alan on 01298 26978

New Shopping Centre – To Be, Or Not To Be?

A packed meeting at Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre on Thursday 16 July was addressed by an impartial expert who spelled out the facts for members very clearly.

Chairman, Paul Dinsdale, introducing Richard Silson of the Planning Co-operative, said, "Richard is a nationally respected planning consultant who can explain the facts to us without commercial or political spin. We are aware that this plan will entirely change the face of Buxton, alter people's shopping habits and

affect both car parking and the volume of town centre traffic."

There were many requests that the developers should be asked to provide a scale model of such an important set of plans, which would make the proposals much easier for everyone to understand. It was felt that the plans and drawings on display in the Town Hall were considered difficult to comprehend and confusing in many ways.

The meeting recognised that some

change is indeed necessary but there were grave reservations about several aspects of the proposed scheme. These included the flat topped roof facing the station exit, the blankness of the finish on the walls of the buildings proposed for Station Road and the lack of a clear, attractive walkway access to Spring Gardens, our main shopping street.

BCA Planning Group, chaired by Hilary Lawrence, is sending its comments to High Peak Borough Council.

A Tribute to Arthur Tomlinson

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Arthur Tomlinson on Thursday 18th June 2009, after a long illness, which he bore with typical courage, dignity and grace.

Arthur served the Association firstly as Secretary, and subsequently as a Director, for over twenty years. During that time he was also our legal adviser, guiding the Association

through many complex and sometimes sensitive situations with a clear direction and a steady hand. Legal acumen apart, he was a most loyal supporter and friend to the Association, and a reliable and trusted source of good advice.

Arthur was honourable, principled, and fair-minded. He was always generous in his assessment of

others, patient, forgiving, and kind, and blessed with a wonderfully mischievous sense of humour.

All of us at the Civic Association will greatly miss him - not only as a valued and highly respected colleague, but also as a good friend.

Paul Dinsdale
Chair, Buxton Civic Association

Who's Who at Buxton Civic Association

Mike Monaghan

Rosie Hughes talks to Environmental Board Member, Mike Monaghan

I first met Mike and his wife Mary as members of a U3A walking group, so was delighted to hear that Mike had been appointed as a Director of BCA in 2008. We are fortunate in the high calibre of our Board and Mike brings to the position a long experience of environmental management and a passion for woodlands.

Mike and Mary moved from Cheshire to Buxton in 2000. "One of the main attractions of the town for us, apart from the fine architecture and having the Peak District on the doorstep," said Mike, "was the magnificent woodland around the town forming a 'ring of trees' which the Civic Association is now promoting through its walk leaflet."

Before retiring in 1998, Mike was the Environment Director of the

P&O Group. In this job he carried out environmental audits of Group companies in many countries and a wide range of industries including many in the leisure field.

He was therefore very keen to help the Association to formulate its own Environmental Policy - which is now in place - and, with the enthusiastic support of the staff at Poole's Cavern, he recently carried out the first environmental audit of the Association's activities. There were a number of recommendations made in the audit report that will be actioned in the coming months.

Mike is passionate about the environment, "It is vitally important in this time of increasing environmental pressures that BCA sets its own high standards and I am confident that the more structured approach to the environment will help in this process."

Since coming to Buxton, Mike has also been active in the University of the Third Age (U3A) and the Churches Together environmental action groups. In what little spare time they have Mike and Mary are keen walkers and love to spend time with their three married daughters and seven grandchildren.



Buxton Civic Association at Poole's Cavern

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