

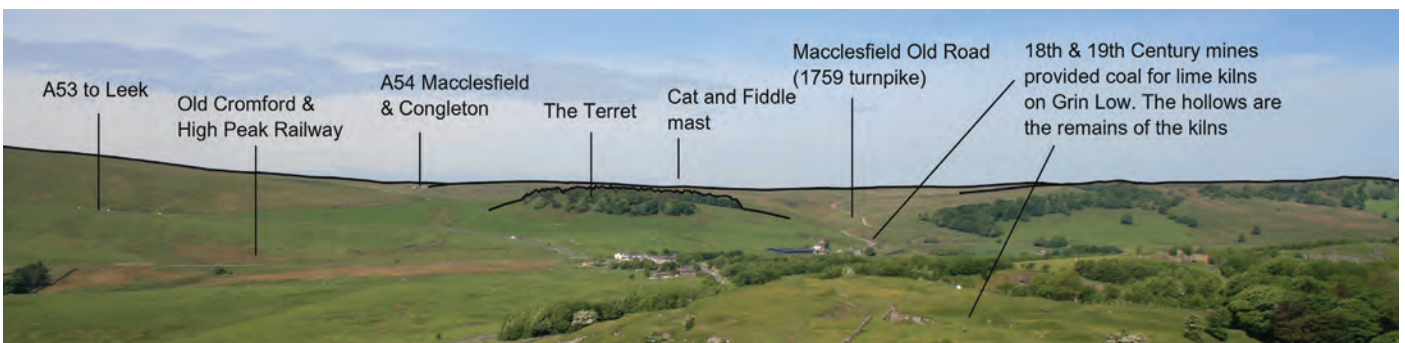


# Buxton Civic Association Newsletter

Issue 27

Autumn 2014

## More Than Just A Good View



*Part of the new Panorama of Grin Low by Lyn Noble*

For a few months I've been scampering up onto Grin Low at odd hours hoping to catch that special light when distant horizons become clear and Minninglow might just be visible. The reason for the frenzied photography has been a 360° panorama from Solomon's Temple.

## The Story of Buxton's Industrial Past

Gazing around I became aware that those familiar views tell the story of Buxton beyond the historic heart of the town; ancient pack horse routes, turnpikes, quarries, lime burning, mines, old railways, the realities of life in the 18th and 19th Centuries.



Looking north from Solomon's Temple to Buxton we see the architectural heritage of the Dukes of Devonshire but look west towards Grin Low caravan site and beyond to Burbage and Axe Edge and we see the vast scale of the fifth Duke's 18th Century mining and lime burning estate. The Buxton coalfield extended from Macclesfield Old Road south to Cisterns Clough on the Leek Road. There are still signs of early shallow 17th Century pits but it was the opening of

the 1759 Macclesfield Turnpike (toll road) that led to major development. Duke's Level was driven into the hillside at Level Lane, Burbage. Coal was brought to the surface by barge and transferred to pack horses on the nearby turnpike. (The rusty water that flows through Buxton after heavy rain comes from the old mine level.)



*Art work from the 2014 Grin Low Art Trail bringing lime burning to life.*

## Why did it all happen here ...?

Meanwhile limestone was being quarried on Grin Low and burnt in the ring kilns that can be seen on the top of the hill and in the trees below. Coal to fuel the kilns was brought by packhorse from the coal mines. With the arrival of the Cromford and High Peak Railway in 1825 a branch line was built through Ladmanlow to Grin. Part of the route can still be seen above the caravan site. Ironically the new railway ultimately brought an end to mining at Burbage as better quality coal could be brought in from further afield. This northern end of the C&HPR closed in 1892.

Grin Low Quarry, which now houses the caravan site, once fed the lime kilns and was used to stockpile coal in the 1950s. It produced roadstone until its closure 1972.

Looking southeast the old "Hoffmann" quarry face at Harpur Hill dominates the view. This was the site of a Hoffmann kiln which operated from 1872 to 1944. Unlike the smaller kilns that had to be cooled, emptied and reloaded the Hoffmann, and other similar kilns, ran continuously. This quarry is one of a string that extend for 5 miles from Grin in the north to Hindlow and Dowlow in the south. The Cromford and High Peak railway linked all the quarries and can be seen traversing below Hoffmann Quarry rightwards through the Harpur Hill Industrial Estate, then below Axe Edge to Ladmanlow and Burbage.

So, our rural view was once a scene of industrial desolation. Smoke from kilns on Grin and coke ovens at Burbage, quarries devouring the landscape, pack horses churning ever deepening tracks through the peat, men wheel-barrowing lime and coal and ash, families living in ash houses excavated into the ash mounds. No wonder the Duke planted Grin Woods to hide all this from delicate eyes.



*Lime burner's house – Listed building in Burbage.*

Blame geology! Look north-east (right of Buxton) and let your eyes sweep round to Hoffmann Quarry, Ladmanlow and Grin Low. This is the White Peak... mostly limestone. You can even see the chimney of Tunstead lime works. Now look beyond Buxton to Corbar Cross and Combs Moss. This is the beginning of the Dark Peak...gritstones, shales and coal bearing rocks. Keep scanning right and in the distance is Kinder Scout then further right still you might pick out the Derwent Edges above Ladybower. All of these upland areas are the edges of a gritstone "crust" that covered the whole of the White Peak.

Just below the A53 to Leek the limestone plunges underneath the gritstones and shales of Axe Edge which are the western edge of the gritstone "crust". At Grin Low the coal seam is almost in barrowing distance. So all the conditions were right for a wealthy, powerful and ambitious landowner; coal on one side of the road, lime on the other and plenty of Buxtonians to do the dirty work!

Next time you are admiring the wild flowers in the Glades just look at the soil. It's lime shale, a perfect habitat for species that couldn't survive in rich pasture,, and a habitat that wouldn't be there without the old lime burners.

Lyn Noble

References The South West Peak by Eric Wood The Coal Mines of Buxton by AE Roberts and JR Leach

## The BCA Archive

### Celebrating 50 Years and Counting

Recently our archivists Jude Hallam and Emily Smedley gave a talk to the Board about their findings in 374 hours worked this year sorting out our past. Between them they have worked in various council services and, importantly for us, have remarkable skills in relation to filing systems. Jude's husband, Fred, laid the walkways in Poole's cavern with Alan Gamble and so continuity of memories and connections live on in a new venture through our old archives.

The large grey filing cupboard, plus miscellaneous boxes contained 50 years' worth of documents, photographs and other memorabilia. They were all stuffed in higgledy



piggledy with no apparent chronological or subject order visible, apart from the Minutes.

Let's just say .... it was a challenge!!!

First ...

The AGM and Minute files revealed a number of interesting legal topics had occurred over the years and were grouped together. For example, the Riversvale project; at the 'heat of its moment' related to new builds with lots of legal issues with BCA involvement. A storybook started to present itself that is of interest for generations to come.

And then ...

The main core of the filing system now emerged with traditional file headers like Historical Information is broken down into the following sub-sections: Broad Walk, Buxton Community School, The Crescent, Hoffman Quarry (aka Blue Lagoon) and so on ...! Just out of interest the Buxton Community School has diverse sub headings such as 'The Coal Chimney Debate' and 'Cross country running in Grin Woods'.

In the 'Buxton Civic Association – Historical Information' file under miscellaneous, is an old handwritten file index. This illustrates how dramatically technology has advanced and how important these artefacts are to history. This document also provides an audit trail for any lost documents detailed on this transcript that are no longer physically available.

User accessibility...

They have aimed to structure the filing system in a method that is user friendly. The file headers are in alphabetical order. The information is easily accessible, enabling future documents to be easily filed under one of the current file headers and sub-sections, chronologically, with the most recent dated document on top reversing backwards to the oldest date present. To make life easier when committee members, staff, interested parties, etc. are searching an excel spreadsheet to be used as a first point of contact reference tool.



*Photos from the archive. Male and female cavers – more information needed. Can you help?*

Two things that kept cropping up...

"Firstly, poor old David Allsop, we now know the famous Christmas tree story off by heart, the day he injured himself whilst falling off a ladder in the cave during Christmas preparations. I think we found at least 20 copies." (Emily)

Also ...

"How narrative in formal documents has changed over the years. One solicitor's letter in the 1980s talked along the lines of the, 'glistening snow in the hills of Buxton'. Today, the solicitor's letter is straight to the point." (Jude)

Finally ... For the Future ...

Regular Updates...

No matter how simple a filing system is its up-keep is the essential ingredient.

\* It is important that whenever a file or document is removed from the filing cabinet that this accounted for. A signing in/out folder is kept in the cabinet.

\* It is important that whenever 'new' documents are filed that the excel spreadsheet is UPDATED also at the same time.

\* It is suggested that 2/3 persons learn how to use the spreadsheet reference system correctly so that hopefully there is always someone on site on a regular basis to maintain the system.

\* It is important to ensure documents taken out of files are put back in the correct chronological order.

A question for older members ...

\* The 'Missing Years'? We have a number of missing years, the most obvious being within the Minutes file

1980 to 1984. Does anyone know of the whereabouts of these documents?

(Olive had a hunch that some documents may have been lost following the death of an old committee member.)

\* Paul holds some more files for BCA. Are there any more files elsewhere that need to be integrated into this new system?

Please Contact Poole's Cavern - **01298 26978**

## The Buxton Diamonds

A real gem amongst the archives.

Whilst searching through the archive material Emily came upon reference to a book called, 'The Buxton Diamonds', an early 19th century tale for children to encourage a selfless regard for the deserving poor.

The story gives a fascinating insight into the family life of the period and of Buxton as a spa where the wealthy stayed to 'take the waters' and visit 'Poole's Hole' whilst the poor existed on the spoil heaps of the lime quarries of 'Grimlow Hill' that might just occasionally uncover the Buxton Diamonds!

Put 'Buxton Diamonds' into a 'Google' and you will be transported into the Early Victorian Trip Advisor 'Gazetteer of the British Isles'.

"...Buxton as a watering-place is remarkable for its dry, bracing climate. It has long been famous for its mineral waters... especially of service in cases of gout and rheumatism, diseases of the skin, and nervous disorders.

"The sterility which once formed the chief feature in the scenery round Buxton is fast disappearing. Extensive woods and plantations now clothe the sides and summits of many of the neighbouring hills. In the vicinity is Diamond Hill, so named from its abundance of quartz crystals of an hexagonal shape, which are known by the name of Buxton diamonds, the whitest of which have the property of cutting glass. ;also, Poole's Hole, a remarkable stalactite cavern. At the distance of about half a mile, in a different direction, are the limestone quarries and Pool's hole. The latter is a cavern of considerable dimensions in a limestone rock, contracted in its entrance, but spacious in the interior. Its roof and sides are covered with stalactites..."

This wonderful historic artefact, recording the unique history of our town has resurfaced thanks to Jude and Emily.

## The Ring Of Truth

Whilst walking the Ring of trees recently one of my companions said, "You know this walk will have to be renamed the 'Ring of New Houses'." This statement had an unfortunate 'ring of truth'.

In many places new developments have changed the footpaths and rural nature of the walk; Hogshaw Woods, Burbage Carr Road Estate, and Persimmon's new estate by Sherbrook Woods to name just three. Members need to be aware that the rural edges of our town are always under threat. Councillor John Faulkner stated in early October that "regrettably" the council has had to recommend plans for the Haslin development at Harpur Hill. He said," As planning law states the situation in the High Peak is that the council does not have a Local Plan. We don't have a five year supply of housing. That puts us in a very difficult position for defending against planning applications."

Name the Site!

Can you decide which is which?

These four photos show land for development on the Cresta Run at Cavendish Golf Course, a site on Manchester Road, proposed development at West Hills on Macclesfield Old Road and a brownfield site desperately waiting for development at Harpur Hill.



We must keep pressing our Council, through regular contact with the Planning Department, in letters and emails to councillors and the local press. We need to watch and then comment on the Public Notices in the Buxton Advertiser. Useful advice about writing effectively on planning matters can be found on our website: <http://buxtoncivicasociation.org.uk>



## Crescent Update

Buxton's long awaited Crescent project is 'progressing', according to developer, Trevor Osbourne but is subject to finance being available. Work is due to start again once negotiations have been concluded which will hopefully be towards the end of this year or early in 2015. At a public meeting on the 10th September at the Octagon, Trevor Osbourne stated that new consultants have been appointed and the proposal is to have the visitor attraction element managed by a charitable trust which will be supported by a number of local organisations of which Buxton Civic Association will be one.



*A sorry site - the rear of Buxton's Crescent which is vastly superior architecturally to the rear of the Royal Crescent at Bath.*

Members are making links with the Georgian Group [www.georgiangroup.org.uk/](http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk/) which campaigns against the neglect, maltreatment and destruction of Georgian buildings, parks and gardens in England and Wales.



The inspiration for the Tideswell Well Dressing this year design was the Crescent because, "...the process of restoration has begun. And will hopefully be finished in the near future. (Paul Fletcher) The depiction, in petals, was from the 1898 engraving by the artist WHJ Boot. Building stated in 1780 and was completed in 1788. The fifth Duke of Devonshire paid £35,601. The fifth Duke's wife Georgiana wrote, "I never saw anything so magnificent as the Crescent, though it must half ruin one, my spirit makes me delight in the Duke's doing it."

## The Past Glimpsed Again

The popularity of the Facebook pages of Buxton of Yesteryear is easy to relate to. Here everyone is able to leave personal, local and communal memories sparked by photographs. It is a fantastic resource. The 1940s photograph prompted these thoughts. Revealed, briefly, was the old signage for the Post Office before Domino's Pizza opens here. The 1940s saw this doorway surrounded by sandbags. Saved, undamaged, from Hitler's air force, we now want sympathetic developments that make our town buzz without losing the unique living history that surrounds us all.



*Buxton Post Office The Quadrant Photo by J D Maddins*



*The same signage revealed in autumn 2014*



## The Fountain on the Market Place

- the search goes on.



News Update on our Fountain Campaign. – the urn has been sighted!

As you will be aware from the recent article in the Buxton Advertiser, we are working with The Buxton Well Dressing Committee to discover who owns the Well head on the Market. We can then approach them with a joint plan to refurbish it in time for the 175th Anniversary next year. The Urn, which was removed so as to keep it safe from vandalism and further damage, is currently being held by High Peak Borough Council. Buxton Museum has been extremely helpful, giving us access to photographic and documentary evidence.

## Members Events

### Wild Flower Walk



*A Frog Orchid, one of the many wild flowers that thrive on the lime rich soil in the glades in Grin Low.*

Sunday July 20th was a perfect sunny afternoon, ideal for the guided walk through the wild flower glades of Grin Low, led by June Noble and ably supported by husband Lyn.

They have produced an excellent introductory guide to "The Wild Flowers of Grin Low Country Park" which is available from Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre.

Quiz – What is the Latin name for the frog orchid a dactylorhiza viride or dactylorhiza fuchsia?

### Art Trail in Grin Low August

This raised money for the environmental charity 'Project Green Hands' and was organised by Beth Ruby Moon. This charity has as its aims the ongoing sustainability of the planet.

Collaboration of local artists won Best Visual Arts prize in the Buxton Fringe



Amongst the tress were crocheted pots out of wool flowers, a man out of plaster of Paris, a lady of lavender and a memory box for shared memories inspired by The Buxton Diamonds.

The Grin Low Art Trail began at the bottom of the woods just up the steps from Poole's Cavern Car Park and wound its way up the woodland paths to a beautiful grassy area further up from the wildflower bed.

For 2015 alongside the story telling tent we hope to have free art and craft workshops for children and families.

## Club Night Thursday 4th September

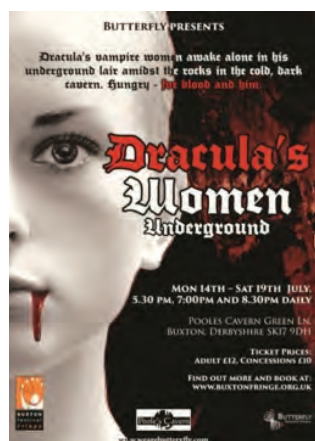
It was great to see so many members enjoying the relaxed surroundings of the café – open for members and their friends to enjoy homemade chocolate cake and fresh coffee. We had a chance to see the almost finished version of The Panorama which will be on sale in the shop very soon. It will really add to the enjoyment of a visit to Solomon's Temple as the landmarks are so clearly photographed and explained.

Members expressed concern over the state of Ashwood Park and the High Pavement.

Members praised on the efficient way that the Country Park, Café and cavern are being managed for the benefit of us all.

## Drama in the Cavern

Butterfly theatre is a familiar name to anyone who has been around for previous Buxton Fringes. The new script 'Dracula's Women Underground' drew in large audiences each night, managing to attract both Fringe newcomers and long-time fans.



The cave made a wonderfully spooky setting for such an iconic, Gothic book, bathed in red light and full of mist. We look forward to their next production in the Fringe 2015.

## Project eARTH

Starting in September and continuing throughout the Winter months a joint community arts project will be taking place at Poole's cavern visitor centre and Buxton Country park.

The project will be hosted by BCA with expertise and funding supplied by High Peak Community Arts and a collaboration with Sarah Fiander Sculptures and Creeping Toad Storytelling.

Sarah Fiander a renown wood sculptor based in Nottingham [www.sarahfiandersculptures.co.uk](http://www.sarahfiandersculptures.co.uk) will lead a weekly group at the Poole's Cavern visitor centre school room with Adult service users to construct three wooden sculptures to depict the varied wildlife and geology of Buxton Country Park. The sculptures made from timber sourced from trees brought down by last winters storms will be on permanent display in the Poole's cavern picnic area.

BCA thank Alison Bowry and the team at High Peak Community arts for arranging and funding this project. Further information can be found at <http://www.highpeakarts.org/>

## Festive Wine Tasting

Wines to go with your Christmas fayre with a taster menu in aid of

West Africa Fistula Foundation  
November 15th 2014 - 7.30pm  
Poole's Cavern Cafe.

Please join us for an evening with  
Rosie Bainbridge

Tickets £15  
- contact no. 01298 23105

## For Hire

Are you planning a 'get together', meeting or birthday party?

Remember the cafe and schoolroom are available to hire at very reasonable rates.



## Christmas Ideas

### BCA Calendar

A local photographer is producing a Buxton Calendar for 2015 and the pages promote the BCA logo. They are available from Poole's Cavern price £8.00.

### BOOK EARLY FOR THE EVER POPULAR SANTA'S GROTTTO

Weekends in December 10am to 4 pm,  
6th- 7th, 13th - 14th, 20th-21st, 23rd-24th  
There are prebooked and timed entries available.  
Bookings now being taken. Please Contact Poole's  
Cavern via phone or through our website.

## More Derbyshire Badgers Vaccinated

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust has carried out more badger vaccinations at setts near Buxton, working with volunteers from Derbyshire Badger Groups, and in partnership with Buxton Civic Association, Poole's Cavern and Derbyshire County Council.

The vaccinations are part of a five-year programme being run by the Trust. Along with other Wildlife Trusts, it is working to convince the Government that resources and funding should be put into badger vaccination and other solutions to bovine TB and not into culling. Tim Birch, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Conservation Manager, explains: "Badger culling was piloted in Somerset and Gloucestershire last year – these proved to be ineffective and failed the humaneness test. While the Government has no plans to extend culling this year, we remain concerned that Derbyshire may be selected for future culling programmes. We know that bovine TB has devastating consequences for farmers and are pleased to be working with them to demonstrate alternatives to killing badgers."

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust began fundraising last year for the programme. Earlier this year it reached its initial target of £50,000 and is continuing to fundraise to enable it to broaden the programme. You can donate at [www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/badgers](http://www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/badgers)

## Visit our Website



This is an example of the beautiful illustrations that are used on our website. They are 18th century illustrations of trees that can be found in Grin Low.

## Visit our Café

We have excellent TripAdvisor reviews for both the Cavern and the Cafe, and the the Cafe has, once more, gained a 5 star rating from the Local Authority.

## Buxton Civic Association

### General Manager:

Alan Walker at Poole's Cavern 01298 26978

### Board Members:

**Chair:** Paul Dinsdale

**Vice Chair:** Mike Monaghan

**Secretary:** Martin Wragg

**Treasurer:** Brian Shawcross

**Planning:** Tim Middleton & Owen Longden

**Woodlands:** Peter Phillipson

**Community & Membership:** Mike Wilde

**Environment:** Mike Monaghan

**Vision Liaison:** Mike Bryant

**Internet:** Tim Middleton & Owen Longden

**Newsletter:** Alyson Phillips

**Communications:** Simon Fussell

### New Board Members:

Brian Lawrence

Johnathan Davey

