

# **HORWICH HERITAGE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025**

## **INTRODUCTION**

As we celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I am pleased to report on another successful year with a full programme of activities. We have had 11 monthly speakers, a Christmas 'special' with the Happy Voices Choir, produced 5 exhibitions on '120 Years of Lever Park', 'Horwich at War', 'Our Ancient Past', 'The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day' and '40 Years of Horwich Heritage', undertaken walks around Blackrod, Horwich Town Centre, Wilderswood, the Club Houses and Bob's Brew, a trip to Chester and local trips to Ladybridge Hall, Worsley Delph and Ordsall Hall. Our extensive programme of schools visits has also continued. It is a pleasure to report that our membership figure has now reached 350 thanks in no small part to our activities on e-mail, facebook and our web site. We are grateful to everyone who has supported us: our Committee and Volunteers, Horwich Town Council & the Community Centre Management and staff and, of course, yourselves the membership. Thanks to you all.

## **MAIN ISSUES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

- 1. The Heritage Centre.** Now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year, the Centre continues to prove popular with visitors. This is down to the regularly changing exhibition programme, our well-stocked shop and extensive archives and the dedication and helpfulness of those who staff it – so thanks to all our Committee & Volunteers. We have had an excellent series of exhibitions and thanks must go to Derek and supporting individuals and organisations for making these possible.
- 2. Visits & Events.** Our 'Locomotiv8ors' schools programme has continued for a 13<sup>th</sup> year and additional school visits and visits from other groups have made for a busy year. In addition to the walks and trips mentioned above, further events are planned for later in the year (see programme) .
- 3. Archives/Storage.** We keep adding to our back room store as donations continue to come in, which requires frequent work in reorganising and cataloguing our archives. Thanks to Kath, Roy and Derek.
- 4. Membership/Funding.** It is especially pleasing to be able to report that our membership has increased by 47 from 303 to 350 (NB the membership year now runs from Jan - Dec.). We would like to thank Liz for her work as Membership Secretary. Despite the continued increase in the costs associated with running the Heritage Centre and our other activities, the subscription remains at £10 per annum. This provides 11 free speakers + 2 magazines and represents very good value for money. We wish to acknowledge the annual grant of £1500 given to us by Horwich Town Council which is a significant help in running the Heritage Centre.
- 5. Staffing Rota/Caretaking.** Many thanks to the Committee members & volunteers who staff the Heritage Centre and especially to Gary Penman who organises the rota. There will be a mid-year Volunteers Meeting on Monday 7th July (7pm). We also wish to thank Norma for her work as cleaner.
- 6. Magazine.** I have continued to edit the magazine. Many thanks to those who contributed articles for this year's editions (including the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 'special' edition). Please keep your contributions coming in.
- 7. Speaker Programme/Trips.** The speaker programme has again proved varied and popular with numbers regularly exceeding 80 and sometimes 100. Please see the programme for details of forthcoming speakers, exhibitions, trips & walks.
- 8. Web Site/Facebook/Research/Family History.** Thanks to Neil at Bolton Website Design for keeping our website up to date and to Derek for running the facebook page. These 2 important elements of 'social media' help us to maintain good contact with our membership and beyond. Thanks to Kath Arkwright for dealing with requests for information, to those who helped with exhibition research and production and to Val Leese for running her Family History courses.

**9. Trading Goods.** Thanks to Kath for looking after our shop. Sales figures have again been good, helped by a range of new publications and 'Book Sales'.

**10. Community Projects.** We have assisted Bolton Council in the restoration of the Crown roundabout direction sign and in re-building of the former Horwich Station Goods entrance wall. We have now installed an information board at the entrance. We have also been working with United Utilities on a new Rivington Reservoirs memorial trail. Thanks to Roy and Derek for their work on these projects.

**10. Horwich Issues.**

- The Golf Course development is now underway and there has been an application for a new Aldi store adjacent to the Beehive roundabout. The former Mansell Paper Factory has now been cleared ready for redevelopment. The Loco Works (Rivington Chase) main access road has still not been completed but new houses are now being built at the opposite end of the site off Crown Lane. The future of the last remaining Loco Works workshop, the Millwrights/Pattern shop remains uncertain. The new Health Centre is now up and running.
- Horwich Council has gone out to public consultation on a proposal to purchase the RMI cricket field and are still considering whether to consult the public on the partial closure/pedestrianisation of Winter Hey Lane.
- Another disappointing season for Bolton Wanderers. Let's hope the new manager can find the answers.
- Thanks to Cllr Ian Aldcroft for his support as Mayor of Horwich this year. We welcome his successor Cllr Victoria Rigby. As always, we continue to offer our support to the Town Council in its efforts to look after the 'best interests' of the town.
- Sadly, there won't be either a Horwich Festival of Racing or a Carnival this year but the Horwich Festival in September 2024 was a success (despite the weather) and will be repeated this year. The UK 'Iron Man' took place on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June.
- We have liaised with the Smithills Wildlife Trust as part of its public consultation on the future of the 2 Lads stone cairns.

**11. The Committee.** It is to the great credit of our Committee and Volunteers that we have such a full programme of activities and a unique, vibrant Heritage Centre – long may it continue! It is particularly pleasing to see a continued increase in the number of members, which we hope reflects the quality of what we have to offer. Thank you all for your support. If you would like to help us to continue our valuable work in the Horwich community, either as a Committee Member or Volunteer, please get in touch.

**CONCLUSIONS**

40 years on and we are still going strong! But we can never be complacent - we need to make sure that our Society and Heritage Centre continue to flourish. This means planning ahead and always trying to improve and develop our range of activities. We've come a long way together, so please continue to support Horwich Heritage, its Committee & Volunteers in whatever ways you can. THANK YOU.

**STUART WHITTLE – CHAIRMAN**

# HORWICH HERITAGE

## SECRETARY'S REPORT 2024

**1. Executive Committee.** The Committee has met on 11 occasions during the year and produced a full programme of activities. The job descriptions of the Executive Committee have remained as follows:

Stuart Whittle -----	Chairman, magazine editor, liaison with Horwich TC, development of Heritage Centre & Open Days/exhibitions, speaker programme, grant applications, school & group visits, web site, posters, publicity for BN, representative on Rivington Chase Liaison Committee.
Roy Davies-----	Vice – Chairman, restoration & special projects, Heritage Centre improvements
Derek Cartwright -----	Secretary, research, Open Days/exhibitions, facebook, health & safety/risk assessment
Carol Walker -----	Treasurer
Val Leese -----	Family History
Kathleen Arkwright ----	Filing, archives, magazine distribution, shop manager
Chris Foley -----	Research, Open Days/exhibitions, facebook
Liz Whitehead -----	Membership Secretary, Tuesday Meetings desk,
Gary Penman -----	Trip and rota organiser, Tuesday Meetings desk

**2. Heritage Centre.** The Centre has been fully appreciated by our visitors with a full range of shop, archive & research and exhibition facilities. For public safety, regular health & safety and risk assessments are carried out.

**3. Magazine.** Thanks to Stuart as editor and for managing to produce 2 high standard editions of the magazine.

**4. Membership.** Our high profile campaign on facebook and our website has enabled us to both retain and increase our membership. Thanks to Liz for her work as Membership Secretary. There are now 337 ordinary members and 13 honorary members: Ted Wisedale, Les Duckworth, Phil Smith, Roy Davies, David Kaye, Betty Ainsworth, Kath Pyle, Sue Hurst, Neil Rickaby, Judith Whittle, Dennis Warren, Mike Ince and Barbara McQueen. Sadly we have lost Jean Webster & Terry Almond during the past year.

**5. Social Media.** We now recognise the importance of social media, and my 'Flashback Fridays' and other postings on facebook and Neil Rickaby's regular postings on the website have helped to keep members in touch and generate a whole new following. This has to be the way forward in this increasingly 'media-driven' age.

**5. Meetings & Trips.** We have been able to hold 11 speaker meetings and a Christmas 'special' – all of good quality and well-attended. Our trips and walks have also been well supported and we have more planned.

**6. Schools & Groups.** Many thanks to Stuart & Judith for hosting the 'Locomotiv8ors' sessions & other group visits.

**7. Trading Goods/Family History.** Thanks to Kath for running the shop and to Val for her Family History courses.

**8. Representation.** We have continued to maintain close links with the Town Clerk & Community Centre management and thank them for their support

**9. Centre Staffing.** A big thank you to all those who have continued to staff our Centre: Les Duckworth, Margaret Pyatt, Barbara McQueen, Judith & Stuart Whittle, Carol Walker, Val Leese, Eric Kent, Cynthia Percy, Kathleen Arkwright, Derek Cartwright, Chris Foley, Roy Davies, Maureen Price, David Howarth, Gary Penman, Liz Whitehead, Bill & Marie Whiteside, Lindsay & Geoff Smith, Lilian & Stephen Foster, Gina Downham, Pauline Yates, Rod Sledge, Ian Nicholls & Dave Hart. We welcomed new volunteers, Susan & John Fletcher and Dave Partington, and look forward to others joining us.. Many thanks to Gary Penman for organizing the rota and our trip and to Norma for being our cleaner. We were sad to lose Lillian & Stephen Foster & Pauline Yates from the rota.

**10. Other Helpers.** We are indebted to our rotating desk team at monthly speaker meetings of Gary, Liz, Kath, Derek, Roy & Val for organizing the entry fees, raffle & sales. We also thank Neil Rickaby for his work on the website, Stephen Hamer for his help with exhibitions, Judith Whittle for helping with the Accounts and catering, our auditor, Peter Haslam and anyone else I have missed.

**DEREK CARTWRIGHT - SECRETARY**

# HORWICH HERITAGE

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

(1<sup>ST</sup> June 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025)

Current Account b/fwd      **£811.15**  
Deposit Account b/fwd    **£21,371.24**

Income	2025 £	2024 £	Expenditure	2025 £	2024 £
Sale of Goods	2,574.54	(2,708.50)	Trading Goods	1,585.94	(1,298.54)
Membership/Ent Fees	3,906.00	(3,366.00)	Print/Stationery/Post	1,853.90	(1,181.02)
Grants Lottery/HTC	22,030.00	(1,598.89)	Exhibition/Archives	472.59	(371.73)
Donations	2,493.65	(2,182.33)	Equipment/Repairs	205.85	(392.99)
Raffle	869.00	(692.00)	Renovation Projects	626.61	(10.80)
Events	1,130.00	(1,338.00)	Speakers	475.00	(450.00)
Family History	330.00	(180.00)	Insurance	289.67	(285.06)
Interest	443.00	(320.44)	Events	1,324.04	(1,342.32)
Honey Sales	1,006.50		Hall Rent	270.80	(292.80)
Other	25.00		Heritage Centre Rent	3,879.16	(3,831.28)
			Schools Project	7,950.00	(7,000.00)
			Computer/Web Site)	394.80	(447.20)
			Cleaning	370.00	(490.00)
			PAT Testing	0.00	(92.56)
			Honey Expenses	805.75	
			Donations to Others	348.00	
			General Expenses	456.75	(438.10)
	<b><u>£34,807.69</u></b>	<b><u>£12,386.16</u></b>		<b><u>£21,308.86</u></b>	<b><u>£17,924.40</u></b>
				<b><u>£866.98</u></b>	
				<b><u>£34,814.24</u></b>	
	<b><u>£56,990.08</u></b>			<b><u>£56,990.08</u></b>	

Value of Stock Held at 31/5/24    £3,000 (estimated)

*Carol Walker*

Carol Walker – Treasurer

3/6/2025

*Peter Haslam*

Peter Haslam – Auditor

ACMA MAAT

3/6/2025



## **TREASURER'S REPORT - JUDITH WHITTLE**

We currently have £866.98 in the Current Account and £34,814.24 in the Deposit Account giving a total of £35,681.22. The Deposit Account is slightly inflated this year because the National Lottery Awards For All Grant which we receive for the Locomotiv8tors Schools Project now covers a period of 2 years. This means that the £20,000 received this year will be rolled into next year and from this we have already paid £7000 to Bolton Council for support, transport etc and next year we will pay £6000 (£13,000 in total) to Bolton Council. This will bring the Deposit balance to £28,000 approximately which is a £6000 increase on 2024.

### **INCOME**

Sales are slightly down but membership is up over £500. Donations are up £300 and this is because numbers of people and groups of all ages are attending the Heritage Centre. Sales of Honey feature in the accounts showing that there is a £200 profit (see expenses).

### **EXPENDITURE**

The amount spent on trading goods has increased reflecting a well stocked variety of books etc. Printing, stationery and postage has increased significantly partly because we have members all over the UK. Renovation Projects have continued this year with the support of a Horwich Council Grant. The Heritage Centre and Community Hall rents have increased and I've mentioned the Honey Sales and Expenditure. Donations to others includes North West Ambulance, Holy Trinity Church Tower repairs, Rivington Chapel and Fort Alice.

That's our financial position which is a sound basis on which to go forward but we are constantly faced with increasing year on year costs across the board.

Are there any questions?

Thanks to our Carol who is stepping down from her role as Treasurer and to Peter Haslam for auditing the Accounts.

Please can someone propose and second the Accounts