

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

This is the eighth Annual Report of Belper Historical Society (BHS) as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for the year 2021-22. Founded in 1957, the Society sought charity status as a CIO in 2014 with an aspiration to be better placed to make its resources available to more people by increasing its membership and raising income to fund its work and maintain its archive material in a central and accessible building.

Structure, Governance and Management

In accordance with the Constitution and Rules of the Society, the Committee consists of:

- (a) Not less than four and up to five trustees who are the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and one or two other members of the Society and
- (b) six to nine other members of the Society who are all elected by the membership annually at the Annual General Meeting.

Circumstances precluded holding a face-to-face AGM in November 2021, but with membership agreement it was held on line. Documents for the AGM (Annual Report, Financial Statement and Trustee Balance Sheet) were supplied to members by e-mail.

The committee members appointed were as follows:

Chairman and Ex-Officio Trustee - Adrian Farmer

Secretary and Ex-Officio Trustee – Adrian Keetley

Treasurer and Ex-Officio Trustee – Heather Eaton

Elected Trustee – Mary Featherby

Other Committee Members duly elected – Mary McLean Farmer, Jane Whitaker, Ian Jackson, Andrea White, Neil Hallsworth.

Appointments of future committee members now follow a more informal process, less rigorous than that required for Trustee nomination.

The Secretary continued in office as Trustee with Belper North Mill Trust as the Society's representative in that group. It was agreed some of the secretary's work be dispersed across the committee, with Jane Whitaker as Programme Secretary and Neil Hallsworth as Minutes Secretary.

Objectives and Activities

The main aims of the Society continued to be:

- Cultivate an interest in the history of Belper and its neighbourhood.
- Maintain the BHS Collection (artefacts, paintings, documents, photographs, maps and Library books and paper archives).
- Encourage practical historical research into Belper's past.
- Providing lectures, publications, displays and exhibitions and making such resources available for study by the general public.

To support these aims, meetings are held monthly (except August) where talks of local and historical interest are given by members and visiting speakers. The lecture programme continues to be the main activity of the Society, sustained largely through an annual membership subscription to offset programme and room hire costs.

The main Objectives for this year have been:

- Maintenance and expansion of the BHS website.
- Continue the rationalisation and review storage of the archive collection.
- Set up a functional library system for access to members.
- Re-establish face-to-face meetings.

Achievements and Performance

Activities for 2021/22 reflected the growing confidence of members in meeting face-to-face, with a mixture of outdoor walks, on-line talks and face to face presentations. No special events beyond the regular monthly programme were planned, but discussions began on providing more activities in 2023, including a chance to display some of the artefacts in the archive. Membership since the enforced break in 2020/1 remains low in comparison with recent years, with plans for a membership drive in 2023.

Programme

Not everyone felt comfortable attending meetings in person, so the first three meetings of 2022 were held on Zoom, all given by members of the Society. The year started with Ian Jackson speaking about the latest discoveries he has made regarding the waterways used to power the mills of Belper. In February, Adrian Farmer stepped in at the last minute to talk about the 20th anniversary of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. March was the turn of Neil Calladine who talked about the links between the local circus and the fair, using the research carried out for his recent book.

April saw the return of the first in-person talk for over two years, given by Trevor Griffin, a long-standing volunteer from Belper North Mill. It was better attended than anticipated, with many members delighted at the opportunity to see the speaker in person. Heather Eaton was the speaker in May, talking about Milford.

As a change to the usual meetings, June and July saw two well-supported walks, firstly around the northern part of Duffield, starting at the castle, and led by Robert Reid. The second was around Belper cemetery by Adrian Farmer.

Once again, Adrian was the speaker in September, using interesting extracts from the recently discovered Nightwatchman's book. October's talk was by Ian Coker about Heage and Morley Park. There are still two more talks to finish off the year, Robin Macey on the history of ballooning in Derbyshire and Jonathan Dwerryhouse on the George Inn, Belper. Many thanks to all the speakers and walk leaders for their interesting contributions.

Members were given the opportunity to comment on the style of the programme via a short questionnaire. Those that responded were happy with the combination of meetings, walks and Zoom talks, so the 2023 programme will continue in the same vein with a mixture of speakers drawn from the members of the Society and outside speakers who can present on a variety of Belper and Derbyshire history. There is always room on the programme for items by members – please discuss ideas with any of the committee members.

Archive

Since January 2019, the Society has rented an upstairs room in a building on the Market Place, which is used for archive storage (documents, photos, artefacts, etc). There are a number of problems with this arrangement, not least that access to the room is via a set of steep and narrow

stairs, the access corridor being blocked from time to time and on occasions the electricity in the building has been turned off presenting a hazard on the dark staircase area. The access yard has become full of junk and brambles. There is a risk of damage or even loss of the archives from water ingress or fire, and also to the personal safety of people accessing the archives.

The committee decided to look for alternative arrangements for archive storage, and an initial visit was made to Belper Storage in Goods Road in July. The operation was seen to be very modern and well maintained, with full fire and security protection; they also reported that quite a few local companies and legal firms store their archives there. Access to the room would be unrestricted during their opening hours (6 days a week), and the cost would be similar to what is being spent now, for a similar floor space. This option was discussed at a committee meeting in August, and it was agreed unanimously to go ahead with this option, subject to a visit by the full committee.

The committee visited Belper Storage, and were impressed with what they saw; a reservation will be placed on a unit there following further discussions on the required floor space, and a move for the archive is anticipated shortly.

Documents

Considerable progress has been made on scanning and cataloguing the archive, essentially those documents which had not been listed previously. Within the collection are many items for which we will never be able to provide satisfactory storage conditions. These have now been taken to Derbyshire Record Office where they will be available to a wider audience in the near future, although we will be able to use material for exhibition locally whenever required. Scanning and cataloguing of documents not now with Derbyshire Record Office continues.

Artefacts

These are still in our storage room, with progress being made slowly. The Collection policy for the acquisition and retention of artifacts of local interest remains as follows: *'that the archive will contain photographs, artefacts and paper material which illustrate and testify to the people of Belper, their working lives and businesses and those who were influenced by Belper'*.

Library

The Society's library finally opened its doors at the end of July, to the delight of several members. A number of books were borrowed and some useful connections made between researchers. Sale of surplus stock and other history books kindly donated by members are helping to fund the running of the library. The committee has agreed that from 2023 the library will open more frequently, increasing from every three months to every two months on the last Saturday of the month from 10am to 12 noon in Room 104 at Strutts Community Centre. There is a wide range of material, not only books but also manuscripts, journals, pamphlets and original research, some of which is unavailable elsewhere.

The library will continue to expand as more books are donated. Any suggestions and recommendations are welcome. A shortened version of the catalogue is available to download from the website. A fuller version can be emailed out on request.

Books

Small numbers of the Society's publications *Historic Belper and Milford in Colour* and *Belper in Wartime* have continued to sell, raising over £400 in the past year. New titles are being considered.

Website

Committee member Mary McLean Farmer continues to expand and manage the <https://belperhistoricalsociety.co.uk/> website. Along with our Facebook page, Historic Belper, it has proven to be a popular way of contacting the society. New material added has included pages on the recovery of the Nightwatchmen's Reports of 1833-1836, along with a full transcription of the contents by Heather Eaton, an updated Library page, Land Tax page and Local Wills resource.

Chair Adrian Farmer was asked to contribute to a virtual tour of the town's Unitarian Chapel and this too has been uploaded to the website. So too has information regarding the local Rotary Club's project on cleaning up the cemetery and researching the rediscovered graves.

Video Material

Adrian Farmer and committee member Mary McLean-Farmer created a Belper Stories video which was made available to members. It can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAtSTddfXt4>

A video version of Adrian's talk on the Nightwatchmen's Reports of 1833-1836, part of the regular BHS programme, was also made available to members. It can be watched at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pmp_M-yxdtM

Closure of the Strutt's North Mill

The Society heard with sadness of the closure of the town's only museum, Strutt's North Mill, which closed its doors at the end of September. The Society had a number of artefacts on long-term loan to the museum, which will now be returned to the society archive.

Extracurricular activity

A number of inquiries have come in via the BHS website, and responses sent out.

Plans for Future Periods

Plans and objectives for 2022-23 will include the following key areas:

- Website - further development
- Continue current mix of face-to-face and on-line meetings and walks
- Increase use of the library facility
- Continue rationalisation of artifacts
- Continue with transcription and scanning of documents and photos
- Plan future BHS products
- Plan special events
- Increase membership

Adrian Farmer

Chair,

On behalf of Belper Historical Society Committee (and with thanks to Adrian Keetley, Jane Whitaker, Neil Hallsworth, Heather Eaton and Mary McLean Farmer for their contributions)

12.10.22

Belper Historical Society

CIO Charity No: 1158020

YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Statement of Financial Activities

(Including Income and Expenditure Account)

for the Year Ended 31 August 2022.

Income			Expenditure		
	2022	2021		2022	2021
Deposit Interest	0533.01	0793.58	Library room hire	0078.40	
Members subscriptions	0915.00	0075.00	Speakers fees	0080.00	
Visitor Donations	0015.00		Meetings Room Hire	0073.00	
Donated books donations	0016.50	0100.00	Web domain	0021.58	
Raffle	0027.00	0021.58	Banking Fees	0048.96	
Sales of WW1 Book	0130.00	0105.00	Zoom Fees	0028.78	
Sales of Belper & Milford	0303.00	4148.00	Administration	0000.00	
Sales of Images	0075.00		Printing Book	0000.00	2642.00
			Archive storage	2241.56	2214.75
Total Income	2014.51	5243.16	Total Expenditure	2572.28	4856.75

Current Excess of Expenditure over Income **£557.77**

BALANCE SHEET at 31 August 2022

Current Assets

Cash in hand	1.64
At HSBC Current A/c (incl Dep Acct)	3196.20
At Cambridge & Counties Bank	21968.64
At Mansfield Building Society	<u>37302.73</u>
	62469.21

Represented by

General Fund at 1 Sep 2021
63004.51

Net Current Assets

Current Liabilities	0000.00
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General Fund at 31 Aug 2022

Depreciation of Assets	348.40
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62469.21

Tangible Assets

Belper in WW1 book	
(Stock at Cost)	1385.74
Belper & Milford	
(Stock at Cost)	<u>324.22</u>
	1709.96

Examiners Report

Net Assets	64179.17
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Represented by

Unrestricted General Fund	62469.21
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124 Lloyds Banking Group Shares at 31 Aug 2022 £44.38