

HEBDEN BRIDGE LOCAL HISTORY
SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Autumn 2023



**Heptonstall Museum
open again**

**Published by the Hebden Bridge
Local History Society**

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www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Chair: Murray Seccombe

Secretary: Barbara Hall

secretary@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Hebden Bridge Local History Society is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), registered charity no. 1196787.

The society has sections for those with a particular interest in local prehistory, family history and folklore.

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Cover picture: Heptonstall Penny Bank – closed 1954 (see page 25)

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter. Here you'll find details of the society activities for 2023-2024.

The editor is always pleased to receive contributions and the next newsletter will be in Spring 2024.

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You can receive the Autumn newsletter by email or post. If you wish to change the way you receive it, or if any of your contact details have changed, please let us know at hblhs.membership@gmail.com

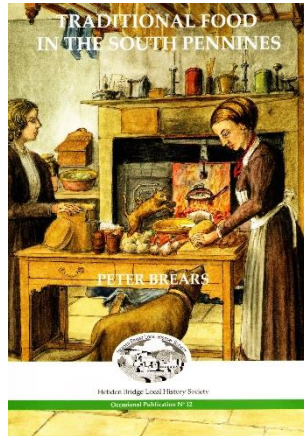
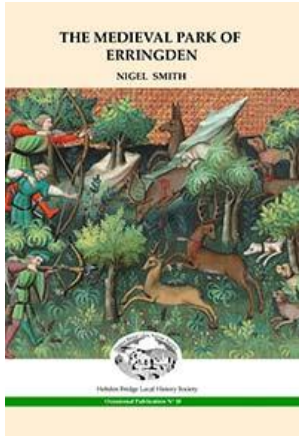
Membership Renewal Reminder

See back page for details

Local History Society Publications

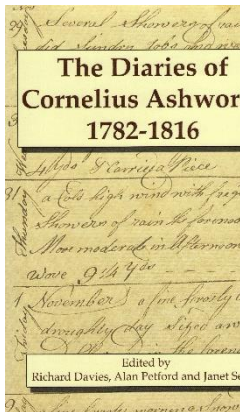
The society has an excellent record of researching and publishing on the local history of the upper Calder valley.

Recent titles

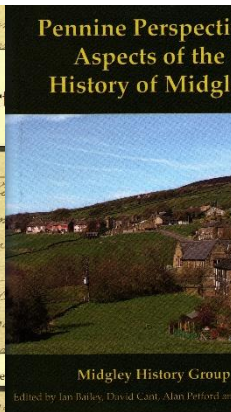


£11.99

Bargain basement



£8



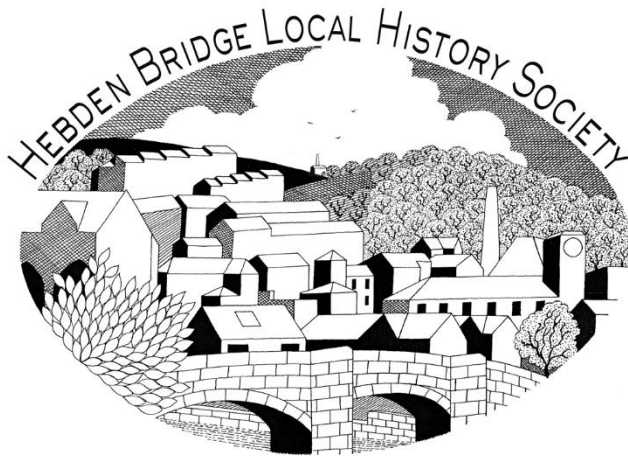
£8



£12

Order on www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Annual General Meeting 2023



The second AGM of the charity – actually, the seventy-fourth since we started – will be held on Wednesday October 25th, 2023. In accordance with the constitution the purpose of the AGM is to receive the annual statement of accounts and the trustees’ annual report, and to appoint trustees.

Three trustees are due to retire this year (but are entitled to seek re-election), and a further two places are vacant. Any member who is interested in becoming a trustee may stand for election at the AGM. We’re happy to talk to you about this informally. For more information about what is involved in being a trustee, in the first instance please contact the Secretary (Barbara Hall) by email:

secretary@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

The AGM is a good opportunity to ask questions about the Charity’s activities and share ideas for the future. We’ll look forward to seeing you there.

Chair's report for the year

In my first report as Chair of the Society, I'd like to take the opportunity to look across the range of activities undertaken by members and trustees. For a historical society based on a small town and its surrounding communities, we are surely punching well above our weight.

The core activity remains the series of twelve lectures staged at the Methodist Church on Market St. What a relief it was last winter to have a whole programme unaffected by COVID-19! I'd like to thank everyone for the support you've shown. The average attendance was forty-six – despite some very cold evenings when the heating wasn't fully working – with another forty watching remotely on video after the event. I'm pleased to say that the Methodist Church are due to install double glazing soon, and we should have a more comfortable home. You'll find details of the new programme in this newsletter. Once again our thanks are due to Sheila and Hilary for putting together such a rich and diverse set of talks. Tenters, ships, the inside of Oliver's Heywood's head and mobile farms – what more could we ask for?

The lectures, of course, are just one part of the Society's work. The archive at the Birchcliffe is a precious asset, preserving the heritage of the district through original records, diaries and a whole range of documents – not to mention a comprehensive collection of printed books about the area. Nigel and his team of volunteers work incredibly hard to keep up with material that's deposited while also updating the catalogue system to make it available more widely, for example, on Archives Hub, and pursuing access to the Discovery database through the National Archives at Kew.

And it's not just that: the tie-up with Pennine Heritage, Pennine Horizons Digital Archive and Huddersfield University that gave rise to South Pennine Archives is giving the Society an important regional profile. Huge thanks to Nigel, Sarah, Anne, John, Jim and everyone else involved.

Just a reminder, our own archives are normally open to members every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon for free; check the website for holiday closures and booking arrangements.

A continuing success story of the Society is the growing portfolio of publications managed with great skill and sensitivity by Nigel. Pride of place this year has been Peter Brears' beautifully illustrated book celebrating traditional food in the South Pennines. More titles are on the way and the whole list of available books is on the website. Talking of which, please do explore the website: it's been completely redesigned over the last two years, and we hope you'll find it easier to see information relevant to you. Thanks again to Nigel for working with the developer to get things right.

Final shout-outs, please, to Rachel for all she does on finance, membership, the lecture recordings and, over this last year, registration as a charity; to Barbara Hall, for her thorough work as Society Secretary and to David Cant, who puts these newsletters together with care and aplomb.

As you will know, we are now an independent Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), and we have sent our first returns to the Charity Commission. You can see our reports by entering our charity number, 1196787, at <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search>

October 25, 2023, is the date of our next Annual General Meeting – the first for the new arrangements for trustee elections. Under the CIO constitution, three of us will officially step down, although I am expecting all to stand again. There are two additional places on the board available. This is, therefore, a good time for anyone interested in becoming a trustee to find out more. All that is needed in the first place is a chat with me to talk about what’s involved and what skills and experience you can offer. Just email the secretary at secretary@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk in the first place and I’ll get back to you.

Finally, I’d like to express my personal thanks to Barbara Atack for her ten years of service as President of the Society. Following in the footsteps of the much-missed Frank Woolrych was never going to be easy, but Barbara has led the Society with great good humour and thoughtfulness, not least in navigating the pressures of the pandemic and the transition to the new legal structure. I’m pleased to say that Barbara has agreed to remain a trustee for a while longer.

Murray Seccombe
August 2023

Archive Report

The archive collections continue to grow through donations. A particularly significant donation in the last year was the papers of Malcolm and Freda Heywood. The Heywoods were members of the WEA class involved in the research and writing that eventually led to the publication of *Pennine Valley* in 1992. They went on to produce *A History of Todmorden* in 1996 with Bernard Jennings. The archive

already holds the papers of Bernard Jennings relating to *Pennine Valley*, as well as those of other contributors to the book, and the Heywood papers are a valuable addition to these research collections.

Andrew Bibby kindly donated his extensive research notes for his book *All Our Own Work* on the co-operative Nutclough Mill. Barbara Attack has donated the papers of her relative Mary Attack, a nurse. These have been the subject of research by Kelly Swaby who is giving us a lecture on this in February 2024. Kelly worked with Pennine Heritage to produce a history project using these documents aimed at Key Stage Two school pupils.

Local societies and groups continue to archive their records with the Society. Collections received this year include the Piano Festival, the Town Twinning Society, Mayroyd Action Group and the early papers of the Todmorden Cricket Club. The archive is keen to preserve the records of local groups and events so if the opportunity arises, please do encourage such donations. Today's records are tomorrow's history.

The archive is now on the national register of archives. This means that we can begin to make sections of our catalogue available on Archives Hub and the National Archives Discovery catalogue. Ultimately this will make our collections much more visible at a national level. Our new website has also allowed us to present the catalogue in an easy-to-use search format for the first time.

As well as all the collections of unpublished material, the archive also contains a comprehensive collection of published books on the local history of the Upper Calder valley that can be borrowed. The archive is normally open

from 2 to 5pm every Wednesday and Thursday but this does depend on volunteer availability so do check our website for closed days. Booking is essential via the contact form for the archivist on the website.

South Pennine Archives

Hebden Bridge Local History Society and Pennine Heritage operate their archives as a single, jointly managed collection called South Pennine Archives. Regular meetings are held to further the aims and processes of the partnership.

Nigel Smith
Archivist

Skills needed!

Have you got an interest in the local history of the area, an eye for detail and technical skills that could further the reach of the Society?

If you (or someone you know) can offer some time, we are on the hunt for people to help with tasks such as keeping our website up to date, handling the technical side of our lectures and managing marketing and sales for our prestigious series of publications. Whether by way of a regular time slot or a particular task, this is an opportunity to make a real difference in the way we celebrate our heritage.

Send a few lines about yourself and your background to secretary@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk and let's have an informal chat about the options.

Lecture Programme 2023 – 2024

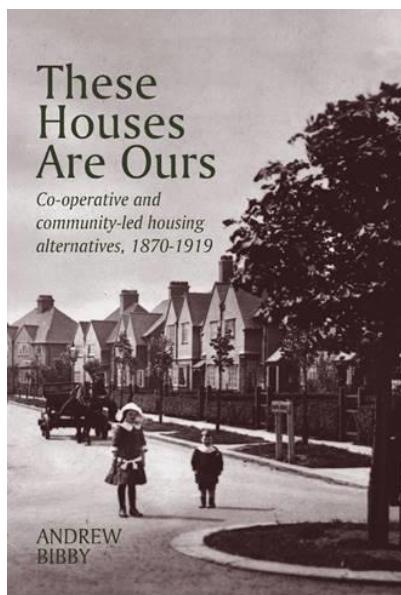
Meetings will be held at Hebden Bridge Methodist Church, at 7.30 pm.

Lectures will be recorded and made available to members on Vimeo for two weeks following the lecture.

27 September 2023

**THE EARLY CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING
MOVEMENT AND HOW HEBDEN BRIDGE
PLAYED A PART IN IT**

Andrew Bibby



The years before the First World War saw a widespread co-operative and community-led housing movement across Britain at a time of great working-class housing need. Andrew Bibby describes the small but significant role Hebden Bridge played in how the movement developed.

Andrew Bibby is a writer and journalist who has a particular interest in the history of the co-operative movement in

Britain. A long-standing member of the Society, he has given talks previously on Hebden Bridge's celebrated Nutclough fustian co-operative and on the 1916 garment workers' strike in the town. He has recently published *These Houses are Ours*, a history of the co-operative housing movement.

11 October 2023

A MELTING SEASON

Sheila Graham

Inside the mind of Oliver Heywood



The Reverend Oliver Heywood, a prominent 17th century dissenter, was a prolific commentator on events and people in Halifax. Not one to be bound by the convention of speaking no ill of the dead, he was incisive and opinionated, with a marked preference

for scurrilous gossip. But a study of his collected notebooks and diaries permits an insight into the mind of the man and his view of the world.

Sheila Graham is a retired English teacher, member of HBLHS committee and transcription addict. A decade of transcribing 17th century probate documents from the parish of Halifax often involved checking the Heywood diaries to see if there was a mention of one of the testators. The suspended time of lockdown offered the chance to explore his diaries more systematically to discover what made him tick. Northowram History Society has published her booklet on the subject.

25 October 2023

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY AGM

Followed by

**THE TREASURES OF HEBDEN BRIDGE
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY ARCHIVE**

Anne Mealia

From archaeological investigations to Yorkshire dialect the HBLHS archive has a wealth of material relating to properties, people and activities in the Upper Calder Valley. We have deeds, diaries, maps and much more. There are even some artifacts such as fabric books and agricultural tools. Our oldest record, a deed, dates from the 16th century and we collect material up to the present day. Come and find out more about what we have and how to access our unique collections.



Anne Mealia is a professional genealogist and historical researcher and runs her own research business, Evergreen Ancestry, carrying out research for individuals, academics and TV companies. She leads historical walks round Todmorden and the surrounding area. She is a trustee of Hebdon Bridge Local History Society and helps catalogue the

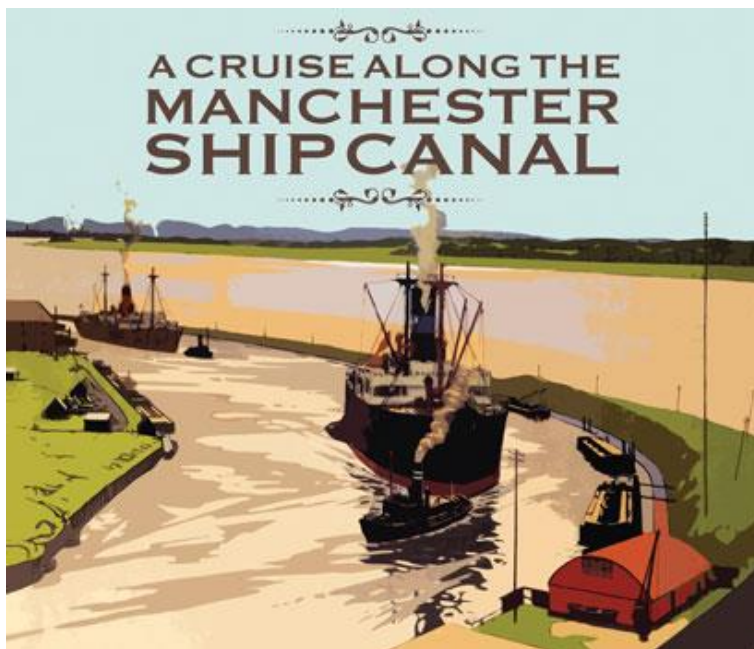
society's collections. Her own research interests include the Fieldens and the Dobroyd area of Todmorden.

8 November 2023

**THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL:
from quays to pier**

Anne Kirker

The Manchester Ship Canal celebrates its 130th anniversary in November 2023. This talk is a visual travelogue celebrating the story of the 'Big Ditch', one of the most important civil engineering projects of the late Victorian period, and the largest river navigation canal in the world when it opened to traffic in January 1894.



Anne Kirker is a local historian and member of HBLHS. She is also an enthusiastic guide with Calderdale Heritage Walks, exploring the history of Calderdale preserved in the landscape, as well as being a volunteer at Calderdale Industrial Museum.

22 November 2023

**TENTERS IN THE LANDSCAPE:
a remarkable history**

Dr Graham Cooper



The use of an outdoor frame with hooks to stretch and dry woollen cloth as part of the finishing process would appear to be straightforward. Far from it! Complications included the weather, cloth theft, and the scourge of deliberate overstretching, which brought parts of the industry into disrepute. In his well-illustrated talk, Graham will discuss the use, abuse, and control of tenters over the centuries. His survey of field tenters on 19th century maps suggests their

prevalence in the West Riding and east Lancashire landscape. But a nationwide search for tenter remains revealed a very disappointing survival rate, with only one remarkable and largely complete set still standing (just!).

Graham Cooper was a medical research scientist for forty years but upon retirement focused his research efforts on many aspects of landscape history such as early deer parks. He lives in the Forest of Bowland.

13 December 2023

**A HISTORY OF TOWN TWINNING
IN HEBDEN ROYD**

Jane Jackson

In the aftermath of the Second World War a powerful impulse in France and Germany that never again would they go to war initiated the twinning process between individual towns and cities in the two countries. This impulse was also felt in the UK. In 1965 Saint-Pol-sur-Ternoise and Warstein became twins, and this was followed by the twinning of Hebden Royd with St Pol in 1979, and with Warstein in 1995. The basis of the twinning process is that families and individuals in one town host visitors from their twin in their homes. This can be a challenge, but also leads to long-term friendships. This talk charts the progress from the early days, the challenges encountered along the way, and way we plan to remain relevant in the future.



Cérémonies du jumelage Saint-Pol - Hebden-Bridge

Feierlichkeiten bei der Partnerschaft Hebden-Bridge - Saint-Pol

Jane Jackson's first degree was a BA in History from Leeds University awarded in 1968. Although she subsequently worked for more than 45 years in management in the manufacturing industry, she has always retained her interest in history. She moved to Hebden Bridge in 2009 and joined both the HBLHS and the Hebden Bridge Twinning Society, of which she is now Secretary/Communications Manager.

10 January 2024

**HEBDEN BRIDGE LITTLE THEATRE:
an illustrated history 1924 – 2024**

Vaughan Leslie



The story of Hebden Bridge Little Theatre, from its origins in the Literary and Scientific Society, in 1924, to the present day. During its hundred years the theatre has performed plays almost without interruption – a total of nearly 400 full-length plays, to over half a million people. The talk will highlight the people and events that have helped to make

the theatre an enduring and endearing feature of Hebden Bridge life.

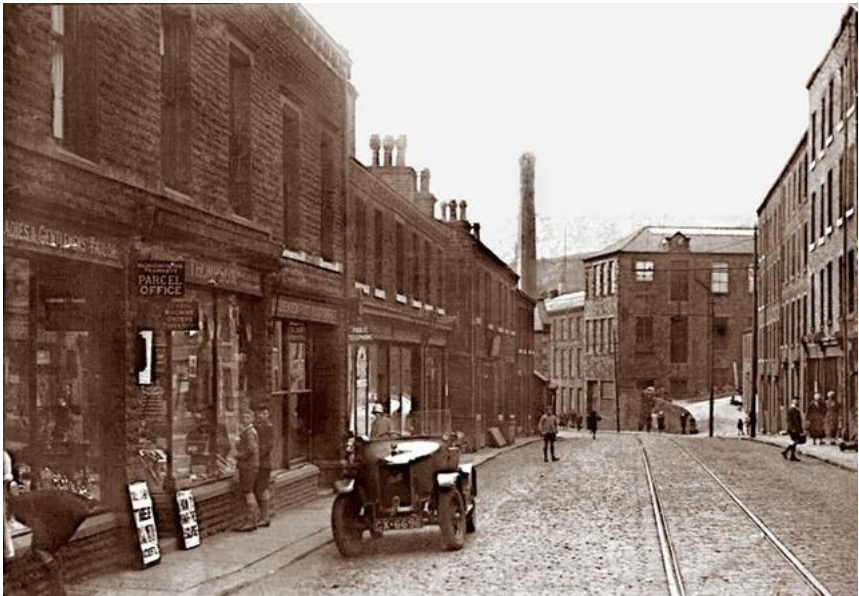
Vaughan Leslie has been a member of the Little Theatre since 1987 as a frequent actor, director, and active in numerous other capacities. Over the last seven years he has put together a comprehensive digital archive on the website, which includes a timeline of all full-length productions during the last century, with links to images for all but four of them.

24 January 2024

JOWETT: THE YORKSHIRE CAR

Barbara Atack

Jowett cars were made in Bradford between 1910 and 1954 - the only Yorkshire car that was really successful. Benjamin and William Jowett formed the Jowett Motor Manufacturing Company in 1901 to undertake general engineering work and produced their first car by 1906. It was after World War II that production flourished with over 40,000 Bradfords and 24,000 Javelins. Today many still survive and are lovingly looked after by their owners. The Jowett Car Club has just reached its centenary and is the world's oldest one-make car club.



Barbara Atack has long associations with HBLHS especially as its hard-working President. She is also the membership secretary of the Jowett Car Club. Barbara, together with her

late husband, owned several Jowett cars over the years and travelled with them throughout the British Isles and as far afield as France and Spain.

14 February 2024

**COMMUNITY LED EDUCATION IN
INDUSTRIAL WEST YORKSHIRE, 1820-1900**

Hebe Gilbert



Working-class adult learning was a significant feature of political agitation, industrial religion, and civic associations between 1820 and 1900. The importance of learning was such that all working-class political movements had stated educational aims, and most religious dominations used adult education to retain the loyalty of their congregations. The talk will explore the efforts of men and women in Huddersfield, Halifax, Leeds and the smaller towns and

villages of the West Riding to educate themselves and attempt to explain the impact that this had on them and their communities.

Hebe Gilbert grew up in Birmingham before moving to Yorkshire to study history at Leeds University in 2011. She stayed in Leeds for her teacher training and continue to live and work here, currently as a history teacher at Roundhay School. The teaching of Malcolm Chase and Simon Green at the University of Leeds led her to fall in love with the history of industrial Yorkshire and in particular the story of working-class political and educational associations. Whilst working as a teacher, she studied for a research Masters in history through the University of Leeds which she completed in 2019.

28 February 2024

**MARY ATACK: LOCAL NURSE,
NATIONAL STORY**

Kelly Swaby

Mary Atack was a Hebden Bridge local who served as a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse during the Second World War. Remarkably, many of her documents were preserved, giving a unique insight into her service and the role played by ordinary people in a wider national event. The donation of these documents enabled local school children to get hands-on with handling original documents and stepping into the role of historian.



Kelly Swaby is currently undertaking a PhD in nursing history at the University of Huddersfield, having spent many years studying various elements of nursing during the twentieth century. During the final months of 2022 she undertook a fellowship with Pennine Heritage to produce a history project aimed at Key Stage Two school pupils. The Mary Atack documents were an incredibly fortunate donation to the project.

13 March 2024

**THE FARM THAT MOVED:
Hollin Hey in Cragg**

David Cant

At the end of the 19th century a farmstead was rebuilt a field's length downhill from the old site of Hollin Hey. The background of those involved and the survival of old plans and drawings present a vivid picture of changing farming life in the area.



David Cant needs little introduction as a speaker on landscape and vernacular buildings, having contributed many talks to Hebden Bridge and other local history societies. After more than 35 years living in the area, he is still fascinated by the landscape, buildings and history, and still sharing his enthusiasm and his knowledge.

27 March 2024

**YORKSHIRE MODERATES
DURING A REVOLUTION**

Mike Crawford

Two local men, George Savile and John Tillotson, survived the hysteria and vindictive years of England in the 1680s. As the drama unfolded, they struggled to maintain their views, their positions and loyalty to their friends, not always successfully and not without raising doubts about their own motives. Ultimately, they played central roles in securing a new foundation after the revolution, but they paid a price for their moderation.



Mike Crawford was born in Halifax, and grew up in Midgley and Luddenden. He lived in Hebden Bridge for 30 years, teaching history at local schools before moving across the border to Lancashire. Formerly a member of the committee of HBLHS, he has worked on the transcription of 17th century probate documents from local townships and, with Stella Richardson, edited the Society's books of probate records.

Pre-history Section

We've been in extensive discussions with Tony Hunt of Yorkshire Aerial Archaeology Mapping regarding the enigma that is Midgley Moor.

For quite some time we have struggled with the overgrowth of heather and, essentially, have depended on accidental and deliberate burnings to locate and record features revealed - cairns standing stones and linear features.

The Environment Agency has, finally, released LiDAR imagery covering the area but the resolution isn't great, such that we've struggled to identify features we know exist - let alone to spot anything new.

The YAA uses drones equipped with kit to produce more nuanced imagery and our hope is that this may shed more light on this intriguing patch of Calderdale.

For a variety of reasons little other local work has been undertaken, and we are preoccupied with an area, quite possibly related, around Grassington.

Family History Group

We have not had many visitors to the archives recently but hope this will improve as people become more confident about being out and about. However, we continue to answer online queries and have helped several visitors to the area who are researching their local ancestors, several of whom have come from overseas.

Folklore News

After three years of preparation by Holly Elsdon, the Centre for Folklore, Myth and Magic, next to the Hippodrome in Todmorden, offers an interesting programme.

They are hoping to extend the library and to use the Centre as a venue for research as well as a rolling programme of talks and other events, mostly at weekends. Keep up with them on Facebook, Twitter or

www.folkloremythmagic.com/

British Association for Local History

Our Society subscribes to BALH and members can join their events at a reduced fee. They also organise and support activities to encourage local historians, such as

16 September 2023 Local History Live

A day of online events including Q & A session with Alan Crosby, editor of Local History News

Up My Street photography competition



Closing date is midnight on Monday 11th September 2023

22nd September to 1st October 'All about that place'

More information: <https://www.balh.org.uk/>

Heptonstall Museum

Congratulations to the Friends of Heptonstall Museum,
who re-opened on 27 May 2023 with an exhibition
Criminal Coiners: Life and Death in Wild West Yorkshire
open Thursday – Sunday 11 – 4 pm (check beforehand)

<https://heptonstallmuseumfriends.org.uk>

The building was recently featured as 'Barb's' in the BBC2
TV production and adaptation of local author, Benjamin
Myers' fictionalised account of the Coiners' story – *'The
Gallows Pole'*.



The Hartley's Home depicted in the current
exhibition of 'The Criminal Coiners, Life and Death
in Wild West Yorkshire'. Photo Bruce Cutts for The
After Alice Project.

An extract from a newspaper article nearly 70 years ago reports on a previous change in use for the building. The reason for closure is interesting:

Another chapter in the long history of the old Grammar School building, which stands at Church Yard Bottom, Heptonstall, will close this month when the business of the local branch of the Yorkshire Penny Bank, carried on there for over half a century, will be transferred to the bank's branch in Hebden Bridge.

The transfer is being made in order to give a daily banking service to present depositors at the Heptonstall branch. The bank acquired the premises from the Revd William Jackson, Vicar of Heptonstall, in 1898. ... If a suggestion put forward by a highly responsible official could be implemented the premises might well take on another interesting phase of life and service to the community.

(Hebden Bridge Times 11 June 1954)

Hebden Bridge Literary and Scientific Society

We are pleased to support events staged by the 'Lit & Sci', the organisation that supported our own development for so many years. At the time of going to press, events that can be booked are:

Saturday 30 September 2023

Professor John Bright – Born in Bradford: can a research study change a city?

Saturday 28 October 2023

Julie Hesmondhalgh – An interview with Amanda Dalton

Saturday 25 November 2023

Dr Nicholas Cullinan – Transforming the National Portrait Gallery

Saturday 20 January 2024

Simon Armitage – The Poet Laureate in conversation with Amanda Dalton

All events at Hebden Bridge Town Hall, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £10 (£15 Simon Armitage) from <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/hebden-bridge-lit-and-sci>

Other enquiries: <https://hblitandsci.org.uk/>

South Pennine History Group

The Society is a member of the South Pennine History Group, together with Saddleworth and Marsden History Groups. The group continues to meet a couple of times a year in order to exchange news and discuss matters of common interest. The group has now established a fund to encourage research and other activities in the history of the South Pennines, derived from the profits of *History in the South Pennines*. Grant applications continue to be invited. Contact

seccombemurray@gmail.com

Forthcoming meetings

Marsden Group www.marsdenhistory.co.uk/

Wednesday, 13th September 2023

Clem Beckett - Motorcycle Legend and War Hero with a Strong Saddleworth Connection

Rob Hargreaves

(Museum, 7.30 p.m.)

Saddleworth group (www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk)

13th November

A Brief History of Punishment and Public Humiliation through the Ages

Roger Logue

Archive and Family History Research

Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge

The archive will normally be open every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon from 2-5 pm for general research visits. However, this is subject to volunteer availability. Numbers at each session are limited. Non-HBLHS members £3.

Pre-booking is required

email: archivist@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

When you book, please indicate which documents you would like to see, or give brief details of your enquiry. Our catalogue can be searched on our website.

Family History Group

Meetings are usually held on the Thursday afternoons between 2 pm and 5 pm at the Birchcliffe centre. Non-HBLHS members £3. Numbers at each session are limited and pre-booking is essential to ensure that there is a volunteer available to help with your enquiry. If you are not able to visit on a Thursday we may be able to arrange for you to visit on another day.

Pre-booking is required

email: info@evergreenancestry.com

Unable to visit?

We also run an enquiry service via a form on the website

www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Membership

The subscription for 2023/24 remains at £15 and is due at the beginning of September.

You can pay your subscription:

- By bank transfer or standing order to our account:

Sort code 30-90-89 Account no: 20031463

Please use your name as the reference

- By cheque payable to:

Hebden Bridge Local History Society

Send to: Treasurer, HBLHS, Bramble Dene, Moss Lane,
Hebden Bridge, HX7 7DS

- By cheque or cash at a meeting

Membership includes

- **free entry to lectures including access to recordings of those lectures for a short time afterwards (where the lecturer gives consent)**
- **Free access to the archive when open**
- **Borrowing rights for the archive (published items only)**
- **Reduced fees for research enquiries**
- **Free membership of Family History and other special interest groups**
- **Two newsletters a year with news, lecture information and short articles**
- **Regular email news on society and local history matters**