

## Castleton Historical Society = Chair's Report for 49<sup>th</sup> AGM January 2022

This is my report as Chair for the past year. And all I really have to say, as indeed I said last year, is "What a year!" There have been some glimmers of light – the Museum re-opened in September, and we have had one face to face meeting in the Peveril Centre. But there has been no archaeological activity and nor have there been any outings. And we know, sadly, that many of our members have been affected directly or indirectly by COVID and we wish them all well.

But I want to start by paying tribute to Barbara Wilkinson, a long-standing member of the Society who very sadly died just recently and whose funeral was yesterday. One of the benefits of Zoom was that Barbara, though rather frail, was able to join our meetings and greeted us all with a smile and a wave. We will, of course, be thinking of Sheila at this sad time.

### TALKS

Our talks programme has gone ahead via Zoom but with one or two casualties. The Clarion Band, as you might imagine, didn't feel Zoom would do them justice and were hesitant about a live event. But we hope very much that they will join us either this year or next. As usual, we had a wide range of topics- from the local Treak Cliff Railway Inclines to the wonders of technology from Bell to Alexa, by way of Buxton Crescent, the Peak's Pauper Past, the History of Zoos and of Water and Medieval Graffiti. No-one can say we don't cover a lot of ground! And it was great to have so many of Hope Historical Society members joining us and for us to be able to join Hope's talks with barely moving a muscle!

It was, however, particularly rewarding to be able to meet up face to face in July when Frank Parker presented his film about Ladybower, and it reminded us how good it is to see one another.

I'll say more about this year's programme at item 7.

### MUSEUM

As you know another COVID casualty has been the Museum. However, the good news is that we re-opened at the end of September and remain open as I speak.

Some other good news is that we have agreed with the Peak Park that we can install new display cases along a wall in an under-utilised part of the Centre. We plan to use these for temporary displays, particularly of documents and artefacts from the storeroom that have either never been displayed or were put away when we downsized as part of the Centre refurbishment some years ago. Some topics that come to mind are, for example, the various Jubilees and anniversaries occurring this year; local "characters" from the past; documents and photographs of local interest; and some of the more curious artefacts that don't fit into our current displays.

Speaking of Jubilees, we'd be grateful if members could look out any photographs of Coronation celebrations in the village.

But before I get too carried away, I should mention that we will have to find grant funding for all this. We're already at work on this though, getting quotes and putting together applications. Wish us luck!

## RESEARCH

As I mentioned earlier, there has not been any archaeological work done this year and other activities have necessarily been limited. But we do have some ideas for this year, mainly around St. Edmund's Church as it happens.

We already have some copies of the birth, marriage, and death records but these are very poor and almost impossible to transcribe. So, we plan to photograph the originals, which are at the Derbyshire Record Office, and make them available for members to transcribe in the comfort of their homes! Please let us know if this is something you would like to get involved in.

We have had enquiries about the family pews in the Church and realised that we don't know a great deal about them – so another area to explore.

Many of you will know about the wall paintings that have been uncovered in St Edmund's and Angela will say a bit more about these in a moment or two.

Again, you will have heard perhaps that the 1921 Census was published a couple of weeks ago. It's available on the Find My Past website for personal searches (at a cost) and we are looking at ways of getting hold of all the Castleton pages. A great resource for family history research.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

We have been keeping the CHS flag flying throughout the year. Enquiries have been flocking in from members of the public looking for photographs, help with family history and so on. It's amazing what people think we might know something about and occasionally alarming when we find out we know nothing! We had, for example, an enquiry about the etymology of "Slop Moll" and were flummoxed.

We've kept the website up to date, thanks to Val, and we have contributed to the Peveril Post with a variety of articles.

We've also taken ownership of photographs, commemorative china and two prints of the village.

## TRUSTEES

We'll come on to elections at Item 8, but I just wanted to say a word about one of our long-standing Trustees, Jean Adamson. Jean has been an incredibly supportive Trustee, playing

a very active role in dealing with the accession of artefacts, in uploading material onto the electronic system, identifying folk and places in photographs and generally sharing her very broad knowledge from a lifetime spent in Castleton.

Jean has decided the time has come to step down as an active Trustee but has kindly agreed to remain in an Honorary role, to be consulted when the rest of us haven't a clue! So, a huge thank you to Jean from all of us.

This means that there are now just 4 of the 5 remaining Trustees who are able to devote time to the management of the Society and the Museum. So, we could really do with some new blood!! It's interesting and not very onerous so please do have a think and let one of us know if you'd like to come on board.

So - I think that about covers things in what has been a very bizarre year. I would like to thank my fellow trustees, to thank you and all our 62 members, especially our new members. I'd like to wish you all a safe and happy 2022, peace of mind and the hope of better things to come this year.

Maria Kenyon