

# Combe Down Heritage Society

*Conserve, Record, Educate*

[www.combedownheritage.org.uk](http://www.combedownheritage.org.uk)



May 2020

Dear Member,

Please find enclosed our Chair's report for the last financial year which ended on 26<sup>th</sup> February. It covers most areas of activity and includes the financial position at the end of the year.

As you know we are presently unable to hold our Annual General Meeting but will as soon as it is deemed safe to do so. Meanwhile please contact me if you have any questions relating to the document and we will try and answer them in advance of the meeting.

Members have been in touch with suggestions for things to do whilst we continue in lockdown which you may care to consider:

- Trace the history of your house and the land on which it stands
- Research your family history using resources like [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk)
- Research the history of a notable person from Combe Down such as the Victorian vicar, Rev Newnham (more than 30 years incumbency, 14 children, 3 wives).
- Write your memories of the village as notes or as an essay. We could collect them and publish them in some form later. Subjects could include your own life, buildings, house names, Rainbow Woods, the underground quarries, time at school etc.

Sources may include: online census information; local newspapers' online archives, church records and our own archive.

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA) offers online courses on a wide range of subjects. See [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.uk). Many of the courses are free (although some require a small fee) and they include local history and family history research. If you feel inspired to take a course we would be happy to offer support so please do contact me if we can help.

My thanks go to Jill Woodhead for her ideas and also to Dave Bishop who has suggested that we organise a local history quiz perhaps by email. Let me know if you have a question we can include. Meanwhile here's a couple (not local history) that my son Tom asked me yesterday: What item that you are likely to find in your kitchen cupboard was invented in C1810 and what related item that you will hopefully find in your kitchen drawer was invented C45 years later? Answers to [secretary@combedownheritage.co.uk](mailto:secretary@combedownheritage.co.uk)

Kind regards

Simon Burrows

Chair: Brandi Hall-Crossgrove    Secretary: Simon Burrows    Treasurer: Jon Wrigley

Registered Charity Number 1116550

## **COMBE DOWN HERITAGE SOCIETY CHAIR'S REPORT 2019 - 2020**

The Society has now completed its sixteenth year and we look back on another interesting twelve months.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

The Society's membership remains steady with a small churn of members each year. Over the year 2019/20 we lost 11 and gained 4 new members to bring the total membership to 160, coming from 121 households.

### **TALKS TO MEMBERS AND VISITORS**

We had some excellent presentations (nine in all) across a wide range of subjects including *Mediaeval Bath* (Steve Pratt), *The Revd Francis Pocock of Monkton Combe* (Jacqueline Burrows), *The Story of Cross Engineering* (Rodney Cross), *The Somersetshire Coal Canal* (Roger Halse), *The Origins of Newton Park* (Dr Kate James), and *Secret Underground Cities* (Nick McCamley). In October we had a welcome return to our *My House* theme when Tim Lunt revealed the history of Welford House, 141 Church Road. Our December *Christmas Cracker* was an excellent presentation with music from Jill Woodhead, Sue West, and friends, about Frederick Weatherly, former resident of Belmont Road, who wrote *Danny Boy* and many other songs.

All the talks were well-researched and illustrated and the speakers kept us entertained and informed. Our thanks go to them all for their time and effort, most often freely given.

Attendance at our meetings has been strong throughout the year as the quality of the subjects and presentation continues to be good. We regularly see more than fifty people attending and had a record number (more than 100) to hear Nick McCamley in February.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT YEAR ENDED 26 FEBRUARY 2020**

Under Jon Wrigley's watchful eye the Society's financial position remains sound. See accounts attached. *(Please note that because of the lockdown the usual audit has yet to be completed. We will let you know if anything changes when it is)*

#### **Income**

Income has held up very well this year with several of the talks attracting a good number of non-members, as well as a generally good turnout from members.

Last year's income benefitted from the publication of Jill Woodhead's book *A Village of Schools*, and there continues to be a steady number of sales.

We were fortunate this year to gain access to the Co-Op's Community Fund to which we applied for £500 towards the archiving costs for our collections. We were delighted eventually to receive over £1,700 derived from money spent in the two Co-Op stores at Combe Down and at Bradford Road. The Committee has agreed that all this additional funding should be allocated to future archiving costs.

### **Expenditure**

Our cost base has remained static overall, although there has been an increase in the amount paid for speakers' fees/donations and we have begun spending the Co-Op donation on archiving materials.

### **Cash**

Our overall Bank position shows a healthy balance in excess of £9,000. During the year, the Committee agreed a Reserves Policy to ensure cash is used to support the stated objectives of the Society. Beyond a provision for two years' general running costs and the Society's own ongoing projects, and now the allocation to archiving costs, we plan to make appropriate donations to Combe Down-based community heritage projects. We have an agreed procedure for determining which projects qualify for what levels of funding.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

We continue to work on our social media presence, with a Facebook page and Twitter account and our website receiving a reasonable number of hits. If you use social media, please like and follow our pages so you can receive and share information easily! Our thanks to those who already do this and to those who contribute material. Especial thanks to those who have taken the plunge and used our online bookshop!

**OUTSIDE EVENTS.** These have been limited to just two talks to other groups this year on aspects of the history of our village. These provide a small but useful income to the Society.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

We continue to sell our books and maps at meetings, through our on-line shop and at the Museum of Bath Stone and through other heritage outlets in the city. Sales

of the Society's publications remain an area where we would benefit greatly from an additional pair of hands and volunteers would be very welcome.

### **LIFE HISTORIES**

The *Life Histories Project* for Combe Down continues to be open although no interviews have been conducted recently. It is likely that we will move more towards inviting residents to contribute their own life histories and memories of Combe Down in writing, rather than conducting interviews.

### **ARCHIVE**

Our thanks go to David Bishop and Paul Reed who have continued with the huge task of organising, conserving and recording our growing collection of documents, books, maps and artefacts in the archive under the Museum of Bath Stone. Our collection continues to grow with contributions from many sources and in many forms.

During the past year we have continued our detailed work of interpreting, describing and recording the material that make up the collection. Our main tasks have been working through paperwork, photos, slides and documents, listing each item, preserving them appropriately and itemising them individually in the records' database. On a regular basis we have received 'new' items, which include newspaper cuttings and books and more importantly, public donations and collections. We have itemised and preserved all our various exhibition materials in protective boxes for future use. We have installed more racking in the archive area where we have mounted several large stone saws and other old quarrying tools.

Most recently we have been working on one of the largest parts of the collection which was that donated by Lynn Willies. This comprises mostly original paperwork and working maps resulting from a survey of the Firs and Byfield mines prior to their stabilisation. This collection is multi-faceted and extensive, but we are making good progress.

### **COMMITTEE**

The committee is considering how best to secure the future of the society. The Secretary and Treasurer are retiring after the AGM but to date no-one has come forward to replace them. We will continue to search but, in the meantime, we are considering options to merge all or part of what we do with other groups.

Committee members for the year 1999 – 2020 were:

- Brandi Hall-Crossgrove: Chair
- Simon Burrows: Hon Secretary\*
- Jon Wrigley: Hon Treasurer\*
- Tim Lunt
- Dave Bishop
- Peter Davis
- Sophie Pandit
- Dick Irving

\*not standing for election at the 2020 AGM.

### **FINALLY**

We continue to lobby on issues affecting our heritage, from the future of our allotments to raising awareness of the damage being done to the Grade 2 John Wood pillars at the top of Ralph Allen Drive. As ever, we have several projects in hand which progress, albeit slowly.

Our thanks go to Alan Garrett who audits our accounts for us and to graphic designer David Taylor who very kindly works magic on our newsletters. Lastly my thanks go to the Committee and to all our members for their continued support.

Brandi Hall-Crossgrove  
Chair

## Combe Down Heritage Society Accounts 2019/20

### Income and Expenditure Summary Sheet for the Year Ended 26/02/2020

	£	2018/19 Year £
<b>Income:</b>		
Subscriptions	645.83	718.00
Donations with subscriptions	100.00	109.00
Members meeting subs	385.00	281.00
Non-Members meeting subs	423.00	165.00
Other donations	176.00	117.06
Sales of books & Trail Leaflets	470.58	1,073.33
Other Grants, Legacies, Gift Aid	1,986.96	330.86
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>4,187.37</b>	<b>2,794.25</b>
<b>Expenditure:</b>		
Office expenses	0.00	177.24
Newsletter production	90.00	135.00
Meeting costs	640.47	394.16
Website costs	0.00	11.99
Postage & Packing	37.71	47.58
Insurance	260.12	337.40
Equipment purchase	0.00	31.73
Donation	0.00	100.00
Purchase of books for sale	0.00	40.34
Computer costs	172.80	168.00
Subscriptions to other bodies	0.00	30.00
Archiving costs	630.76	246.54
William Smith Trail	0.00	251.96
<b>Total Expenditure:</b>	<b>1,831.86</b>	<b>1,971.94</b>
<b>Balance Sheet:</b>		
Total Receipts	4,187.37	2,794.25
Total Payments	<u>(1,831.86)</u>	<u>(1,971.94)</u>
	2,355.51	822.31
Cash at Bank 25/02/2019	6,817.49	5,995.18
Cash at Bank 25/02/2020	9,173.00	6,817.49
Cash float	50.00	50.00
Liabilities	0.00	0.00
<b>Available funds:</b>	<b>9,223.00</b>	<b>6,867.49</b>

Jon Wrigley - Treasurer