

NEWSLETTER 7 – January 2023

EDITORIAL

January is the time of year when we look backwards as well as forwards. As the pandemic receded last year, and life returned to something approaching normal, we were able to resume some of our activities – organising displays and arranging talks and similar events. Read on and you will see just how busy we have been.

Looking forward and we think we have a lot to interest you. Our website has been given a completely new look, and will soon be ready to welcome visitors.

We will have a stall at the History and Heritage Show in February, and our AGM will be held in April. In May we have the first in this year's series of talks at Cross Corners, and following the success of our Christmas party last year, we will be offering you a similar event in December.

April is also the month when we return to Belgrave Hall, for a new season of displays. These can only really work if we have people available to meet and greet our visitors and help them find their way round. Do you have a few hours each month to help us? They're a friendly lot in the 'Old Laundry' and we can promise you an almost unending supply of tea, coffee and nibbles!

If you like what you see in this Newsletter; if we have missed something out, or you have a story to tell us, why not write and tell us? Happy reading (and come and see us soon).

*Editor Nick
belgraveheritagetrust@gmail.com*

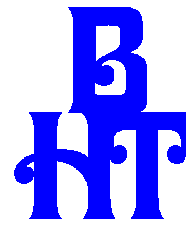


Membership Subs Now Due

After our short membership subscription 'holiday', last year we took the decision to ask, once again, for a membership fee. We set subscriptions at £12 for an Individual Membership and £20 for a couple (Double Membership). But circumstances seem to change so rapidly that we have had to look again at our subscription rates.

We are aware of the current financial situation, affecting virtually everyone and so we have taken steps that will make becoming a member of Belgrave Heritage Trust less of a drain on your purses. We have decided that, for this year, we will reduce our Individual Membership fee to **£6**. We have also taken the decision to scrap our discounted Double Membership, so that we now have a single rate for all members. If you would like to receive a Membership Application Form email our Secretary (belgraveheritagetrust@gmail.com).





We're in the Old Laundry at Belgrave Hall

Last year the Trust was invited to make use of the “Old Laundry” room in the courtyard of Belgrave Hall, as part of a project by the Leicester City Museums Service to provide free entry to the hall and gardens every Wednesday afternoon and on the first full weekend of every month between April and September. We displayed photographs of old Belgrave around the room, and there was always at least one member of the Trust available to greet visitors and talk about the photographs or their particular memories of Belgrave. We purchased a number of large maps of Belgrave, dating back to 1886, laminated, and put them on display. These proved to be very popular, as did the whole project – over a thousand people came to visit it during the season.



We're at Cross Corners

Since the Pandemic, and the closure of Claremont Street Methodist Church, the Trustees have struggled to find a suitable venue to resume our regular series of talks. Our presence in the “Old Laundry” led to a meeting with Kate Bull, manager of the Cross Corners Community Arts Centre, next door to Belgrave Hall, on Thurcaston Road. Now we hire a room at Cross Corners when we hold our talks.

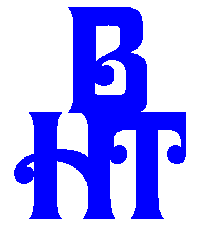
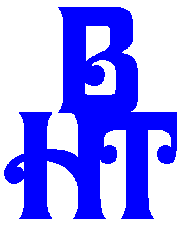
Because the Trustees had not had the opportunity to book speakers in advance, two of our members, Sandra Moore and Nick Fathers provided us with a photographic tour of changes to Belgrave and the surrounding district, for which there was no admission charge.

Subsequently, Cynthia Brown told us about “Belgrave at Work and Play”, and in November Sandra Moore gave a very poignant talk - “Some Mother’s Son”, that told the story of some of the servicemen from Belgrave who lost their lives as a result of the First World War. An admission charge to both was made. All of the talks were well attended, and the refreshments afterwards provided the opportunity for some interesting conversations among the attendees.

In December we held an informal party at Cross Corners to thank the people who had attended the talks. We provided refreshments (thanks to Carolyn and Christine for all that buttering and slicing!), and a quiz; and a free prize draw rounded off the afternoon. Unfortunately, due to limits on the number of people able to attend, it was by invitation only but we hope that this year we will be able to extend the invitation to more of the members. We have been invited to use Cross Corners again this year, and it is hoped to hold at least one talk in the evening for those members who are unable to attend in the afternoon.



*Christine and Carolyn
earning their crust!*



Heritage Open Day

Well, we did it - we managed to recreate our Virtual Walks as part of the national Heritage Open Day event for a second year, so thank you to everyone who helped in whatever capacity, be it post marker assistant or meeter-and-greeter. We always knew that we would not be able to count the number of visitors, simply because we designed the walks to need no human intervention, so instead we recorded the number of visitors to our online Youtube pages each of our marker posts received.



What jumps out at you is that the number of hits this year is well down on last year, but we always knew this was likely to be the case because of the passing of Her Majesty the Queen on 8th September. But I still think it was a very worthwhile project and we should all give ourselves a pat on the back.



Armistice Day 2022

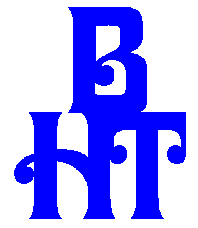
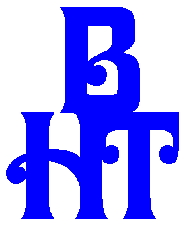
Earlier last year we received a call from The Venerable Richard Worsfold, Archdeacon of Leicester, to inform us that St. Peter's was being advertised for sale again. During the conversation, the subject of Armistice Day and the fact that we had not been allowed to lay a wreath at the war memorial in St. Peter's was mentioned. Richard offered to "see what he could do", and, some weeks later, we received confirmation that we would be allowed to lay a wreath inside the building - but that we would not be able to have a service.

On November 11th, the Trustees met a representative of Andrew Granger, the estate agent, at St. Peter's. A two-minute silence was observed at 11am outside the building, and then a wreath was laid inside, at the war memorial by Andy Warren on behalf of the Trust.



Andy Warren lays the wreath on behalf of the Trust





St Peter's Church

One of the questions we are most often asked is, "What's happening to the church?" There have been all kinds of speculation on social media, so we asked the agent responsible for marketing the property for an update. We received this statement;

"As you are aware we have been marketing St Peters Church for sale. The Diocese are now in receipt of, and are considering offers. We aren't able to discuss who/what the offers are at this stage."

The reply does not really take us any further forward, but at least we are aware of the present situation.

St Peter's Churchyard

The guided tours of the churchyard proved very popular, and we hope to be able to continue the tours this year. However, this does depend on what will happen with the sale of St. Peter's. Pending any decision on the sale, it has been decided that we will carry out very little maintenance work in the churchyard this year.



'I Were Married There!'

That is the cry from any Belgrave person when we show them a photo of any church in the Belgrave area.

So we have decided that this will be the title of our first display in April 2023 when BHT will once again be using the Old Laundry at Belgrave Hall. BUT... we need YOUR help!

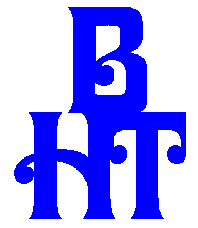


If you were married in Belgrave and have any wedding photos, wedding veils or dresses, maybe gloves or pictures of your bouquet, pictures from the wedding breakfast etc that you are willing to share with us, please contact Sandra on the email address at the bottom of this newsletter.

Do you have a story, good, bad or funny about your wedding day; if so, will you please share it with us, and suitable stories will form part of the display.

Remember, your special day is a piece of history; we are all making history everyday. We hope to hear from you soon with your special story and it will be lovely to meet you all during our open hours from April onwards. Without your help, there will be no display. We also promise to treat all photos etc with care and consideration.

Sandra Moore
sandraemoore@sky.com



Our New Website

Last Year, following the restrictions on social activities imposed by the Pandemic, the Trustees agreed that we needed a new website, to provide better functionality and as a way to communicate more effectively with our members. We received an offer to create the new website but, owing to unforeseen circumstances, we were unable to make any progress with the project. Instead, the Trustees have commissioned Martin Norton of a company called “OneSix” to take on the project. The new website will provide us with facilities for archive, news, articles, links to other sites of interest and the ability to accept online payments - all presented in a modern, easy-to-use format. We have had a sneak preview of the website and we think you will like it. We are about to be trained in operating the new site and we hope it will be “live” in time for this year’s AGM in April.



Coming Up

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Saturday 22nd April at Birstall Village Hall. We will keep the meeting, starting at 2pm, as short as possible and afterwards, there will be a talk by David Bell, entitled “Down the Garden Path - Tales of the Privy”.



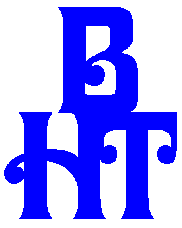
History and Heritage Show

After a break of 3 years the History and Heritage Show is back. More than a dozen local history groups will have displays at the show, including, of course, Belgrave Heritage Trust, and will give visitors the chance to find out more about the past of their city and county. The Show will be at the Menphys Hub, Bassett Street, South Wigston, Leicester, LE18 4PE, on Saturday 25th February between 10:00 and 4:00. If you go, come to our stall and say hello.



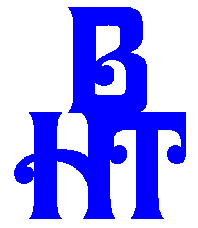
Stop Press

We are pleased to announce that the Trust is now a member of Leicester and Rutland Heritage Forum. We are one of over 40 museums and heritage organisations which are largely run by volunteers, who, like us, are passionate about preserving, researching and displaying the heritage of their community and sharing it with the world. Have a look at our entry on the LRHF website. <https://www.lrhf.co.uk/members-list/>



Belgrave Heritage Trust

Registered Charity Number 118 0903



Bite-Sized Belgrave

Our archive of information about Old Belgrave is growing steadily – here are just a few of the nuggets you can find.

- ⌘ Cross Corners, on Thurcaston Road, was once the home of members of the Ellis family. During the First World War it provided a safe haven for Belgian refugees.
- ⌘ Claremont Street was named after a ship commanded by Captain Atchieson, who came to live there. The captain found the original name of the street objectionable. Its name? *Backside*.
- ⌘ The Talbot Inn was once a three-storey building, but after a fire in the 1950s, the top floor was removed.
- ⌘ The oldest headstone which we can identify in St Peter's churchyard is that of Thomas and Elizabeth Stanton. It dates from 1667 – just one year after the Great Fire of London.
- ⌘ Once upon a time Belgrave Avenue was called Avenue Road; until that name was hi-jacked to be used elsewhere in Leicester.



We do hope you have enjoyed this newsletter. If there is anything you would like us to include in the next edition contact our Secretary, (0116 266 6531) or email us (belgraveheritagetrust@gmail.com)



We're On Facebook



Don't forget that we have a page on Facebook, too. You can find us by following this link <https://www.facebook.com/Belgrave-Heritage-Trust-377407353082328>

Belgrave Heritage Trust Heritage in Trust for the Future

*Richard Norburn (Chairman), Carolyn Hindocha (Secretary), Jayne Cordiner (Treasurer)
Sandra Moore, John Dixey, Nick Fathers, Andy Warren*