

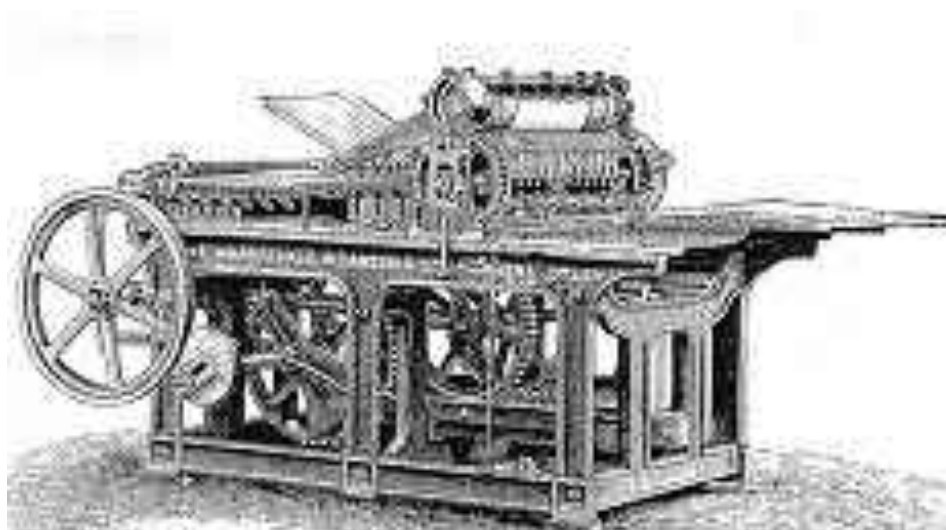
OTLEY MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT

&

NEWSLETTER

2023-24



The Wharfedale Printing Machine

OTLEY MUSEUM & ARCHIVE TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to our Annual Report which outlines some of the many tasks we have undertaken in the last twelve months.

The two large tasks which we set ourselves were to photograph every item in our entire collection and to update our website. Both these tasks also prompted us to upgrade our computer system. As reported later, these tasks are now well underway and when complete will improve the accessibility to our collection for everybody.

One aspect of this undertaking which has particularly gladdened my heart is that it has involved people from outside the regular museum volunteers who answered our call for help in the photographing of the collection. It was good to have them on board and we are extremely grateful for their help.

We may not be able to exhibit most of our collection at the present time, but on completion the exhibits should be available for viewing on a virtual platform which is the way forward and will be more accessible for some. Thank you to all those involved in these projects.

We continue to receive items into the collection and we are grateful for those who donate items. The collection continues to grow and is a magnificent archive for the town protected for the future. Without our presence many of these items would be lost forever. Other towns are envious of Otley's heritage collection built up over the last 60 years.

Could I draw your attention to the Museum's display at Otley Courthouse on Heritage Open Day, **Saturday 7th September**. This is your chance to see a number of items brought out of storage for you to see.

During the year Barbara Winfield stepped down from being a Director of the museum and I would wish to thank her for all the work she has put into the museum, particularly with Family History over many years.

Our AGM is on **Monday 24th June at 7 p.m. in Wellcroft House**.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Andrew Howard

HERITAGE OPEN DAY
Saturday 7th September
At Otley Courthouse 11.00 am-3.00pm
'WHEELS AND WAYS'
Display by Otley Museum

RECENT EVENTS

In the last twelve months the museum has followed its intended path of photographing the artefacts in storage. This involved 160 boxes of individually wrapped items being unwrapped, photographed and then wrapped up again in new conservation grade tissue paper as recommended by the Conservation guidelines. With a total of some 1900 “parcels” we asked for help and gained a marvellous team of enthusiastic volunteers to whom we are most grateful. As well as photographing the items we have had the opportunity to look to ensure they are all in good order. Once the project is completed we can add the pictures to our database and the public can see them on request.

With financial help with a grant from the Otley Town Council and using money from Legacies the museum has been able to purchase conservation grade packing materials and tools. There is an ongoing process of replacing the old packaging of the documents for new acid-free polythene pockets and a special vacuum cleaner to clean the books of accumulated dirt, dust and mould if found.

The museum is launching a new website that will replace the old outdated one with more information of our collections and photographs, and articles that will be easy to navigate. The website is due to be launched by the end of June.

The Museum decorated a Christmas tree in the Parish Church last December, which was a very colourful occasion. The event was more about publicising the museum than raising funds.

Heritage Open Day last year was a great success. It was held in the Courthouse. Using the main courtroom we were able to display a large collection of textiles from babywear to dresses including hats, shoes, underwear and nightclothes. This year we are again in the Courthouse and the theme is “Routes, Networks and Connections” and we hope to repeat last year’s success. The plan is go from turnpikes and toll roads to carts, trains and road transport as well as telecommunications.

The Heritage Open Day will be **September 7th** so please come along to see us.

The Archaeological company CFA made contact recently to see if the Museum was interested in having the documents, photographs and finds from the dig that was carried out when Garnett’s Mill was redeveloped. The answer was a definite “Yes please” so in due course we hope to see what was found and archived.

The display cabinet that was in the Council Offices has now been moved to the Library where there is more footfall. There has already been a lot of positive comments.

Jill Allman

Secretary

Cont’d overleaf...

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Accessions continue to come in. Over the last year the museum has received a varied collection of memorabilia. A large collection of items were donated by Bryan Kitching which included photographs of Arthur Kitching's garage on Station Road.



Other photos show Manor Square, which is covered in setts, not tarmac, and another with a group of long-haired goats with very large horns. Also an aerial view of Station Road and Burras Lane, press photo of circus elephants walking down Boroughgate C1900. Four pamphlets- The first Otley Town Road Race held 23rd June 1986, Otley Town Council Trade Exhibition 1981, Otley U.D.C. Road Safety Handbook and map, and Otley Official Guide for 1990. Various certificates and two adverts for the Beech Hill Cinema- tickets were 1/3 and 9d.

Another collection came from the Roundhill family of Guycroft which includes two embroidered postcards from the 1914-18 War, also various letters and pass permits etc connected to the 2nd World War. A Certificate of Honour awarded to Guycroft for the Wings for Victory Nation Saving Campaign 1943 and a Personal message of Appreciation from Elizabeth R to Mrs Roundhill with the envelope stamped Buckingham Palace, which would have been treasured. As would a certificate awarded to a pupil at North Parade School for having made Every Possible Attendance during the 6 years ending 30th September 1898. The 3rd Otley Guide Company Court of Honour Minutes Book dating from 8th November 1945 to 9th December 1966 together with 3 photographs of Guides and Brownies.



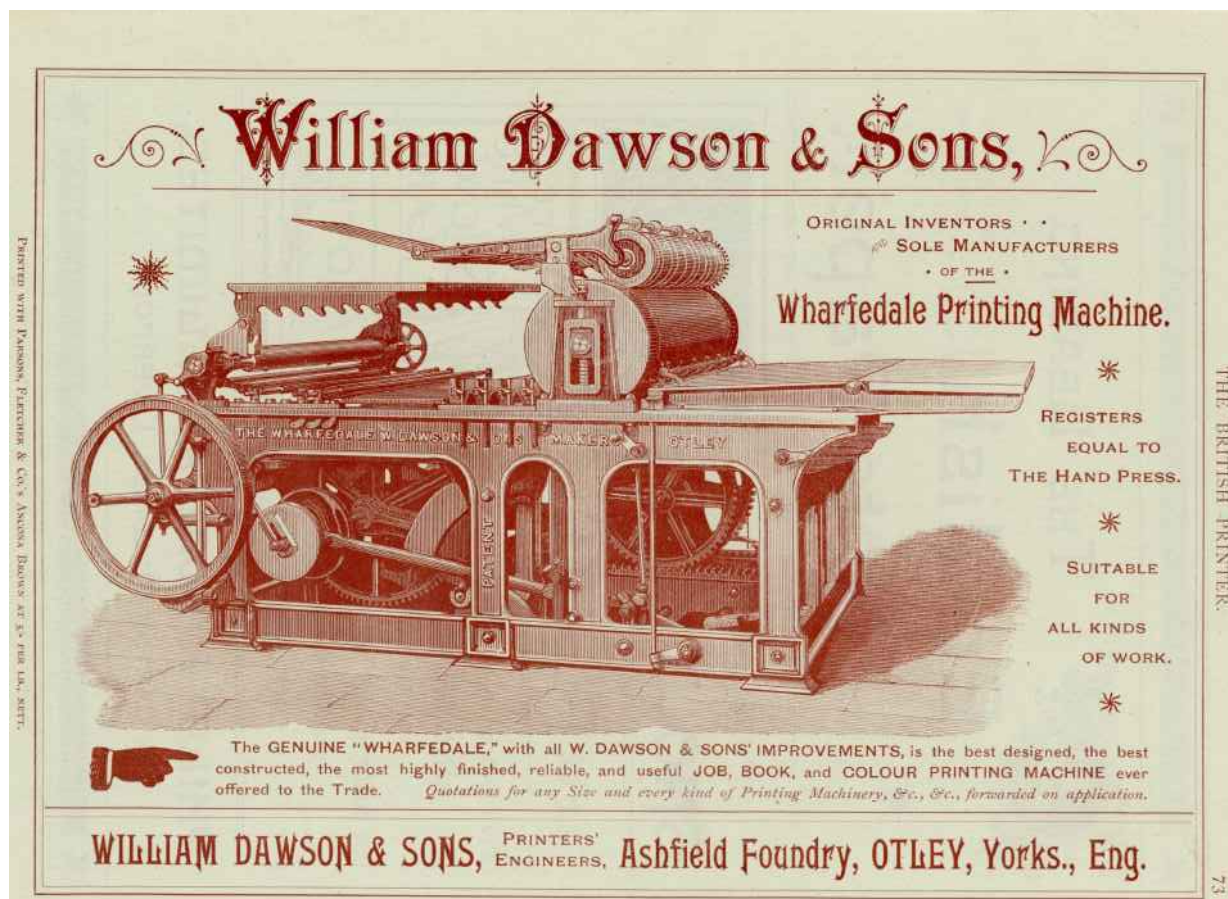
Other items include a roll of unused Ledgard's bus tickets (do you remember the slatted seats?)

Three books including the New Testament from Otley National School. A price list for gates from Peter Patrick's Wharfedale Saw Mill. A ledger, cash book and day book from Phoenix Rollers of Station Road is evidence of another lost engineering firm of Otley.



A photograph celebrating Queen Elizabeth's Coronation Parade on Albion Street with Otley's Queen and a rather strange "pantomime horse". A plan of Otley Mills Drainage System, together with maps, photographs, plans and indentures etc were also donated.

The most unusual item donated is a large drum that the Otley Chamber of Trade presented to the 279 Squadron ATC in 1943.



EMAIL ADDRESS FOR MUSEUM

otleymuseum@gmail.com

Otley Museum is nationally accredited and independent (not local authority funded). It is managed and staffed by volunteers who are dedicated to conserving, recording and interpreting Otley's historical resources for the benefit of this and future generations.

Since the closure of Otley Civic Centre in 2010, our collection of artefacts remain in store until such time as funding is available to find a new home.

Our extensive Documentary Collection remains accessible at our new base at Wellcroft House.

Researchers are welcome to visit us there during opening hours. If you wish to use these resources please make an appointment beforehand in order that we are able to give you the best help and assistance.

We are open Monday, Tuesday and Friday mornings between 9.45 a.m. and 12.15 p.m.
(excluding bank holidays)

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