



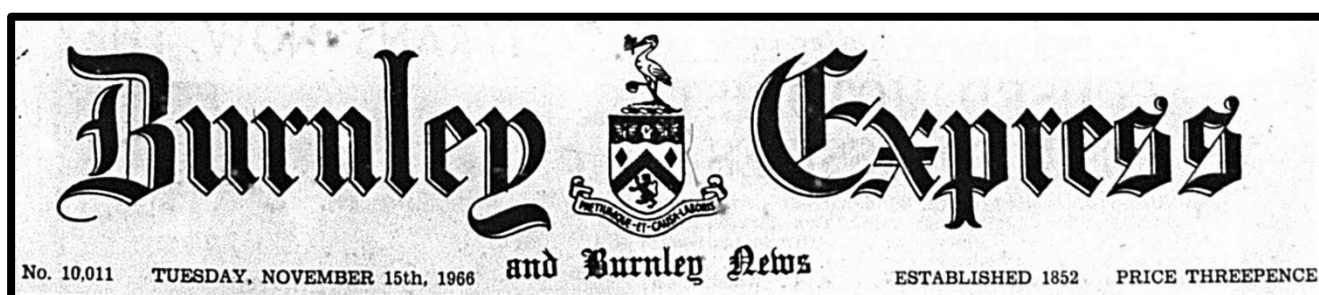
**Funding raised by  
The National Lottery**  
and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund



# ***BURNLEY CIVIC TRUST***

## ***HERITAGE IMAGE ARCHIVE:***

### ***THE STORY***



THE COLLECTION OF EXPRESS NEGATIVES DATE FROM NOVEMBER 1966



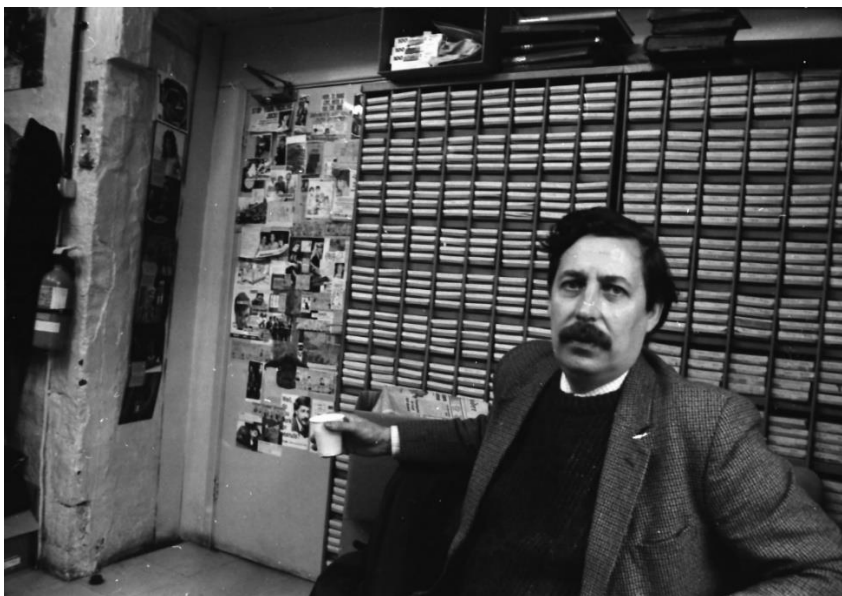
The old police station at the rear of the Town Hall, one time Radio Blackburn office, and now home to the Burnley Civic Trust Heritage Image Collection Archive. On the right, locking up for the last time at the old police station in 1955 when the force moved to its new HQ in Parker Lane.

## HOW IT ALL STARTED

In 2016 Johnstone Press, then owners of The Burnley Express were moving from their Bull Street premises in Burnley town centre to new premises on the outskirts of town, where space was limited. It was decided that boxes of negatives which had been used in the Burnley Express from 1966 to 2012 could not be accommodated.



The boxes of negatives in the Burnley Express Offices 2017



From a 1987 Burnley Express negative



After approaching several other organisations who might be interested in saving this important archive of Burnley life, Roger Frost, the Chair of Burnley Civic Trust was asked if the Trust would be interested. The Civic Trust agreed to accept the offer and decided to seek funding to digitise the negatives and create a website which would make the images available to everyone.

As the move was imminent the first task was to find a location for the archive and transfer the collection from the Express offices. Discussions were held with Burnley Council who offered the former Police Station/Radio Lancashire Rooms at the rear of the Town Hall and a team of Civic Trust volunteers transferred and set up the collection in the new rooms. In fact, the collection contained much more than the negative packets and their index books:



Burnley Express microfilm rolls  
1877 to 2012

Newspaper cuttings from 1920  
to 1960

Burnley Football Club images,  
glass slides and programmes

Printers' Blocks

Small library of books



Negatives, microfilm rolls and  
prints from the Nelson Leader  
and district offices

Clitheroe area microfilm rolls  
which have been passed on to  
Clitheroe Civic Trust

Cabinets and cupboards to house  
the collection and even some  
office furniture

## HERITAGE LOTTERY GRANT

The next task was to make an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and an application, “Burnley Civic Trust Heritage Image Collection: Changing Burnley 1965 to 1985” was made on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017. On the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 we were informed that our application had not been successful and that more emphasis could have been placed on people and community outcomes. After receiving advice from the Heritage Lottery Fund’s regional support officer a second application was made on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018. Much to our delight on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018 we were awarded a grant of £32,400, over a two-year period, which would provide funding for:

- vital equipment to digitise images
- design and creation of a dedicated website
- training and expenses for volunteers
- premises rent
- publicity and promotion.

## ACTION STATIONS

With a small group of Civic Trust volunteers and two microfilm reader machines donated by Lancashire Archives we had already begun to experiment with transcribing stories about images in the Burnley Express but now it was full steam ahead! Equipment was bought, the website was commissioned and publicity arranged to attract new volunteers including help from Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Services. We could now start to scan the negatives in the collection and our focus, in accordance with the Heritage Grant, was on images between 1965 and 1985 and within 1 mile radius of the town centre.



The website [www.bcthic.org](http://www.bcthic.org) was launched in March 2019 when sufficient images had been digitised and uploaded to the site.



As part of the publicity an open day at the archive rooms was also held and exhibition boards displayed in Burnley Market Hall showing images and text from the website.

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers already had a range of computer skills and have learnt a wider range of skills from each other and from PG54, our website designers. Training sessions have also been held:



Lancashire Archives visited the archive rooms to give a half-day training course on handling negatives and other archive materials



Lancashire Adult Learning ran a one-day Photoshop training course at Northlight, Brierfield.





Three annual lectures have taken place at Towneley Hall and Museum learning about their painting/photographic, postcard and other related collections.



At the National Science and Media Museum at Bradford we learnt about their Daily Herald archive of images (left), and their other collections (right).



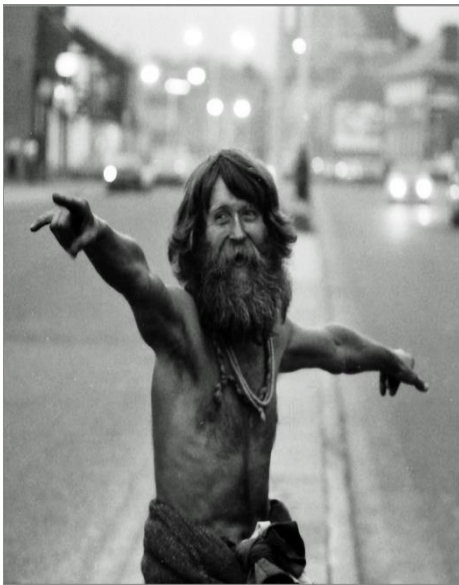
Volunteering sessions are held on Wednesday and Thursday from 1pm until 4.30 when images are scanned from negatives, stories typed up from the microfilm rolls and then uploaded to the website. Some volunteers carry out additional work at home too.

### **This is what three volunteers have said about their involvement:**

*The opportunity to receive the photographic negatives of the Burnley express seemed to be too good to be true when I was first asked by Roger Frost if we wanted them and could make use of them. I have always been a keen photographer and relish the chance to look at the press photographs. I was not sure my enthusiasm for the project that I envisaged would be matched by others within Burnley Civic Trust, so I produced a short illustrated show to present my case to my colleagues. Matters progressed nicely with their enthusiastic support. We eventually, on a second application, gained a Heritage Lottery Grant.*

*Our workshop sessions in scanning and researching stories has proved to be an enjoyable social gathering each week – a sharing and educating time that we all seem to benefit from. I am highly delighted. The statistics shown on our website providers pages show that many people all over the world, have a connection with Burnley and seem to enjoy visiting our site to see the fruits of our labours.*

*It's been really good to get involved in many other aspects, providing images for books, shows, other websites of various interests which are grounded in the Burnley area. It has been very pleasing to give illustrated talks to community groups to widen our exposure for BCTHIC.ORG*



*It is very difficult to choose any one particular story, which I've enjoyed posting, but one stands out and that is the story of JB Hopkins-a local character, who seemed to be loved by all, a man who sadly left this life too soon. I could trace the original Burnley Express photographer Danny Elwes, now a successful London-based photographer, and correspond with him about his iconic photograph, which still reaches many with affection and nostalgia for the 1980s*

*Edward Walton, Project Manager*

*\* \* \**

*I was not a member of the Civic Trust, and was extremely sceptical that the project to digitize the Burnley Express image archive would ever get off the ground. However, when I saw that it had, I went to one of their first open events, and immediately signed up as a volunteer. I was in awe of the work the team had put in to get the image archive project to that stage. It was an ideal opportunity for me, I had been volunteering at Burnley Library scanning archive photos, and was becoming fascinated by social history, as portrayed through documentary photos.*

*I have hugely enjoyed being part of the group, and am very proud of what we have achieved. It has been a learning curve for me too, I have improved my IT skills considerably, working with images, and writing and uploading articles. One of the aspects of the project which I have particularly enjoyed has been the partnerships we have made with other people, and I feel we have become a really valued heritage resource.*

*As a keen cricket fan, I have shared brilliant archive cricket images not just with my own club, Lowerhouse CC, but with the wider cricket community. This is one of my favourite images, former Lowerhouse professional and amateur cricketer Safdar, “Jim” Minhas meeting up with old friends in 1968. We were delighted to share this photo with Lowerhouse CC and Mr. Minhas, and his family in Pakistan, not long before he died.*



*Anne Cochrane*

\* \* \*

*I first became aware of Burnley Civic Trust when I responded to an article in the Burnley Express, inviting members of the public to join a walk around Hurstwood, a historical village on the outskirts of Burnley. The walk was led by two very knowledgeable local historians and members of the Civic Trust. As we walked around, I was asked if I was interested in joining the organisation, and, subsequently I became a member. Shortly afterwards, I attended one of the monthly meetings, and heard for the first time of the initiative to digitise the recently gifted Burnley Express photographic archive. Funding from the Heritage Lottery was in the offing, and the group had recently acquired rented premises in which they could house the many thousands of negatives and the essential equipment upon which the work would be carried out. Since joining the small but dedicated group of archivists, I have been amazed at the enthusiasm with which the work has*



*been undertaken. Among the members with whom I am working, are two people that I have not seen since the 1960's, an unbelievable coincidence. Being a keen supporter of our local football club, I am currently helping a local author by finding images to be included in his next book, marking 50 years since our team were promoted into the top tier of English football.*



*Additionally, I have always been interested in steam railways and the town's locomotive depot played a pivotal role when British Railways dispensed with this form of transport. The town became a Mecca for steam enthusiasts from across the country as it was one of the last four depots to provide locos until the very last day of steam operation. I have thoroughly enjoyed searching the newspaper articles and negatives to feed*

*these passions! I am indebted to the HLF for providing our small group with the funding to undertake the venture and, despite the fact that we have merely "scratched the surface", we are all intent on seeing the job through for many years to come.*

*George Grimshaw*

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## **EVENTS**

Many events have taken place to make people aware of the website and its historic images and stories from the Burnley Express Newspapers. These range from exhibition boards placed in community facilities in various locations and at other events where a wider range of people will be attending, to illustrated talks given to a wide range of groups and organisations.



Central Library November 2018



Coal Clough Library February 2020



Weavers' Triangle Visitor Centre May 2021



Gannow Community Centre Oct 2021



Burnley Civic Trust open talk April 2019



Talk to U3A meeting February 2022



St Peter's Heritage Open Day  
September 2022

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The website now has more than 10,500 images and 24 researched stories/articles relating to some of the images. Visits to the website have increased steadily over the four years it has been in use – From 1,505 visits in March 2019 to 5,480 visits in January 2023 – and is viewed from countries all over the world. We receive many enquiries through our Facebook pages and our BCTHIC emails, indicating that the site is used by a wide range of people for many purposes. Some of the images from the site have been used by other organisations in various documents and exhibits and by researchers and authors. Working partnerships have been formed with other organisations and we continue to provide useful images as more images are digitised and uploaded. Individual people have also been able to find personal images which they may not have seen before or have lost copies of photographs.



Images and memorabilia have been donated to the archive and added to the website as 'Other Collections' and are saved for the future.

During Covid restrictions, although we had to close the archive for volunteer group use, we were able to continue adding images to the website and volunteers working from home also catalogued other collections. It is hoped that, in the near future, these catalogues can be made available for searching on the website. They include the Newspaper Cuttings Envelopes 1920-1960; a Burnley Football Club collection of images; the library book collection and a collection of theatrical programmes and booklets (mainly Pendle area).

## **THE FUTURE**

Post National Lottery funding, using the equipment and website provided by the grant, we hope that the project will continue as a Burnley Civic Trust project for many years to come. There will be a relatively small yearly running cost which will hopefully be funded by future grants and donations from supporters and users of the website and images.

With thanks to all volunteers, past and present:

Geoff Ashworth	Roger Atkinson	Susan Barker
Stephen Chaddock	Anne Cochrane	Jonathan Cound
Tina Ellis	Neil Fawcett	Roger Frost
Robert Glover	George Grimshaw	Brian Hall
Arthur Hollis	David Kilpatrick	Andy Lucas
Tony Mitchell	Viv Pascoe	Janet Precious
David Smith	Mike Smith	Mike Smith
Edward Walton	Laura Worthington	

And to National Lottery players and all those who have supported and helped in other ways.

29<sup>th</sup> March 2023