

Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum



This delightful cottage dating from the 15th century is the oldest domestic building in the market town of Dereham. It houses displays of local history and the archaeology of the surrounding area in the Breckland region of central Norfolk.

The Museum, situated in St Withburga Lane, Dereham, next to the parish church, is normally open from May to the end of September. For current details visit www.derehamhistory.com.

Due to the age and Grade II status of the building, wheelchair access is restricted to two ground floor rooms only.

For further information regarding the Museum's displays and history, please contact us.

History of the Cottage

Virtually untouched by the 21st century, this beautiful timber-framed, thatched building is particularly noted for its unusual pargeoting. The oldest surviving domestic building in Dereham, it was originally three cottages built at different times between 1575 and 1650: why there is 1502 in Roman numerals over the door and on the gable is a great mystery.

It is the only thatched building in Dereham to have survived the fires of 1581 and 1679. With its sloping ceilings, tiny rooms, twisting staircases and wooden beams, it is easy to imagine how the many previous inhabitants lived here in the past.



The Cottage itself has a colourful history. It takes its name from Bishop Bonner, Rector of the neighbouring St Nicholas' Church during the 1530s. In his role as Bishop of London during the reign of Queen Mary, he was responsible for the death of many Protestants burned at the stake. He was known as 'Bloody Bonner' for good reason.

More than 400 years later, war veteran 'One-armed Jack' was the last resident, and he was something of a local legend, remembered by some of the town's older community.

In 1963, Dereham Town Council became responsible for the upkeep of the Grade II listed building, and the Dereham Heritage Trust established the town Museum in the cottage.

For over 50 years it has been run entirely by volunteers. It is an Arts Council Accredited museum. Find out more on our website at www.derehamhistory.com.

Dereham Heritage Trust



Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum

Come and Discover Dereham's Heritage!

Are you interested in local history? If so, you may like to become a member of the Dereham Heritage Trust.

The Trust supports and administers the Dereham Archive and the Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum.

The Trust welcomes volunteers as stewards in the Museum and to help in the Archive Centre. There are four newsletters a year, a programme of talks and an annual dinner.

The Trust (formerly Dereham Antiquarian Society) was founded in 1953 and is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation (No 1187140). Visit the Trust's website for more information: www.derehamhistory.com.

Dereham Heritage Trust

Membership Application Form

Please use block capitals for your name and address

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Tel _____

Email _____

For joint membership, please give the name of the second member

I/We give permission for Dereham Heritage Trust to hold the above details.

Your details will be used only to send you our Newsletter and advise you of other Trust activity. They will not be disclosed to anyone else without your permission unless required by law.

Please return this panel with a cheque payable to Dereham Heritage Trust to:

Ken Hawkins, DHT, 26 Hillfields, Dereham NR19 1UE
Tel: 01362 691455 Email: ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk

Alternatively, pay by bank transfer to Dereham Heritage Trust, sort code 20-28-20, account 10179752 **using your surname as a reference.**

Subscription Rates (renewal 1 April)

Please tick box for type of membership required

Single £12

Joint (2 people at the same address) £20

Half price rates from October to December
New members joining in January to March get membership to 1 April in the following year

Dereham Heritage Trust

From academic beginnings in 1953, the Dereham Heritage Trust is a friendly group of people who have a shared interest in the history of Dereham and the surrounding areas.

The archive and collection of the Trust are an important resource for the study of local history. Material has been collected from the Dereham area since 1953 when the Trust was founded.

Displays of items from the collection can be seen in Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum. Entry is free for Trust members.

The Trust holds monthly meetings through the year, with expert speakers giving talks ranging widely from prehistory to the 20th century, in Dereham and the rest of Norfolk, including life, work, prominent personalities, and the development of the town through the years. Talks continued online during the pandemic.



Volunteering in the Museum

Can we tempt you to experience 'hands-on' running of a museum?

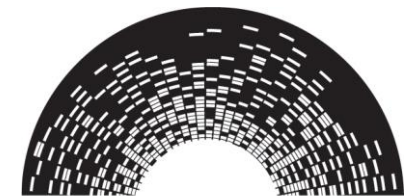
We are always looking for people to join our group of volunteers who staff the museum on a rota basis. You would decide what time you could give to us - it could be as little as one session a month if that's all the time you have to spare. You will be trained on site and do not need to be a member of the Dereham Heritage Trust. All we ask is that you are over 16; there is no upper age limit.

Volunteering in the Dereham Archive

Would you like to become a member of our volunteer team working with historic artefacts and documents?

Our archive is located in the Town Council offices, and we are working hard to get it ready to open to researchers and the public who wish to use it. For the time being, this complex task can be undertaken only by those already involved, but once that is done, we may well be seeking volunteers to work to improve its accessibility.

If you are interested in helping us in the future, please email ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk or phone Ken Hawkins on 01362 691455.



ACCREDITED
MUSEUM