

# DALTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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Dear, Contributor, Friend of DCA and/or VIPs

## Launch of the book

### ‘From Drill Hall to Centre for All’

#### History of Dalton in Furness Drill Hall 1928 to the present day

Sadly, because of Coronavirus the launch event on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 has had to be cancelled. Therefore, this letter and your copy of the book which you would have been presented with at the event, has been sent to you.

This project came about through the generosity and encouragement of the Heritage Lottery Fund which has helped us initially with a micro grant, leading to a more substantial grant following up on the need to have some recorded documentation of the Drill Hall/community Centre. The culmination of this project has taken a little longer than expected but has created much interest. I believe this will engender further exploration and ideas, as the book will prompt others to come forward with more information and help to fill in gaps we have missed and maybe a second edition will be produced.

I would like to thank Ron Creer for writing and putting this book together. I would also like to thank Janice Benson, Shaun Blezard, Ann Thurlow and Ian Maddox who acted in an advisory capacity.

We have created a website [drillhallidentity.co.uk](http://drillhallidentity.co.uk) - From Drill Hall to Centre for All. Please visit the website for more information and if you wish to contribute. I have also included a presentation outlining the work that has been carried out over the past twelve years at the Community Centre.

As soon as we are back to normal, we should have a small drama sequence on the website performed by the pupils of Dowdales school. They were going to perform at the launch event. As this will now not be happening, we will put the performance on the website for you to enjoy at your leisure.

Comments from Ron Creer are listed below: -

*"I have really enjoyed working on this book on the history of Dalton's Drill Hall. It has not always been as straightforward as I had expected - certain periods and users had very little in terms of documentation or people to give their memories. Moreover, other commitments meant the book's launch has been delayed and I apologise for that. However, for the most part, it has been a fascinating project for me.*

*The research was in two parts: the academic research using books, websites and Barrow Archives. This threw up some amazing detail such as the 1927-9 letters and bills and lists when the Hall was being built - I felt I was eavesdropping on the conversations between architect and builder as I read their correspondence. And the Log Book from Nelson Street School revealed tensions between staff, naughty girls and parents.*

*The second part was the best: meeting so many people who told me stories, gave me documents and photographs and shared memories of their time in the Hall. It was intriguing to discover the stresses caused by decisions about raising funds or increasing charges, finding volunteers or attracting custom. The playgroup leaders were a good example of this as they struggled to balance the facilities, inspection demands, parents' wishes etc.all while providing a great service to the children.*

*I learned about soldiers going off to Dunkirk or Burma, about a local pigeon playing a part in the war effort, about .22 cartridges left behind for schoolboys. I discovered the Hall used over the decades by Flower Shows and Judo classes, church services, school plays and jumble sales.*

*I read about the changes in ownership from Territorial Army to County Education Department to Community Groups, and about the times the Hall nearly closed but was rescued by community minded locals who were determined to fight for its future. In its 90+ years Dalton Drill Hall has served the people of the town in many ways and I hope that this little book serves as a record of this work and a spark for it to continue. Thank you, Dalton Community Association, for asking me to produce it".*

My thanks to the Trustees, as well as Pat Wilson and Brenda Walker for all the administration and distribution of the book. We will have extra copies available, £3 each. as well as some postcards of the line drawings at £1 each.

To the Heritage Lottery fund, we hope we have fully fulfilled your criteria for the grant aid. I am really pleased that a record now exists, and I trust many will gain from a glimpse into the Heritage of their town especially the Drill Hall/Community Centre.

Kindest Regards

Barry Doughty  
Chairman of Dalton Community Association  
April 2020