

Berkshire Record Office

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Records of the Berkshire County Club, 1776-1887; of the Berkshire Club, 1875-1972; of the Athenæum Club, 1842-1971; of the Joint Amalgamation Committee, 1970-1972; and of the Berkshire Athenæum Club, 1971-1995. (22 vols, 38 bdls, 18 docs)

Deposited in May 1995 (acc. 5620); in June 1995 (acc. 5635).

Cat : LS 8/96

Schedule of accessions

Acc. 5620 : 1/1-5 ; 2/1/1-2, 4, ; 2/2/1 ; 2/3/1-2 ; 2/4/1 ; 2/5/1 ; 3/1/1-7 ; 3/2/1 ;
3/3/1-2 ; 3/4/1 ; 3/5/1-3 ; 3/6/1-4, 7-8 ; 3/7/2, 4-7 ; 3/8/1-7 ; 4/1-3 ;
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5/5/1-2, 4-5, 7-11

Summary

BERKSHIRE COUNTY CLUB : general minutes and accounts, 1776-1887; rules, 1776-1812; register of members, 1806-1818; attendance registers, 1806-1827; subscription registers, 1828-1887.

BERKSHIRE CLUB : general minutes, 1875-1934, 1968-1971; committee minutes, 1875-1935, 1968-1971; lists of members present at dinners, 1924-1939; subscription accounts, 1968-1972; annual reports and statements of accounts, 1927, 1929, 1967-1970; correspondence, 1927-1933; rules, 1949-1960; history, 1959.

ATHENÆUM CLUB : general minutes, 1842-1971; committee minutes, 1842-1971; sub committee minutes, 1897-1903; accounts, 1843-1889 (incomplete); annual reports and statements of accounts, 1898-1970 (incomplete); pass books, 1941-1954; rules, 1842-1962; correspondence, 1896-1970; register of meals served, 1920; subscription/membership accounts, 1914-1945 (incomplete); deeds and papers re property, 1889-[1971]; suggestions book, 1898-1970; roll of honour, c.1920; centenary autograph book, 1942; miscellaneous, 20th century.

JOINT AMALGAMATION COMMITTEE : minutes, reports, correspondence and papers, 1970-1972.

BERKSHIRE ATHENÆUM CLUB : general minutes, 1971-1982; committee minutes, 1971-1982; statements of accounts, 1972-1992 (incomplete); papers re club buildings and contents, 1971-1995; rules, 1971, [c.1990]; suggestions book, 1972-1988; newsletters, 1984-1992; miscellaneous, 1974-[c.1995].

BERKSHIRE COUNTY CLUB

Introduction

The Berkshire County Club was formed in May 1776 as a private gentleman's dining club. Membership, which was restricted to no more than 40 members of the local gentry and aristocracy, met monthly during the summer for dinners at the Crown Inn, Reading. Meetings later moved to the Bear Hotel.

Membership declined in the 1880s, and although it was never formally wound up, the club ceased to meet after 1887. Many of the club's members were also members of the Berkshire Club (see below), which may explain the location of the Berkshire County Club's records among their own.

1/1 Minutes

- | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|-----------|
| 1/1/1 | General minutes and accounts, 1806-1821.
(Includes memorandum of the formation of the club, 1776; rules, 1776-1812; minutes of special meetings, 1800-1818; register of members, 1806-1818; and (reversed) list of forfeits due, 1808, and attendance register, 1806-1820.) | 1 vol | 1776-1821 |
| 1/1/2 | General minutes and accounts, 1821-1836.
(Includes (reversed) attendance register, 1821-1827; and subscription register, 1828-1835.) | 1 vol | 1821-1836 |
| 1/1/3 | General minutes and accounts, 1836-1849.
(Includes subscription register.) | 1 vol | 1836-1849 |
| 1/1/4 | General minutes and accounts, 1850-1874.
(Includes subscription register, 1850-1873.) | 1 vol | 1850-1874 |
| 1/1/5 | General minutes and accounts, 1874-1887.
(Includes subscription register, 1874-1887; and Berkshire Club lists of members present at dinners, December 1924 - February 1939.) | 1 vol | 1874-1939 |

[For a history, see 2/5/2.]

BERKSHIRE CLUB

Introduction

The Berkshire Club was formed in May 1875 as a gentleman's club. Many of the founder members were also members of the less formally organised Berkshire County Club.

The club rented two rooms and a cellar at the Queen's Hotel, Reading, until 1897, when premises were built in Blagrove Street, Reading. It was open daily, and provided overnight accommodation for members.

In 1972 the club amalgamated with the Athenæum Club.

2 BERKSHIRE CLUB

2/1 Minutes

2/1/1 Minutes of general meetings, May 1875 - April 1898; and of committee meetings, May 1875 - August 1898. (Includes minutes of the following sub-committees : house committee meetings, April 1878 - March 1885; sub committee meetings, September - October 1897; building committee meetings, February 1898 - January 1899; furnishing committee meeting, January 1899.) 1 vol 1875-1899

2/1/2 Minutes of general meetings, March 1899 - May 1913; and of committee meetings, January 1899 - March 1914. 1 vol 1899-1914

2/1/3 Minutes of general and committee meetings, May 1914 - May 1924. 1 vol 1914-1924

2/1/4 Minutes of general meetings, May 1925 - May 1934; and of committee meetings, July 1924 - January 1935. 1 vol 1924-1935

[Minutes, 1935-1968, appear to be missing.]

2/1/5 Minutes of general and committee meetings. (Includes minutes of general meetings, March 1968 - March 1971; meeting of chairmen of sub-committees, September 1969; management committee, October 1968 - March 1971; and house committee, November 1969 - January 1971; and annual report and statement of accounts, 1969/70.) 1 vol 1968-1971

2/2 Membership records

2/2/1 Subscription accounts. 1 vol 1968-1972

[For lists of members present at dinners, 1924-1939, see 1/1/5.]

2/3 Annual reports

2/3/1/1-2 Annual reports of the committee and statements of accounts, 1927, 1929. 1 bdl 1928, 1930

2/3/2/1-5 Annual reports, 1967/8 and 1968/9, with balance sheet, 1968/9. 1 bdl 1969-1970

[For annual report and statement of accounts, 1969/70, see 2/1/5.]

BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

MISCELLANEOUS UNOFFICIAL COLLECTIONS

D/EX 1323

BERKSHIRE CLUB

2/4 Correspondence

2/4/1/1-9 Miscellaneous correspondence. 1 bdl 1927-1933

[Found loose in 2/1/4.]

2/5 Miscellaneous

2/5/1/1-3 Printed rules, 1949, 1954, 1960. 1 bdl 1949-1960

2/5/2 History of the Berkshire County Club and the Berkshire Club. 1 vol 1959

2/5/3 Rules and regulations. 1 doc 1960

ATHENÆUM CLUB

Introduction

The club was formed in 1841 as the Reading Athenæum to promote literature and science in the Reading area. It was in part an amalgamation of a "Literary Institution" [not the same as the Reading Literary Scientific and Mechanics Institution] whose Friar Street premises it purchased, and the Philosophical Institution, whose library it inherited. No records of these predecessors appear to survive, and they may have been lost when the Athenæum sold off its museum in 1854/5.

By the 1880s the original aims had been lost, and the Athenæum consisted of little more than a reading room. In 1886 the name was changed to the Athenæum Club, and the organisation became a conventional private club similar to the Berkshire Club, but somewhat less exclusive.

In 1897 the original premises were demolished during the building of Queen Victoria Street, and the Athenæum moved to a new site on the opposite site of Friar Street, Reading.

Women were admitted as members in the early 20th century (including Mary Russell Mitford), but by 1970 membership was male only. In 1972 the club amalgamated with the Berkshire Club.

ATHENÆUM CLUB

3/1 Minutes

- | | | | |
|------------|--|-------|-----------|
| 3/1/1 | Minutes of general meetings, October 1842 -February 1899, and of committee meetings, October 1842 - March 1899.
(Includes accounts, 1843-1881, 1885-1889; and rules, 1842, 1853 (printed), 1886 and 1898 (printed).) | 1 vol | 1842-1898 |
| 3/1/2 | Minutes of general meetings, February 1900 - September 1910, and of committee (general committee from 1907) meetings, April 1899 - September 1910.
(Includes annual reports and statements of accounts, 1898-1907, and correspondence, 1909.) | 1 vol | 1899-1910 |
| 3/1/3 | Minutes of general meetings, March 1911 - March 1929, and of general committee meetings, October 1910 - November 1929.
(Includes annual report and statement of accounts, 1910, draft annual report, 1914, and correspondence, 1910, 1913.) | 1 vol | 1910-1929 |
| 3/1/4 | Minutes of annual general meetings, 1930-1953, and of general committee meetings, December 1929 - September 1953.
(Includes annual report and statement of accounts, 1941.) | 1 vol | 1929-1953 |
| 3/1/5 | Minutes of general meetings, May 1954 - October 1969, and of committee meetings, October 1953 - April 1970, June-November 1970. | 1 vol | 1954-1970 |
| 3/1/6/1-26 | Minutes of general meetings, March 1970 - June 1971. | 1 bdl | 1970-1971 |
| 3/1/7/1-26 | Minutes of committee meetings, May 1970, January - December 1971. | 1 bdl | 1970-1971 |

BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

MISCELLANEOUS UNOFFICIAL COLLECTIONS

D/EX 1323

3 ATHENÆUM CLUB3/2 Sub-committees

- 3/2/1 Minutes of sub committee meetings : 1 vol 1897-1903,
 finance committee, November 1897 - October 1902;
 games committee, November 1897 - July 1902; house
 committee, November 1897 - February 1903; reading
 room and library committee, November 1897 - February
 1903; and rules committee, November 1897.
 (Includes register of meals served, March-October 1920.)

3/3 Membership records

- 3/3/1/1-4 Subscription accounts [described as registers of members]. 1 bdl 1914-1917
- 3/3/2/1-11 Printed lists of members, annotated with notes of payment
 of subscription, 1920, 1922-1927, 1934, 1935, 1938,
 1939, 1945. 1 bdl 1920-1945

3/4 Annual reports

[For annual reports and statements of accounts, 1898-1907,
 see 3/1/2.]

- 3/4/1/1-69 Annual reports and statements of accounts (many annotated),
 1898, 1905-1928, 1930-1933, 1935-1938, 1940-1968,
 1970. 1 bdl 1899-1971

3/5 Accounts

- 3/5/1/1-8 Balance sheets, 1920-1922, and revenue accounts,
 1921-1922, with notes concerning accounts, 1915-1922. 1 bdl 1920-1922
- 3/5/2 Comparison of annual income and expenditure, 1950-1953. 1 doc n.d.[1954]
- 3/5/3/1-2 Bank pass books. 1 bdl 1941-1954

3/6 Correspondence

- 3/6/1/1-36 General correspondence, mostly concerning property. 1 bdl 1896-1916
- 3/6/2/1-39 General correspondence, mostly concerning property. 1 bdl 1917-1920
- 3/6/3/1-39 General correspondence, mostly concerning property. 1 bdl 1923-1925
- 3/6/4/1-53 General correspondence, mostly concerning property. 1 bdl 1929-1932

3 ATHENÆUM CLUB

3/6 Correspondence (cont)

3/6/5/1-74	General correspondence, mostly concerning property.	1 bdl	1933-1946
3/6/6/1-72	General correspondence, mostly concerning property.	1 bdl	1947-1970
3/6/7/1-88	Correspondence concerning mortgages on the club's premises at 27-29 Friar Street, Reading.	1 bdl	1909-1952
3/6/8/1-29	Correspondence concerning a loan from John Hill.	1 bdl	1899-1918

3/7 Property records

3/7/1	Mortgage and reconveyance of the Athenæum, Friar Street, Reading.	1 doc	1889, 1896
3/7/2/1-16	Agreement, draft and counterpart leases and licence to assign, concerning 27 Friar Street, Reading.	1 bdl	1892-1953
3/7/3	Agreement to let 28 Friar Street, Reading.	1 doc	1893
3/7/4/1-4	Agreement, counterpart leases and letter concerning 29 Friar Street, Reading.	1 bdl	1894-1941
3/7/5/1-8	Valuations and correspondence concerning 27-29 Friar Street, Reading.	1 bdl	1913-1915
3/7/6	Report on fabric.	1 doc	n.d.[1971]
3/7/7/1-7	Draft deeds of Pinelands Caravan Site, Padworth Common.	1 bdl	1971

3/8 Miscellaneous

3/8/1	Suggestions book, June 1898 - November 1970. (Contains members' complaints and suggestions for improvements to the Club, and the response of the committee. No entries, 1924-1940 inclusive; few, 1917-1958.)	1 vol	1898-1970
3/8/2	Roll of honour. [Lists club members serving with the armed forces, 1914-1919.]	1 doc	n.d.[c.1920]
3/8/3	Press cutting recording the history of the club.	1 doc	1937

3 ATHENÆUM CLUB

3/8 Miscellaneous (cont)

3/8/4	Centenary autograph book. (Contains signatures of all members, 1942, arranged alphabetically.) [Compiled as part of the club's centenary celebrations.]	1 vol	1942
3/8/5	Caricatures of club members at the annual general meeting, drawn by "Fred".	1 doc	n.d.[1957]
3/8/6	Photograph of the club premises.	1 doc	n.d. [early 20c]
3/8/7	Rules, n.d., annotated with draft changes, 1959 and 1962.	1 doc	n.d.[20c]
3/8/8/1-3	Papers concerning dinner in honour of A W Tudor, mayor of Reading.	1 bdl	1932

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JOINT AMALGAMATION COMMITTEE

[By 1970 both the Berkshire Club and the Athenæum Club were facing financial difficulties. A Joint Amalgamation Committee was set up in 1970 with representatives from each club. It had three sub-committees : constitution, finance, and premises.

The two clubs formally amalgamated on 1 January 1972.]

4/1/1-96	Committee minutes, reports and papers.	1 bdl	1970-1971
4/2/1-42	Correspondence, March 1970 - February 1972. [Original bundle.]	1 bdl	1970-1972
4/3/1-17	Plans and elevations for proposed redevelopment of the Berkshire Club premises in Blagrove Street, Reading.	1 bdl	n.d.[c1971]

5 BERKSHIRE ATHENÆUM CLUB

Introduction

The club was formed on 1 January 1972. It initially occupied the Friar Street premises of the former Athenæum Club. After this was sold and the Blagrove Street premises of the former Berkshire Club were altered, the club moved to the latter.

The club initially admitted men only, but allowed women to join from 1976. In the mid 1980s it began to be profitable, but this success was temporary and the club closed in 1995.

5/1 Minutes

- 5/1/1 Minutes of general meetings, November 1971 - April 1982, and of (steering) committee meetings, December 1971 - April 1981. 1 vol 1971-1982
(Includes minutes of catering committee, December 1971, membership sub-committee, January-October 1972, special meetings, April 1975, October-December 1981, Blagrove Street premises development sub-committee, May 1975, finance sub-committee, January 1977, executive committee, June 1981, and general committee, June 1981 - February 1982; and correspondence and papers.)

5/2 CommitteesFinance Committee

- 5/2/1/1-6 Minutes of finance committee meetings, January - February 1977. 1 bdl 1977

5/3 Accounts

- 5/3/1/1-39 Audited balance sheets and statements of accounts, 1972-1989, 1992. 1 bdl 1973-1993
[Balance sheet, 1974, missing.]

5/4 Property records

- 5/4/1/1-15 Inventory of furniture and equipment at the new club's premises, 53 Blagrove Street, Reading. 1 bdl 1971
- 5/4/2/1-150 Correspondence and papers concerning the disposal of the Friar Street premises and redevelopment of the Blagrove Street premises. 1 bdl 1972-1977

5 BERKSHIRE ATHENÆUM CLUB

5/4 Property records (cont)

5/4/3/1-7 Plans of proposed redevelopment of Blagrove Street premises. 1 bdl 1975-1976

5/4/4 Valuation for insurance purposes of the club premises, 53 Blagrove Street, Reading. 1 doc 1979

5/4/5 Survey report ("schedule of condition") on the club premises.
(Includes many photographs of exterior and interior.) 1 doc 1989

5/4/6/1-3 Report on options for proposed alterations. 1 bdl 1990

5/4/7 Sales catalogue for the auction of the club's furniture. 1 doc 1995

5/5 Miscellaneous

5/5/1 Constitution and rules (printed). 1 doc 1971

5/5/2/1-7 Constitution and rules. 1 bdl n.d.[c1990]

5/5/3 Suggestions book. 1 vol 1972-1988

5/5/4/1-5 Admission tickets for guest nights and Christmas dinners. 1 bdl 1974-1975

5/5/5/1-2 Invitations to receptions. 1 bdl n.d.
[c1980-1995]

5/5/6 Press cutting reporting the sale of the Friar Street premises (former site of the Athenæum Club). 1 doc 1976

5/5/7 Sale catalogue of 45-51 Blagrove Street [adjoining the club premises] and 7-10 Friar Street, Reading. 1 doc 1982

5/5/8/1-32 Members' newsletters. 1 bdl 1984-1992

5/5/9/1-30 Menus and publicity brochures. 1 bdl 1984-1993

5/5/10 Membership card. 1 doc n.d.
[c1990-1995]

5/5/11 Reading room notice. 1 doc n.d.
[c1930-1960]

[It is not clear whether this originates from the Berkshire or the Athenæum Club.]