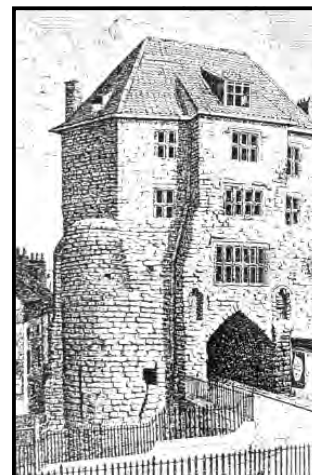


# NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF  
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No. 38: JUNE 2005



## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

*The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne is one of the country's oldest antiquarian societies, founded in 1813. We have a regular programme of lectures and events, a learned journal, a library, and collections housed in several museums around the region. We also lease the Castle Keep and the Black Gate from the City Council.*

*Subjects for our monthly lectures this year range from the history and archaeology of Roman Britain, to local connections with the Battle of Trafalgar, and 20th century coastal defences. During the summer months, there are Country Meetings – visits to places of interest by coach – and Country Walks.*

*Every ten years, the Society organises a week-long Hadrian's Wall Pilgrimage in conjunction with the Archaeological and Antiquarian Society of Cumberland and Westmorland, at the other end of the Wall.*

*As well as this twice-yearly Newsbulletin, the Society has an academic journal, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, and publishes occasional monographs.*

*The Society's books, thirty thousand volumes or more, are housed in the Library at the Black Gate. Opening hours are Wed 2–4pm, Thur 5–7pm and Sat 10am–12 noon. Volunteers to help out are always welcome. Our collections, once in the Black Gate Museum, are now mainly in the Museum of Antiquities, the Bagpipe Museum at Morpeth, and the Castle Keep.*

*Contact the Membership Secretary for more information at The Black Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1RQ, phone 0191 261 5390. Our e-mail address is [admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk](mailto:admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk), and our website is [www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk](http://www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk)*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is a great privilege to be asked to preside over the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle. A further privilege is that of sharing its work with those people who give so freely of their time and experience to make possible all that the Society achieves: the Society is its members.

Our last President, Beryl Charlton, set a fine example for her successor to follow. Her patient and wise management of the Society's business was admirable, and she continues to give us the benefit of her leadership and management as she again represents the Society on the Conservation Committee of the Army's Otterburn Training Area, where her archaeological expertise has been put to good use. She also chairs the Buildings Committee, at an especially significant time.

Like Beryl, I am a child of the north-east of England. I grew up in South Shields and had already learnt the importance of Arbeia before Professor Ian Richmond presented the prizes at the last school Speech Day I attended.

Many years later, the courses of the Extra-Mural Department at Newcastle introduced me to the pleasures of archaeology and eventually to this Society. So I came to attend a monthly meeting in – was it 1974? and came to be a volunteer, and eventually ‘labourer’ as the forms said, on Barbara Harbottle’s excavations, and began to research the sites and buildings of Newcastle. As research experience grew, work for the Listing Branch of English Heritage followed, and out of that grew many other activities, such as doing List Reviews of various towns, working as English Heritage Field Monument Warden, and helping with the North-East Vernacular Architecture Group. After retirement from English Heritage came much work on various conservation committees, and I was able to take part in the activities of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, and to a lesser extent, of the Royal Archaeological Institute and of the (Newcastle-based) Northern Architectural History Society. Running through all of these was the thread of this Society, its meetings and outings and receptions, its magnificent Journal and library, and many friendships. With so many gifts received, it would have been unseemly to have refused to take part in the work of running all these activities.

Now, following the guidance of Beryl Charlton and of her predecessor, Professor Richard Bailey, we have started out on a path which will lead to great benefits for us, for our collections, and for the community of which we are a part, as the Great North Museum takes shape. I shall endeavour to repay all that the Society has given me by following the example of dedication and service set by my predecessors.

*Grace McCombie*  
President

## HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2005

This year the Black Gate will be open for just two of the four days – Friday 16th and Saturday 17th September. The reduced openings are a result of last year’s lack of volunteers to help prepare and invigilate. As last year there will be a temporary disabled access ramp allowing access to the guardrooms and

some other features at ground level, interpretation at that level, and displays and interpretation on the 2nd floor (Member’s Room).

*John Nolan*

## DISABLED ACCESS AT THE CASTLE KEEP



*The ramp and screen in the Garrison Room.  
Picture, Pat Blue*

Originally built to keep people out, how can you make the Castle Keep more accessible without structural alteration, retaining its unique character and atmosphere?

This was the quandary created by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). The DDA requires buildings to be altered to allow access to the disabled or the provision of an ‘alternative service’ where this is not feasible.

As part of our initiative to promote the Keep and its importance to our heritage we had begun to develop a web site and material to put upon it, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the ‘Tomorrow’s History’ project. Initially this was quite simplistic, but with the assistance of two masters’ students from the Newcastle University (Marc Johnson and Jessica Kemp), this was developed to

include virtual tours of the Keep and Black Gate producing the all singing, all dancing web site we have today [www.castlekeep-newcastle.org.uk](http://www.castlekeep-newcastle.org.uk)

We also began to explore the potential of using the material from the web site to provide an 'alternative service' by giving a virtual tour of the Keep from within the sub-ground floor Garrison Room. Funding was obtained from the Newcastle City, Disabled Access and Good Stewardship funds. This allowed the purchase of access ramps, audio entry system, retractable screen, projector and cabinets to house them in. These cabinets are bespoke and blend in well. Local historian and TV presenter John Grundy provided a voice over to the tour which brings the whole thing to life.

The project was officially launched on Friday 28th January 2005. Disabled people or groups can have access to the facility by appointment by ringing 0191 232 7938. No charge is made. Copies of the website have been produced on CD and are to be circulated free of charge to local schools.

Newcastle Disability Forum describes the project as "best practice", In their newsletter they said "It would have been easy to declare the Keep inaccessible; however, the team at the Castle Keep have worked tirelessly to set this facility up. Everyone here at the forum sends their congratulations for a job well done".

Other new developments to enhance the visitor experience, particularly for the disabled include the creation of disabled parking bays (already completed) and the planned installation of drop kerbs and removal of footpath obstructions

Internally, signage is being renewed to RNIB standards, there are to be 3 touch screen audio/visual kiosks providing a virtual tour on each floor, and we are producing Braille and Large type guides.

*Pat Blue  
Castle Keep*

## ARCHAEOLOGY VISIT TO OTTERBURN TRAINING AREA

Philip Abramson, the Historic Environment Advisor to the Defence Estates, is organising an archaeological trip to Otterburn Training



*Highshaw Bastle. Picture Phil Abramson*

Area on 23rd July. The tour will provide an opportunity to visit several of the Bastles within the OTA (Highshaw, The Raw, Ironhouse and the Craig) and several other sites close by but outwith the Training Area

A 52 seater bus has been arranged. There will be several pick up/drop off spots at convenient points along the route between Catterick and Otterburn, probably including Durham, Washington Services, Newcastle station, Ponteland.

There will be no rugged outdoor pursuits but people will need to bring a packed lunch and sensible/appropriate clothing depending on weather conditions. Timings have not yet been worked out, but the trip will last the best part of the day. There will be no charge.

Anyone who would like to go on this visit should contact Phil Abramson: Historic Environment Advisor, Defence Estates, Gough Rd, Catterick Garrison DL9 3EJ, Tel: 01748 875055, [Phil.Abramson@de.mod.uk](mailto:Phil.Abramson@de.mod.uk) by 8th July at latest

## JOHN CHARLTON 1909-2004

John Charlton was one of the most distinguished members of our Society. We are proud that his last paper, on averting the threat to Hadrian's Wall of quarrying during the Second World War, was published in the 2004 volume of *Archaeologia Aeliana*. Characteristically, he downplayed his own crucial role in that drama.

Born in Gateshead, John gained a first class degree at Durham in English and History, and then embarked on a study of Renaissance Architecture. Waiting for a book in the University Library, he noticed an advertisement for volunteers to join Eric Birley on an excavation on the

Wall. Responding to this not only changed his career plans, but joined him to that group of scholars (including R.G. Collingwood, F.G. Simpson and Ian Richmond as well as Eric Birley) who were then re-shaping our understanding of the Roman north; his name thus appears among those in the verses recording the lighter side of excavating which we published here in December 2002.

He went on to be an Inspector (later Principal Inspector) of Ancient Monuments, with responsibilities which included the Royal Palaces and Downing Street; as a result State Visits often required his services as an informed guide. Always enthusiastic and with an elegant wit, he was in great demand as a lecturer and office holder in national and regional societies and he took particular pleasure in his Presidency of the Royal Archaeological Institute when it visited Newcastle for an extraordinarily successful conference in 1976.

We extend our sympathies to John's family.

*Richard N. Bailey*

## SAVING "OUR FINEST HOUR" FOR ALL TIME

2005 is the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The range of twentieth century defensive sites all over the country chronicles a crucial century in our shared history, which saw the demise of Britain's colonial empire and the coming of the nuclear age.

The latest instalment in a series of guide-books produced by the Tyne and Wear Specialist Conservation Team based at Newcastle City Council aims to give an accessible introduction to the military structures in the region, as well as explaining their importance in a national context. The Guide to the archaeology of World Wars One and Two in Tyne and Wear, due for publication by Christmas 2005, will discuss some of the existing military installations in the region, as well as identifying sites of special interest which no longer remain. The book's gazetteer and distribution maps will attempt to give an appreciation of the massive scale of defensive construction, especially around 1940, when the entire landscape would have



*The World War 1 control tower at 47a Percy Gardens, Tynemouth.*

been transformed by a vast network of concrete, earth works, and barbed wire.

Some of the more interesting sites in Tyne and Wear include the World War 1 acoustic mirror at Fulwell, Sunderland which tracked approaching zeppelins, a series of anti-glider pits at Ryton Willows, the radio telegraphy station at Cullercoats, Picket Hamilton Fort at former RAF Usworth (now Sunderland aircraft museum), control shelters for bombing decoys at Whitburn and Whickham, the underground headquarters at Kenton Bunker and its filter room at Blakelaw, plus a wealth of pillboxes, anti aircraft batteries, coastal batteries and so on.

You can consult the Tyne and Wear Historic Environment Record, our county-wide archaeological database at <http://museums.ncl.ac.uk/sitelines> to see which wartime sites we know about. Please let us know of any we have missed – we want our book to be as comprehensive as possible!

*Jennifer Morrison*  
*Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer*  
*0191 2816117 or*  
*[jennifer.morrison@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:jennifer.morrison@newcastle.gov.uk)*

## GREAT NORTH MUSEUM

The Great North Museum project is over its first hurdle! In January we learned that the project had been granted Stage One funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund and that we had until the beginning of September to get the very much more detailed second stage bid in to secure the full £8.75 million. This has meant a life of meetings, lists and even more meetings for the curators and the representatives of the project partners: the Society of Antiquaries, the Natural History Society of Northumbria, the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear Museums and the City, as we tackle the detailed planning of the building and its displays, not to mention the tricky business of raising the rest of the money required.

Members can look forward to an exciting few years as first the Hancock is emptied, then (around April 2008) the Museum of Antiquities and the Shefton Museum are closed, before the grand opening in 2009 when the the Society's archaeological collections and library will be finally rehoused in a splendid, convenient, and up-to-date building.

Any Society member who has a brilliant idea for the displays or any concerns about the project can contact Lindsay Allason-Jones on 0191 222 7846.

## THE HORSLEY MEMORIAL LECTURE

This year we have the Horsley Memorial Lecture as our Public Lecture on 30 November. The Horsley Lecturer is Dr Carole van Driel-Murray, Lecturer in provincial Roman archaeology at the Amsterdam Archaeological Centre, University of Amsterdam. Her research interests include the Roman army in its wider social context and she has published extensively on Roman leatherwork, military equipment and footwear. The title of her lecture is 'Families across the Frontier'. Dr van Driel-Murray will consider the effects on native communities on either side of the frontier of the recruitment of their men into the Roman army. She will look in particular at the Frisian and Batavian

communities within and outside the province of Germania Inferior who provided units for Hadrian's Wall.

The lecture will be held at the usual time of 6.00pm in the Curtis Auditorium in Newcastle University as a joint venture with Insights, the University's public lecture programme.

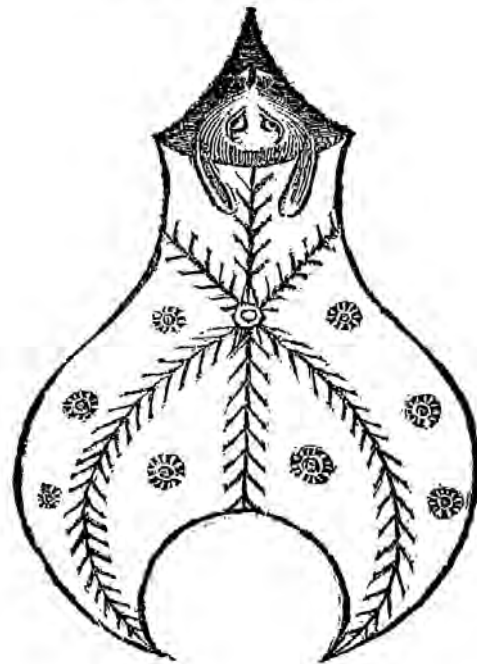
*Colm O'Brien*

## THE ART OF COOKERY, JOHN THACKER, INTRODUCTION BY IVAN DAY

T H A C K E R ' s

*To make a Rabbit Pye.*

*Paté des Lapins.*



This is a wonderful facsimile of a book published in 1758 by John Thacker, the then Cook to the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral, with an introduction by food historian Ivan Day.\*

Thacker's post was no sinecure; each member of the Chapter had to have a "hospitality residence" of 21 days each year, during which they gave feasts to other members of the cathedral foundation and their wives, the gentry of the country, the mayor and corporation, the JPs and military officers. "I reckon there is spent yearly by the Chapter £1000 a year in

this unedifying way” wrote one disapproving Canon. But even while he was in charge of the enormous kitchens, John Thacker managed to run a cookery school for young ladies and gentlewomen, and publish a recipe book first as a part-work, and then in this single volume.

It’s a lovely book, but one for dipping into, not for cooking from. Many of its recipes, Ivan Day says in his introduction, were old-fashioned even in their time. They are also very elaborate, with some fantastic decorations – as witness the illustration, showing the form of a rabbit pie should take.

*Sue Ward*

\*available from Southover Press, 2 Cockshut Road, Southover, Lewes, BN7 1JH, hard-back, price £25

#### FROM THE TREASURER'S DIARY

##### Wed 25th May

Good news to report to the Executive Committee. Subscription income is already nearly £1,700 up on last year’s total. But Sarah Walter, the membership secretary, circulated a list of nearly 40 members who have still not paid, despite a reminder. It really does puzzle me why people fight shy of Direct Debits for this sort of thing. So easy to set up, so easy to cancel if the need arises. So much simpler than trying to remember to send cheques. One form to sign, then the rest is up to Sarah for next year and every year thereafter – and a £2 discount on the subscription into the bargain. What are they waiting for?

##### Thurs 26th May

More good news. Sent off this year’s Gift Aid claim to the Revenue. £2,743 extra for the Society at no cost to the members, and just there for the asking. But another puzzle. There are still lots of folk out there who haven’t signed up. I know some members don’t qualify – non-taxpayers, or resident abroad – but why don’t the others? Could be worth at least another £500 to us each year, and maybe quite a lot more. One form to sign, then leave it to Sarah and me to do the rest. As simple as that!

*David Hide*  
*Treasurer*

Direct Debit and Gift Aid forms are available from Sarah Walter, Membership Secretary (see address on front page)

#### NORTH EAST INHERITANCE

Durham University Library is currently preparing a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to finance the conservation, preservation and indexing of its probate records – over 150,000 wills and inventories of people from the whole of the North East region. These are currently being digitised by the Genealogical Society of Utah, and the images will be available free of charge on their website. However, users will not be able to explore the full potential of this source until good and flexible indexes are provided.

So the Library is looking for volunteers across the region, to be trained by their professional staff to help index many of the original probate documents at the library. They hope

---

#### NEW MEMBERS MAY 04 TO MAY 05:

(in 'newest' first order)

Mr Peter McHugh  
Mr James Jack  
Mr Anthony Smithson  
Dr Marilyn Kendall  
Professor John Tomaney  
Mr Howard Phillips  
Mr Andrew Newton  
Mr John Davies

Dr John Yule  
Mr Gary Haley  
Mr Michael Heslop  
Mr Nick Baker  
Miss Frigga Kruse  
Dr David Mason  
Dr Paul Richards  
Mr David McDiarmid  
Mr Chris Calver  
Mr Jon Eaton

Mr Geoffrey Wallis  
Mr David Welsh  
Mrs Sue Marshall  
Dr Anne O'Connor  
Mr Philip Banks  
Mr Alan Williams  
Mr Arthur Hendricks  
Mrs Maureen Hendricks  
Dr Eric Robinson  
Mr Philip Heath

that in addition, the volunteers will take part in public events in their local communities.

Contact details for anyone interested; Sheila Hingley and Andrew Grey, Durham University Library, Palace Green, Durham, DH1 3RN, 0191 334 2932, or [pg.library@durham.ac.uk](mailto:pg.library@durham.ac.uk)

## COUNTRY MEETINGS IN THE AUTUMN

There are two more country meetings to come, and plenty of room on each. On 9th July we explore along the Tees, with visits to Croft Church (which inspired Lewis Carroll), the Roman remains at Piercebridge, the Brigantian oppidum at Stanwick. The afternoon is shared between Sir Thomas Robinson's mansion of Rokeby Park, with its fine pictures and furniture; and the less familiar Mortham Tower, a fifteenth-century stronghold that is now the home of Mr & Mrs McDonnell.

On September 3rd the main objective is that elegant Borders house, Paxton, its array of pictures and furnishing and its pleasant Tweedside grounds. There we are promised guidance by the Director of the Paxton Trust, a member of our Society. We also visit an earlier past at St Abb's Head, Coldingham Priory and Ancroft Church. Please contact Tom Corfe, 01434 603562, e-mail [tom.corfe@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:tom.corfe@ukonline.co.uk) if you would like to come on either or both of the outings.

## ROBIN MARTIN GARD 31 JANUARY 1926–1 MAY 2005

Robin Gard became a member of the Society after he moved to the North East to become County Archivist in the Northumberland Record Office at Melton Park. He had previously worked as an archivist in Leicester and Hampshire. I first met him when I applied for a part-time post in the Record Office in 1970 and I am grateful to have known him as a friend and colleague for over thirty years.

At a time when most record offices were seen as remote academic institutions, he actively promoted wider public use encouraging school and college visits and imbuing staff with his own high ideals of public service. Long before the Parochial Measures

Act of 1978 Robin was encouraging local vicars to deposit their parish records in the office. He contacted schools so that their historic logbooks were saved, and actively encouraged local landowners and businesses to deposit their historic records also. Tape recordings and photographs were collected chronicling the declining coal industry in the county and changes in agriculture.

His retirement in 1987 gave Robin more time to pursue interests as diverse as book-binding, watching rugby and walking. A devout Roman Catholic, he set up and maintained the archive for the Diocese of Newcastle and Hexham, spending one day a week answering queries and working on the archives. As editor of the Journal of the North East Catholic History Society he finished the next edition even when seriously ill. His last illness was borne with dignity, humour and faith. He will be greatly missed by all his friends and colleagues.

*Sally Bird*

## ARCHIVES FOR ALL

The Society's archive collection is of national significance. Our Archives for All project, funded by a National Heritage Lottery grant to catalogue the archives and make them accessible to a wider audience, gained an extension of time but ended officially at the end of April 2005.

However, our loyal volunteers are continuing their work so that the final listings will be much more detailed than the usual archive catalogue. An electronic catalogue will be published on the Internet in addition to the normal paper catalogues. Basic cataloguing has been completed and is currently in preparation for web-mounting. Conservation work is continuing, and all the archives are now packaged in conservation grade packaging except the glass slide collection which is currently still housed in its original wooden slide boxes.

The archive is not just a collection of local documents but contains papers relating to national and international figures such as poets, bishops and politicians and also photographs of Europe in the early twentieth and Rome in the nineteenth century. It is in addition a

treasure house of local knowledge reflecting the interests of individual members. There are papers from John and Thomas Bell with unique maps and records relating to the region, papers from James Clephan (editor of the local Gateshead nineteenth century newspaper) which include a photograph of a cannon on the top of the keep in Newcastle used to give the time to passing ships (an experiment that was abandoned!), the records of the Reverend John Hodgson, Robert Blair, William Woodman, Thomas Wilson and many others. A 'learning journey' on the life of Grace Darling has been prepared based on the papers of the Darling family in the collection.

The deed collection records property ownership not just in Newcastle but throughout the region and ranges in date from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries. It includes agreements to purchase ships, thus giving evidence for shipbuilding in the area, cases of bankruptcy in the eighteenth century with trade details and a deed relating to the sale of slaves in Jamaica in the early nineteenth century. There is an extensive collection of maps, plans and drawings including architect's drawings. There are over thirty albums of photographs and many loose ones, showing such scenes as the building of the Durham railway viaduct in 1854, the demolition of Glasshouse Bridge in 1908 and slides showing the building of the Tyne Bridge in 1927-8. One of the volunteers working through eight volumes of newspaper cuttings has uncovered details of a national lottery and other fascinating details on the social life of the early nineteenth century. Printed sources record balloon ascents from Newcastle and Durham and a rare plan of a working class house in the 1820s.

Rubbings of cup and ring marks and many papers, photographs and glass slides relating to the Prehistoric and Roman periods reflect the archaeological interests of members.

Even the administrative papers covering almost two hundred years have revealed fascinating information about the history of the north-east and its wide cultural links. The diversity and breadth of members' interests shown in the nineteenth century continues to the present. The Society has been very fortunate to have so many volunteers whose wide ranging interests and expert knowledge have contributed so much to the listing and cataloguing of this unique collection of archives.

*Sally Bird*

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you to all those who have returned questionnaires to the Activities Committee. We have received 50 so far but would like more. We aim to check what members want from SANT, what practical steps we can take to make activities accessible and whether there are any new ideas out there.

We want a wider sample, so intend to use the mailing list to contact some of those members who have not responded yet. So keep those questionnaires coming in – we want to hear from you.

*Rosie Serdiville*  
*Activities Committee*

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I would be very glad to have readers' comments or suggestions for the content of the Bulletin. I am also happy to receive contributions from members, but with the warning that pressure of space means that articles frequently have to be drastically cut, deferred, or dropped altogether. My address is 5 Goldspink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1 NQ, phone 0191 232 2968, fax 0191 222 1559. E-mail is sue.ward@btinternet.com. Deadline for the next edition will be November 11th 2005. The mailing date will be December 14th. Anyone who wants an insert included in either mailing should contact the Membership Secretary at the Black Gate in good time before these dates, for details of the requirements.