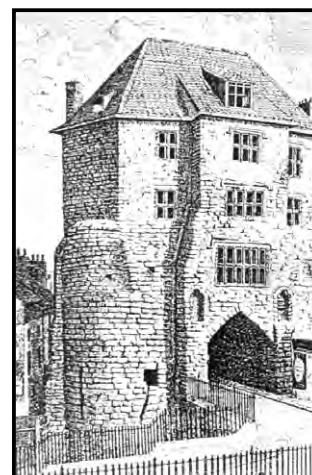


# NEWS BULLETIN

## THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No. 40: JUNE 2006



### 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 range from Neolithic remains in the region to 19th-century personalities, and geographically from churches in Byzantium to buildings in the West of Scotland. 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 Westmoreland, at the other end of the Wall.*

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

*The Society's thirty thousand books 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 are held 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, e-mail [admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk](mailto:admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk), website [www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk](http://www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk)*

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

#### Richard Harbottle

Richard Harbottle, who died on 13th December 2005, became a member of the Society in 1957, and served on Council for many years, eventually as Secretary, Treasurer and Trustee. He was a loyal member of the Society, a fine man, and it was good to know him.

At the Anniversary Meeting in January, members stood during a short silence to honour his memory. The next edition of *Archaeologia Aeliana* will include a full obituary.

### AMOR SPOOR'S WAREHOUSES



*The 'General Bond Warehouses', from the 1844 Newcastle Trade Directory*

In the 1840s Newcastle Quayside was booming. Ships were bringing vast quantities of goods and commodities. "because of the opening of trade to India, China and the Levant, as well as... Germany and Holland." (Council Proceedings 11 December 1839).

Imported goods needed to be stored securely in 'bonded warehouses' before being sold on and import duties paid. Such warehouses were built at both ends of the quayside. Out of many to the east of Broad Chare, only one original remains at Pandon, and one has been rebuilt.

Upstream, and so less convenient because only low ships could pass below the stone-arched bridge, Amor Spoor owned a huge block of warehouses: presumably the disadvantage of the upstream site was compensated for by the availability of a large plot of land behind the Close. Williams' trade directory of Newcastle for 1844 lists Amor Spoor, builder, Hanover Square, and has a wonderful picture of 'Amor Spoor's General Bond Warehouses'. They are shown with no buildings on the south side of the Close, giving prospective customers the impression of direct access from the water.

To build them, many old houses on the north side of the Close were demolished and a new road (Hanover Street) was made which climbed diagonally up the hill to Hanover Square, necessitating the demolition of White Friars Tower on the Town Wall. Various historic objects were presented to our Society: see the obituary of Amor's son Edward (*Archaeologia Aeliana* 2, X, 224).

The new warehouses were sensibly designed (the architect has not yet been identified) so that small spaces could easily be let separately, each slice of the building under a pitched roof between north and south gables, each front having tiers of loading doors. High arched entrances to the Close were dressed with big stepped sandstone voussoirs, and under a very tall narrow arch was a new set of stairs to replace another demolished to make way for the new building. On Hanover Street, the dates 1841 and 1844 were set in the gables. The development continued across the road, another stone arch leading to rooms set into the cliff below the Stephenson works off South Street.

The strength of the astonishingly thick walls can be judged by the fact that they survived a previous fire, in 1997, even though the timber framework of the interior was destroyed. In 1996, after a small fire had destroyed a section of one floor, the building was fully recorded by the then Royal Commission for Historic Buildings (England). It was found that the timbers had cargo marks – a feature increasingly recognised now, and worth looking out for on any imported timber. Only the walls have survived the recent fire and may be incorporated in the new development on the site.

*Grace McCombie*

## A NEW HANDBOOK TO THE ROMAN WALL



*Watercolour of the Wall by T.M. Richardson, courtesy of the J.C. Bruce Collection of Tyne and Wear Museums.*

Later this year the Society will be proud to publish a new edition of John Collingwood Bruce's *Handbook to the Roman Wall*. Bruce (1805–1892) was a non-conformist schoolmaster who reinvented himself as the foremost authority of his day on the Roman Wall. The first edition of his *Handbook* (entitled '*The Wall Book...*') was issued in 1863 and went through two further editions in his lifetime, re-styled '*The Handbook*'.

During the twentieth century the book was revised at intervals by a series of distinguished editors including R.G. Collingwood and Sir Ian Richmond. Its role gradually changed from that of mere guidebook to an account of what could be seen on the ground combined with a statement of the state of current knowledge and research on the Roman frontier. It acquired an international reputation as an indispensable work of reference to archaeologists and an essential guide for visitors to the Wall.

The last edition, edited by our Past President, the late Charles Daniels, appeared in 1978. The 1980s and 1990s, however, were in some ways a golden age for large-scale excavation on Hadrian's Wall. Our member Professor David Breeze, himself as eminent in Wall studies as was Collingwood Bruce, has taken up the challenge of revising the book so that it will continue to serve its purpose in the twenty-first century. He has modernized the tone and appearance of the volume, but kept something of its traditional appearance. New maps and illustrations have been specially prepared, but these will be mixed with woodcuts from the previous editions.

The compact pocket size shared by all previous editions is being retained, and the new Handbook will have a durable and water-resistant cover. In the words of R.G. Collingwood in his preface to the 1933 edition, 'A book like this has the singular privilege of not lying still all its days indoors, but travelling with its owner and sharing his fortunes of wind and weather'.

All members of the Society will be sent details of the price and how to obtain the book as soon as these are finalised.

*Nick Hodgson*

### **NEWBURN CHURCH FIRE**

Sadly, one of the area's medieval churches, at Newburn to the west of Newcastle, was seriously damaged by fire at the end of March. The church was probably rebuilt after a previous fire (accompanied, unlike the present fire, by a murder) in 1067, and may incorporate pre-Conquest masonry. Its furnishings included a pre-Reformation bell (which was still in use), woodwork by Ralph Hedley, and various memorials to local people, most notably the Spencer family of Spencer's iron and steel works, Newburn's biggest employer in the Victorian and Edwardian period.

The cause of the fire is still not known. It severely damaged the upper part of the tower, and destroyed its roof. The nave roof and the chancel roof were also affected. The furnishings still need to be examined in detail to see whether the damage is on the surface only, or goes deeper. Various conservators and restorers will be visiting the church over the next few weeks to do this. After that, it will be possible to draw up a restoration plan. The church was insured, fortunately, so this will stand a lot of the financial strain. The vicar is hoping for an 18 to 20 month restoration-period, but realises that this is probably too optimistic.

So far, it appears that the bells are almost certainly ruined, so that new ones will be needed. The pre-Reformation bell will probably be put on display in the church. The stained glass is mostly still in situ although it has been affected by smoke. All the woodwork is smoke-damaged, but is largely intact apart from one pew and some superficial damage to others. An 1898 painting over the chancel arch, on canvas, mounted in front of

the wall-face, stood no chance in the fire, and has gone completely. The church is thinking of a replacement of some sort. The organ was damaged by water, and will be removed, restored and replaced by Nicholson's (the firm which built it in 1885).

*Roger Fern*

(It is a pleasure to acknowledge the friendly help of the vicar, John Sinclair, in providing information for this note.)

### **THE GREAT NORTH MUSEUM**

This project has now entered a new and very busy phase following our successful application for £4 million of European funding. We now have contributions committed from all the larger funding bodies and only need to secure the last £1.5 million from trusts and individual donors, several of whom have already expressed interest. The Fundraising Group have been able to raise £25 million in just a couple of years.

The Hancock Museum closed in April and the staff there are tackling the Herculean task of emptying the building by mid September. Anyone who has moved house will sympathise with the problem; 120 years of occupation produces a great deal of stuff. Each object has to be documented and photographed before being carefully wrapped and labelled so that it can be found again when next required. With funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the museums have been exploring a new method of recording artefacts in transit using micro dots, a method already pioneered in libraries. This has not worked as well as we would have wished and a full report will be produced in due course.

Although January 2009 seems a long way away there is actually very little time for all the work that needs to be done. Working backwards: time has to be factored in to put objects in cases or mount them, for the cases to be built, fitted out and allowed to rest for a while to allow any noxious fumes to disperse before introducing fragile objects, and for the designers to design the cases or mounts. This means that deciding which stories are to be told and which objects best tell those stories has to be done quite quickly and I would like to thank those members of the Antiquaries who have generously given of their time and

expertise to ensure we tell up-to-date, exciting and accurate stories.

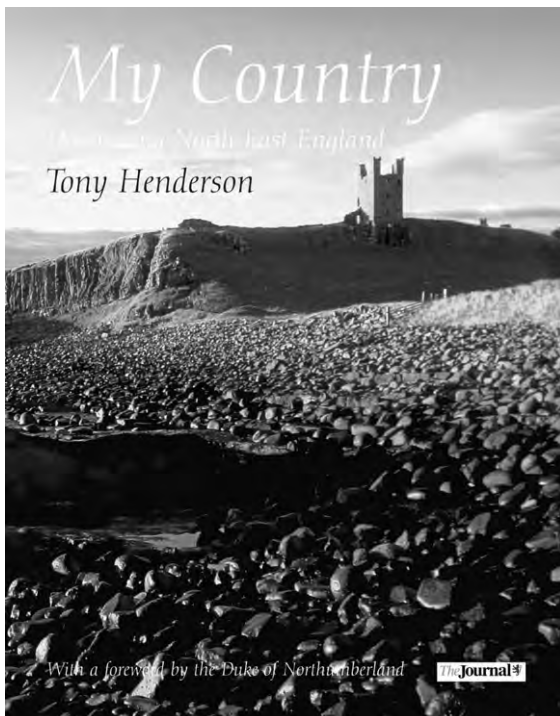
A detailed brief has been produced by the curatorial staff for each gallery and section and the staff are now creating a complex database to ensure that the designers have instant access to each display object's dimensions, accession number, significance and weight, as well as images of the object.

The Museum of Antiquities is proud of its collection of Roman altars and sculpture but having to work out the weight of 200 of them strains one's enthusiasm. Somehow the altars without photographs are always the ones in the most inaccessible place in the store!

In the meantime, the Museum remains open and visitors are very welcome.

*Lindsay Allason-Jones*

## DISCOVERING NORTH-EAST ENGLAND



The North-East has a quality and diversity of natural landscapes which are by far and away the best in England. They are layered by outstanding heritage, much of it a legacy of the region's centuries as a frontier land. In a crowded island, there is the tranquillity and solitude of the wide open spaces in what is known as the Land of the Far Horizons. There are the great tracts of moorland, the sacred hills, the

forests, the dramatic valleys and gorges. Add some of the best preserved prehistoric landscapes in England, the world heritage site Roman legacy, the array of castles, the industrial heritage.

We have areas such as the College Valley in the Cheviot Hills, where only 12 cars a day are allowed in by permit. As it takes effort to get a permit, the valley is essentially traffic free and walkers can experience the nearest there is to wilderness in England.

There is also the region's great Christian heritage from Lindisfarne and Cuthbert and Bede, plus the fact we have 12,000 listed buildings, 1,349 archaeological sites of national importance. Over 40% of the region's landscape is either national park or area of outstanding natural beauty and there are 122km of heritage coast.

I decided to explore in detail the special places which set the North-East apart from the rest of the country. So far I have visited 70 locations, from the Durham Dales to the North Pennines, Northumberland National Park, the Cheviots, the stunning coastlines and the urban surprises.

The first volume of *My Country: Discovering North-East England*, covers 33 of these destinations in a 144-page full colour book published by First Edition at £14.99 (available from The Journal Groat Market, Newcastle and all good bookshops). A second volume is due out later in 2006 with possibly a third to follow

*Tony Henderson*

Personal details: I am Environment Editor on The Journal and I have a lifelong passion for nature, history and archaeology and – being born in Jarrow – for the North-East too. I have been a member of the Society of Antiquaries for 20 years.

## JOHN MANSELL FLEMING

John Mansell Fleming, who died on 1 March 2006, had been a loyal member of our Society since he joined in November 1947. He became a member of Council in 1961 and took on the role of Country Meetings secretary in 1969, being largely responsible for the organisation of the pilgrimage along Hadrian's Wall that year. He served as President between 1981 and 1982.

A keen photographer, he recorded all manner of old buildings but particularly old railway stations

and the engines and other railway subjects. His collection is now included in SINE and can be consulted on the internet. He was a founder member of the North East Railway Association, edited its journal *Express* between 1979 and 1985, and was its Chairman and subsequently Life President until his death. He was also a founder member of Gosforth Local History Society, now unhappily in abeyance.

His working life was spent with the General Post Office Engineering, Telephones Branch, and during World War II he was engaged in maintaining communications between London and HM Forces in Europe.

He married Dr Margaret Walker in 1946 and she was a constant support in his work for the Society. Their son Charles was brought into the fold virtually as soon as he could walk!

*Constance M. Fraser*

## SECOND HAND BLUES (AND REDS AND BROWNS)!

From time to time the Society receives donations of second-hand copies of *Archaeologia Aeliana* for resale to members. Some of these donations include copies of journals no longer in stock. These include:

4th Series hardback (brown covers)  
 1963–1972 (£50 the set)  
 1961–1972 (£60 the set)  
 1966–1972 (£35 the set)  
 1952, 1964, 1967, 1968 – £5 each

5th Series hardback (red covers)  
 1974–1979 (£30 the set)  
 1973–1980 (£40 the set)  
 1982–1986 (£25 the set)  
 1988 – £5

There are also several copies of the 5th series in paperback (blue covers). For the most part these duplicate stock already held, and will be used as reserves when that stock is depleted. Members ordering back numbers will be offered second hand copies where no unused stock remains.

To purchase any of the stock listed above, or any other back numbers from the 5th series

please contact the membership secretary at the Black Gate.

*Bill Griffiths*

## FUNDRAISING WITH THE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY



*Kate Adie and Sir Thomas Allen at the VCH; picture, Gill Cookson*

The Durham Victoria County History committee held a highly successful fundraising evening in February at Sunderland’s historic Exchange Building. “Farne Island Discs” bore a close resemblance to a certain Radio 4 format, with our chairman, Prof. Tony Pollard, as Sue Lawley.

His guests, intrepid TV reporter Kate Adie and singer Sir Thomas Allen, were both raised in Sunderland and are both patrons of the Durham VCH. The pair shared memories of unflattering school uniforms and strict gender segregation, and then of the rigid landladies of their college days. The much-travelled duo also recalled a partitioned Berlin, Prague and Sarajevo.

Among the 120 guests, we were especially pleased to be joined by some of the volunteers recruited to our England’s Past for Everyone project, and by two other patrons, Lord Barnard and Sir Paul Nicholson, Lord Lieutenant of County Durham, as well as by Dr David Taylor, representing the University of Sunderland and his wife Dari Taylor, MP for Stockton South.

The evening raised about £1,700 for the VCH’s local funds, Spin-offs included useful contacts, ideas and information, and excellent publicity.

*Maureen Meikle*

## BRITISH HISTORY ONLINE

This website, [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk) is the digital library containing some of the core printed primary and secondary sources for the medieval and modern history of the British Isles. Created by the Institute of Historical Research (IHR) and the History of Parliament Trust, with funding from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, it aims to support academic and personal users around the world in their learning, teaching and research.

Its resources include early OS maps (including 1:10,560 = 6 inch) on it, and the full text of a number Victoria County History volumes, including VCH Durham, vols 2 & 3 in full text, with pictures where copyright permits. The full set of religious house part-volumes is now online (except for the moment Somerset, for technical reasons). In due course, all published VCH volumes will be up there. It will also include the National Archives *Calendars of State Papers, Domestic*, from 1547 to 1704, and 1760 to 1775.

A recent addition is Mackenzie's History of Newcastle in full text, though seemingly without any pictures. There is a search facility, although this may take a little experimenting to get used to.

In April this year it was announced that the IHR had been awarded a further grant of nearly a million dollars from the Foundation, to fund additional digitisation, the creation of new partnerships, outreach activity and the establishment of a sustainable long-term business model.

## HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2006

This year, Heritage Open Days will run from Thursday 7th to Sunday 10th September 2006. The Keep will be participating on Saturday and Sunday (9th & 10th), and will have the 15th century re-enactors York City Levy in attendance again.

The Black Gate will be open for two days - Thursday 7th September and Friday 8th September. We may consider extending to include Saturday if the level of supervision is adequate.

On display as usual will be the guardrooms, with information panels and temporary flood-lighting. The Members' Room will also be open, with the historical information panels and temporary displays. If anyone in the Society has relevant displays or publicity material, this could be a chance to give them an airing!

Other properties and events in and around Newcastle will be advertised in the HODs Directory. The website is [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk) and the online event directory is intended to go live in July. The published directory may not come out until later, as they take late entries up to August. At least one copy will be in the Library at the Black Gate for reference, and it will also be available at Tourist Information Centres and elsewhere.

*John Nolan*

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have joined since May 2005.

Mr Brian Anderton  
Miss Valerie Bridges  
Ms Valerie Butcher  
Dr Derek Craig  
Ms Linda Davies  
Mr Mark Egan  
Dr John Gower  
Mr Robert Harrison  
Mrs Deborah Haycock  
Miss Kathryn Irwin  
Mrs Hellen Jowett  
Miss Hannah Lynch  
Mrs Gillian Mabbitt

Dr Michael Massam  
Mr David McGlade  
Mr Neil Peacock  
Mr Adrian Pettifer  
Dr Alan Rushworth  
Mrs Harrison Sally  
Ms Marian Tindale  
Mrs Sarah Walter  
Mr Colin Wells  
Mr Jon Welsh  
Ms Carol Ann Whitefield  
Mrs Eileen Williamson  
Mr Joe Williamson

## HADRIAN'S WALL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The Hadrian's Wall Research Framework is a joint project between Archaeological Services Durham University and the Archaeology Section, Durham County Council.

The Wall was inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS) in 1987. The second WHS Management Plan of 2002 recognised the importance of research for the understanding of the Wall. This first phase of the Research Framework project will be an assessment of the current state of the Hadrian's Wall resource, both in terms of the surviving physical remains and the accumulated knowledge existing in publications and archives. In the second phase, the Resource Assessment will be analysed to identify the principal research themes and directions suggested by the assessment, including those prompted by gaps and areas of difficulty in the current knowledge base. The overall purpose will be to identify subjects and themes for potential future research set out as a Research Agenda. The third and final element of the project will be the formulation of a Research Strategy. A key aspect of this project is involvement by the wider archaeological community. We are keen to have input from all those with a research interest in Hadrian's Wall and its immediate hinterland, and a number of public meetings will be held over the next year to allow individuals to have their say.

Further details about the project can be found on the Framework's website at [www.durham.ac.uk/archaeological.services/](http://www.durham.ac.uk/archaeological.services/) – follow the link to Hadrian's Wall Research Framework). I can be contacted at the Archaeology Section, Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5TY, 0191 383 4225 or e-mail [david.petts@durham.gov.uk](mailto:david.petts@durham.gov.uk)

*David Petts, Project Officer*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### **Bede's World, Jarrow**

Lectures on the last Saturday of the month at 12 noon

28 October 2006; *The Vikings in Northumbria*, Professor James

Graham-Campbell, Institute of Archaeology, University of London

25 November 2006, *Tyrian Purple in Anglo-Saxon England*, Dr Carole P Biggam, University of Glasgow

### **Northern Architectural History Society**

Lectures at 7.30 on a Tuesday evening. For membership and more details, contact David Hide, 24 Towers Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 3QE, phone 0191 281 1918

17th October 2006; *Carlo Scarpa; a portrait of an outstanding Italian architect*, Richard Murphy

14th November 2006; *Ruskin and Wallington, the House, its owners and their circle*, Professor John Bachelor

## UNDERSTANDING HADRIAN'S WALL



The Arbeia Society's annual conference will be held over the weekend of 3rd to 5th November, at the Customs House, Mill Dam, South Shields, and will mark the imminent publication of the 14th edition of the *Handbook to the Roman Wall*.

Since 1992, the Arbeia Society has run an annual day conference on the central theme of the study of Hadrian's Wall. For 2006, Professor David Breeze suggested that to tie in with the publication of the new edition of the *Handbook*, it would be particularly useful if the conference were to air as many of the problems in our understanding of Hadrian's Wall as possible. The Arbeia Society was delighted to accept this suggestion and in order to provide the time necessary to discuss these problems in depth, we are extending the conference over an entire weekend. It will begin on the Friday evening with a reception and an introductory lecture by David Breeze.

The main focus will be on the structural history of the Wall as a whole, and not on individual sites. There will be contributions by speakers from Germany and Austria on the Roman frontiers of mainland Europe to provide

comparisons, but all the other speakers will be scholars active in the study of the Wall. The proceedings will be published in due course as a volume of the *Arbeia Journal*.

The conference is being arranged in association with this Society, and with the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society and the Hadrianic Society. Details are available from the Secretary of the Arbeia Society, c/o Arbeia Roman Fort, Baring Street, South Shields, NE33 2BB (liz.elliott@twmuseums.org.uk), tel: 0191 454 4093.

### AND ANOTHER CONFERENCE...

This one is entitled "Border and Identity; The Solway Basin, England and Scotland, c1500-

2000". It is being held under the joint auspices of the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology and the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society. Speakers will include Prof Edward Cowan, Innes Macleod, Frances Wilkins, Geoff Stell, David Cranstone, Richard Newman, Chris Dalglish and Peter Messenger.

Dates are Saturday 30 September – Sunday 1 October 2006, and the venue is Browne House, Crichton University Campus, Dumfries DG1 4ZZ. It costs £40, or £25 for senior citizens and students. The charge covers morning coffee, buffet lunch and afternoon tea, on both days

For additional information on the venue and directions for getting there visit <http://crichtoncampus.co.uk> or contact David Caldwell who will also offer advice on accommodation near the campus.

### 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 3rd, 2006. The mailing date will be December 13th. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Secretary at the Black Gate by noon Wed Dec 6th. 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.*