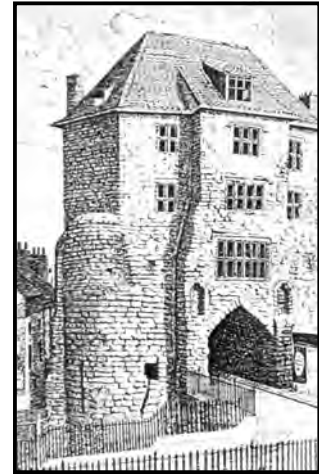


NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No. 41: DECEMBER 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, website www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk

INDOOR MEETINGS FOR 2007

Our January lecture, coming as it does as part of the Anniversary meeting, needs a different sort of treatment from the rest of the programme. This year we offer an Antiquarian Miscellany. So, who and what are in the miscellany? Come and find out.

During the rest of 2007, we catch up with four current archaeological projects. At Bollilhope in Weardale where Rob Young and others have prehistoric settlement remains and Rachel Pope's project at Clennel Street in Northumberland. Studies of rock art have become something of a feature of north-east archaeology in recent years and Tertia Barnett will give an account of current work.

Further afield, but closer in time, we revisit the First World War study on which Alistair Fraser reported a few years ago and which has now raised some issues concerning human remains. Corbridge will feature in a pair of lectures, from Nick Hodgson who will consider some architectural fragments, and Eric Cambridge who will deal with post-Roman matters. Bernician origins, seen through the evidence of place names, is Mark Wood's topic.

The Hearth Tax of the 17th century is the subject of a national study and we take the opportunity to catch up with this through Grace McCombie and Constance Fraser who have been working on the Northumberland evidence.

We had to drop Richard Allen's lecture on the Quakers from the 2006 programme when he was appointed to a Fellowship in the USA. Fortunately, we have been able to bring it forward into this year.

For the Public Lecture in November we turn to a subject which we have not featured before, the impact of DNA analysis on the study of early populations. Stephen Oppenheimer of Oxford University, who has recently published on DNA and British origins, will review this topic.

As ever, I would like to thank those who have opened discussion and given the votes of thanks during the past year.

Colm O'Brien
Indoor Meetings Secretary

JANUARY SOCIAL EVENING

The first meeting of 2007, on January 31st, will be the Anniversary meeting and as usual, we will be having a social evening after the lecture. It will be held in the Wood Memorial Hall on the first floor of the Mining Institute where the lectures are held. There will be food, drink, and good company! Donations of food for the buffet will be very welcome – please contact me on 0191 285 5303 to say what you are bringing. We will also be requesting a small donation, around £1, from anyone who has a glass of wine.

Freda Thompson

COUNTRY MEETINGS

Following the sad death of Tom Corfe, Stuart Hill has very kindly agreed to take on the task of arranging Country Meetings for the coming year.

Stuart has been a member of the Antiquaries for several years, having been originally recruited by Colm O'Brien at an Archaeology class. His background, though, is completely different – he used to teach Chemistry at Newcastle University. He was a stalwart of the Archives for All project at Northumberland Record Office, acting as team leader of the Monday group of volunteers.

Because of the necessary changeover, details of the 2007 meetings were not yet finalised at the time of going to press, and the full details will be sent out in the Spring

mailing. The provisional programme, however, is
28th April, 2007 Chillingham Castle & Park,
Ros Castle
7th July, 2007 Keswick, Cockermouth &
Lorton Hall
1st September, 2007 Richmond, Aysgarth &
Castle Bolton

Stuart's contact details are Tel. 0191 281 0999, e-mail zmbovk@yahoo.com.

We're all very grateful to Stuart for taking on the role.

COUNTRY WALKS 2007

To blow away those Christmas cobwebs, on 2nd January 2007 Eric Larkham will take us round the Ouseburn Valley, offering an insight into some of the less known areas and bringing us up to date with the work carried out in recent months

On May 20th, Chris Hudson will lead us on a seven-mile walk from Whalton (via some railway history) to Mitford Church and Castle, then on to Newminster Abbey. This tour of the three baronies will end in Morpeth.

9th September will offer a tour of some of the lesser known bastles in Tynedale led by John Sadler. He will focus on the history of the reiver families associated with the sites, and assures us there are good pub lunches to be had as well as good walking.

We hope to organise a car pool and lifts for those without transport who would like to come along on these walks. Please ring me on 0191 230 3797 if you can go offer lifts or if you need to be put in touch with those who can.

Many thanks to John Mabbit, Rob Young and Ian Ayriss for leading the walks this year, and to all those who participated.

Rosie Serdiville

SEVEN STORIES – SEVENTH HEAVEN?

The 2006 President's Evening was held in the Centre for Children's Books, Seven Stories, on the banks of the Ouseburn. As our President Grace McCombie explained, nearly 160 years ago there was another festive occasion

here when the proprietors of the Northumberland Flax Mill – now Seven Stories – gave a dinner to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its opening in 1838. One of our members, John Dobson, was the architect.

The Society had of course always known that this was quite a special area, Grace said, and still hoped that one day we would find Hadrian's Wall crossing the Ouseburn. We had also been interested in its long industrial history, from the glass works of the 17th century near the mouth of the Ouseburn, to the lead works and potteries of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Elizabeth Hamill, the Collection Director, explained the creation of the Centre, "a dream... on the banks of the Tyne. Not just any dream, but a dream that would lead to the creation of a national home for British children's literature." Elizabeth took us through the long story of the founding and search for funding of the Centre, from 1995 to August 2005, when it was officially opened by the Children's Laureate, Jacqueline Wilson, and her principal illustrator Nick Sharratt. She had found Leetham's Mill (as it then was) in 2000, when it was derelict, but it was a building with a history. "It had been bought in the early eighties by the actress and political activist Vanessa Redgrave for the Worker's Revolutionary Party to be used as a retraining centre for redundant miners. One floor was full of party literature, papers and film. A large portrait of Trotsky leant against a wall. Downstairs was TUPS – Trade Union Printing Services – a publishing company run by an ex-miner and dedicated to publishing mining and local history," she explained.

The archive itself is not in the Centre, but at Newcastle University and a second site nearby. The creation of a collection centre with an environmentally controlled store work rooms, research facilities, a reading room and lecture rooms is already under way. The core aim of the growing manuscript and artwork collection is to document the creative process involved in the making of a children's book and the working lives of modern British children's authors and illustrators. Around the body of original work, a

book collection is being built up to provide a cultural and historical context for it.

The Centre is open from 10 am to 5 pm Mon to Sat, with a slightly later closing time of 6 pm on Thursdays. Sunday opening is 11.00 to 5.00. Tickets are £5 for adults, £4 for children and concessions. You can get annual passes for unlimited visits for £12.50 and £10 respectively, and a Family pass for £37.50. For more details, look at their website on www.sevenstories.org.uk

HANDBOOK TO THE ROMAN WALL



Former President Beryl Charlton purchasing a copy of the new Handbook. Picture, courtesy Alan Biggins

25th October saw the publication of the 14th edition of Bruce's Handbook to the Roman Wall. The first edition (called "The wallet-book of the Roman Wall") appeared in 1863. The 13th edition, by Charles Daniels, was published in 1978, and had been out of print for a long time. Our Society decided to take on the job of publishing a 14th edition, and

invited our distinguished Council member, Professor David Breeze, to write it.

The launch ceremony in the Museum of Antiquities was attended by what the 19th century might have called “a brilliant company”, some quite a distance. They heard speeches by Eric Robson (a director of Hadrian’s Wall Heritage Ltd and a leading light of Gardeners’ Question Time), and by Professor Breeze himself. Eric Robson mentioned that he had looked up Hadrian’s Wall on the Newcastle University website, no less, and discovered a book by John Collingwood Breeze! David invited everyone to go out and explore the Wall; and to report any errors and new discoveries to him ready for the next edition.

First reactions from outside the Society are favourable: people think that it is a very good piece of work, and nicely presented.

Roger Fern

Note; Bill Griffiths sold large quantities of the Handbook at the Arbeia Society’s conference on the topic. You’re still in time to buy one, though! You’ll need to send a cheque to our distributor, made out to Oblong Creative Ltd, address 416b Thorp Arch Estate, Wetherby, LS23 7BJ. The price is £18, plus £4 postage and packing (or £6 postage and packing for addresses in Europe).

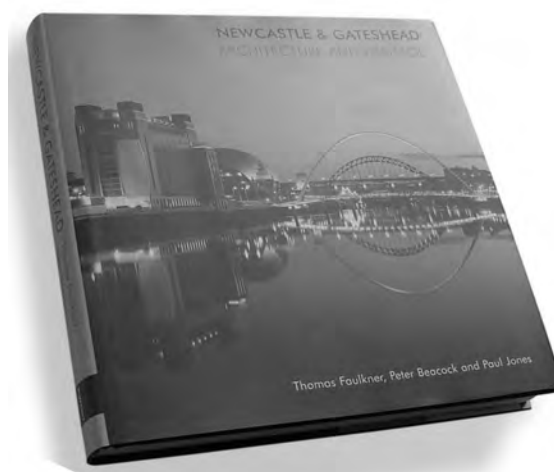
OTHER NEW BOOKS OF INTEREST

The Complete Greek Temples, by Tony Spawforth, Thames and Hudson, 2006; £24.95

Tony Spawforth is Professor of Ancient History at Newcastle. His book is a welcome and beautifully illustrated addition to T+H’s series. It discusses the multifarious aspects of construction and use, and includes a gazetteer covering all the archaeologically significant sites from among the 196 known temples.

Alan Beale

Newcastle and Gateshead; Architecture and Heritage, Tom Faulkner, Peter Beacock, Paul Jones, with photos by Tom Yellowley, £25, In



Picture courtesy of Bluecoat Press

bookshops, or from Bluecoat Press, 19 Rodney Street Liverpool L1 9EF, e-mail colin@bigbluetube.com, phone 0151 707 2390 Fax 0151 707 6174

A substantial publication charting the overall development of Newcastle and Gateshead’s architecture from the early Middle Ages right up to the present day. It has more than 300 colour photographs, nearly all taken specially for it. There are also historical illustrations, such as old maps and engravings.

Stotty ‘n’ Spice Cake; the Story of North East Cooking, Bill Griffiths, Northumbria University Press, £9.99

This Bill Griffiths is project co-ordinator for the dialect initiative “Wor Language” based at the Centre for Northern Studies, Northumbria University. Cookery is the first of three topics selected; mining terms and coastal terms will follow in 2006-2007.

They welcome comments and participation. See their website www.worlanguage.co.uk or e-mail billygriff@postmaster.co.uk

GIFT AID

Earlier this year Sarah Walter and I compiled and submitted a claim to the Inland Revenue for £2,815.43, based on the subscriptions of 380 of our members. If all our other 160 or so individual members had signed up, our claim could have been some £1,200 higher at no cost whatever to them. No Treasurer likes having to ask Council to increase subscription

TOM CORFE, 1928–2006



Tom Corfe, Country Meetings Secretary for the Society, died suddenly on 24th September 2006.

We in the North East who are interested in history owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Tom Corfe. His time in Sunderland and the last twenty years spent in Hexham produced a rich harvest of talks, lectures, pamphlets and books. He had a gift with words which, animated by his enthusiasm and scholarship, resulted in a lively but clear and concise style, a joy for both listener and reader.

The outings which he organised were meticulously planned, accompanied by splendid leaflets with detailed information about places, times and travel arrangements. All of this has resulted in most enjoyable and fruitful visits, truly days to remember.

Tom was deeply committed to his vocation as an historian, to his duties as a Hexham Abbey steward and guide, and to the societies which he served. He loved acting and relished the many and varied parts he played in the production of the Queen's Hall Theatre Club in Hexham. He was a loyal friend, father and grandfather; above all he was a devoted husband, having shared with Sheila over forty years of happy married life.

We shall remember Tom, a generous, kindly man who never spared himself in the service of others.

Marjorie Dallison

levels. That amount of extra money would comfortably postpone the day when I have to do so.

I therefore once again make the strongest possible plea to those of you who pay income tax but who have not yet signed up for Gift Aid to do so straight away. Forms are readily available from Sarah at the Black Gate or from me at 24 Towers Avenue, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3QE (tel 0191 281 1918).

*David Hide
Treasurer*

“UNDERSTANDING HADRIAN’S WALL”



Hadrian's Wall looking east towards Housesteads Picture, Linda Kay

The Arbeia Society, in conjunction with ourselves, the Hadrianic Society, and the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, held a conference over the weekend of 3rd – 5th November 2006, at the Customs House in South Shields, following the publication of the new edition of the *Handbook to the Roman Wall*. Surprisingly, so far as anyone has been able to find out, it was the first full-scale conference about the Wall to be held for 30 years or more. There were contributions by speakers from Germany and Austria on the Roman frontiers of mainland Europe to provide comparisons, but all the other speakers were practising academics and archaeologists active in the study of the Wall.

Our own Nick Hodgson gave one of the most interesting sessions, suggesting that we should be looking at the history of the Wall in terms of what was going on in the rest of

the Roman Empire rather than from an insular perspective. For example, one could link the change in the nature of soldiers' accommodation in the Wall forts to the grant by Caracalla of Roman citizenship across the Empire in 212, which meant that the local population were eligible to join the Legions. Paul Bidwell talked about the obstacles in front of Hadrian's Wall, and what these could tell us about their purpose. Lindsay Allason-Jones discussed the "missing" items in the archaeological record – things which do not survive because the soil conditions, or because they were consumed. Given the bureaucracy of the Roman army, for example, there must have been a huge consumption of wax for tablets, along with honey for both eating and medicinal purposes (it's a mild antiseptic). But we have no beehives and no knowledge of where they would have been sited.

The speakers are to be congratulated on keeping it accessible to the many non-specialists in the audience, while still giving their expert archaeological colleagues something to bite on. Let us hope we don't wait another 30 years for the next such event!

Sue Ward

THE GREAT NORTH MUSEUM – THE LATEST

Another busy period for the Museum of Antiquities has passed, as we plan what is going to be on display in the Great North Museum and where and how it is going to be placed.

The premise we are working on for the archaeological displays in the new Museum is that archaeology is about people and we are basing our displays on real people. In the prehistoric sections these are people who we know must have existed, such as the family at the Mesolithic house at Howick, but whose names we don't know because there are no surviving written records. In the Roman period, we get the first recorded names of individuals. Through our exceptional collection of inscriptions we have been able to identify people with stories to tell, such as Aurelia Aureliana from Carlisle and Anicius Ingenuus, the doctor at Housesteads. For the Anglo Saxon period we also have named

artefacts. The carver of the Alnmouth Cross left a runic inscription, for example, and there is also a small stone memorial found at Falstone in 1813, to uncle Hroethberht - Uncle Bob, in fact. In the Medieval and Tudor and Stuarts galleries we have no named artefacts. So we have picked people such as Roger Huntely and Thomas de la Mare, whose lives are known from manuscripts.

The Hancock is now closed and empty except for the sound of builders' hammers but the Shefton Museum and the Museum of Antiquities remain open. We are starting two new projects at the Museum of Antiquities, both funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund. In *Museum of My Life*, two groups of people come to the Museum each week to work with our Poet in Residence, Maureen Almond, on a creative writing project based on our Roman collection. *Stories from the Northern Frontier* is a follow-up project to the *Reticulum Project*, which was completed in the summer and is now fully on-line (at museums.ncl.ac.uk). The Teachers' Pack was downloaded over 18,000 times in its first year – an astonishing international reaction. *The Curator as Artefact*, an assessment of the Project by Jo Catling, is available on demand.

There is still time to catch our current temporary exhibition, *Tattoo!*, as it is open until after Christmas. If you know of anyone with interesting tattoos, please encourage them to send us photographs for inclusion in the exhibition. Several people have done so already, with the local Mixed Martial Arts Association going so far as to provide us with an extra screen full of images and quotes!

Lindsay Allason-Jones

THE LIBRARY ON THE MOVE

The new Great North Museum will include a joint library for the Natural History Society, the University Cowen Library and the Society of Antiquaries. This will be housed in three rooms on the second floor, with normal access by lift, with stairs only for emergency use. Opening hours will be considerably extended from the present ones, and will include Saturday mornings and one evening. The precise extent of opening will depend on ourselves and the Natural History Society producing



Some of our library stock Picture, Denis Peel

enough volunteers to be on site as there will only be one full time member of staff. The joint library will be open to all members and also to the general public, but there will probably be a reader's ticket similar to the County Archive Research Network card, CARN. Only *our* members will be allowed to borrow *our* books.

One downside, however, is that all our books will not be instantly available. There will be an open access room where the most popular books will be housed and I would welcome your views as to what categories should go there. My first thoughts are that we would include all or some of the selection currently in the care – local directories, bibliographies, books relating to Newcastle, Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, Yorkshire and Scotland and also journals of our Society, Yorkshire, Durham and the Surtees Society, plus recent issues of a range of periodicals and the Roman section.

All the rest of our stock will be stored in a closed access room, and will have to be ordered in advance, but initially from the present card catalogue (unless funds can be found to convert the present catalogue to an electronic form before the proposed opening date), but eventually on a web based catalogue. There may be scope here too for volunteers, once the decision has been taken on the form of the electronic catalogue.

The Society has had a library almost since its inception in 1813, and when it moved into the Keep in 1849 the library was housed in the room below the Great Hall. It was open every weekday from 10am to 4pm and for 2 hours one evening a week, under the supervision of the Warden of the Keep. By 1909 it

had far outgrown the Keep. Some books were already being stored in the Black Gate, so the library was transferred into upper Black Gate room, which had previously held the copy of the Bayeux tapestry made by John Collingwood Bruce. These panels were then pinned around the upper parts of the walls above the bookcases. They were moved to Northumberland Record Office when the roof was repaired, but some bits were missing. Recently, when emptying shelves we found some traces, and when we move the shelves we will find out whether these are just small bits, or the complete missing panels.

Our move is planned for early 2009. Already the Natural History Society's library has been packed up for storage. Our library, however, will remain in its present state until the new library is ready for occupation.

Denis Peel, Librarian

Comments and offers of help to
gdpeel@btinternet.com

COUNTY ARCHIVE SERVICE RE-OPENS AT WOODHORN

After more than a year of closure the Northumberland County Archives Service has re-opened at Woodhorn. Our opening weekend saw around 5000 people visit the site, and we resumed full service on Wednesday 1 November 2006. 71 people used the Study Centre on the day of opening!

Woodhorn now houses the Northumberland Collections Service – comprising the county's Archives, Local Studies and Modern Records Service together with the 3D collections previously held at Woodhorn Colliery Museum.

The new Study Centre has accommodation for up to 68 people. You can turn up without an appointment, but must register (free of charge) for a Woodhorn Card, and bring it with you each time you visit. First time users will be asked to complete a registration form and provide proof of identity before being granted access to the Study Centre.

Our website – www.northumberland.gov.uk/collections gives details of how to get here, what services we now provide, and our current

projects. We will be publishing Research Guides and a quarterly Newsletter on the web pages. There is also a link to our electronic catalogue, with descriptions of more than 142,000 records. In due course, users will be able to view thumbnail and screen size images for over 1000 records within the electronic catalogue. (The catalogue of the Society's records will shortly be accessible directly from the Society's own web pages).

Our new address is Northumberland Collections Service, Woodhorn, Queen Elizabeth II Country Park, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 9YF Tel: 01670 528080, E-mail: collections@woodhorn.org.uk

Sue Wood

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

In September, the Black Gate and the Keep were both open for two out of the four Heritage Open Days 2006. The Black Gate had 319 visitors, and was looked after by Denis Peel, Peter Nichol, Brian Gargate, John Williams, Jenny Vaughan and myself.

The Keep had 1189, and there was much interest in the temporary exhibition in the Great Hall, featuring the pubs, clubs, theatres and entertainments to be had in the Castle Garth in the 17th to 19th centuries.

Thanks to all those who volunteered to help.

John Nolan

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Northern Architectural History Society

For membership details contact David Hide, 24 Towers Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3QE phone 0191 281 1918

20th Feb 2007; Ruskin and Wallington; the house, its owners and their circle, Professor John Batchelor

20th March 2007; The Baths of Caracalla, Rome; an exploration of their construction, Dr Janet Delaine

24th April 2007, M H Baillie Scott; an appreciation of the work of this "Arts and Crafts" architect, Diane Haigh

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 1NQ, phone 0191 232 2968, fax 0191 222 1559. E-mail is sue.ward@btinternet.com. Deadline for the next edition will be 11 May 2007. The mailing date will be 20 June. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Secretary at the Black Gate by noon on 13 June. The Spring mailing will go out on 21 March, and anything to go out in it must be at the Black Gate by noon on 14 March. 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.