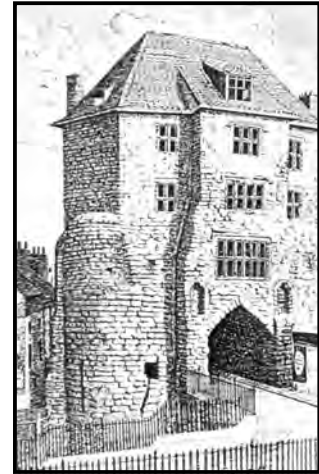


NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No. 42: JUNE 2007



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.

Look at our website www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk for more information, or contact the Membership Secretary at The Black Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1RQ, phone 0191 261 5390, e-mail admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk

WELCOME TO THE NEW NEWS BULLETIN

With this issue we have expanded the *News Bulletin* to 12 pages from its previous 8. One of the reasons for this was to allow space for brief reports of monthly meetings, as a service to our many members who are interested but unable to come along. We will be experimenting with the format over the next few issues, but the idea is to give a short summary of each presentation, plus (where the speakers agree to this) a note of their e-mail address and/or website so that those who want to pursue the subject in more depth can do so. Comments from readers on the format and contents will be welcome.

Due to the publication cycle of the *News Bulletin*, we will be reporting on meetings from November one year, to April the next, in the June edition; and from May to October in the December edition.

We will be using the rest of the extra space to tell members about news, events, publications, and websites of interest. We might even have room for a few readers' letters!

Sue Ward, Editor

CONTENTS

Welcome to the new <i>News Bulletin</i>	1
Richard Bailey OBE	1
The Heart of the City	3
Conservation policy in Newcastle	3
Time Walks and Summer Walks	4
News from the Bagpipe Museum	4
Hadrian's Wall	5
Book Reviews	5
Reports from Monthly Meetings	6
Welcome to new members	6
Friends of Historic Dilston	8
Website Wonders	9
Access to Northumberland's History	9
Great North Museum	9
Dates for your diary	10
Corbridge Lion centenary	11
Cleopatra and the Antiquaries	11
Progress on Sunderland VCH	12

RICHARD BAILEY OBE

Richard Bailey was awarded the honour of Officer of the Order of the British Empire for services to heritage in the Queen's New Year's Honours list, citing his positions as former chairman of the Heritage Lottery Fund's Committee for the North-East, and a Lay Canon Emeritus of Newcastle Cathedral.



Not under arrest! Richard Bailey at the Palace for his investiture

That brief statement hides a lifetime of service to Anglo-Saxon studies in particular, and to the Society, the University, and the wider community.

At Newcastle University he was awarded a personal chair in Anglo-Saxon civilisation in 1980, and at various times was Head of the English Department, Dean of Arts, Public Orator, and Pro-Vice-Chancellor. He has served and serves on innumerable national and regional committees, and on Cathedral Fabric Committees of Newcastle and Ripon. No one who heard him describe the Hexham pilgrims' route, through narrow passages, to see the relics in the crypt, will ever see that space as mere stones. All of this did not prevent his being President of this Society, seeing us through the millennium (1999–2001). For many years he shared with John Philipson the work of editing *Archaeologia Aeliana*. After John's death he added the post of editor to all his other commitments.

Retirement in 1998 brought a change – but not a reduction – of commitment. He spent two years representing the North East on the Heritage Lottery Committee, and when regional committees were set up in 2001, took on the responsibility of chairing the Committee for the North-East. No better chairman could have been found: from red kites to Blaydon Races via the Flavinus Reticulum project, the people of the north east were enriched.

All this and publications too. The first of his that I read was *Viking Age Sculpture in Northern England*, published in 1980, a wonderful, enlightening book. Clutching my new acquisition I came face to face with its author – he said he would sign it – I was too shy to ask – perhaps I'll do that now... But he did warn me that his students said that signed copies were worth less...

It is a great thing to see such qualities as Richard's recognised by Her Majesty's award.

Grace McCombie, President

Below, Richard describes some of the work of the Heritage Lottery Fund whose regional chairmanship he has just relinquished;

What do the following have in common: the restoration of Grey's Monument and Alderman Fenwick's house; excavations at Corbridge Roman bridge and Howick Mesolithic site; the purchase of Avison's musical manuscripts and the iconic "Blaydon Races" painting; the cataloguing of our Society's manuscripts?

The answer is that they were all helped by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Out of every £1 paid for a Lottery ticket, 4p goes to the Fund and, over the last ten years, those 4ps have given the north-east over £130m in grants. Much of this money has gone to large projects, like the restoration of Leazes and Saltwell Parks, the main visitor centre at Segedunum, the Hadrian's Wall path or the stunning new Great North Museum in the transformed Hancock, which will house our Society's collections.

Alongside these massive projects, however, there have been hundreds of smaller grants to local groups and societies which have had a huge impact on their local communities: miners' banners have been restored and made the centre-pieces of education projects in Co. Durham; Lady Waterford's extraordinary paintings in Ford school room have been revived; the town clock in Bellingham has been restored to its former glory and the history of Muggleswick has been written by the village. Our Society's museum was funded to launch its Reticulum project, bringing knowledge of the Romans to outlying schools in rural Northumberland; a project which was not only short-listed for a national award but saw one of the judges, Joan Bakewell, being lectured in

haughty terms on Roman armour nomenclature by a seven-year old expert!

In the early years of the Fund, the north-east seemed to miss out on its fair share of grants. In part this was because potential applicants felt that a London-based organisation would not understand their needs. However the establishment of a regional office near St Nicholas' Cathedral in 2000 changed all that. In the first year of its operation, its very committed officers succeeded in raising the number of applications by 700%! The associated regional committee was drawn from across the north-east, and brought a wide knowledge of the area to the work of advising and judging the bids; it included two of our Society's members, Grace McCombie and Adrian Osler. It was a privilege, and a humbling experience, for all of us to be involved in conserving the region's rich and varied heritage – and in making it more widely appreciated.

Richard Bailey

THE HEART OF THE CITY

The City Council, the Cathedral Chapter and the Antiquaries have teamed up together to prepare and submit a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a major grant for the "Heart of the City".

As the 1992 edition of Pevsner's *Northumberland* notes, "The Roman fort of *Pons Aelius* lies under the Castle Garth. It faced N, away from the bridge it guarded and from which it took its name." Modern Newcastle took its name from the Norman castle which, for the same defensive purpose, succeeded the fort and has dominated the skyline for eight centuries. Three hundred years later, it was joined by the 'proud spire' of St Nicholas' church (now cathedral) 'which, in the words of William Grey, Newcastle's first historian (*Chorographia* 1649), "lifteth up a head of majesty high above the rest, as a cypress tree above the low shrubs" (Pevsner 1992).

In later centuries, the importance of the site was emphasised by the presence of the Moot Hall and of County Hall but, in the name of progress and in the interests of slum clearance, the Castle Garth was ruthlessly



The neglected heart of our City

bisected by the railway. Today, architectural interest in the city is heavily focused on 'Grainger Town'. Its commercial heart radiates around Grey's Monument and when they have finished their shopping, tourists are likely to be drawn to the refurbished quayside.

In both fabric and interpretation terms, the partnership between the City Council and the Society of Antiquaries at the Keep and the Black Gate has been a strong one and at the Cathedral the Chapter, too, have set themselves high standards. Yet it has increasingly been felt that an important element has been missing. The crucial facts that, historically, the buildings had a strong relationship with each other and that this was the earliest 'heart of the city' have almost dropped out of sight. Although many local people and tourists do visit the Castle and the Cathedral and the area retains many layers of its history, it can be hard to find, it is poorly signed and interpreted, and there has been a significant loss of historic character.

If successful, the Lottery Fund bid's results will be hugely beneficial in terms both of the presentation of the buildings and of their use, with special emphasis on educational purposes. They will no longer be a haphazard group of old buildings, but an area of which Newcastle can justly feel proud.

David Hide

CONSERVATION POLICY IN NEWCASTLE

Currently there are proposals for major developments virtually surrounding the city centre, from from Science City and the

Discovery Quarter on the west, through the Stephenson Quarter on the south, to the Pilgrim Street area on the east, with an outlier on the Ouseburn. All these areas are likely to contain vestiges of pre-medieval, medieval, and later industrial and other buildings. Their exploration would add immensely to our knowledge.

Recently the City Council has issued two Supplementary Planning Documents, 'Tall buildings guidance', and 'Archaeology and development'. These are important to anyone concerned with the fabric and evolution of the city.

Tall buildings or structures are defined in the first document as those which break the skyline and/or are significantly taller than the surrounding built fabric. The council has laid down fourteen criteria against which applications are to be assessed, ranging from siting to lighting. Generally, the Society is in favour of the approach being taken by the City.

We also supported a number of the comments in the second document. To summarise;

A vibrant historic environment can strengthen the identity of the city, enhance tourism, and stimulate education.

There should be no development within an area of archaeological interest until a written and approved scheme of investigation has been implemented.

The City intends to improve the setting of the Town Walls, and continue its maintenance programme at the Castle Keep.

The important archaeological potential of the City Centre Area is recognised and measures will be taken to ensure that any remains exposed by development will be properly preserved, even if they have no statutory protection.

We have suggested that the document should include an explanation, in layman's terms, of how the present and proposed listing and scheduling procedures protect buildings and sites. It should also point out that archaeology covers not just buried remains but also standing structures of all periods and types.

John Penn, Conservation Officer

TIME WALKS AND SUMMER WALKS

Time Walks

Our January walk around the Ouseburn, and the May walk around Whalton, Mitford and Newminster both went very successfully with a good turnout and very well-informed leaders.

The next country walk is on 9th September, in Tynedale. We are organising a car pool for anyone wanting to attend this and future country walks who either needs transport or would like to maximise the number of people in each car. Would anyone who can offer a lift or those in need of one contact Rosie Serdiville: tel. 0191 230 3797 or e-mail on Rosie.Serdiville@btinternet.com

Summer evening walks

Members will also want to be reminded that once again we are running a short series of informal summer evening walks. Two will already have taken place by the time this News Bulletin is published, but there are still three remaining in the programme.

Monday 25 June: Jesmond Vale and the middle Ouseburn parks; leader Mike Greatbatch. Meet at the corner of Warwick Street and Dinsdale Road, 7 pm (no 1 bus)

Monday 16 July: Leazes Park and the Leazes; leader Rosie Serdiville. Meet at the landing stage, Leazes Park boating lake, 7 pm (buses to RVI)

Monday 30 July: Pelaw and Bill Quay; leader John Griffiths. Meet at Pelaw Metro, 7pm. This is not a circular walk but will return from Felling Metro.

Each walk will last up to two hours, covering two or three miles. Some include some gentle climbing. All walks start at 7 pm. Please remember to bring waterproof clothing!

For enquiries contact John Griffiths on 07729 827244, 0191 285 7988 or at johnfrancisgriffiths@hotmail.com

NEWS FROM THE BAGPIPE MUSEUM

On 18th July 2007, The Chantry, Morpeth's 13th-century bridge chapel now housing tourist office, craft centre and museum, will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its grand post-refurbishment opening by Princess Margaret.

The day of activities will feature a 20-foot high processional figure of the legendary 18th century piper Jamie Allen, created by Dodgy Clutch Theatre Company in association with the Morpeth Gathering, complete with blinking eyes, moving bellows-elbow and pipe music transmitted from his posterior! There are also plans to hold a concert and workshops. Look out for details nearer the time in the regional press, or ring the Bagpipe Museum on 01670 500717.

Kim Bibby-Wilson

Balderdash and Piffle!



Jacks the Lad page in Baty's tune book; picture courtesy of FARNE (Folk Archive Research North East)

A new series of the BBC2 programme 'Balderdash and Piffle' has recently begun. The programme, which traces word etymologies and solves intriguing word mysteries, approached the Bagpipe Museum recently for permission to use a manuscript now in the Cocks Collection. The page that interested the programme's researcher contained a tune called "Jacks the Lad".

The Oxford English Dictionary has no definite reference to the phrase "Jack the lad", prior to 1981, while the tune book – previously owned by John Baty – dates back to 1860 at the latest. We can deduce this because though the compiler does not leave his name or address, the name of the well known Gateshead fiddler, James Hill, can be found in the back of the manuscript – and that places the book, as far as we can tell, on or near Tyneside some time in the mid-19th century.

Michael Harbottle (student on placement)

HADRIAN'S WALL

The 2009 Pilgrimage

The next of our ten-yearly series of Pilgrimages, the thirteenth, will take place from 8 to 14 August 2009. In line with our tradition of reversing the direction of travel each time, we will be moving from west to east on this occasion, staying in Carlisle for 4 nights and then Newcastle for 3 nights.

We will be visiting many of the familiar sites, but there will also be a focus on new research. We will be visiting milecastle 50 (High House) on the Turf Wall and milecastle 40 (Winshields) in order to examine the ditch and upcast mound. These have been discussed in papers by Humphrey Welfare, and have had several geophysical surveys by Timescan. We also hope to go to some sites not normally visited such as Moresby fort, the Wall from Garthside to Banks and Limestone Corner – though final plans will depend upon accessibility for coaches.

These visits will replace the traditional walks from Housesteads milecastle to Steel Rigg and from Cawfields to Carvoran. However, the organising committee intend to repeat the journey up the River Tyne from South Shields to Newcastle and to place a wreath at the memorial to John Collingwood Bruce. Nick Hodgson will be preparing the handbook.

The members of the two societies concerned, the Newcastle Antiquaries and the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological and Antiquarian Society, will have priority in booking. Detailed arrangements will be announced in due course.

David Breeze

Handbook to Hadrian's Wall

Sales of the Handbook, produced by David Breeze and published by the Society, have been brisk since its publication last autumn. There are plenty of copies left, however – look on the website for details of how to obtain one, or ring the Membership Secretary on 0191 261 5390.

Arbeia Society Conference

The 16th Annual Arbeia Society Conference will take place at the Customs House Theatre, South Shields, on Saturday 17th

November, 2007 with the title of *Deities, Death and Burial on Hadrian's Wall and Beyond*. It will feature recent discoveries and research concerned with religion and burial practices on Hadrian's Wall and in the military areas of the north-western provinces generally. A programme and further details will shortly be available on the Arbeia Society's website www.arbeiasociety.org.uk; alternatively, the Society can be contacted at Arbeia Roman Fort, Baring Street, South Shields, NE33 2BB (tel: 0191 454 4093).

BOOK REVIEWS



Picture courtesy of Tyne Bridge Publishing

***Queens of the Tyne.* Ken Smith, Tyne Bridge Publishing 2007, £6.99**

Passenger liners played a key role in the River Tyne's maritime heritage. This attractive and well-illustrated book celebrates the greatest passenger liners launched from the banks of the Tyne built in the golden age of Tyneside's shipyards. They went on to cross the oceans of the world, and at one time there was hardly an ocean in the world without a Tyneside liner sailing on it.

Ken Smith gives an account of the passenger liners built on the Tyne during the great period of shipbuilding in the 19th and 20th centuries, providing insight into the work and craftsmanship of shipbuilders on Tyneside, and illustrating how the shipbuilding industries in the North-East were a major contributor to the revolution taking place at the time in engineering and shipbuilding, and to the skills and craftsmanship of the workers.

In 1907 came the launch of the famous *Mauretania*, the fastest and most opulent vessel of her day. Tyneside was established in the forefront of the world's shipbuilding centres. Ken's chapter on her brings the story vividly to life, giving an account of her building and her subsequent successes, and a keyhole view into the social life on board this ocean queen.

Freda Thompson

***My Country Volume II.* Tony Henderson, Aheart Publications in conjunction with The Journal, 2006, £14.99**

Tony Henderson has been writing a popular column in the *Journal* for years, picking out different buildings and sites in the North-East for description, potted history and encouragement to his readers to visit. Such articles are ephemeral, however, and publishing in book-form was the natural next step to making a more permanent record. Tony's first volume covered the big set-piece sites in the region, while this second one looks at others which are more obscure, but should be better known – the sort of place, like Langley Garden Station or Binchester Roman Fort, to which one sees the brown sign when passing, wonders what it is all about but is too busy to find out more. Now the research work has been done for us all, written up in a clear popular style, and excellent photos provided.

The contents of each article might not always satisfy the rigorous academic, but that is not the purpose of the book. If it leads more people to visit places like the forlorn Finchale Priory, on the edges of Durham, or the recently-restored Thirlwall Castle now it is open to the public, that can only be a good thing. Two serious criticisms of the book, though, are that it has no map so one can pinpoint where each place is in relation to others, and no index.

Sue Ward

REPORTS FROM MONTHLY MEETINGS

November 2006

David Mason, Durham County Archaeologist, discussed *Excavations in Sedgfield* in 2005 and 2006. Several sites have been

discovered in the area in recent years, some of them with the assistance of Time Team involving geophysical survey. In 2002, Time Team located a Roman roadside settlement and explored fenced and ditched property plots, some of which contained industrial features such as pottery kilns dating from around the 2nd century AD.

In the summers of 2005 and 2006, an excavation project combining undergraduate fieldwork training with community excavation was organised jointly by Archaeological Services Durham University and Durham County Council Archaeology Section. This found more enclosures and evidence of settlement continuing further along the Roman road than originally seen. The size of the settlement, as now known, means that it can justifiably be regarded as a small town. A substantial ditch at the southern end of the settlement was revealed by geophysical survey. Possibly defensive, this may be investigated in 2007.

There is a full report on the excavations on the Durham County Council website, www.durham.gov.uk (put Roman Sedgefield into the keyword search)

January 2007

We had an “Antiquarian Miscellany” for this Anniversary meeting. It began with Derek Cutts talking about *The Northumberland Craggs – Archaeology under Threat?* Rock climbing in the sandstone areas had started in the 1970s and grown steadily since then. A major growth area is “bouldering” – climbing short difficult routes without rope. This has the potential to generate a lot of damage to the crags. Boulderers are attracted especially to features such as overhangs, where there might well be rock art. However, they are very conscious of conservation issues, and reduced erosion by using bouldering pads (large cushions onto which to fall). There is no evidence of actual damage to rock art, and they have a good record of handing in finds.

John Griffiths then talked about the history of *Brandling Village*, in the southern part of Jesmond, behind Clayton Road. Former Mary Magdalene Hospital land was taken over by a consortium in 1820-1830 and laid out in a rectangle, with large 3 storey houses on the outer edges, and 3 inner rows of much more modest ones for servants.

However, a building which had originally been a Baptist Chapel was turned into a Home for Penitent Women, and this ran a laundry. In 1897 the “unfortunates” moved to Elswick, and the buildings were taken over by another more commercial enterprise to form the Brandling Laundry. This then expanded to cover much of the original green space in the village. As a result, sites overlooking Brandling Village failing to attract residential development. Instead the land was used for institutions, such as schools and the Church of Humanity, a fairly short lived positivist “church”.

The third speaker was Rosie Serdiville, on *Ancient Egyptian ostraca*, potsherds used for writing in hieratic scripts. Thousands of them have been found in Deir el Medina, a site for craftsmen working on the major tombs in that area, where 68 dwellings could be seen, last occupied over four centuries 3,500 years ago. They had left evidence of their daily lives, because they were literate; some of the sherds had laundry lists or notes to their mothers.

Rosie can be contacted on Rosie.Serdiville@btinternet.com

February 2007



Rock art in Northumberland; Picture, courtesy of Tertia Barnett

Tertia Barnett explained the *Northumberland and Durham Rock Art Project*, on which she worked as Project Officer for Northumberland County Council.

In 1999, English Heritage set up a pilot study to research and sort out a future strategy on rock art sites. The Northumberland and Durham project was given English Heritage funding for 2 years from 2004 to 2006, and recruited about 60 volunteers in five teams. They

were given the equipment and training to produce a high quality and consistent record, as well as being able to distinguish between the natural and the man-made.

They had developed a cheap and easy method of photogrammetry – recording images in three dimensions, by taking two photographs from slightly different stand-points and offsetting them. Using computer software, they could make a 3-d image and could manipulate it, for example by simulating the effect of sunlight across the surface.

Tertia can be contacted on tertia.barnett@rcahms.gov.uk, and there is information on the project on the Northumberland County Council website, www.northumberland.gov.uk

March 2007

Dr Rob Young, Archaeologist for Northumberland National Park, talked on the *Excavations and Field Survey on Bollihope Common*. This project was established as a student training and, latterly, community heritage scheme in 1988. Bollihope Common is unploughed upland moor, with well-preserved, multi-period, archaeological remains. There is evidence of early lead-working, and several Iron Age/Romano-British enclosures with round houses and yards, one of which has been completely excavated. Artefacts recovered include locally made ceramics, Roman glass and other Romano-British pottery types. Other sites date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Rob will be leading guided walks on Bollihope Common between July 2 and July 20. See www.northpennines.org.uk's events programme for details, or contact him on websteryoung@bruge2.freeserve.co.uk

April 2007

Mark Wood discussed *Place Names and Bernician Transitions*, summarising his research on the transition from Britannic domination in the fifth century to the Anglian kingdoms of the seventh century. Archaeological evidence was concentrated in northern Northumberland, and was very limited, and place names had been little studied. He had found it possible to use them to map settlement and the distribution of English and Brittanic language speakers.

Early -ham names, for example, were concentrated in the Tyne Valley and the Ponteland area. In the Tees area, they tended to be on the coast or the Tees estuary. Most such names were inland, but they appeared in major estuaries and in the Tweed basin. Perhaps surprisingly, coastal areas did not seem to be the areas of earliest settlement.

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC DILSTON



Dilston Chapel and Castle today; Picture, courtesy of Friends of Historic Dilston

The fifteenth-century tower house of Dilston Castle, and the early seventeenth-century Dilston Chapel have been restored and stabilised by the North Pennines Heritage Trust, with the help of grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage. This is Phase 1 of an ongoing project aimed at conserving and gaining recognition for the whole of the historic site. The Friends of Historic Dilston have been set up to support the North Pennines Heritage Trust in the maintaining, promoting and preserving of this important ancient site.

The Friends will help raise the profile of the site by organising a range of events and fundraising activities that will encourage the use of the castle and chapel and their beautiful setting. These will include talks, historical re-enactments, open-air dramas, exhibitions, art days, flower shows and musical events.

During the summer, Friends will have the opportunity of taking part in an archaeological summer school at Dilston, run by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd. This will investigate the remains of the service range of the Jacobean manor house.

In August there is to be a special event centred on Josephine Butler, the Victorian feminist and social reformer, who grew up in

nearby Dilston Hall, the house that is now Dilston MENCAP College. Later in the year Dr Leo Gooch will reveal his latest research on the Radcliffes of Dilston, focusing on life in the household of a Northumbrian Earl in the seventeenth century. There will also be a series of Guided Jacobite Trails around Hexhamshire and Tynedale. A new Historic Dilston publication, *The Northumbrian Jacobite Trail*, features a pull-out map with information on walks, drives and places to visit.

For further information, contact the Membership Secretary, Mary Rose Ridley, telephone 01661 844157.

WEBSITE WONDERS

Oxford dictionary of national biography (ODNB).

This new Oxford publication is available online, for a hefty fee. However, there is a deal for public libraries which enables them to give their registered readers free access not only in the libraries themselves, but also at home. Both Newcastle and Gateshead libraries have signed up for this.

For access, go to the electronic-subscription page of the libraries' websites. For Newcastle: <http://tinyurl.com/2bsuha>

For Gateshead: <http://tinyurl.com/2awol9>

Then click on the link to the ODNB. This takes you to the ODNB's login page, where you type your library card-number in the box labelled "Library Card Login", and then click on GO.

Many other libraries also subscribe (*see* <http://tinyurl.com/yuvc5j>), including almost all the ones in the North East.

Some of the biographies are of quite local people: John Dobson, for instance, Richard Grainger, the Fenwicks (of Fenwick's) and the Bainbridges (of what now calls itself John Lewis). Some have even been written by members of this Society, and the ODNB website allows you to search for contributors.

Victoria Tunnel

The Victoria Tunnel was dug between 1839 and 1842, to take coal from the colliery at Spital Tongues in Newcastle to the Tyne at the mouth of the Ouseburn. Parts of it are still accessible by arrangement.

www.victoriatunnel.info is a website giving the Tunnel's history and other details.

Roger Fern

ACCESS TO NORTHUMBERLAND'S HISTORY

Following a Heritage Lottery Fund award, Northumberland Collections Service, based at the new Woodhorn Museum, Archives and Country Park, is about to embark on a major two-year archives cataloguing, digitisation and outreach project called "Access to Northumberland's History". This involves creating a web-based, searchable catalogue of archive collections, as well as the digitisation of key archive resources and the delivery of a programme of community and educational events.

The core project team is currently being assembled, and we will shortly be looking for a small band of willing volunteers to do some of the cataloguing for the project, on site at

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have joined since May 2006

Ms Blanch Carpenter
Mr Hugh Chambers
Mr Robert Collins
Mrs Jeanette Cooper
Mr Ian Craig
Miss Julia Dawson
Mrs Beryl Elliott
Mr John Elliott

Dr Michael Flood
The Rev'd Canon Robert Gage
Mr Raymond Hunneysett
Mr Peter Keane
Dr Aron Mazel
Dr Graham Oliver
Ms Clare Pickersgill

Ms Wendy Prahms
Mr Philip Reay
Mr Brian Reynolds
Mrs Isobel Reynolds
Miss Tina Rooney
Dr Peter Wilson

We are always glad to see new members, so if anyone has friends or colleagues whom they believe would enjoy our activities, please encourage them to join.

Woodhorn under the guidance of an archivist dedicated to the project. We will be organising a meeting in the near future for interested parties to attend but, in the mean time, anybody interested in volunteering for the project can contact Project Leader, Geraldine Hunwick at ghunwick@woodhorn.org.uk or on 01670 528051.

Geraldine Hunwick, Project Leader

GREAT NORTH MUSEUM



Lord Armstrong sharing his plinth with a builder's board outside the Hancock Museum

The Great North Museum planning has reached a more detailed stage. The Hadrian's Wall gallery now has a firm list of artefacts for the designers; not as many as we would have liked, needless to say, but all the old favourites will still be on display plus some new artefacts that have not been seen recently or often. We are now beginning to gather up images and draft text for the graphic panels, as well as working with the technically minded people in the University's Culture Lab to create some very exciting interactives. Our colleagues at the other Hadrian's Wall museums and sites are being very helpful in providing information for the electronic panels, which will be linked to the Hadrian's Wall model. This section looks set to be a really useful introduction to Hadrian's Wall. The Prehistory gallery has nearly reached this stage and we are working hard on the post Roman displays. We hope to get all the briefs finalised in the next few weeks.

Work on the building has now started. Thompsons of Prudhoe had the site cleared

before Easter and the foundations are being dug. Our colleagues who work on the north and east sides of the Claremont Bridge and Tower buildings have excellent views and are now reconciled to those of us who visit them rushing to their office windows to check on progress as soon as we arrive.

Detailed planning leads to detailed questions and each day my e-mail is full of strange questions, such as 'what sort of trees did they have in the area in the Roman period?' and 'should the red deer or roe deer go in the Mesolithic period?' This is keeping the curatorial staff on their toes. At the same time, the Museum of Antiquities and the Shefton Museum remain open and are particularly busy with events and exhibitions. At the moment the Museum of Antiquities has two temporary displays. The first is the Collette Hoard of Late Bronze Age metalwork which was found recently south of Berwick and which the Society purchased after the Hoard was declared Treasure Trove. This is a fascinating hoard that includes the first Bronze Age razor from Northumberland as well as the first gouges. Look out for the beeswax filling that can be seen in one of the six gold lock-rings.

The other exhibition is called 'Museum of my Life; the Time of my Life' and shows the work of two groups of local people, including several members of the Society, who worked with the Museum's Poet in Residence, Maureen Almond, and our Artist in Residence, Gilly Rogers, to produce poetry inspired by the Roman objects in the Museum as well as their own experiences. They also made miniature and very personal museums of their lives, which have been displayed next to the ancient objects which inspired them. This juxtaposition of ancient and modern lives emphasizes how similar people are throughout time and reveals that there are no ordinary people. Everyone is extraordinary, particularly members of the Society!

Lindsay Allason-Jones

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Bede's World; talks at 12 noon on the last Saturday of most months. Normal museum admission charges apply, or entry is free to members of the Friends of Bede's World.

Look on www.bedesworld.co.uk or phone 0191 489 2106 for more details

27 October 2007; *From Calf to Codex; the making of manuscript books in Bede's Britain*, Professor Richard Gameson

24 November 2007; *The Anglo-Saxon Monastery at Hartlepool*, Dr Robin Daniels

Northern Architectural History Society; meetings on the third Tuesday of most months in the Fine Art Lecture Theatre, University of Newcastle upon Tyne. For more details contact the Secretary, Ian Wells, on 0191 265 6391 or ian@iwells.net

16th October 2007 *How the Parthenon was Built*, Jack B Lynn

20th November 2007, *John Piper's involvement with architecture*, Frances Spalding

CORBRIDGE LION CENTENARY



The Corbridge Lion

A modest dayschool will celebrate the centenary of the discovery of the Corbridge Lion on Saturday 28th July 2007 in Corbridge Parish Hall, starting at 10am. Speakers include Roger Wilson, Georgina Plowright, Fraser Hunter, Nick Hodgson, Phil Freeman, Jeremy Cunningham, and Mike Bishop. For more details see www.thecorbridgelion.co.uk or email growl@thecorbridgelion.co.uk

CLEOPATRA AND THE ANTIQUARIES

“Age shall not wither her nor custom stale her infinite variety,” said Shakespeare of Cleopatra Queen of Egypt, and as Antiquaries discovered back in the spring, she still has the



The Anthony and Cleopatra coin on display capacity to spring surprises upon the unsuspecting. We woke up on St Valentine's Day to find the newspapers splashing the story that a coin had been “discovered” in our collection, showing Anthony on one side and Cleopatra on the other, and lo and behold, Cleo was not depicted as a stunning beauty. As our Keeper of Antiquities, Lindsay Allason-Jones, put it, “Cleopatra looks as if she had forgotten to put her teeth in.”

The story went rapidly round the world; anyone who googles for it will find a list of references ranging from the South India Women's Forum to the *Santa Fe New Mexican* newspaper. Lindsay's media appearances included the Today programme and Colourful Radio, the black national radio for Britain, where she found herself in a three way debate with a Rastafarian DJ and a Black historian over the ethnic origins of Cleopatra.

Bonhams the auctioneers also got in on the act, asking permission to use the image of the coin and the story for publicity for a sale of film costumes. By coincidence, they were selling the very costumes used by Richard Burton, in his serious *Anthony and Cleopatra*, and Sid James in his not quite so serious *Carry on Cleo*, that month. The two films were apparently filmed back-to-back at Pinewood, and they used the same set and the same costumes.

Just to milk the story a little more, the Tyneside Cinema arranged to show both the *Carry on* film and the French (dubbed into English) *Asterix; Mission Cleopatra* at the

Museum of Antiquities on May 13th. Audiences for the two films were thinner than one might have hoped, but appreciative. The Museum laid on some vaguely Roman and Egyptian nibbles, and the Tyneside provided a couple of people who had dressed up – one as an Egyptian woman, the other as a Roman soldier but with bare feet.

The more ignorant among us had assumed that the Asterix film was a cartoon, but it turned out to have real actors, including Gerard Depardieu as Obelix. *Carry on Cleo* had Sid James as Mark Anthony, Kenneth Williams as Julius Caesar, and a whole range of others in bit-parts, including Sheila Hancock as caveman's wife Senna Pod. It has the famous line "Infamy, Infamy, they've all got it in for me" among many others.

Sue Ward

PROGRESS ON SUNDERLAND VCH

Work is now well advanced the new volume of the County Durham Victoria County History, *Sunderland and its Origins: from monks to mariners*, with publication scheduled for late 2007.

We will be exploring the history of the town from prehistoric times through to the creation of the parish of Sunderland in 1719. Much of what we know of Sunderland's Anglo-Saxon history comes from the writings of Bede, born on the lands belonging to the monastery of St Peter's at Monkwearmouth and its twin establishment, St Paul's at Jarrow. Bede spent his early years at Monkwearmouth, before transferring to Jarrow, thus witnessing the development of the twin monasteries as focal points of early Christianity in the north and



St Peter's Chapel

major centres of cultural and intellectual excellence in Anglo Saxon England. The book covers the history of this period in detail and includes a section on St Peter's monastery by eminent archaeologist Professor Rosemary Cramp, who undertook the excavation of the site in the early 1960s. The book goes on to explore Sunderland's development, from a small medieval borough and fishing port. Its story thereafter was one of continued growth and economic success. 'Origins' traces the progress of this growth, charting the expansion of the port, its trade and associated industries, its fortunes during the Civil War when the town was occupied by the Scottish army for a time, and its later development into a prosperous borough and commercial centre. An excellent collection of images, maps and plans has been brought together to illustrate the volume.

Maureen Meikle and Christine Newman

A longer version of this article first appeared in EPE News, the newsletter of England's Past for Everyone, available on www.EnglandsPastForEveryone.org.uk

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 2nd. The mailing date will be Thursday December 13th. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Secretary at the Black Gate by noon Wed Dec 5th. 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.