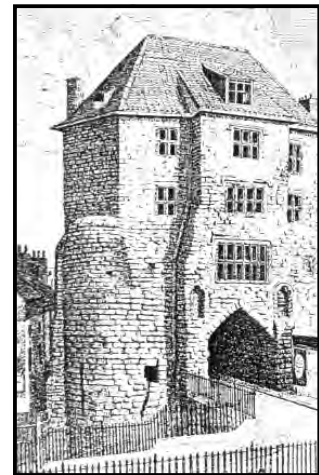


NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No. 43: DECEMBER 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.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...



The Building Committee inspecting the Keep, photo courtesy Grace McCombie

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2007 has been an extraordinary year for the Society, with three big projects running. One is completed: the volunteers' cataloguing of our Woodhorn-held archival collections. Work continues on another, the 'Heart of the City' project, with the City of Newcastle and the Dean and Chapter of St Nicholas's Cathedral, to improve the area of the Castle and Cathedral.

Lastly, the new Museum and Library project, where our partners are Newcastle University, the Shefton Museum, and the Natural History Society of Northumbria. This will bring these collections together in imaginative displays and give them new significance. Support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and many other organisations has made this possible, and both Societies have sought members' contributions towards the cost of the new galleries. The Society of Antiquaries will fund the integrated – and

comfortable – seating, and I am deeply grateful to those members who have already contributed to that admirable objective; I hope others will consider making a donation now. An illustrated museum leaflet will be sent to all members in January.

Looking back over my three years as President, I am struck by the vigorous structure which has developed since in January 1813 ‘seventeen gentlemen met in the Long Room of Loftus’s inn’* and resolved to form this Society. The international membership has grown to many hundreds; Council manages matters of policy; Committees manage Publications, Activities, Library, Buildings, Collections, Research, and Membership. In the care of the Editor, *Archaeologia Aeliana* continues to delight and inform, and is on the shelves of scholars and scholastic libraries round the world. This News Bulletin and our website give us up-to-date information about Society matters. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to acknowledge the support of our Membership Secretary and the Administrator and Warden of the Keep and their staff. Our Trustees, Council, officers, and volunteers give much time to the Society; many members represent it on outside bodies. To all of these people, whose achievements would no doubt astonish the seventeen gentlemen of 1813, my heartfelt thanks for their work and their support, and for three very enjoyable years. *J C Hodgson, ‘The History of the Society’ *Archaeologia Aeliana* series 3, x, 1913, p1.

Grace McCombie

ENID HART

With great sadness I report the death of our past President, Mrs Enid Hart.

Enid was on the Society’s Council for many years, and made a valuable contribution to the work of any committee of which she was member or chairman. She had the distinction of being the first woman in the Society’s history to be elected President, an office to which she brought great dignity – and efficiency. The fact that these words are being read by members now is in itself a tribute to her contribution to the activities of the Society, for it was she who suggested the

publication of a News Bulletin. Everything she did, she did with enthusiasm. For example, no-one who was part of the 1989 Pilgrimage will ever forget the superb organisation of that complicated journey, Enid checking the smallest planning details, and rushing round to deal with any practical difficulties, while presiding over that great celebration.

An obituary will appear in a future *Archaeologia Aeliana*.

Grace McCombie

OUR PROGRAMME IN 2008

Anniversary meeting and social evening
2008 begins with a retrospective. With the Museum of Antiquities due to close as part of the preparations for the Great North Museum, Lindsay Allason-Jones will reflect at the Anniversary meeting on 30th January on its history and those who have been involved in its achievements.

As usual, we will be having a social evening after the lecture, in the Wood Memorial Hall, on the first floor of the Mining Institute. Donations of food for the buffet will be very welcome – please contact Freda Thompson 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.

The rest of the meetings programme

In planning the rest of the year’s programme we have aimed for a wide variety in subject matter and time scales to reflect the wide range of interests among members of the Society. We begin right in the present with the project to promote the Wearmouth-Jarrow monastery as a World Heritage Site. Laura Sole, who is co-ordinating the complex administrative task of preparing the case to present to UNESCO, will speak about this and how an 8th century foundation can be seen to be relevant in the 21st. Jarrow features again for an aspect of its 20th century history when Matt Perry considers the Jarrow Crusade and how this has become a legend of the times.

If we think that the Northern Allotment Society was concerned mainly with leeks and potatoes, John Griffith will disabuse us: they

were responsible for the development of Darras Hall. Gwenda Morgan spoke here some years ago on emigration from this region to the United States, so when she speaks on slavery and the American constitution she will have some north-east connections in mind. We did not include a lecture on the theme of slavery in 2007 – plenty of other organisations did that; but the subject has many dimensions and Jane Webster's lecture on the archaeology of slave shipping takes us into a topic, that of ships, which we do not visit as often as we might.

As far as I know, we have never considered the topic of salt working in our lectures. David Cranstone will put this to right when he looks at salting in the region from the time of medieval monasteries to the 19th century.

Those who heard Eric Cambridge's lecture on Corbridge in October may remember that he referred to ideas which Brian Roberts has developed on the origins of Northumbria. We can hear these at first hand when Brian Roberts himself speaks. As a historical geographer, he brings a new perspective to this topic. To some extent, it is a year for picking up topics which we have ignored or under-represented; we can add to this list that of coinage when Rob Collins interprets the latest Roman coin finds from Hadrian's Wall. Finally, in this run through time, we reach the Neolithic and Ben Edwards' work on long cairns which leads him to review this era in northern England.

May I again thank those who have contributed to the meetings this year by opening discussions and giving votes of thanks to the lecturers. These contributions matter to the success of the evening.

Country meetings

We plan to change the way we organise the Country Meetings. Instead of expecting one person to have all the ideas, do all the work and lead all the trips, we would like to share it out so that each of the three meetings in the year has its own leader who will prepare the itinerary for the day.

If anyone would like to volunteer to set up and lead a day, please would you contact me either by email

colm.o'brien@sunderland.ac.uk. or phone (daytime) 0191 515 2821.

Colm O'Brien

Time Walks

On January 2nd, following our tradition of a New Year urban walk, there will be a trip round some of the industrial archaeology in the Newburn area.

May will bring, with luck, a rare treat: a chance to look round the testing site established by Armstrong Vickers and now owned by BAE. Details of this walk and other summer walks will be included in the News Bulletin and on the website as we get closer to the time.

Finally, on September 7th we will take a trip round the site of the Battle of Flodden guided by John Sadler.

As usual we can arrange car shares/lifts for those who may need them. Ring me on 0191 230 3797 or email rosie.serdiville@btinternet.com if you need or can offer transport.

Rosie Serdiville

ARCHAEOLOGIA AELIANA

This year's volume of *Archaeologia Aeliana* should be out in December or January. It's a monster edition of 400 pages, the largest in the 5th series, and possibly even the largest since the original 1822–1855 series.

Though the external appearance has stayed the same, inside you may notice a few changes. Following suggestions by our typesetter, we've changed the typeface to Palatino, and reverted to a single-column layout. We hope you think that the result looks reasonably smart, but still dignified.

Articles in this year's volume range from the archaeology of the Otterburn Training Area to church music in Gateshead in the early 19th century, and the *other* Sir Walter Scott (the civil engineer).

Roger Fern

PROGRESS ON THE GREAT NORTH MUSEUM

Members' Meeting

Society members, along with colleagues in the Natural History Society, had a chance to hear about progress on the Museum project at a meeting in October. The Dean of Cultural Affairs, Eric Cross, told us first about the fundraising for the project – and in an attempt to provoke healthy competition, pointed out that the Natural History Society were way ahead of the Antiquaries in this.

We heard about how the building work was going on, and the development of the new displays throughout the museum. All our favourite objects, Lindsay Allason-Jones stressed, will be on display, including the Mithras temple.

The Museum of Antiquities and the Shefton Museum will be closing in April 2008 to prepare for the move. Some things are being lent out – the giant porphyry foot in the Shefton is to go to the Victoria and Albert Museum and then tour the US, while many Hadrianic objects will go to the British Museum, for a major exhibition on the Emperor Hadrian.

Sue Ward

Favourite Things

For the final exhibition of the Museum of Antiquities we would like members to nominate their favourite object in the Museum by sending a poem, drawing or paragraph of text explaining why this object is important to them. All the contributions will be entered into a large laminated book which will be on display in the Museum from March 1st until the closing date of April 19th.

Please send your nominations to the Museum, with your name and contact details, before 8th January 2008.

Lindsay Allason-Jones

Moving the Library

It is still too early to give dates but I anticipate moving our library to the new site during the Autumn of 2008. We will need to close the Black Gate Library in advance of

the move, and also to recall all books on loan. Several members are hanging on to books longer than the generous period of three months allowed and I would ask them to return these books forthwith. Once a date is finalised, we will need to have a final period in the Black Gate when books may be consulted only.

The physical moving will be done by a commercial company, and we are to have some paid help to do the humping of boxes and so on. However, we need to pack our books very carefully and keep precise records of what is in each crate. I would also like to have every book cleaned and security tagged at the same time. I am therefore asking for volunteers in two categories, supervisors and "others". There is no status difference between the two but for the supervisors, we need two or three people who can devote time on a regular basis. For the second category, involvement might be more casual. I envisage working in a team of four or five packing only one box at a time to avoid confusion. Please let me know if you can help, and in what capacity, by contacting me on 01661 853278 or by email gdpeel@btinternet.com.

The new library will house books from the University Cowen library, the Natural History Society of Northumbria and the Black Gate. The library will be divided into three sections, open access, closed access and rare books. I propose that in the open access area there will be the books from our collection which are more frequently used. I would welcome suggestions of what we might have available there.

Closed access will contain most of the books stored in compact shelving and these will only be available by filling in a request form. Rare books will only be available by prior request. All members of the Society will have access to the library, once they have registered and been given a user card, and will be able to borrow our books as at present. We will also be able to consult books from the Cowen and Natural History Society but not to borrow them. Non-members will not normally be able to borrow but may consult in the library.

Denis Peel
Librarian

BAGPIPE BIRTHDAY



The Newcastle University musicians and Jamie Allan in the Chantry courtyard (photo by Kim Bibby-Wilson)

The Chantry Bagpipe Museum celebrated its 20th birthday on July 18th. Dodgy Clutch Theatre Company's giant figure of piper Jamie Allan, created for the Morpeth Gathering earlier in the year, was installed in the Chantry courtyard as a focus for the day. The Deputy Mayor of Castle Morpeth was entertained at an afternoon reception by performers from the Northumbrian Pipers' Society and student musicians from Newcastle University's folk music course. There were also informal musical performances throughout the day, as well as demonstrations of crafts, herbs and painting. The Windy Gyle Band gave two evening performances to full houses, to launch their new CD, and further music went on until midnight.

Anne Moore and Kim Bibby-Wilson

MID-NORTHUMBRIAN DIALECT

At long last Thomas Moody's "The Mid-Northumbrian Dialect" has been published. Thomas Moody (born in Amble in 1901; died 1970) was a remarkable and talented man, a teacher, water-colourist, draughtsman, researcher, linguist, singer, euphonium-player, book-binder, calligrapher, sports coach, mathematician and arachnologist. He hand-wrote a number of texts, including this 700-page two-colour scholarly study of Northumberland's language, literature and social history, with copious illustrations and appendices on the history of the language, childhood games and local songs. It was intended mainly as a dictionary of the dialect of the area Alnwick to Morpeth and from Rothbury to Amble, as spoken during the first half of the 20th century. However, the glossary is of relevance to a much wider community, with many references to the author's time as a teacher on Tyneside.

The Northumbrian Language Society has now published the text (transcribed by volunteers) in a book also containing all Moody's illustrations and four facsimile pages. Grateful thanks for financial support go to the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland County Council, Mr Moody's daughter Shirley Coughlan and the Catherine Cookson Foundation (Newcastle University), as well as individual subscribers.

The book has been published in a limited edition of 300 copies, and costs £35 including UK postage. It is available from Kim Bibby-Wilson, kim@northumbriana.org.uk or on 01670 513308 or from the Chantry Museum or bookshops in Morpeth. (The ISBN number is 0 9522756 2 7)

Kim Bibby-Wilson

REPORTS FROM MONTHLY MEETINGS

May 2007

Alastair Fraser, who is a member of No Man's Land, the European Group for Great War Archaeology, described an excavation undertaken near the village of Serre on the World War I Somme battlefield. With



Jakob Hönes (left) and his brother Christian in early 1915; picture, courtesy Walter Rapp

increased development on the battlefields human remains are being found more frequently. By using standard archaeological techniques, closely allied to documentary research and appropriate conservation, it is often possible to give these men names.

The Serre excavation led to the discovery of the bodies of three soldiers from the Great War, one British and two German. From his badges the British soldier was found to be a member of 1st King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regiment) who was killed on 1st July 1916, but sadly no further identification was possible.

The two German soldiers could however be identified and researched. The first was a non-commissioned officer of a Württemberg regiment of the 26th Reserve Division, Vizefeldwebel Albert Thielecke. He was born in Halberstadt and later moved to Württemberg, and killed on June 11th 1915 whilst serving with 121st Reserve Infantry Regiment. The second was Wehrmann Jakob Hönes from the village of Münchingen, north of Stuttgart. He served in the same company as Albert Thielecke and was killed two days later. The researchers were able to assemble a detailed biography of Hönes including photographs of him and his family.

In 2006 the group were involved in the construction and dedication of a memorial to the three men near where they fell, believed to be the only joint memorial to British and German soldiers on the old Western Front.

The group's website is at www.redtwo.plus.com/nml/

June 2007

June's speaker was Dr Rachel Pope, of the University of Cambridge (though born and brought up in Blyth). She has been working with Peter Carne, of the Archaeological Services of the University of Durham, on prehistoric land use in upland settlements in the Cheviots, in particular around Clennell Street – the drovers' road on the watershed to the north of Alwinton.

Rachel reviewed the work of George Jobey, Colin Burgess, and Rob Young, and showed aerial photos of the area from Tim Gates. She also had some astonishing images from Google Earth which, due to their recently enhanced resolution, brought out the prehistoric remains very clearly.

A key issue was the sequence of settlement and abandonment of these upland areas in prehistoric times, a question on which there has been considerable controversy. Her own theory was that the first stage of settlement was the building of monumental burial cairns along the ridge, followed by the development of unenclosed settlement and field-plots, which she believes were contemporary with the cross-ridge dykes. Palisaded enclosures came next, following which the area was abandoned for agricultural purposes until perhaps as late as the Roman Iron Age.

The question of how long turf- or clay-walled roundhouses could survive was also important, and Rachel is also working on a project in Wales, where a turf-walled structure of a design similar to that in the North will be reconstructed and monitored.

For further information, contact Rachel on rep44@cam.ac.uk

July 2007

Dr Constance Fraser, Past President of the Society, spoke in July about the Northumberland Hearth Tax. The Hearth Tax was a national tax levied between 1662 and 1688, to recompense the Crown for revenues lost during the years of the Commonwealth. Not surprisingly, it was wildly unpopular, since it was based on the number of hearths in each house, and the local assessors had the power of entry into any home to check for evasion. Collection was not easy; in 1666 around £1,200 was sent to the Exchequer from Northumberland, but this left around £1,000 unaccounted for.



Welton Hall, one of the buildings researched for the Hearth Tax project. Picture, courtesy Constance Fraser

Constance's research, concentrating on the 1664, '66, and '67 Northumberland returns, is part of the national Hearth Tax Project, which aims to publish Hearth-Tax returns for each county in England and Wales, alongside an analysis of the economic structure, social profile and population density of each county.

However, she said, her study had thrown up so many anomalies that she had begun to question the underlying assumptions. For example, the minister and churchwardens of each parish made returns of those too poor to pay, but there were discrepancies in almost every area between the numbers thus certified, and the smaller numbers on the returns who were classified as non-payers. Equally, some of those recorded as living in a one-hearth house almost certainly were sharing accommodation in a larger building.

Further information about the Hearth Tax project nationally is available on <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/research/researchcentres/hearthtax.html>.

August 2007

In August, Nick Hodgson, secretary of the Society, spoke about his new research on the architecture of the temples at Corbridge Roman site.

Nick explained that a large number of architectural fragments, smashed and used as hard core in the roadway, had been found in the original excavations at Corbridge nearly a hundred years ago. The fragments were noticed and partly published by the original excavators, especially Knowles, but had been little studied since. However, they had been preserved and, as part of a project funded by the North East Regional Museum

Opportunities Hub, and carried out by Tyne-Wear Museums in collaboration with English Heritage, Nick had been studying the various pieces.

One group of these fragments could be identified as coming from the cornices and pediment of a substantial temple-like building. Nick suggested that the famous *Sol Invictus* inscription, found on the site, could have come from above the main doorway of such a temple. However, he did not think that this temple, or any others, were on the sites that Sir Ian Richmond had labelled as "temples" during his investigations. There was a more likely spot beside the Roman road on the way to the river, where aerial surveys had shown traces of buildings that were not on the usual long thin plots of the town.

For more information, see www.arbeiasociety.org.uk/excavations.htm

September 2007

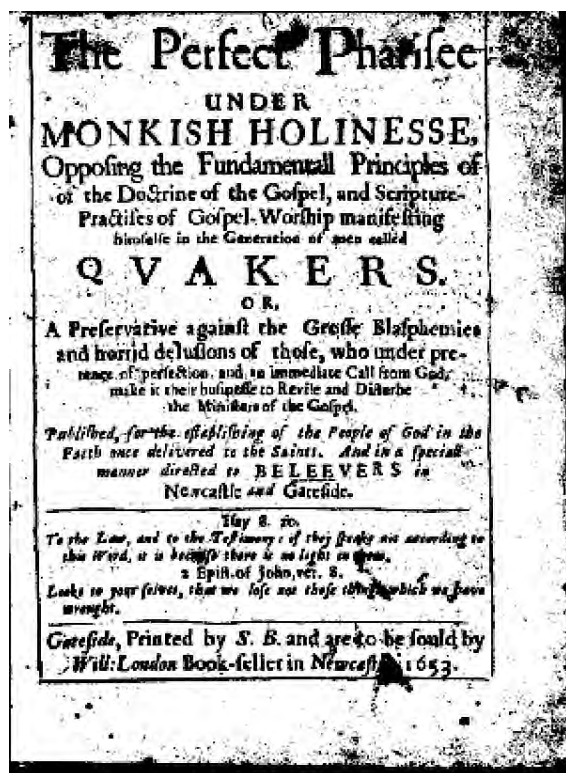
September's lecture was another local, Eric Cambridge, who talked about the little-known and, as he went on to prove, unjustly neglected traces of an Anglo-Saxon church within the fabric of the mainly 13th-century parish church at Corbridge.

Enough traces could be seen within the fabric of the church and on the existing tower to show that the earlier building was middling size, but considerably taller than its counterpart at Escomb, and as tall as the major church at Monkwearmouth. It would have been very striking in its position on a bluff high above the Tyne, probably rendered and whitewashed to make it stand out more.

Eric went on to speculate that Corbridge might have been far more important in the early middle ages than is generally assumed. It could, indeed, have been a major royal centre. There were documentary references to the consecration of a bishop there in 786, and in 796 a king had been assassinated there. It was close to the episcopal seat at Hexham, and there were a number of examples of royal centres in close proximity to bishops' seats, such as Lichfield-Tamworth and Lindisfarne-Bamburgh. The area around Hexham, Eric pointed out, was thick with Anglo-Saxon religious sites, whereas other parts of Northumbria which may have been settled earlier were comparative deserts in religious terms. One might guess that when kings or

nobles gave land for monks to settle on, it was marginal land rather than the most productive – though the monks tended to be good at turning such land quickly into prime estates – and land which was not already controlled by kin groups.

October 2007



A savage attack on the Quakers by Thomas Weld, picture courtesy Early English Books Online (<http://www.odl.ox.ac.uk/eebo/>)

At the October meeting Richard Allen, head of history at the University of Wales, Newport, spoke about the Society of Friends (the Quakers) in the North East in the first century after their foundation, 1650–1750.

The Friends had started out, he explained, as a radical sect, and had been persecuted for it, only becoming “respectable” several decades after their foundation. They originated in the North West of England in 1652, and missionary preachers quickly spread the word elsewhere. County Durham saw seventeen missionary visits between 1652 and 1658, with considerable success. Barnard Castle was one stronghold of Quakerism, with national leader James Nayler holding a “great meeting” there in 1654.

Adherents were disliked by the Church of England, and even other dissenting groups, for their refusal to pay tithes and lack of

respect for the established hierarchy. There was considerable persecution, although Richard Allen’s research suggests that fewer Friends from the North-East than elsewhere escaped persecution by going to Pennsylvania in North America. It is not clear, however, why this should be.

The Act of Toleration was passed in 1689, and by the end of the seventeenth century, there were Friends’ meeting houses in many towns in the North East, including one in Pilgrim Street in Newcastle, and a number of people of wealth had joined. However, the Friends were also in the process of becoming more inward-looking and exclusive, with many of what were called “disownments” of people who married outside the Society.

Dr Allen can be contacted at richard.allen@newport.ac.uk. His most recent publication is *Quaker Communities in Early Modern Wales*, published by the University of Wales Press in 2007.

Sue Ward

DISCOVERIES AT DILSTON CASTLE

A dig carried out at Dilston Castle, near Corbridge, has uncovered a mass of stonework of the building that stood to the north of Dilston Hall, a mansion belonging to the Radcliffes, Earls of Derwentwater, demolished in 1768.

The dig, by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd with the help of over 50 volunteers, was intended to investigate the remains of what appeared to be the Jacobean service range of the original Dilston Hall, built by Sir Francis Radcliffe, the first baronet, c. 1616. A century later, James Radcliffe, 3rd Earl of Derwentwater, transformed the Jacobean manor house of Sir Francis into a palatial Queen Anne mansion with fountains and walled gardens stretching down to the river.

The quality and extent of the remains discovered in the dig has been totally unexpected, providing new evidence of at least three phases of building, dating back to the 16th century and earlier.

Discoveries include a row of underground culverts that appear to have been drains from the hall itself. The largest of these could well have doubled as an escape tunnel in times of

trouble – which would confirm a long-held tradition. Foundations of possible medieval walls have been found alongside some of the later seventeenth-century stonework. Finds have included 17th and 18th pottery, moulded stones and plaster, lead window comes, musket balls, a Charles II half penny and masses of roof tiles.

It is thought that the service range survived as a stable block until the early 19th century, when a number of Dilston Hall's outbuildings were dismantled.

Evidence of the lost medieval village of Dyvelston, a thriving community in medieval times, has also been found.

All these discoveries will greatly enhance our current application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding for further work including opening the walk down to the Devil's Water to the public.

Group visits to Historic Dilston, with a guided tour, can be booked for 2008 through the Friends of Historic Dilston, tel: 01661 844157. For more information, see www.friendsofhistoricdilston.org

Frances Brownlee

HADRIAN'S WALL 2009

Preparations are well advanced for the next Pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall, which will be held from Saturday 8 to Friday 15 August 2009. The Pilgrimage will start in the west and end at Wallsend, after which will be the final dinner on Friday evening, allowing Pilgrims to depart for home the following day. Accommodation will be in hotels in Carlisle for the first four nights, and at the Claude Gibb Hall of Residence in Newcastle for the last three nights.

The formal booking period will follow the Society's mailing in June 2008. The priority period will last until 31 July, after which bookings will be open to non-Society applications. Bookings will need to be accompanied by deposits. Society members who would like to attend the Pilgrimage are encouraged to pre-register with: Ian Caruana, 10 Peter Street, Carlisle CA3 8QP. Tel: 01228 544 120. E-mail:

pilgrimage@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk

SYMPOSIUM AT WOODHORN



Society members at Woodhorn, picture courtesy Maureen Meikle

The Research Committee's Symposium took place this year at the Woodhorn Museum and Archive site, on the topic of the Society's very substantial collections, now mostly deposited there.

Sally Bird took us through the genesis and progress of the *Archives for All* project. One of her future tasks, she added, was to produce a history of all our collections. They had moved about over the years, and some had even gone into people's homes for safety during World War II. She was not certain even now that we knew where everything was. Anyone with information about different items should get in touch with her.

The Society is fortunate to have inherited the archives of several people who might be described as "pictorial kleptomaniacs", a phrase used by Donal Donnelly-Wood about Robert Blair, the secretary of the Society for forty years up until 1923. He drew almost anything he saw, on almost any scrap of paper to hand, and added them into his sketchbooks. Many of the inscriptions Blair recorded are no longer legible because of erosion.

John and Margaret Slade, in a double act, told us about the Society's bookplate collection – four large volumes and numerous loose plates, presented to the Society in 1925 by John Crawford Hodgson. Many date from the nineteenth century and earlier. Barbara Harbottle talked about the sketches of George Bouchier Richardson in the mid-nineteenth century, which included many historic buildings in the course of demolition.

The sets of architects' plans in the collection, as explained by John Penn, include

working drawings, contract documents and photos of work in progress, and letters relating to different projects. Measured drawings of Trinity House, done in 1901–9, show many details that have now disappeared.

Sylvia Coddington followed with a description of the Bell collection of survey plans. She had brought along examples of surveying equipment, heavy and cumbersome, and explained how they would work. Sadly, plans drawn on poorer quality paper were often disintegrating, and public access had to be restricted to avoid further damage.

Avril Snodgrass dealt with the Brook “autograph books”, which contain not just the autographs of eminent people but also a wealth of photographs, newspaper cuttings and letters about them. There were also the notebooks from John Hodgson, including details of his visit to Staffordshire collieries to look at ways of improving safety in mines. Aside from this, Hodgson had put together pedigrees of all the leading Northumberland families, laboriously written out on rather fragile paper. Gil Gilmour, our Keeper of Coins, talked about the Society’s very substantial coin collection – though this is generally not at Woodhorn, but at the Museum of Antiquities or in safekeeping in a bank vault.

From the Collections Service, Keith Gilroy, Study Centre Supervisor and Reprographics Manager, told us how they go about producing digital images, stressing the high quality of the equipment at Woodhorn. Thumbnails of many of the images are included in the electronic catalogue, and can be increased in size so one can study even the smallest details. The Collections Service is also able to produce large laminated panels for displays, for example of the illuminated Hexham Bible.

Sue Wood, who is in charge of the whole Collections Service at Woodhorn, then took us through the way the electronic catalogue was set up, and how to make the best use of it (A summary of this is to be included on the Antiquaries website, on the Collections page). In the recent Remembering Slavery Project, over half the material turned up had come from SANT sources. Our catalogue is so detailed that it is often possible to follow

up references which might have been hidden elsewhere.

Sue Ward

SINGING IN THE BATH



Barbershop Belles at Housesteads, picture courtesy Lindsay Allason-Jones

On August 8th the bath-houses of Hadrian’s Wall rang with song as seven choirs and one soloist entertained the public with suitable songs in the Roman baths at Ravenglass, Carlisle, Vindolanda, Carrawburgh, Housesteads, Chesters and Segedunum. Many of the choirs dressed appropriately: the Barbershop Belles at Housesteads wore *stolae* and wreaths of vine leaves while others preferred shower caps and bath robes. Bathing accessories were flourished by many of the singers, and occasionally by members of the audience, while the Tynedale Community Choir was conducted with a loofah.

Altogether 94 choristers performed in front of audiences totalling over 2,000 people. Some sat through the whole performance, whilst others enjoyed the singing as they explored the archaeological remains. At Carlisle, where the bath-house is under the Market, most of the audience were serenaded as they carried on shopping.

This was the first event arranged by the Hadrian Arts Trust. The Trustees are very grateful to the singers, who included Sam Dalglish at Carrawburgh, the Tyne and Wear Museums Staff Choir at Segedunum and the Hexham Amateur Stage Society at Vindolanda, and to the very supportive staff

and owners at all the sites, for making the day such a success. The event was funded by Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd, Cumbria County Council, North Tynedale Council and Copeland District Council. For more information about the Trust, see www.hadrianartstrust.org

Lindsay Allason-Jones

HANDBOOKS TO HADRIAN'S WALL

The publication of the 14th edition of the Handbook to the Roman Wall nearly a year ago hasn't dampened my interest in its predecessors. I have been searching secondhand book shops to help the Society achieve a full collection of past editions.

I now have 2 copies of the first edition, in different covers. One is green and bears no title. The other is blue and records that it is "Dr. Bruce's Guide to the Roman Wall – Illustrated. 5/-" (I paid £60 for it). In the 19th century books were sometimes produced as a bundle of sheets to be later bound by the purchaser: this could explain the different styles.

The 8th and 9th editions (1921 and 1933) both cost 3/6. The 10th (1947) moved up to 10/6, the 11th (1957) 15/-, the 12th (1966) 18/-, reprinted in 1970 at £1.20, the 13th (1978) £4.95 and the 14th (2006) £18. Perhaps an economist could advise on the relative values.

The 8th edition is also the earliest I have found with a dust jacket. I also have one on a 9th edition, and they are common from then on.

I was puzzled at 3 dates offered for the publication of the 12th edition, the last of 3 produced by Ian Richmond. The title page bears the date 1966, but inside it is 1965. The answer is that Richmond had prepared the revision only to die in October 1965 before its publication. His death delayed publication until the following summer but the publisher omitted to revise the date. The book was then reprinted in 1970.

I should welcome further arcane information from members about the history of the longest running guide-book in Britain.

David Breeze

Copies of the Handbook are still available, and would still make very good Christmas presents. To buy one, send a cheque made out to Oblong Creative Ltd, to: Oblong Creative, 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, total £24 or €34.

SCARAMOUCHE AT THE CASTLE KEEP

"Thunderbolts and lightning, very, very frightening." Sounds like an Italian *Commedia Dell' arte* but it actually happened in July at the Keep during the launch of the Heart of the City Project hosted by the Newcastle Gateshead Initiative. The Dean of St Nicholas Cathedral, Christopher Dalliston, had started to welcome the assembled guests from the local business community when the proceedings were interrupted, not by fire and brimstone but by a waterfall cascading from the gallery arch above the Dean. Rainwater ran down the spiral stairs flooding the Garrison Room and pooled in the Great Hall.

In reality, the deluge was a sign that the recently completed all singing and dancing waterproof membrane to the Keep roof was doing its job!

In the past, heavy rain has often penetrated through the stone flags of the roof and worked its way down through the fabric of the building causing the odd drip but never anything so dramatic as this. The new membrane prevented this, and there had also been subtle changes in the roof levels, so that the rainwater discharge system couldn't cope. The rainwater backed up and spilled over into the two spiral stairways. Fortunately flash flooding doesn't happen very often, and slight alterations to the fall of a few strategic stone flags, and opening up of the existing gully and hopper head should stop a repeat performance.

Pat Blue

T. DAN SMITH

SANT member John Griffiths has recently started work on a PhD at Northumbria

University assessing the life and career of T Dan Smith (1915–1993). John would very much like to meet people who worked with, for or otherwise knew Dan Smith, and is at present particularly interested in his early life – up to the point in 1950 where he became a Newcastle councillor.

If you have any information or useful leads, please contact
johnfrancisgriffiths@hotmail.com or
telephone 0191 285 7988.

STORIES FROM THE NORTHERN FRONTIER



Some of the contributors at the book launch, Picture courtesy Museum of Antiquities

This enchanting little book has been written by children for children, with help from the Museum of Antiquities. It covers Roman myths and legends, such as those of Romulus and Remus and of Hercules and the Golden Apples, and stories of Roman and British history.

Children from St Michael's First School at Alnwick, and Stobhillgate First School at Morpeth worked for a week to produce the text and illustrations, visiting the Museum to research the background. They also went to Seven Stories, the Centre for Children's Books, to discover how books were made. In all, 111 children took part, and every one of them had something included in the book.

It's very clear and beautifully produced, with lots of illustrations and facts and information to back up what is in the stories at the end of the book. It's available for £6.95 from the Museum Shop and other booksellers. Assuming there are any left by now, it would make a very good present for grandchildren this Christmas.

Sue Ward

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Just a reminder that subscriptions are now due by 31st January each year and not by 31st March as used to be the case. Prompt payment benefits the Society and is much appreciated.

Many members will also have seen our new recruitment leaflet. If you would like copies to give to friends in order to encourage them to join, please contact me. Also, if you know of other groups or organisations to whom we can distribute the leaflets in a "targeted" recruitment drive, please let me know. The Membership Committee will be very interested in such suggestions.

Sarah Walter, Membership Secretary

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. e-mail sue.ward@btinternet.com. Deadline for the next edition will be 16 May. The mailing date will be 25 June. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Secretary at the Black Gate by 18 June. The Spring mailing will be on 19 March, and inserts must be at the Black Gate by 12th 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.