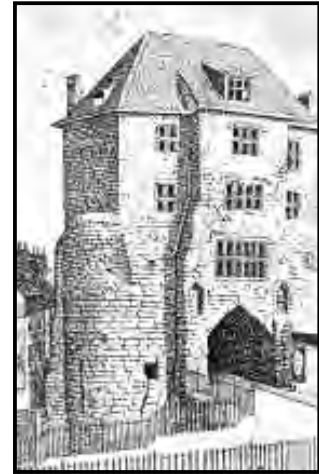


# NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF  
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No. 45: DECEMBER 2008



## 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](http://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](mailto:admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk).*

## BAGPIPES SAVED FROM MORPETH FLOODS



*Anne Moore, Kim Bibby-Wilson, and Maureen Davison surveying rescued exhibits, Photo by Richard Heard*

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The medieval Chantry suffered badly during the severe flooding of Morpeth town centre on 6th September. Although the Bagpipe Museum's galleries are upstairs, the reserve collection, library, merchandise stocks and general office are all located on the ground floor.

Curator Anne Moore had already begun moving items up to the first floor galleries when my daughter and I joined her just before 2 p.m. Shortly afterwards the waters seeped in from the south-east corner of the building, covering the whole of the ground floor within forty-five minutes. By 5 o'clock, it was too dangerous to remain any longer, but we had (with extra help from my brother and a friend) cleared everything vital to safety.

The next few days saw volunteers from the Northumbrian piping fraternity, Castle Morpeth council staff, and conservation

advisers from Tyne and Wear Museums and Durham University moving the collections from the dangerously humid building to a temporary secure home within other council premises in the town. For several days the Mayor's Parlour was the centre of operations. The instruments of the W. A. Cocks Collection and 1991 Collection were unpacked, checked, labelled and repacked after stabilisation. The only casualties were one damaged chanter, the musical box casings and, unfortunately, the bulk of the modern archive of piping cassettes.

Currently, the possibility of temporary exhibitions elsewhere in the region is being investigated. The museum's profile is to be maintained by a series of concerts to be held in Morpeth Town Hall over the next few months.

*Kim Bibby-Wilson,  
Bagpipes Representative*

## 2009 PROGRAMME

### Indoor Meetings in 2009

Two highlights for the Indoor Meeting programme for 2009. On 28th January, at the Anniversary meeting, Sally Waite will speak about a *kalathos* (that is, a Greek pot) which belongs to the Society and has been on display in the Shefton Museum. There is an enthralling detective story as to how this pot reached the Society after its discovery in the early 19th century, and how it is that one piece of it is elsewhere.

As usual, there will be 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.

Our March meeting will be held jointly with the Society of Antiquaries of London. Our own President, David Breeze, will be the speaker. His title is 'Did Hadrian build Hadrian's Wall?' Those of us who didn't know that was still a question had better come and listen. 2008–9 is something of a Hadrian year and we have planned this

lecture as a link between this year's big exhibition in London and the Pilgrimage next summer.

Later in 2009 we hope to have a special event in addition to the normal lecture series, a collaboration with Newcastle University. Details to follow.

*Colm O'Brien*

### Country Meetings

I am sorry that we had to cancel the September country meeting. There were not enough takers for it to be viable. That we were not able to send details and booking form in the July mailing may well have been a contributory factor. We ran into some difficulty with one of the venues and we were not able to resolve this until after the date for the mailing.

However, we fully intend to offer three meetings in the coming year, in May, July and September. Mary Longley, who organises these behind the scene, has re-established the WI tea as an essential element of the day.

Our practice now is that each visit is proposed by a particular individual who identifies and researches the venues and then leads on the day. The Activities Committee is eager to hear from anybody in the Society who would care to volunteer to lead a day. Please contact me by email ([colm.o'brien@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:colm.o'brien@sunderland.ac.uk)) or by phone on 0191 257 9130.

*Colm O'Brien*

### Time Walks 2009

Three walks are planned for next year. On 2nd January, John Charlton will lead us on an exploration of attitudes to the slave trade in the North East looking at both those who profited from the business and those who opposed it. We will be meeting at 10 a.m. outside the Assembly Rooms in Newcastle.

In May we will be re-running the trip to Flodden Field which, like the Scots on the day of the battle, was rained off last year. Meet at 11 a.m. on 10th May at the car park below Pipers Hill, for a visit to the battlefield and related sites at Etal and Ford.

Gordon Moir will be introducing us to the industrial archaeology of the Brusselton Incline on 6th September. Meet at the

National Railway Museum at Shildon at 11 a.m.

Apologies to anyone who did not hear in time that the September walk was cancelled. As you will appreciate, inclement weather or other circumstances can lead to late changes of plan. If in doubt, check the website before setting off – we will always aim to post any details of changes there.

*Rosie Serdiville*

### **2009 Pilgrimage**

Plans are now well advanced for the Pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall in July. Nearly all the available places are booked, so if you want to join the select group of 220 people travelling along the Wall, register now.

The direction of travel along the Wall changes each time and in 2009 we will be moving from west to east. The Pilgrimage will as usual include visits to well-loved sites, but some of the usual sites and walks will be omitted in order to allow more time to visit those areas which have featured in research over the last decade. One 'new' tradition we will maintain is the laying of a wreath at the memorial to John Collingwood Bruce in Newcastle Cathedral.

Whether or not to have lectures on some evenings has always been a question - not least because it is difficult to stay awake after a long day's walk! For 2009, we have included two lectures in the programme. On the first night, Professor Sean O'Brien will speak about 'Hadrian's Wall in literature', while the following evening Dr Ernst Künzl will talk about the Roman 'pans' from Hadrian's Wall before we go to see them in Tullie House Museum.

Having seen the list of participants, I know that the company will be good. All we need now is to be assured of good weather!

*David Breeze*

## **CASTLE MATTERS**

### **New Administrator for the Keep**

Tony Ball joined the Society in the part-time role of Administrator of the Keep on 6th October, starting with a probationary period. He joins the existing team of Warden Paul



*Tony Ball, our new Administrator*

McDonald, Andrew Fenwick, Tom Hogarth and Dr. Gabriela Petkova-Campbell.

Tony is a native of Newcastle, a retired company director who comes to us after a career spent mostly in manufacturing industry. He has also taught marketing at Northumbria University and worked in the advertising industry. A graduate in economics, Tony holds masters' degrees in business administration and history. He is a military history enthusiast but is also interested in local history. The Keep fits neatly with both these interests. He is a member of the Western Front Association and the Society for Army Historical Research for whom he has written articles on the Northumberland Fusiliers in the Great War.

### **Other news from the Keep**

Members will have noticed the scaffolding round the Keep, which has attracted a good deal of publicity in the press and on TV. The masonry on the north side has been repaired, the window frames painted and the glass cleaned. Removal of the scaffolding has depended on securing six rail closures, but the shrouding should be cleared away by mid-November. The Keep remained open to visitors throughout, 1100 visiting on Heritage Weekend alone.

The building continues to be a popular venue, and recent events include two ceramic exhibitions, two murder mystery events, a number of plays, a visit by ghost hunters, a Schools Forum attended by thirty teachers, Gateshead guides and Brownies working for their History badges, two talks about Harry Houdini who visited the Castle Keep in 1920, and filming by Adam Hart-Davies for the TV History Channel.

During the last week in October the Keep hosted *The Kurdish Garden*, an interactive show for children, performed in the Great Hall by an Italian company. All told, four to five hundred children and adults took part in the ten performances, part of the Newcastle-Gateshead Juice Festival. The Keep is also participating in the Newcastle-Gateshead Winter festival, in partnership with the Baltic which is staging the Yoko Ono Exhibition.

*Beryl Charlton*

### Heart of the City

The aim of 'Heart of the City' is to make improvements to the whole Castle, the Cathedral and the area around them, and to help people to understand the importance of this area and these buildings: the medieval core of Newcastle, the nucleus from which our city has grown. The City of Newcastle,



*The Heart of the City today; picture courtesy Grace McCombie*

the Dean and Chapter of St Nicholas's Cathedral, and this Society are all partners in the project, led by the Dean and Chapter.

In 2005 a Project Planning Grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund allowed the commissioning of professional advice. A Board of Trustees manages the project, with advice

## MUSEUM SEATING APPEAL

Our grateful thanks to all those who have donated to the appeal. As at 31st October, the Society had received donations totalling £15,878.53 (including Gift Aid) towards the target of £45,000. As there is still a considerable distance to go, you will find a further copy of the appeal leaflet in the mailing with this *News Bulletin*.

Between mid-May and the end of October, donations were received from

Ms L Allason-Jones	Mr G A Fenwick	Mr D Peel
Mr R G Atkinson	Mr B G Gargate	Mr J S Poulter
Prof and Mrs R M Bailey	Dr D W J Gill	Ms W Prahms
Mr C Baker-Cresswell	Dr P M Hacking	Mrs M Preston
Prof D J Breeze	Ms L Harrison	Prof J Price
Mrs D B Charlton	Mr M Hassall	Ms E I Randall
Ms M Creighton	Ms S C Lenderyou	Ms J Reynolds
Mr R J Cruse	Ms V C Mothersdale	Miss T Rooney
Mr J Darling	Mr F McCombie	Mr and Mrs J Slade
(in memory of) John Dore	Prof N McCord	Mrs J Spence
Miss J Du Cane	Mr I McVicar	Mr J Wilkes
Mr and Mrs W Errington	Mr and Mrs G Miller	
Mr R Fairbairn	Mr D Parvin	

A complete list of all donors since the start of the appeal is on the website.

and support from many organisations active in the Centre of the City as well as invaluable input from staff at St Nicholas, from the City of Newcastle's Historic Environment Section, and from this Society's officers, personnel at the Castle Keep, and members.

When the Society's library and office are transferred to the Great North Museum at the Hancock in the course of 2009, this will leave the Black Gate free for the use of educational groups and other visitors. The Project's architect, Jane Kennedy of the conservation architects Purcell Miller Triton, has prepared the necessary designs. The obvious drawback of that stone spiral stair, up which we have all struggled for so long, will finally be overcome without any damage to the medieval fabric of the Black Gate by constructing an external glass lift shaft. Access to the upper floors will be through a door inserted into the post-medieval fabric. This is a brilliant solution, but it will, of course, be subjected to the scrutiny of the planning application process. The Cathedral's 1920s Hall will also be adapted for the project. New landscaping, signage and interpretation will enable a better appreciation of these magnificent buildings and their setting. The application will go to the Heritage Lottery Fund very soon, and matching funding will be sought.

Look at

[http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/hoc\\_history](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/hoc_history) for more details. Articles in the *Newcastle Journal* and the *Northumbrian* magazine have also described the project.

*Grace McCombie*

## LIBRARY MOVE

The Great North Museum library will open in the spring of 2009, a hundred years after the SANT library moved to the Black Gate from the Keep. So all borrowing from the Black Gate library has now ceased. Those of you with books still out should return them before Santa Claus comes to seek you!

By the time you read this, the packing up should have started and will continue to the end of January. The idea at the moment is to pack books on Mondays and Tuesdays, transport on Wednesdays and unpack on



*Denis and volunteer tagging books; photo courtesy Peter Nichol*

Thursdays and Fridays. Packing must be done very carefully and in strict order so that the books can go straight into their designated new locations at the Great North Museum (GNM).

We need volunteers on a regular basis for this. Please contact me by telephone, 01661 853278, or [gdpeel@btinternet.com](mailto:gdpeel@btinternet.com). Many thanks to all those who cleaned books in the store in the summer and have been busy inserting security tags since then. It is a sad fact of life that we have to tag books where there is public access, but it is even sadder to have to report that over the years when the library has only been open to members of the society a considerable number of books have disappeared. The full extent is only now becoming apparent and a list will be produced later, but meanwhile could I ask all members to check their shelves.

We will only be able to open the library at GNM when at least two volunteers are present. Opening times have yet to be finalised but it is hoped that they will be at least four afternoons a week, plus Saturday mornings 10 a.m. to noon, and Friday evenings 5–7 p.m. (We have made the change from Thursday to make use of the night that our partners in the project, the Natural History Society of Northumberland (NHSN) meets). It all depends on you, our members, and the NHSN membership volunteering in sufficient numbers.

Finally.... I am not superstitious, but could someone be telling me something or is it just

coincidence? Hanging in the carrel has been a framed membership admission certificate of one of our founders the Rev. John Hodgson, signed by himself and John Adamson as secretaries and sealed with the Bewick seal, by our first president Sir John E Swinburne, dated 23rd January, 1813. While tagging books, I reached up for a hand list of the Swinburne deeds. I was violently hit over the head by John Hodgson's certificate dropping on me, breaking the glass and cracking the seal and my head into the bargain!

*Denis Peel, Librarian*

## HADRIAN EXHIBITION



*The Milecastle 38 inscription being eased from the position it had held since 1959. Picture courtesy Glyn Goodrick*

Many members will have visited the British Museum's exhibition on the Emperor Hadrian, between July to October this year. They will have seen the various exhibits lent by the Society, including the centurial stone from Hadrian's Wall which has been in the Museum of Antiquities since 1938. Prising it from its place and packing it up to go down to London was a ticklish job for the Museum team, with Lindsay's steel toecapped boots having another airing.

In Newcastle we think of Hadrian mainly in terms of his Wall, and this was well-covered and explained, but put in the much wider context of Hadrian's overall preoccupations. Our stones looked rather minimalist compared to the glories surrounding them - spectacular bronzes and marbles of Hadrian, his wife Sabina and his lover Antinous, coins,

jewels, and artefacts from all over the wide empire he ruled.

It was a nice touch that the Reading Room in which the exhibition was held is modelled on the Pantheon which Hadrian rebuilt in Rome - and which still stands today as part of a church.

The most moving exhibits, because so well-preserved, were the finds from the 'Cave of Letters' in Israel relating to the Jewish revolt of AD 132-135. Refugees had brought their house-keys and precious objects, presumably hoping to go home when it was all over - only to perish or be sold into slavery in a vicious campaign headed by Julius Severus, straight from the governorship of Britain.

*Sue Ward*

## ANTONINE WALL VISIT



*The Wall ditch at Falkirk; picture Sue Ward*

The counterpart to Hadrian's Wall is the Antonine Wall in Scotland - though sadly, the amount that remains above ground and visible is small. In mid-July, a coach load of SANT members enjoyed the hospitality of the Glasgow Archaeological Society on a visit to the remains, on the hundredth anniversary of an earlier, two-day trip by the Society.

We began at Watling Lodge in Falkirk, to look at the ditch and the upcast mound. At Seabegs Wood, we walked over the stretch of military way and the well-preserved section of turf curtain wall, and looked across into the adjoining field at the remains of the fort. After lunch we went to Bar Hill, where the fort sits on a steep upland site. One can get a 360-degree view of the area, right across to

the Isle of Arran. The next hill is covered with an Iron Age earthwork, perhaps slighted by the Romans.

The final event was the cutting of a commemorative cake by our President, David Breeze, and his opposite number Jim Mearns from GAS. Our thanks are due to GAS for arranging the trip, their hospitality during the day, and the expert commentary they were able to arrange from their members. Plans are well under way for a return visit by GAS to our Wall in the summer of 2009.

*Sue Ward*

## REPORTS FROM MONTHLY MEETINGS

### May 2008

Dr Gwenda Morgan, of the University of Sunderland, spoke on *Slavery and the American Constitution*. The US had abolished the slave trade on 1 January 1808, but it would take another sixty years to abolish slavery itself there.

Frederick Douglass, a well-known American abolitionist, author and escaped slave, visited Newcastle during an anti-slavery lecture tour of Britain in the late 1840s. Fears over his safety when he returned to the US led Quaker abolitionists in Newcastle, the Richardsons, to launch a subscription on his behalf and negotiate to buy his freedom. Douglass was a discerning critic of the US Federal Constitution. Liberty and tyranny were both present in it, he wrote, but "If we adopt the preamble, with liberty and justice, we must repudiate the enacting clauses with kidnapping and slaveholding".

Although the word was not mentioned, certain clauses in the Constitution were designed to protect slavery, and even some which were not subsequently used for the purpose. Discussion revolved around clauses such as the extension of the slave trade for a further twenty years, the 'three-fifths' clause which boosted Southern representation in Congress, and the fugitive slave clause. In the nineteenth century first the abolition movement, then the Civil War and Reconstruction periods ensured its place in the historical literature.

At the turn of the twentieth century, however, as the processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and mass immigration reshaped the US, historians lost interest. It was not until the 1950s when the Civil Rights movement gained momentum and in the 'sixties when black protest spread across the nation that the subject returned to the historians' agenda. Interest persisted through the 1980s, but in the more recent period of conservative politics, mainstream historians have minimised the importance of these issues.

### June 2008

Laura Sole, currently working for Sunderland and South Tyneside councils on the World Heritage bid, spoke on *Wearmouth-Jarrow as a Candidate World Heritage Site*.

World Heritage status is granted by UNESCO, with the aim of identifying parts of a country's cultural and natural heritage that are outstanding, and confers a duty to protect such sites. For Wearmouth-Jarrow, the very formalised nomination process started in 1999 when the UK Government included it in its *Tentative List of UK World Heritage Sites*. The nomination is due to be formally submitted in January 2010, with a decision in July 2011. Status would improve conservation of the site and the profile of the area.

The site is symbolic of the importance of Benedict Biscop's first journey to Rome, accompanied by the 19-year-old Wilfrid, and the way they were exposed to an exceptionally wide range of ideas about religion, art and architecture. Along with Ceolfrith, Biscop created one of the best libraries in Europe and a choir trained by the Pope's own arch-cantor. In this environment Bede flourished, the only Englishman recognised as a Doctor of the Church. He created a cultural legacy of works on every subject, studied not only within Anglo-Saxon Northumbria, but via missionaries and teachers all over the continent. He has been "in print" continuously for over 1300 years.

At St Peter's parts of the original building are still standing, including *in situ* carved stone sculptures in the west porch, while at St Paul's the chancel is largely Anglo-Saxon, with the astonishing survival of the oldest dedication stone in an English church.

For further information, see [www.wearmouth-jarrow.org.uk](http://www.wearmouth-jarrow.org.uk)

## July 2008

Industrial archaeologist David Cranstone talked about saltmaking in the North, from monastic *salinae* to 19th century saltworks.

Locally, salt was made from seawater, not from strong brines of geological origin. Seawater has only 3% salinity, and the liquid must be concentrated to around 30% before the salt will crystallise out. Most people assume that the main coastal process is solar evaporation, but this has rarely been used in Britain except around the Solent (and even there the brine was boiled down further to produce the salt).

The main medieval process was 'sleeching'. Fine salt-impregnated sand was scraped up from the upper foreshore, and washed to extract the salt into a strong brine, which was then boiled in a 'saltcote' – a hut containing small lead pans, normally using peat or wood fuel. Most documented medieval saltworks were monastic. In the north-east David has found the large mounds of waste 'sleech', but so far these are puzzlingly small and rare in the north-west.

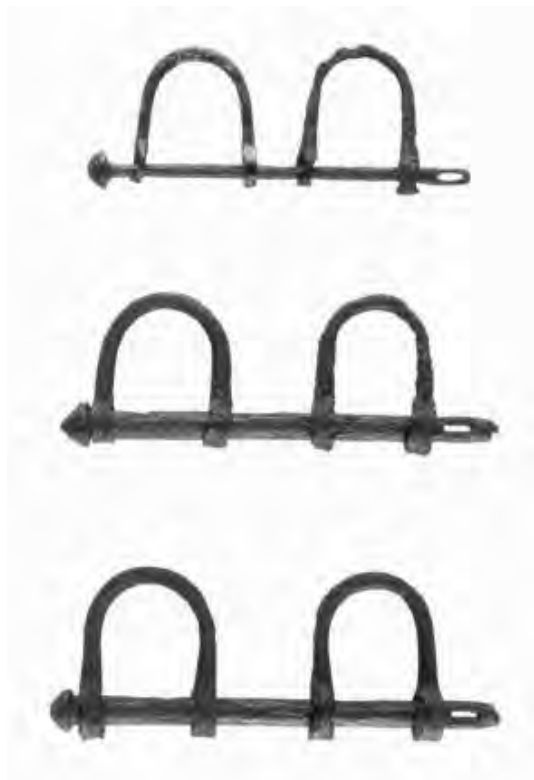
From the fifteenth century, sleeching was replaced by the 'panhouse' process, in which unconcentrated seawater was boiled in large iron pans using cheap coal fuel. This was the first coal-fuelled industry, probably perfected in central Scotland. The English industry was centred at North and South Shields and was of major importance in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with other sites scattered along the coast – though so far he has found few field remains.

David can be contacted at [cranconsult@btinternet.com](mailto:cranconsult@btinternet.com)

## August 2008

Dr Jane Webster, Senior Lecturer in Historical Archaeology at Newcastle University, spoke on the *Archaeology of the Slave Ship*. Very few slave-ships or ex-slavers have been excavated, because the prime movers in maritime archaeology are treasure-hunters, not interested. Until recently, there has also been a tendency to consider it too uncomfortable a topic to explore.

Of the 12 million or more slaves transported from Africa to the New World between the 1500s and the 1850s, an estimated 3.2m were in British ships. Britain



*Slave shackles from the wreck of the Henrietta Marie (copyright: Corey Malcom, Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society)*

was the global leader in the trade from the 1750s to abolition. Much as been learned about the 'social world' of the slave ship from the few excavations, and from documentary records and paintings.

Slave-ships were generally second-hand merchant ships, only fitted out to hold their human cargo for a comparatively short proportion of what might be a year-long triangular voyage. On the way from Britain to Africa, they would be carrying trade goods and timber. Once they were off the African coast, the timber would be used to construct an extra deck, with bulkheads dividing this into 'rooms', and a 'barricado' across the open deck so that when the captives were there during the day, they could not rush the quarter-deck and take over the ship. The possibility of an insurrection would always have been on the captain's mind.

Jane can be contacted on [j.l.webster@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:j.l.webster@newcastle.ac.uk).

Details of the most thoroughly excavated slave-ship, the *Henrietta Marie* off the coast of Florida, can be found at [www.melfisher.org/henriettamarie.htm](http://www.melfisher.org/henriettamarie.htm)

## September 2008



*Duddo stones, picture courtesy Ben Edwards*

Ben Edwards of Durham University spoke about *Long Cairns and research on the Neolithic in Northumberland*. He described recent work at Warden, on a well-preserved field structure 60 metres long and 20 wide.

The excavation showed that the mound was at least partly man-made, with stones piled on top of a possibly natural feature, some deliberately cut, and with broad terracing along the length. There were echoes of other mounds in the region which had been dated to around 2800 BC, but no sign of human remains. Perhaps burial was not the most important aspect of such long cairns. It could be that building them up was a separate part of the architectural repertoire, making a statement in the landscape.

Ben also reported on the summer's excavations in Duddo stone circle, overlooking the Tweed – the first time a Northumberland stone circle had been excavated under modern conditions. Earlier reports had mentioned more stones than were now visible, so the aims were to locate the missing stone holes, to seek dating information and to look for traces of an outer stone circle.

Remarkably, the stones appear to be resting in very shallow holes. Accepted wisdom holds that around a third of a stone's mass is underground, but here there is much less, even though the stones are top-heavy.

Two pits in the centre of the circle, previously excavated by antiquaries, were re-excavated, to find some badly damaged

fragments of bone. Over all the site, however, were also found much more recent deposits, of modern coins, polished stones and horseshoes – evidence of the mystical appeal which such circles still have today.

Ben can be contacted at [benjamin.edwards@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:benjamin.edwards@liverpool.ac.uk).

## October 2008

John Griffiths discussed the little-known figure of Joseph Wakinshaw, the leading light of the Northern Allotment Society (NAS) between 1890–1923, responsible for an unusual form of land development.

Wakinshaw was the son of an iron-merchant and worked all his life for an engineering firm. He founded the NAS in 1890, and quite soon thereafter, the Society bought a farm to the west of Newcastle, using collective funds and dividing it up into plots on which individual members could build their own homes. The idea was to mix homes for those working in Newcastle with market gardens and smallholdings. This venture was followed by a number of others in and around Newcastle. After initial mistakes, restrictions on the buildings and businesses allowed became tighter. Pubs were always forbidden.

The Fenham Hall and Wingrove Estates were bought in 1898, and Darras Hall and Little Callerton in 1907. This was a very large project, slowed by the first world war. A railway to Darras Hall from Ponteland lasted only a few years. A final project, just before Wakinshaw's death in 1923, was the acquisition of Otterburn Hall and its surrounding estate.

Influences on Wakinshaw included the 'Voluntaryist' Auberon Herbert who was himself a disciple of Herbert Spencer. A more interesting one was Prince Peter Kropotkin, a frequent visitor to Tyneside at the time, who had similar views on the importance of smallholdings but very different ones on private property and capitalism.

John can be contacted on [johnfrancisgriffiths@hotmail.com](mailto:johnfrancisgriffiths@hotmail.com)

## 2008 RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

This year's Symposium focused on the British Civil Wars as they affected the North-East. Professor John Morrill from the University of



*Professor John Morrill at the symposium, picture Sue Ward*

Cambridge introduced the topic, stressing the violence of the period, unparalleled for our isles.

A quarter of the adult male population fought at one time or another, and one in eight died. The wars culminated in regicide and the abolition of the principle of religious conformity. Church lands and those of hundreds of landlords were confiscated and sold. However while in England and Scotland the Restoration saw property restored to its former owners, in Ireland 40% of the land was *permanently* confiscated from Catholics born in Ireland, and given to Protestants born in England or Scotland.

Each part of the country had a different experience of the wars; in the North East, there was the direct relationship with Scotland, but also with London, which depended on Newcastle's coal for fuel. While Newcastle was held by Royalists in 1643 and 1644, Parliament engaged in economic warfare by blockading the colliers in the Tyne. Kent lost three-quarters of its trees as a result of the desperate search for alternative supplies. The 18 MPs from the area formed a powerful grouping, but there were many tensions especially as hatred of the Scots occupation of Newcastle grew.

John Nolan, from Northern Counties Archaeological Services, then looked at the archaeology of Civil War sites in the area. Jacob Astley, sent by the King in 1638 to survey the town, had regarded it as basically indefensible. He proposed new forts and outlying bastions to give protection from artillery on the surrounding hills, but

appeared to see only a threat from the north, despite the long history of Scots crossing the Tyne further up. He made no proposals for defending Gateshead.

John's excavations and those of Barbara Harbottle had shown that some defensive work was undertaken before the siege of 1644. A temporary fort was constructed at Shieldfield, the town wall strengthened, and the gates walled up. There was evidence of bastions in Closegate and at Plummer Tower. However, the walls were undermined and breached on 19 October. The Governor and the Mayor retreated to the Castle and held out for a few days longer, so it was likely that it did see action, though there was little evidence of activities there.

Hardier souls went on a short walk around the significant sites after lunch, and before listening to John Mabbitt, of the University of Newcastle. There was considerable technical literature about defending towns in the 17th century, but the term 'fortify' could mean anything from recruiting a trained band, to full-scale bastions. In Newcastle, as elsewhere, there were calls for the citizens to go and work on the walls, as a communal (and unpaid) project. After the Civil Wars, there were moves away from defending towns themselves, and instead fortresses were constructed outside to dominate the towns, as at Hull.

Finally, Maureen Meikle spoke on Sunderland, whose path was radically different from the rest of County Durham. It only received its charter in 1634, from the bishop of Durham, but this was never ratified by Parliament. Puritan leaders in Sunderland had strong connections with the Covenanters in Scotland, many of them battle-hardened veterans of the Thirty Years' War on the continent. One of the wealthiest men in the town was George Lilburne, uncle of John Lilburne the leveller. When the Scots occupied Newcastle in 1641, Sunderland was also occupied by opponents of the king, who stole money from the customs house. Despite their sympathies, the 1643 Parliamentary blockade covered the Wear as well as the Tyne. A few ships, however, did manage to evade it and took coals to London and Europe.

The battle of Boldon Hill took place in March 1644, with the Parliamentary forces helped by cannons brought up with

considerable effort by Sunderland's seamen. The Royalists had to retreat towards Durham, which left the Scots in control of the town and the Wear's coal mines. Had they lost this battle, supplying their army would have been impossible and they would have had to return home – so the Parliamentary army would not have been there for the siege of York and the battle of Marston Moor. In their under-recognised way, therefore, the citizens of Sunderland had played a crucial role in this part of the Civil War.

*Sue Ward*

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Membership subscriptions were last increased in January 2005. The good news is that, despite the tendency for costs to creep ever upwards, Council has decided to hold subscriptions at their present level for one further year. However, members are asked to bear in mind that the detailed implications for the Society's finances of some of the complex changes which the next twelve months will bring remain unclear. It will certainly not be possible to defer an increase in subscriptions beyond December 2009.

*David Hide, Treasurer*

## YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN NEWCASTLE

The Council for British Archaeology's Young Archaeologists Club is the only UK-wide club for children aged 8–16 interested in archaeology. Children can become members of both the national YAC group, and/or one of the many regional branches run by volunteers. Newcastle University opened its own YAC branch in 2006. It currently has a temporary base at the Discovery Museum from October of this year, and will eventually move to the Great North Museum.

Newcastle YAC is led by Dr Jane Webster, assisted by a very willing group of student volunteers. The branch currently has 25 members, and meets on the third Saturday of each month from October to July. Recent activities have included an excavation day at

Dilston Hall, a 'be a Roman soldier' day with Maximus the centurion, graveyard recording at St Andrews church in Newcastle, and a laboratory session exploring the archaeology of human bones.

There is currently a waiting list, but Jane is always keen to hear from potential new members, particularly in the 12–16 age group (the age at which it is less cool to be keen!). She is currently putting together the programme up to July 2009 and would welcome suggestions from Society members for new things to try.

For more information on Newcastle YAC, look at [www.britarch.ac.uk/yac/branches/newcastle/](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/yac/branches/newcastle/)

## BOOK REVIEWS

*An Alarming Accident: Or Every Glass Tells a Story.* John Brooks and William Cowan, Tyne Bridge Publishing, £7.99.

The subject is not the very fine engraved glass products for which in another period the North East became justly famous, but the more humble commemorative engraved glass items, many connected with coal mining. As the publishers rightly claim, these open 'a window on a world of rough times and hard lives in the northern towns and villages of the 19th century'. The context for each piece discussed is described and the text is generally clear and readable. Succinct accounts of the coalfield's history and the region's glass-making tradition are also included.

No one could read this book without appreciating that it represents a considerable labour of love on the part of its authors and that a great deal of hard work has gone into the production of this book of modest dimension.

*Norman McCord*

*Hidden Chains; the Slavery Business and North East England, 1600–1865,* John Charlton, Tyne Bridge Publishing, £10.

This book is one of the fruits of the 2007 Remembering Slavery Project, which dug into the major archives in the region to research the slave trade in the North East. Its historical spread, however, goes from the beginnings of the Atlantic slave trade in the 16th century to the final abolition of slavery in the USA in 1865.



*The engraved image of a slave, by Thomas Bewick. Courtesy Tyne and Wear Museums*

As Professor James Walvin says in his foreword, 'eastern England has always seemed geographically distant from, and relatively unaffected by, Atlantic history. The importance of John Charlton's new book is that it confounds this old impression by giving old arguments and theories a new, regional dimension.' It does it in a highly readable way, academically rigorous without being full of jargon, and without expecting much prior knowledge in the reader.

The only pity is that too much space in a short book is taken up by illustrations that are peripheral to the topic, with some being reproduced more than once. There is room for a much longer and more detailed book, but this makes a very good start.

*Sue Ward*

## OUR WEBSITE

Recently there have been some problems with this, with pages going missing. Our webmasters Cornwell Internet believe they have sorted out the glitches, and most of the lost material has been restored. However, if anyone notices further peculiarities, please let us know on [webmaster@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk) so we can put things right.

Recent new material on the site includes a description by Sally Bird of the Society's archives on deposit with the Northumberland Collections Service at Woodhorn, and an explanation by Sue Wood of the Service of how to get the best from the e-catalogue.

## 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 pressure of space does mean 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](mailto:sue.ward@btinternet.com). Deadline for the next edition will be 15 May. The mailing date will be 17 June. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Secretary by 10 June. The Spring mailing will be on 18 March, and inserts must be with the Membership Secretary by 11th March.*