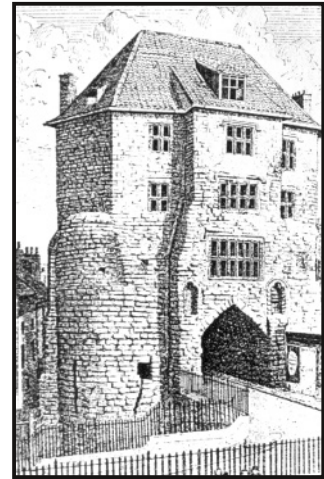


NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No.52 JUNE 2012



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, and a learned journal. Our library, our main collection and our offices are housed in the Great North Museum at the Hancock, with further items in other museums around the region. We lease the Castle Keep and the Black Gate from the City Council.

For more information, look at our website www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk, or contact the Membership Secretary at Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, Great North Museum: Hancock, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT, phone 0191 231 2700 (please leave a message if no reply), or e-mail admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we near 2013, a great deal of planning is going on behind the scenes for our Bicentenary. Our aims for the year are to bring the public's attention to SANT's achievements through the years; to encourage current members to feel proud to be part of a worthwhile organisation; to encourage new members to join; and to have a jolly good time in true celebratory fashion!

The show-and-tell sessions we have started at the monthly meetings give the opportunity for members to hear about objects that have been acquired for our collections, or about projects. At the April meeting we were grateful to Ian Ayris of Newcastle City Council for bringing us up to date with the Heart of the City/Old Newcastle project which is moving ahead at great speed. We have also attracted considerable publicity in recent months from our purchase of the coin of Prince Henry and the work of our colleagues in the Mining Institute on some of our 19th century photographs. A good start for Aim 1.

The Society has always relied on volunteers for its high level of achievement and 2013 will call upon many members to use their skills for the benefit of the Society. We are grateful to an American member, Scott Vanderbilt, for his work on creating a database for *Archaeologia Aeliana* and to Violet Rook for offering to start our outreach work in the Great North Museum.

You can see full details about the 2013 celebration in John Griffiths' article, elsewhere in this Bulletin. It will include an exhibition in the Great North Museum about the Society. We would be grateful if someone could suggest a witty title for this exhibition and also if members would volunteer to join Violet in engaging with the visitors.

*Lindsay Allason-Jones
President*

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PRESIDENT'S EVENING 2012



A Biggles-eye view of Segedunum, courtesy Mike Bishop

There is still time to buy tickets for this year's President's Evening, to be held at Segedunum on 22nd June. As well as seeing round the site, you will be able to study the current exhibition, *Into the Mouth of Hell*, about North-Eastern mining disasters, on which John Clayson will give us an introductory talk.

The exhibition is part of a programme to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the most notorious mining disaster in the region, at Hartley Pit in 1862. This was caused when the beam of a steam engine, used to de-water the mine, suddenly broke. One end plunged into the single shaft of the pit, blocking it with debris. The 204 men and boys in the pit at the time could not be rescued, and so suffocated and died. It remains one of the worst mining accidents ever in England. One result was a change in the law, to require all pits to have at least two shafts.

*Sue Ward
(with thanks to Wikipedia for the Hartley details)*

ROMAN SCULPTURE IN THE NORTH

Lindsay Allason-Jones is working with Jon Coulston of St Andrews University to pull together information about Roman sculptures from the counties of Tyne and Wear, Durham, Cumbria, Lancashire and Derbyshire for publication in the final volume of *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani*, a mammoth series

of publications listing Roman sculptures from all over Europe.

This is being sponsored by the British Academy and publication is planned for 2014. Lindsay and Jon would welcome information from anyone who knows of any pieces in private hands which might otherwise escape their attention. Please contact Lindsay at Lindsay.Allason-Jones@ncl.ac.uk.

BICENTENARY NEWS

Next year will see the Society celebrate its two hundredth anniversary, and a wide variety of celebratory activities is being planned. As well as the Great North Museum's major exhibition, centred on some of our most precious and most interesting artefacts, further exhibitions will celebrate the wealth of material in our archive collection at Woodhorn, and the important work done by the Society in documenting and preserving the region's musical heritage. A concert at the Sage is also being considered, and may see the first performance of a specially commissioned Antiquaries' Rant!

Regular activities such as the lecture programme, walks and visits will all have a bicentenary slant. There will be no fewer than three public lectures, because we want the bicentenary to be as much about outreach and publicising our work past, present and future, as about celebrating our birthday – important though that is. The main 'party' will be a dinner at the Civic Centre Banqueting Hall. We hope that the President's Evening can take place in the Keep, our first home. Further merriment may be expected in a re-enactment of a notoriously bibulous nineteenth-century Antiquaries' trip to Holy Island and with the planned performance at Seaton Delaval Hall of the 1790s farce recently rediscovered in our archive and described by Denis Peel elsewhere in this *News Bulletin*.

We will be publishing a short book giving an accessible account of the Society and its wide range of current activities, and a series of articles documenting aspects of the Society's history is being considered for future editions of *Archaeologia Aeliana*.

We plan to produce a booklet, and a section of the website, by the end of 2012 which will include information and dates for all the

Bicentenary activities, so that members can plan their year well in advance.

John Griffiths

TIMEWALKS



Otterburn Range, courtesy Rosie Serdiville

We were exceptionally lucky with the weather for our trip to Otterburn Range in April. Despite gloomy skies, the persistent rain of previous days held off by and large, leaving us to enjoy an unusual landscape at its best.

Phil Abramson, the MoD archaeologist for this area, who had taken us on the marvellous visit to Spadeadam in 2011, led us to a varied selection of sites. They included training trenches, medieval granges, cairns and bastles. We even encountered what might be an unrecorded stone circle exposed by a recent burning episode.

What lingers most in the memory though, is the walk across the normally inaccessible impact zone, where the remains of medieval settlements shelter in the lee of a slope marked by craters and the silent carcasses of tanks. Sheep supervised incuriously from the brooding hill beyond. Continuity of occupation took on a whole new meaning here. Many thanks to Phil for a day that will linger on in memory for some time to come.

The June walk, taking place while this News Bulletin is in the press, is due to take a look at the new excavations at Flodden, led by Chris Burgess. With luck, this year's dig will be in progress.

Our final walk for 2012 on 30 September – also led by Chris Burgess – will also have a warlike theme; it is to Blaeberry Hill, near

Rothbury, to look at the World War Two training trenches. Meet at 10.30 at the Newcastle House Hotel, Front Street, Rothbury to drive up to the site. We should finish around 3 p.m. Bring lunch, walking boots and rainwear; there is some hard going and we can anticipate muddy walking if it is wet! Details are on the website or contact Rosie Serdiville on 0191 230 3797 or by e-mail on rosie.serdiville@gmail.com.

Rosie Serdiville

NEWCASTLE ANTIQUARIES AT THE CUTTING EDGE



Atkinson and Philipson's steam-powered car

A chance find of a 1908 billhead, and a few minutes on the internet researching the history of the firm which produced it, provided an interesting sidelight on a former Vice President of the Society. John Philipson (member 1871; council 1876; vice president 1890, died 1898) was one of the owners of Atkinson & Philipson, a carriage manufactory in Pilgrim Street.

In 1897, jointly with local engineers Toward & Co, Philipson's firm developed and patented the North East's first known motor carriage, heralded in the local press as "a concrete illustration of the ideas which will probably prevail for some years in regard to the new mechanical road locomotion". The "chiefly gasoline motors of French or American pattern" having been dismissed as "unpleasantly odoriferous", Philipson and Toward chose to construct a steam-powered model. Steam could be got up within about 20

minutes of lighting the furnace and a speed of 12 or 13 mph achieved.

While there is no evidence that the motor carriage went into production, newspaper advertisements for Atkinson and Philipson throughout 1898 state that the firm is “now prepared to quote prices for motor cars”. It may be that the death of Philipson in 1898 helped to discourage the firm from further experimentation. A search up to 1900 has found no further references. In the Middlesbrough Exhibition of 1900, the firm showed its latest horse drawn ambulance, but no motor vehicle.

The billhead which provoked the search, however, suggests there may be more to discover. It carries a photograph of a motor car with the Atkinson and Philipson nameboard beside it. Could they have been making vehicles as late as 1908?

Derek Cutts

DEATHS



Barbara Harbottle in 2009, picture courtesy Tom Yellowley

Sadly, there are several deaths over the last few months to report here. The most notable is our former President, Barbara Harbottle, in February at the age of 80.

Barbara was elected to the Society on 30 May 1951, served on Council from 1967 and

was President 1996-8. After working in the School of Architecture at Newcastle University she became Tyne and Wear's first County Archaeologist, and during her time there she produced one of the most complete and accurate Sites and Monuments Record for any English county. First and foremost a medieval archaeologist, she will long be remembered for her excavations throughout Newcastle, at Blackfriars, the Keep and Black Gate, as well as for discovering Milecastle 4 on Westgate Road. She also worked on sites in Northumberland at Newminster Abbey and in advance of the Kielder reservoir. She was an inspiring lecturer and brought many people into the Society's fold through her adult education courses.

A packed memorial service in St Nicholas' Cathedral demonstrated how much she will be missed. She will have a full obituary in the next volume of *Archaeologia Aeliana*.

Jim Summerly, known to participants of the last three Pilgrimages of Hadrian's Wall as a guide, died in January aged 57. Jim first developed an interest in Hadrian's Wall when a student at Leicester, and excavated at Housesteads under John Gillam and Charles Daniels. His chosen career, however, was as a school teacher, spending the last 23 years at Radley College where he was an inspirational teacher of history.

Hugh Chambers, former Hon Librarian of our sister-society, the Natural History Society of Northumbria died in May 2012 at the age of 86. Hugh organised the packing up of NHSN's library in 2006 and the re-housing of the books in 2009, and was a key member of the GNM's Library Liaison Committee. He became a SANT member in 2007.

Finally, Brian Shefton, Professor Emeritus of Greek Art and Archaeology at Newcastle University (since 1984) and University Honorary Fellow, died in January at the age of 93. He established the Shefton Research Library resources in Greek and Etruscan Archaeology in the University's Robinson Library. He also built up the Shefton collection of Greek Art and Archaeology from small beginnings, to become the most important collection of archaeological material from the Greek world in the North of England. It is now housed in the Shefton Gallery at the Great North Museum.

Sue Ward

SEATON DELAVAL PLAY

While I was thinking about the Society's history and the library I thought it would be useful to read through our *Proceedings* (the predecessor of this *News Bulletin*). I came across a note about the donation of the manuscript of a play and a synopsis by Madeline Hope Dodds. It was only recently that I had come face to face, figuratively speaking, with this remarkable lady who was not only our librarian, but was deeply involved in the production of several volumes of the County History. The lead-in was through the fascinating diary of her sister Ruth Dodds, which can be found in the Lit & Phil library.

The play involves inebriated and randy monks from the monastery at Tynemouth, nuns from a fictional nunnery at Seaton Delaval, Lord Derville who has a predilection for serving maids, and a ward who has been separated from her lover to have an arranged marriage with an elderly Dutch Merchant. The lover turns up shipwrecked on the Long Sands, and is united with the ward in a clandestine midnight wedding. There are various sub-plots involving notes from Lady Derville to fictional lovers, other couples, and all is held together by the serving maid Cherry who could well have been played by Barbara Windsor.

The play was last performed, by the 'Gay Delavals', at a Christmas house party at Seaton Delaval, about the time the Lit & Phil was founded in Newcastle. It all goes to show there is more in the SANT collections than bronze age socketted axes and Roman Altars!

Denis Peel

NEWS FROM THE GNM LIBRARY

The spring term has been very busy in the library with students, Society members and museum visitors, all making more visits to use the three library collections. Over the Easter holiday we also had a visit from the Great North Mouse, who (with TWAM learning officer Kathryn Franklin Johnston) hosted a wonderful storytelling session for our younger visitors. This was a great opportunity to show off our new selection of over 60 children's books, which were purchased for the library with funding from Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums Business Partners. The books

provide a fantastic introduction to natural history, history and archaeology, and have been well received by families visiting the library. We hope to run another storytelling event in July, so please contact the library if you would like further details.

Cataloguing the library collections onto Newcastle University's library catalogue is progressing well. Thanks to funding from the Marc Fitch Fund all of the Natural History Society of Northumbria's public access books and journals now have records on the online catalogue: <http://sparky.ncl.ac.uk/F>

The library will be open for the academic term, Monday-Friday 10am-4pm. Opening hours will change to afternoons only for the summer vacation period. Please contact the library if you need any more information on opening hours, collections or using the catalogue. Library phone: 0191 222 3555, Library email: gnmlibrary@twmuseums.org.uk

Nicky Clarke

OLD NEWCASTLE PROJECT



Kate Sussams (on right) and Stephanie Carter, Old Newcastle's Project Manager and Learning Officer

I'm thrilled to be involved with the Old Newcastle Project as Project Manager. My role will be to lead on this exciting three-year project to help revitalise this important area through an innovative programme of events, activities, learning opportunities and increasing access to Newcastle's Castle.

The £1.6m secured for the project (mostly from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with the balance from the City Council) will be spent

on new facilities such as a smart new lift to enable access to all public floors of the Black Gate. We will be completely refitting the building as an interpretation centre, education facility and multi-purpose cultural venue, with new toilet facilities and shop. This will be complemented by new digital interpretation bringing the whole Castle area together as one visitor experience. Construction works, including the lift, are likely to run through most of 2013.

The Keep will get a new access point into the Garrison Room, together with new touch-screen interpretation to enable less mobile visitors to experience the whole of this fabulous building. The Project will be working very closely with its partnership organisations – the City Council, SANT, and the Cathedral of St Nicholas – to provide a high quality visitor experience telling the fascinating stories of Old Newcastle.

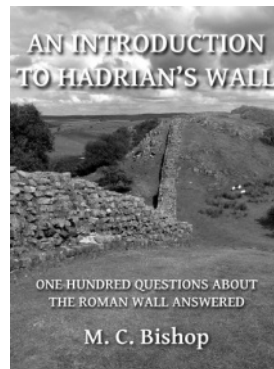
My own background is as Director at Bede's World in Jarrow, Property Manager at Sutton Hoo and also Assistant Keeper of Archaeology at Norwich Castle Museum. This has enabled me to develop a wide range of skills from museum curation and operational development to strategic planning and project management, all of which will be put to good use in the Old Newcastle Project. I'll be working closely with our Learning Officer, Stephanie Carter.

SANT members saw a presentation of the plans in April, and I will be keeping the world updated on progress through a series of marketing events such as exhibitions, talks and our dedicated website www.oldnewcastle.org.uk. There are many ways in which people can get involved in the project, such as helping out with research, training as tour guides and becoming event assistants. If you'd like to know more or have any suggestions or comments, please drop me an email at kate.sussams@newcastle.org.uk.

Kate Sussams

E-BOOK REVIEW

An Introduction to Hadrian's Wall: One Hundred Questions About the Roman Wall Answered, Mike Bishop, available to download to a Kindle or other e-reader from his website www.perlineamvalli.org.uk.



Ebook and Kindle, pictures courtesy Mike Bishop (left) and Wikimedia Commons (right)

Writing a guide to Hadrian's Wall that meets the need of somebody new to the subject whilst not dumbing it down is a hard task. Mike Bishop has pulled it off. The hundred questions in his *Introduction to Hadrian's Wall* are the questions the author is asked most often and those he asked himself when his interest was first sparked.

Here you will find everything from why the wall was built to how it is maintained today. I finally got the answer to whether or not it can really be seen from space and discovered that there is a theory that the Romans used brass speaking tubes to communicate along its length (not proven).

The digital format will make it particularly useful for people walking the Wall, especially if it is produced as an app [this is planned for the future – Ed.] In the meantime, comprehensive linking and a well condensed layout make it manageable on a mobile phone and a treat on a Kindle or other reader. Having links at the beginning and end of the book is a real boon for people like me who are not using touch devices yet.

Each question comes, of course, with an answer, and also sources and suggestions on further reading. All in all, a lovely guide and one which is brought to life by the introduction in which Mike Bishop conveys his own enthusiasm for the subject and entertainingly describes the many ways in which he has made contact with the past.

I'll be taking it along the next time I go for a walk.

Rosie Serdiville

Editor's Note; Mike Bishop does the layout for this *News Bulletin* and sees it through the press. As well as this Guide, Mike has

produced a blog about walking the Wall, and at the end of May three more e-books, two of them detailed 'archaeologists' guides' to walking the Wall, and the third on *Images of Hadrian's Wall*.

OTHER NEW BOOKS BY OUR MEMBERS

As always, our members have been prolific in publication of books; two that have come to our notice are

The Great Walls of Newcastle: Exploring the City's Ancient Defences, by Ken Smith and Tom Yellowley, Tyne Bridge Publishing, £6.99, available in Newcastle City Library and the Tourist Information Centre. It includes a walking tour around the Town Walls.

Hadrian's Wall and the End of Empire: The Roman Frontier in the 4th and 5th Centuries, by Rob Collins, Routledge, £80 (ouch!). This expands on the ideas Rob explained at the April monthly meeting.

If any other member has a book or article published and would like it to be noted in this *News Bulletin*, please let the Editor know. Detailed reviews of selected books are published in *Archaeologia Aeliana*, but with some time-lag after publication of the book.

Sue Ward

ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE NEWCASTLE CONFERENCE



The Royal Archaeological Institute's weekend research conference, organised in partnership with SANT and the Durham and Northumberland Archaeological and

Architectural Society, will be held in Newcastle from 28th to 30th September in the familiar venue of the Mining Institute under the chairmanship of myself as its President (and our immediate past President). The Institute is one of the UK's oldest national archaeological societies. It was founded in 1844, making it a mere 31 years younger than SANT.

The conference title is *Legacies of Northumbria: Recent Thinking on the 5th–14th Centuries in Northern Britain*. SANT members (and anyone else who is interested) will be welcome to register and attend.

The early medieval Kingdom of Northumbria occupied an area that crossed modern political boundaries. Yet the archaeology and history of Northumbria continues to influence regional identities across northern Britain in the 21st Century. Material culture, settlements, landscapes, and art all leave a lasting legacy within modern cultural narratives, but were themselves influenced by earlier and external factors. Northumbria has been a focus of major recent research, particularly on transitions and frontiers, as well as exciting new archaeological discoveries. Themes to be explored include the legacy of Rome and the prehistoric north during the formation of fifth- and sixth-century chiefdoms; the Golden Age of Northumbria; the region in the Viking Age; and the role of Northumbrian culture in the High Medieval period.

The conference will begin in the evening of Friday 28th September with a keynote address by Professor Dame Rosemary Cramp, with lectures over the next two days by a host of luminaries, several of them SANT members. There will be a visit to Bede's World at Jarrow on the Sunday, and a coach trip to North Northumberland, including Yeavering and Bamburgh, on Monday October 1st. A full programme and booking form are available on the RAI website: <http://www.royalarchinst.org>. The price of the conference, including a wine reception on the Friday, is £80, with Monday's coach trip an extra £20.

David Breeze

BUDLE CRAG WHINSTONE QUARRY

I am putting together some research on Budle Crag, today known as Kittling Hill and on the



Budle Crushing Plant, picture courtesy Angus Graham

golf course of Bamburgh Castle Golf Club. The mining rights for this were given to the mining contractor Charles Brand & Son Ltd by Mr George Cruddas in 1910. By the end of January 1911 machinery had been delivered and a light railway was being laid and 30 men were working on site. Three locomotives operated on the line between the quarry and the crushing plant in Budle Bay. At least one of these, AB1249 'Budle Crag', is known to have been built by Andrew Barclay Sons & Co locomotive works in Kilmarnock and dispatched on 25th July 1911. The Berwick Advertiser notes that regular stone shipments (from the pier in Budle Bay) were delivered to Kings Lynn, Boston and Whitstable during March 1913. Loading was carried out by a steam crane operating on the pier.

If any members have knowledge of how whinstone or similar crushing plants operated I would be grateful if they could contact me on 0191 251 6672; angus_graham@yahoo.co.uk. Images of the Budle crushing plant and waggonway can be found on the AditNow website (<http://www.aditnow.co.uk/>).

Angus Graham

OUR COIN COLLECTION

The first 'show-and-tell' session at our monthly meetings featured our newly acquired silver penny, minted in Carlisle between 1136 and 1152 for Henry, crown prince of Scotland and Earl of Northumberland and Huntingdon.

The penny is now one of more than 5,000 coins in our Coin Collection, covering the numismatic history of England from the Iron Age to the present, with more limited

collections of non-English ones. There are further coins in some of the archaeological site archives for which SANT is the deposit/collecting body in Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

The core of the collection is more than 2,000 coins of Roman republican and imperial issues, with another 1,000 coins from pre-Roman Greece. There are substantial collections of coins of the Early Medieval (British and Continental issues), with a particularly impressive collection of Northumbrian stycas. We also have a very respectable collection of Medieval and Post-Medieval hammered coinage. Coin-related collections include coin weights, communion tokens, lead tokens, Wall Pilgrimage badges, and medals.

The very first public letter proposing the formation of an antiquarian society in Newcastle in 1813 included a proposal for a Coin Collection. In keeping with other collections that originated in that era, ours was founded on gifts from gentlemen's cabinets, a so-called 'boys' collection'. As such, the collection represents a wide range of numismatic interests that reflect the traditions of the grand tour, antiquarianism, and British imperial service. 334 coins, tokens, and counters were donated in 1813, and donations and acquisitions have continued to the present. In the past decade, the 1996 Treasure Act and the advent of the Portable Antiquities Scheme have had a beneficial impact on opportunities to enhance numismatic and archaeological collections for the society.

Some of our coins are on display in the galleries of the Great North Museum, including the Prince Henry penny. The Archaeology section of the School of Historical Studies at Newcastle University makes use of other coins in teaching undergraduate and MA-level students. Their main interest is in Roman coins, though they stray occasionally into Byzantine, Early Medieval, and Medieval series. Research enquiries are welcome, and should be directed to me in the first instance.

Rob Collins, Keeper of Coins

VOLUNTEERS

SANT depends heavily on volunteers to keep our activities going, and we are always keen to involve more people. We try to run stalls at local history fairs, archaeology days and other events in the region. If anyone would like to volunteer for this, and/or knows of an event at which we should be represented, please contact Rosie Serdiville.

We also need people interested in helping with our education and outreach activities in and around the Great North Museum. We would particularly welcome help from retired teachers and other members who are used to working with the public. If you are interested please contact Lindsay Allason-Jones.

Sarah Walter, our very part-time Membership Secretary, is building up a team of helpers for general administrative tasks in our

office at the Great North Museum at busy times. The tasks may not be demanding but help of this kind would benefit the smooth running of the Society's administration and would, of course, be greatly appreciated. Please contact Sarah by e-mail or by phone 0191 231 2700.

There is a Volunteers button on the sidebar of the website. This will take you through to the pages where we are asking people for help with specific events, such as local history fairs. So if you can't commit yourself to a regular timetable of volunteering, but could help out occasionally, do keep an eye on that part of the website. And if there are events or activities at which you think we should be represented, but they are not included there, please let us know!

MONTHLY MEETINGS



Cairned road leading to the Lykabettus Quarries (mountaintop left) and Quarry Village (in the saddle), courtesy Valerie Maxfield

Public lecture November 2011

Valerie Maxfield, Emeritus Professor of Roman Archaeology at the University of Exeter, spoke about *Imperial Purple Porphyry: the Archaeology of the Emperors' Building Stone*.

She explained that porphyry, a fine, gem-like, purple stone, was quarried in remote mountains in Egypt's Eastern Desert. Throughout the Roman period it was an imperial monopoly, used almost exclusively for the emperors' building projects – for example, in the interior of Trajan's Basilica, Hadrian's Pantheon and the Temple of Venus and Rome. It was exploited also for carved stonework, such as the statues of Trajan's

Dacian captives now in Florence and Paris, the Tetrarchs now built into the facade of St Mark's in Venice, and massive late imperial sarcophagi.

The quarries from which porphyry came had lain virtually undisturbed since the end of Imperial quarrying in the early fifth century AD. Their remoteness, their difficulty of access and the resulting logistical problems involved in their exploitation, meant that they had not been reactivated since then, while the hyper-arid climate had led to the remarkable preservation of organic materials and written documents.

Valerie took us through the archaeology of the exploitation of porphyry, the quarries themselves and their infrastructure – the fort housing the soldiers who supervised the complex, the settlements of the quarry workers, and the logistical support system which facilitated the transportation of the quarry products down to the Nile. She revealed that the contemporary sculptor Stephen Cox has been given permission to use material from the quarries, and that one of his pieces, Eucharist, is in Newcastle's St Nicholas' Cathedral.

Valerie can be contacted at V.A.Maxfield@exeter.ac.uk.

Anniversary meeting January 2012

Mike Campbell, Arts Development Officer for North Tyneside, talked about *Creating the Cullercoats Artists' Exhibition*. He explained that North Tyneside's modest municipal



Robert Jobling, When the Boats Come In or Morning on the Beach, picture courtesy North Tyneside Council Art Collection

collection had been brought together from the collections of the earlier local authorities after after local government reorganisation in the 1970s. Of these, the most notable was the collection of paintings relating to Cullercoats, where between about 1870 and 1920 a group of artists had lived and worked, painting what was then a picturesque village and its fisherfolk. The most famous of these artists was the American Winslow Homer, who lived there for a time between 1881 and 1882/3. Sadly, the collection did not include any of Homer's paintings, but artists such as Robert Jobling, John Falconer Slater and Bernard Benedict Hemy were all represented. Some of the paintings were of specific historic interest, such as those which showed the naval training ship HMS *Wellesley*, destroyed by fire in 1914.

Mike explained that in recent years the collection had been moved around from one storage place to another. As a result, some of the pictures were in poor condition with tears or flaking paint, while others had lost their paperwork over the years. Funds for restoration were currently limited. For some portraits, they knew neither the names of the local worthies portrayed nor their painters. However, with the help of the Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums collection, it had been possible to put together an excellent exhibition about the Cullercoats artists in the Segedunum gallery.

Mike can be contacted at mike.campbell@northtyneside.gov.uk. North Tyneside Council are working with the Your Paintings project (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/>), run by the BBC jointly with the Public Catalogue Foundation, to make the oil paintings accessible on the internet.



The observation tower at Senhouse Museum, overlooking Maryport Roman Fort, courtesy

February 2012

Professor Ian Haynes and Tony Wilmott reported on their 2011 excavation at Maryport, at the Camp Farm site 300m north east of the Roman fort. The aim had been to find out more about the seventeen Roman altars in the Senhouse museum, found on site during an antiquarian dig in 1870. The idea that the altars originally stood on the edge of a notional parade ground, and were ritually buried each time a new one was erected came up 70 years after the altars were discovered, but rapidly became a full fledged factoid.

The Victorian excavators' diagram showed a pattern of round pits, with altars found in some of them but others marked as 'empty, filled with stones'. Re-excavation of the base of the pits that had been fully or extensively previously excavated had found puzzling light green stained sand.

Tony described one pit entirely missed by the Victorian excavators as 'our Tutenkhamen's tomb'. In another, the Victorians had been stopped by a huge granite boulder, and beneath it the modern excavators found a surviving Roman pit fill 450mm deep. Removing this fill left the clear impression of a timber post, rotted in situ, 300mm wide. In the edges and base of the post-pipe was the same light green sand. It was now clear that the stains represented the bases of enormous timber posts, 300mm (basically one Roman foot) square, placed into post-pits averaging 1.2m square, and 1.3m deep. The posts were

packed around by a mass of heavy stones within the pits.

In the antiquarian fill of one of these two pits a fragment of an altar was found. It turned out to be the missing back corner of a stone dedicated by Marcus Maenius Agrippa, tribune of the first cohort of Spaniards during the reign of Hadrian. Surprisingly, this altar was not among those found in 1870, but was first recorded by John Horsley in 1725 in the garden of Netherhall, where it was being used as the base of an ornamental sundial.

Ian and Tony concluded that the 'ritual burials' were in fact the re-use of the altars as foundation packing material. There was very little dating evidence apart from the altars themselves, which dated from the 2nd century but not beyond. Six of the post holes were aligned, and there was also a curving group of four pits. So were there two successive buildings, one with a curved shape and one straight, and if so, how did these relate chronologically? Further seasons of work await...

A diary of the dig can be found at www.senhousemuseum.co.uk, and Prof Haynes can be contacted on ian.haynes@newcastle.ac.uk

March 2012

Alan Rushworth spoke about the Barrasford and Gunnerton Historical Village Atlas, on which he and the other staff of the Archaeological Practice had worked in 2008–2010 with the community on a project funded mainly by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

He explained that the Archaeological Practice had already carried out a major project for Northumberland National Park, creating such an atlas for seventeen villages within the park area. He went through the process of creating such a document, a combination of mapping, trawling the records both historical and archaeological, oral history, house-by-house surveys (by Peter Ryder), and archaeology on the ground. The involvement of the community itself was crucial, and in Barrasford and Gunnerton there had been a strong committee (several of them members of the Antiquaries, and in the audience) who had worked hard on the research.

There were major differences between the two villages in terms of what could be gleaned from the archives. Barrasford had come into the hands of the (then) Percy Earls of Northumberland, acquired from the Umfrevilles in the late 14th century, so that meticulous maps and records were available at Alnwick. Gunnerton had a more fragmented ownership, which meant such records were much less easily available.

Alan then took us through the history as laid out in the book, from Neolithic times to the present day. *Inquisitio post mortem* records showed how much had been laid to waste by the Scots in the 14th century, leaving their feudal lords unable to collect revenues. In later centuries, there were a number of thriving small industries in the villages, including quarrying and coal-mining. The Border Counties Railway ran for nearly a century

NEW MEMBERS 2011

Welcome to all the new members who joined in 2011.

Mrs Eilleen Absolon
Mr Alan Baxter
Dr Adrian Bint
Dr Hazel Board
Mr Spencer Carter
Mr John Caulfield
Mr Alan Chatt
Ms Nicola Clarke
Mrs Catherine Cleeve
Mrs Sarah Collins
Miss Shelley Dootson
Miss Maria Duggan
Mr Matt Durfee
Dr James Gerrard
Miss Pamela Giese

Miss Emma Gooch
Miss Guo Hao
Mr Ferdinand Heimerl
Mrs Jacqueline Henderson
Mr John Horton
Mr James Hughes
Miss Stephanie Jeffries
Miss Gill Johnson
Mr Peter Judge
Miss Fran Lalor
Mrs Elizabeth Liddle
Ms Madeline Littlewood
Mr Shaun McAlister
Mr Sion McElveen
Miss Emma Morris

Mrs Dianne O'Neill
Mr John Parkin
Mrs Barbara Piercy
Miss Lauren Proctor
Proquest Humanities Index
Mr Dane Rowles
Mr Evan Scherer
Mr Michael Scott
Mr Philip Spoons
Miss Christine Stevens
Mr Geoffrey Taylor
Mr John Taylor
Mrs Jenny Uglow
Mr Scott Vanderbilt
Dr Peter Wright

from 1858 to 1956, and was linked to a series of mineral lines.

The Atlas is published by Chollerford Books, price £30, and a copy is available in our library. Alan Rushworth can be contacted on archprac@tiscali.co.uk

April 2012

Rob Collins spoke about *Hadrian's Wall and the End of Empire*. He explained that he was attempting to put the history of fourth- and fifth-century northern Britannia in the context of the fall of the Western Roman Empire as a whole.

A standard assumption in the past had been that the Roman military forces had left at the beginning of the fifth century, abandoning the forts and defended sites to incomers. Rob, however, preferred to think in terms of a 'war-band' model, in which the forts were occupied by a 'chief' and his warriors, directly evolved from the late Roman garrison.

The frontier zone, Rob went on, extended from the Humber to the Forth, and there was a pattern of thorough and fairly even military occupation, together with a couple of areas of villa settlement, particularly in what is now Yorkshire and Teesside. By the fourth century, there appeared to be an increased reliance on local and regional supplies rather than those coming from further afield. From

the later fourth century, a number of changes could be recognised at forts throughout the frontier – for instance, simple stone revetments rather than free-standing walls, and the demolition or changed use of granaries. The *principia* also changed, being adapted to different uses and changes in status. It remained the centre of the community, but its official, sacrosanct nature altered. Many forts had evidence of continued occupation between the fifth and eighth centuries, while there were increasing numbers of Anglo-Saxon objects in the villa areas.

Rob suggested that there were two different élites, though both would have considered themselves Roman. The northern frontier zone was under the thumb of the military commanders, while the Greater York area had a non-military élite class as substantial landowners – perhaps the reason Anglo-Saxon settlers were attracted to the area. He visualised a fragmentation of the frontier following the loss of the *dux Britanniarum* rather than directly associated with detachment from the Western empire. At this point, everything was up for grabs, with new allies and enemies being made and the political geography of the frontier shifting.

Rob can be contacted on robert.collins@newcastle.ac.uk.

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 means that articles frequently have to be drastically cut, deferred, or dropped altogether. My address is 5 Goldspink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1NQ, phone 0191 232 2968, or e-mail me at sue.ward@phonecoop.coop

Deadline for the next edition will be 2nd Nov 2012. The mailing date will be 12th Dec. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Secretary by 5th Dec. Anyone who wants an insert included should contact the Membership Secretary in good time for details of the requirements. An electronic copy of any insert should also be provided (as a Word or pdf document) so that it can be included on the website.