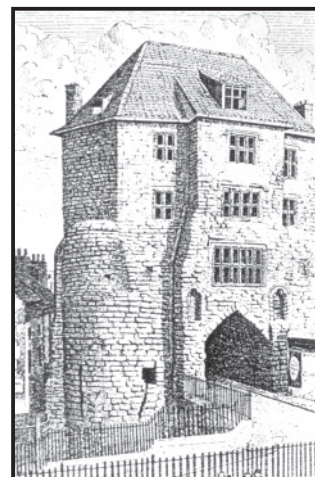


NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No.55 DECEMBER 2013



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne promotes the preservation, study and enjoyment of historical and archaeological heritage in general, and of the North East of England in particular. We have over 750 members, and always welcome new ones. We are the oldest provincial antiquarian society in the country.

We have a full programme of public events, lectures, walks and visits, and social events.

We are also guardians of world-class collections of antiquities and archives, and of a library of over 30,000 books and journals. We sponsor and publish research into North East history and archaeology of all periods.

For more information, look at our website www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk, or contact us at Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, Great North Museum: Hancock, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT, phone 0191 231 2700, e-mail admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk

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GOODBYES AND HELLOS



Antiquaries struggle with the turnstile during the Lindisfarne trip, one of the highlights of our Bicentenary Year

Goodbye from the President

This is my last newsletter before I cease to be President of the Society, and I would like to thank everyone who has helped me during my three years. They have been action-packed, and the support of the members has been much appreciated.

The most important change recently has been that the Society finally relinquished the lease of the Keep and the Black Gate. Given our long association with both buildings – indeed, without the Society's interventions, neither building would still be standing – this has been a wrench. However, the success of the Heart of the City's application to the Heritage Lottery Fund has given a new life to the two buildings and we leave them in good hands. We have not given up all contact with Castle Garth, as we continue to be a partner in the Heart of the City Project and I will continue as Chair of the HoC Executive Committee. The Project is honouring Barbara Harbottle's work on the buildings by naming the education rooms the 'Harbottle Suite'.

My first two years as President were mostly taken up with planning our Bicentenary and

this last year in overseeing a splendid programme of events. This has seen us walking on the Wall, taking over a Virgin Cross Country train to Berwick while dressed in nineteenth-century costume, and listening with delight to a marvellous concert of Northumbrian music at the Sage, Gateshead. In between we seem to have had a great number of parties and picnics, and some excellent lectures and visits. We were honoured by the presence of the Lord Mayor and her consort at our Bicentenary Dinner, at which the Civic Centre staff did us proud with the meal, John Grundy gave an after-dinner speech, and nearly 150 members and friends had a very good time.

The success of several of the events exceeded our wildest expectations, and a thick file of press notices will be deposited at Woodhorn to show the organizers of the 250th anniversary how to do it. Some of the events were so successful that we are planning to repeat them, annually or bi-annually. We are planning an annual family picnic at the Great North Museum and are considering holding more concerts at the Sage. The greatest success of the year, however, is the growing sense of enthusiasm for the Society and its activities. All the events were well supported and members have been keen to volunteer to assist with projects. It is important that we build on this enthusiasm and attract more members, so that in 2063 the Society is still flourishing and still promoting and caring for the heritage of our region.

Lindsay Allason-Jones

Goodbye from Colm

I am handing on responsibility for arranging the monthly lectures to Frances McIntosh. I have done this task for the Society for about 10 years and that is enough. No one should do a job for too long.

It has been a pleasure to do the lectures and I would like to thank all who have helped me in this: our lecturers; all who have offered suggestions and helped me with introductions to speakers whom I did not know; and those who made important contributions to the meetings by opening discussions and giving the votes of thanks. Thanks often to personal contacts, we can usually get speakers of distinction who take the occasion seriously and present well-prepared lectures. I have not often thought that a speaker is simply re-cycling well-worn material. Frances McIntosh has been preparing the 2014

programme, and so from January we are in her highly capable hands.

Colm O'Brien

... and hello from Frances

Colm O'Brien has given me a hard act to follow! I currently work part-time for English Heritage as the Curator for Roman Collections, based at Corbridge. For the other half of the week I am studying for a PhD at Newcastle entitled *The Clayton Collection; an Archaeological Reappraisal*. I have belonged to SANT for a few years now, and my main aim is not to remain its youngest member!

We have an exciting series of lectures for 2014. The first lecture of 2014 promises to bring some amusing revelations. Much more seriously, in the anniversary year of World War One we are extremely lucky to be joined by the curator of the regimental collections of the 15th/19th The King's Royal Hussars and The Northumberland Hussars, Roberta Goldwater, on hidden histories of the war. Food historian Peter Brears is making a return visit in August to talk about Northumbrian food, and in our Public Lecture on 29th October, Somerset Herald David White will introduce us to the development of heraldry.

I hope you enjoy my first year of lectures, I for one am looking forward to them all!

Frances McIntosh

And hello to Lauren



Lauren Proctor in her glad rags at the Bicentenary Dinner

Just to prove how up-to-date we are, the Society is developing a growing presence on Facebook and I have taken over responsibility for looking after this.



Authors, editors, and the Festschrift recipient; from left to right Jon Coulston, Nick Hodgson, Frances McIntosh, Lindsay Allason-Jones, Rob Collins, David Breeze, Rebecca Jones and Alex Croom

I have been working for the Portable Antiquities Scheme in the North East of England for a year now, spending time in both the Durham and Newcastle offices. I studied for both my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Archaeology at Newcastle University and my research during that time focused on the medieval period in the North East, especially the economic transition from Middle Saxon to the Viking periods. I am particularly interested in regional variations in the material culture within the early medieval kingdom of Northumbria, and how this compares to contemporary kingdoms elsewhere.

You can reach the Facebook page by clicking on the button on the front page of the website. Please click 'Like' if you do indeed like it! I'm happy to receive messages on the page or, if you would like me to post something specific on the page, contact me on Lauren.Proctor@newcastle.ac.uk

Lauren Proctor

FESTSCHRIFT FOR LINDSAY

In academia, a *Festschrift* is a book honouring a respected person, and presented during his or her lifetime. In (almost) complete secrecy, Rob Collins and Frances McIntosh have been

preparing one for Lindsay Allason-Jones, to be published in the New Year by Oxbow Books under the title *Life in the Limes: Studies in the People and Objects of the Roman Frontiers*.

Lindsay's day job, outside her activities for the Society, has been to be at the forefront of small finds and Roman frontier research for forty years. She also has the ability to produce an intriguing story or off-beat fact about almost any object or event within her purview. The twenty-seven contributions to her *Festschrift* reflect this. They include new insights into inscribed and sculptural stones within military communities; the economic and ideological penetration of *romanitas* in the frontiers; evidence of trans-frontier interactions and invisible people; the role of John Clayton; and not least, one essay on leather bikinis and another on mice in Roman art.

Advance orders are being taken now by Oxbow, at a special price of £34 if ordered via their website.

OTHER NEW BOOKS BY OUR MEMBERS

Newcastle upon Tyne, the Eye of the North: An Archaeological Assessment, by C.P. Graves and our member David Heslop. English Heritage and Oxbow Books, £36. This covers Newcastle's long and proud history from

AN INVITATION

The first meeting of 2014 will be on Wednesday 29th Jan, at the Mining Institute, Westgate Road, as usual. It is our Anniversary Meeting, and the speaker will be Derek Cutts. His lecture is intriguingly titled *The Battle between a TOWN COUNCILLOR and an ARCHITECT and the POLISS*, but he says that it has very little to do with architecture, and much more to do with public morality. Who or what is being referred to, you will have to come to the meeting to find out!

There will be a social evening after the lecture, upstairs in the Mining Institute's Wood Memorial Hall. We would be grateful if members would donate food for the buffet; please contact Freda Thompson on 0191 285 5303 to say what you are bringing. We will also be asking for a small donation, around £2, for each glass of wine. New members who have joined in the last year will be especially welcome.

Roman times when Hadrian's Wall marked the northernmost point of the Roman Empire, and through to the protracted siege of the city during the English Civil War.

Wearmouth and Jarrow; Northumbrian monasteries in an historic landscape, Sam Turner, Sarah Semple and Alex Turner, University of Hertfordshire Press, £20 (paperback). This is the 'book of the lecture' given by Sam Turner in September this year (see below).

The Crosby Garrett Helmet, ed. by David Breeze and Mike Bishop, £5. Produced in conjunction with the display of the helmet at Tullie House Museum, Carlisle, until Jan 26th, 2014.

WALKS AND COUNTRY MEETINGS 2014

Last year saw a bumper bundle of walks, with visits to Wylam, Wallington, Little Harle Tower and Capheaton, and of course the old favourite the Roman Wall. Among our Country Meetings, of course, the trip to Lindisfarne in August was undoubtedly the high spot. There is a record of all these on our website for those who want their memory jogged, and a full album of photographs from Lindisfarne, courtesy of

Derek Cutts, on our Facebook page.

This year promises to be equally good. We are returning to a very popular site from previous years, getting a new viewpoint on some familiar locations and exploring the impact that the last two millenia have had on a small portion of Northumberland.

On 3rd January, our traditional urban walk offers a chance to blow away the cobwebs without overstretching those muscles. Lord (John) Shipley will guide us round the process of commemoration in one small part of the North East, looking at the two major memorials in Gosforth plus a number of significant private dedications in the churches and other buildings on the High Street. In April, Lindsay Allason-Jones will pick up on the other half of the Wylam walk held last Spring. This seven mile circular walk takes in both sides of the river and will look at the site of the 1640 battle of Newburn. With a bit of luck Hadrian Brewery will be open and there will be the opportunity for lunch in the pub nearby.

May sees Derek Cutts guiding us along Rimside Moor Road near Edlingham taking in both Roman Road and Toll Road, along with some cup and ring marks, medieval remains and some industrial archaeology. The ghost of a black pig may also make an appearance...

July takes us back to Spadeadam RAF base, where Phillip Abramson will introduce us to Cold War Northumberland, complete with rockets, missile launch pads and the odd modern training landscape. If you never expected to find a Russian forest in Northumberland, this is your opportunity.

Country Meetings, where we travel by coach rather than individual cars, are planned for spring and summer. In May we are going to Coniston in the Lake District, with a trip on the National Trust's steam launch to see Ruskin's



Despite their best efforts, the Society found marching difficult to master. Picture from the Catterick trip, courtesy Lindsay Allason-Jones

house at Brantwood. At the end of August we will be in Scotland for a visit to Burrell Collection and Pollok House, with its fine art collection.

Pre-booking is essential for the Country Meetings, and full details and booking forms will arrive in the May mailing. It's also needed for the Spadeadam walk, since this is on Ministry of Defence land. It helps the organisers if they know how many are coming to the other walks as well, and allows us to arrange car-shares where possible. Booking forms and more information will be on the website and in the Spring mailing.

Rosie Serdiville and Mary Longley

UPHEAVALS IN THE LIBRARY



One of Barbara Harbottle's unidentified slides; can anyone tell us where this gatehouse is?

We have had a busy few months in the Library. During the University's summer vacation the library was closed to public access, as we had to empty the rare book store to enable the environmental controls to be brought up to standard. These books had to be stored in the SANT office, together with much of our picture collection. At much the same time, we took delivery of books bequeathed by our Past President Constance Fraser, and some donated by Sunderland University from the library of the old Centre for Lifelong Learning, now sadly defunct. For a while, it was a scene of chaos – but all is now well on the way back to normality.

The arrival of these extra books led to a rearrangement of the public access shelves, and re-shelving and checking of the closed

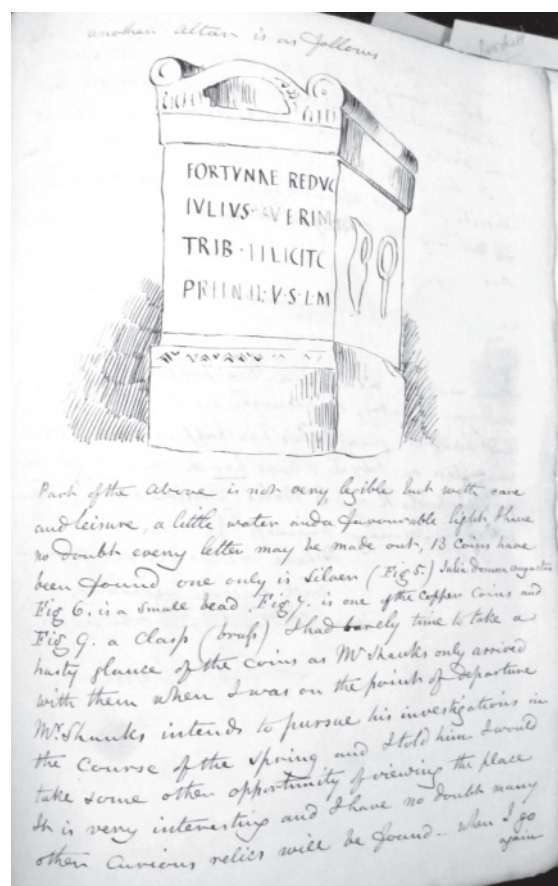
access sections. In this I have been greatly assisted by Eric Waites and my fellow librarian, Howard Cleeve.

The books from Constance Fraser's very generous bequest have now been catalogued, but volunteers are still working their way through the boxes of files and pamphlets.

We have also inherited Barbara Harbottle's slide collection. So far around a thousand – about a third of the total – have been scanned electronically by the indefatigable Eric Waites. Some are unidentifiable, and we have put a selection on the website with a request for help on them. In due course they will all be available for viewing on request to me.

Denis Peel

1840S MINUTE BOOK RETURNED



A page from John Bell's minute book, picture courtesy Lindsay Allason-Jones

Thanks to the eagle eyes of one of our members, an important part of our early records has returned to our keeping.

The minute books from our early years,

created by the Society's first Treasurer John Bell, include handwritten copies of minutes of meetings, lists of donations of books and artefacts, applications for membership and notices of recent archaeological discoveries. However, Volume III, covering the years 1840 to 1843, seemed to be irretrievably lost.

Although first reported missing in 1965, it may in fact have gone astray during the Second World War when everything was moved out of the Black Gate. The bookplates on the inside cover show that it has passed through at least two private libraries. When a Society member who is a noted collector of antiquarian books saw that it was up for sale, he immediately let us know and helped us to get it back.

It's especially pleasing to have the volume back in our Bicentenary Year. It is an important record of the Society's activities in the mid 19th century and includes fascinating correspondence between John Bell and some of the foremost antiquaries of the day, including John Clayton, John Adamson and Thomas Sopwith.

Lindsay Allason Jones

ELEPHANTS IN THE STREET

Nearly 5,000 people visited the exhibition of our historic photos held in conjunction with the Side Gallery. This was a remarkable collection of images showing people in the streets of Newcastle in the 19th century. They strongly resemble the known work of Edgar G Lee, a respected Tyneside photographer and lantern slide maker, with a professional studio in Newcastle's Eldon Square. We are working with the Gallery and the Mining Institute on a further project.

We asked via our website for help identifying when, where and why the most striking picture, of two elephants dragging a cart with the skeleton of another, might have been taken. Grace McCombie identified the buildings in the background as Claremont Buildings on the corner of Claremont Road, and so narrowed down the photograph's date to between 1894 when they were built, and 1905 when they were extended. Derek Cutts trawled through newspaper records and discovered a surprising number of itinerant elephants passing through Tyneside in the late nineteenth century. In 1884 in Sunderland, one of the



Elephants in Victorian Newcastle, from our collection of historic photos

performing elephants appearing at the Avenue Theatre was being taken to its quarters in the Black Bull Hotel stables. It escaped and entered the bar 'much to the astonishment of the customers, who beat a hasty retreat'. It was recaptured after it had knocked the glasses from the bar. There is no mention of its colour.

Finally, the Keeper of Pachyderms at the Natural History Museum told us that she was surprised that elephants, normally a very sensitive species, could have been induced to pull along a skeleton of one of their own kind.

Lindsay Allason-Jones

AN UPDATE FROM THE TREASURER

We have had a generous £5,000 legacy from Constance Fraser's estate. It will provide a welcome boost to our Publications Fund. We always welcome legacies, whether for specific purposes or towards general running costs. As we are a charity, legacies to us are tax exempt and reduce the size of your taxable estate.

I will be proposing at the AGM in April 2014 that subscription rates rise from 2015. When we strip out all the one-off costs of the Bicentenary and the costs of dealing with the Keep, our income is less than our expenditure. We have already made economies such as putting the annual report and accounts on-line rather than printing them and posting them out, which saves well over £1,000, but we have not been able to find other easy savings, and indeed there are areas where we might spend more.

So we need a general uplift to allow the Society to go forward on an even keel and to

maintain sufficient funds to take advantage of opportunities to add to its collections, continue to build the Library, and to issue new publications. We can often raise grants, but need to be seen to be making a contribution ourselves. More specifically, we need to consider whether we charge enough for hard bound copies of *AA* to cover the additional costs of binding and postage, and whether we need differential rates for members abroad.

Simon Pallett

NEWS FROM THE COIN COLLECTION

We have some new coin cabinets, kindly provided by Frances McIntosh, as our traditional ones are no longer structurally sound. Our volunteer Liz Wilson spent much time before returning to university helping to move them, and it means we will be able to re-order the collection into a more contemporary and user-friendly scheme! Thousands of coins are still waiting to be moved, so further volunteers will always be welcome.

The move gave us the opportunity to examine the Hadrian's Wall Pilgrimage badges. This is an interesting collection, highlighting the changing choices in symbolism and materials over the course of the past century. However, we are missing badges for the 1969 and 1979 pilgrimages. Is anyone willing to donate these to our Society, to give us a complete set?

Rob Collins

MARYPORT EXCAVATIONS IN 2013

As members who visited us last summer will remember, our excavations in 2011–2012 had re-examined the site where in 1870 a large number of Roman altars had been found buried in pits. We concluded that far from being 'ritually buried', they were there as post-packing for a succession of timber buildings. This year, we opened up two new trenches on the eastern side of the 1870 site.

As we had hoped, we found two more post-pits to the east of the main concentration, possibly marking the corner of a structure. We also found the corner of the linear boundary



Trench E looking north, and showing the ditch underlying the rectangular temple and the edge of the circular monument. Picture courtesy Tony Wilmott/Roman Temples Project

we detected in 2012. The big surprise though came in the form of a roundhouse with internal post-pits – sadly, without any dating evidence.

The main thrust of the 2013 season, however, was to determine where the altars had originally been displayed and venerated. As a first step we opened up a new trench in the area where in 1880 the archaeologists had found a substantial rectangular building. Sadly, we found it much damaged since it was cleared and photographed in the 1880s. Sufficient has survived, however, for us to see that the entrance façade consisted of two columns *in antis* – that is, columns set between the pilasters that extend from the long side walls of the structure to form a porch. So this is the north-westernmost classical temple known from the Roman world.

Enough of the collapsed wall remained for us to learn something more of its appearance. The walls were local red sandstone, but elements such as the cornice appear to have been specifically carved from yellow sandstone. The temple was built over a v-shaped ditch – possibly a military feature – which contributed to the instability of its walls. In 2014 we plan to expand the excavated area to the west to investigate the area where the 1880 diggers uncovered a substantial circular monument, perhaps another temple or a mausoleum.

Ian Haynes and Tony Wilmott

BAYEUX TAPESTRY IN THE BLACK GATE



The rediscovered section of the Bayeux Tapestry drawing in the Black Gate. Picture courtesy Lindsay Allason-Jones

Earlier this year, the builders in the Black Gate discovered a section of the 1851 full-size copy of the Bayeux Tapestry, commissioned by our member John Collingwood-Bruce, behind bookshelves at the Black Gate. It was displayed during an open weekend in August, before being reunited with the other sections.

Collingwood-Bruce commissioned the 70m long copy in 1851. It was drawn by his friend, John Moffat (brother-in-law of the famous explorer, David Livingstone) and coloured in by his students at Percy Street Academy in Newcastle. Collingwood-Bruce then used it as a teaching aid, and took it when he travelled round Britain and Europe giving lectures on the topic. There are only three other Victorian copies of the Bayeux Tapestry in England, one of them a full-size embroidery currently in Reading Museum.

In 1884, Collingwood-Bruce donated the facsimile to SANT. It was displayed as a frieze around the top of the walls in the library at the Black Gate. Over the years the bookcases were extended upwards, hiding sections of it. These were probably by now very dirty and not considered important. What was visible was taken down in the early 1960s, rolled up and put in a cupboard, not to be rediscovered until 1990.

When the Old Newcastle Project contractors moved in during July 2013, a further section was found and taken off the walls under controlled 'watching brief' conditions. We are now assembling small team of volunteers under the supervision of Sally Bird to clean it, firstly with soft static brushes to get the loose muck off; then, very carefully, to use artists' erasers to clean further. They will be working one afternoon a week or so in the Castle Keep,

and may also find themselves acting a display to visitors of working conservation!

Collingwood-Bruce himself is buried in Jesmond cemetery, but has a marble memorial in St Nicholas Cathedral. It needs conservation to the tune of £8,000 and SANT will be leading a fundraising campaign for this. Collingwood-Bruce also paid for the restoration of St Margaret's Chapel in the Cathedral, dedicated to the memory of his wife; the windows depict important historical women such as St Hild.

Lindsay Allason-Jones

MONTHLY MEETINGS

June 2013

Chris Fowler, Lecturer in Later Prehistoric Archaeology at Newcastle University, spoke about *Chalcolithic and early Bronze Age funerals*. He examined how funerals had changed during that time in North East England, drawing on his recent synthesis of 355 burials from 150 sites in the region, and new osteological analysis and radiocarbon dating of some of the human remains from these burials. His research is published in an article in the 2013 edition of *Archaeologia Aeliana*, which members should have received before this *News Bulletin*.

Chris can be contacted on chris.fowler@newcastle.ac.uk

July 2013

In the second of our Bicentenary Public Lectures, Jim Rees of Beamish Museum explored the issue of who should be given the credit for Puffing Billy and Wylam Dilly, the Wylam locomotives built in 1813. The audience was over a hundred strong, and included many railway enthusiasts as well as antiquarians.

Jim explained that the two locomotives were constructed for Christopher Blackett, the owner of Wylam Colliery, to haul coal wagons to the docks at Lemington. However, the first steam locomotive in the North East had been built several years earlier, by John Steele at the Whitfield Foundry in Gateshead in 1805. Steele had the licence from Trevithick to build his engines, and produced one speculatively, but had been unable to interest Blackett in it.

Development beyond that had been a matter of several people working out different

improvements and producing models and prototypes before a version could be put into operation. Even then, the Wylam pair lasted only a short time before being reconstructed with eight rather than four wheels.

Construction had been credited to engineer William Hedley, enginewright Jonathan Forster and blacksmith Timothy Hackworth. The roles of craftsmen such as William Chapman and Isaac Jackson had been largely forgotten. Jackson was a mechanical genius, largely self-taught, who not only designed complicated machinery but also built it, even making his own tools. He had built a tiny model engine that ran back and forth on rails set out on a long dining-table, using 'eccentric' gearing which meant it reversed after so many strokes. (The first ever toy train?). He was buried in Ovingham Churchyard, and deserved more recognition.

The original locomotives, Jim said, seem to have been named Elizabeth and Jane, after Blackett's daughters, and no-one knew where their later names came from. They went on working on the wagonway for many years, but are now in the Science Museum and the Royal Museum of Scotland. A German team was allowed to take Puffing Billy to pieces in 1906 in order to do very detailed drawings from which to construct a replica, from which much was learnt. Beamish Museum also has a replica, built in 2006.

Jim can be contacted on
JimRees@beamish.org.uk.

August 2013



The Flodden Memorial, picture courtesy Stephen McKay from the Geograph project

Chris Burgess, archaeological manager for the Flodden 1513 project, spoke on *Strategic decisions at Flodden (or the Scots was robbed)*. The Scots, he said, had built formidable fortifications, and had with them massive siege guns with which they had

reduced Norham Castle in a very short time. The English, however, had counter-bombarded, with smaller and more manoeuvrable guns. It was a myth that the Scots did not know how to use their 18-foot pikes. They were very used to 12-footers, and would have done plenty of drilling while waiting for the English.

The 'robbery' was because of particular ground conditions. It was another myth that there had been a lack of advance scouting; the phenomenon was not one that would have been picked up in that way. A water discharge zone created a wet boggy area running through the dip between the two hills. The ground above it would be firm enough if half a dozen horsemen rode over it. A small group of men, too, would have had nothing more than wet feet. However, the Scottish units marched forward 'German fashion', in orderly ranks. Eighty or more men marching in step would have broken the surface tension completely, and after the first couple of ranks they would have found themselves waist-deep in water. The English troops could then simply pick them off.

Chris revealed that he had organised a short experimental session, training people to march with 18-foot pikes, and was planning another where volunteers would be trained to charge with them (though sadly, not with bare feet, as the Scots would have had). He added that the battle was always called Branxton Hill until the 19th century romanticising by Scott; the name was changed to Flodden for poetic reasons, because it was so much easier to find a rhyme.

You can find out more on the excavations at <http://www.iflodden.info/>

September 2013

Professor Sam Turner of Newcastle University spoke about *Building with Power*, presenting new research into the nature and legacy of two of England's most important early medieval monasteries. Wearmouth and Jarrow were among the most sophisticated centres of learning in Europe during the 7th and 8th centuries. Through their buildings and estates they had a long-lasting effect on the surrounding region from the Anglo-Saxon period to the present. A recent collaborative research project, led by himself and Dr Sarah Semple of Durham University (with funding from English Heritage) had set out to investigate the development of the landscape, the monastery precincts, and the surviving buildings themselves.

At a regional level (between the Rivers Tyne and Wear) they used GIS to analyse landscape change. They surveyed the open areas around the two monasteries using a full range of geophysical techniques. They complemented this fieldwork with geo-archaeological and palaeo-environmental surveys to help map ancient land surfaces around the churches. They had also surveyed the surviving early medieval fabric using laser scanning and ground-penetrating radar. They then integrated all this digital data with petrological recording of each stone. As a result, they were able to address topics such as the sources of building material used in the churches, and investigate relationships between the early monasteries and the surrounding landscape over the long term, including the sites of the Roman frontier.

Sam can be reached on sam.turner@ncl.ac.uk. See New Books, above, for details of the book covering the research.

October 2013

Our third Public Lecture this year was given by Dr David Clarke, former Keeper of Archaeology at the National Museums of Scotland. Antiquarianism went back to the turn of the eighteenth century, he suggested, and tended to be Tory, Anglican, and dominated by the lower gentry who were very conscious of their place in society. In the early nineteenth century it was the fashion to laugh at them, as with Scott's *The Antiquary* and Dickens in *Pickwick Papers*. Our own founder-member Rev John Hodgson had been taken in by a fake hoard of coins deposited in his churchyard at Heworth, publishing the find in good faith in the very first edition of *Archaeologia Aeliana*. [Editor's note; The Wikipedia entry on Rev. John Hodgson contains a good summary of this story.]

Our own Society had been founded during the Napoleonic Wars, when repressive legislation was discouraging the formation even of learned societies; in the period of unrest after the war, the Society had needed to apply for a licence to meet, in compliance with the Seditious Practices Act. It was only the third successful antiquarian society founded in Britain, after the London and Edinburgh ones, and the first to have simply regional concerns. Its membership was more broadly spread across the social classes than many other learned societies, perhaps because Newcastle society was quite socially cohesive.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Dr Clarke

suggested, archaeology had been taken much more seriously because it touched on major controversies of the time; the form of early churches interested the Tractarians, and discoveries about pre-historic humans linked with geology and raised questions about the date of Creation and the literal truth of the Bible.

David Clarke can be contacted at incontext003@gmail.com.

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

Our final meeting of the Bicentenary year, at the end of November, was taking place as this *News Bulletin* was at the printers. So the three speakers have kindly supplied advance copy for what they planned to say.

Mr Loftus and his Long Room



McDonalds in Grainger Street; should our plaque go up there?

The first meeting about setting up a Society of Antiquaries in Newcastle was actually held on 15th January 1813, in a solicitor's chambers on the corner of Mosley Street and Dean Street. On this evidence, the Society's plaque marking its 200th anniversary should be erected there. However, the Society chooses to mark instead the anniversary of its first formal meeting a week later, 'at Loftus's Long Room, in Newcastle, on Saturday the 23rd instant, at One o' Clock'.

William Loftus (1763–1834) was the landlord of the Turk's Head Inn in the Bigg Market, a street which then extended as far as the Nuns' Gate. The buildings were demolished in the improvements of the 1830s when Grainger

Street was laid out and Bigg Market was truncated. If the plaque were to be erected on the site of the inn itself, a traffic island at the junction of Grainger Street and Newgate Street would be about right. The Long Room was a separate structure, part of the first Newcastle theatre (1748–1788) in a yard behind the inn. Long rooms were common in inns of the period. Today they would be called ‘function rooms’ and every town had at least one. They were used for all sorts of events: the founding of antiquarian societies; dinners for the Society of the Sons of the Clergy; exhibitions of wild animals; lectures on electricity; waxworks, automata and panoramas. The Turk’s Head Long Room saw all of these and, ironically, the meeting of creditors on John Bell’s bankruptcy in 1817.

Perhaps the correct location for the commemorative plaque would therefore be close to McDonalds in Grainger Street!

‘Mr Loftus’ was the son of a Newcastle innkeeper, and an enterprising man. By his death, he was ‘one of the most extensive coach masters in the north of England’. By then, he had first moved his business to the Turf Hotel in Collingwood Street, and later given up innkeeping to concentrate his business entirely on coaching. The name of the Turf Hotel refers to his holding for many years the position of Clerk of the Course for Newcastle Races. He was the man behind the grandstand commemorated in Grandstand Road.

Derek Cutts

The Old Newcastle Project



Scaffolding and walkways between the Black Gate and the Castle Keep

Work on the Black Gate is close to its finishing point. The contractors, Northern Construction Solutions Ltd, have worked extremely hard over

the last 30 weeks. Inside the building, there has been a complete refurbishment including new electrics, lighting, heating and security provision. New toilets have been installed, there is a reception counter on the first floor, and the offices in the old attic space are ready for us to move into after Christmas. The Learning floor – which we have been glad to name the Harbottle Suite – and the exhibition space are almost ready for their second-stage fit out by Studio MB, our exhibition designers. They will take our many stories of the castle and its inhabitants to create some very exciting interpretation ready for opening in the spring of 2014.

Installing the external lift has been a tremendous feat of engineering and construction, with the main structure going up in some decidedly wet weather. Together with the new walkways and refurbished bridge, this means that the building will be fully accessible to everyone.

As for the Keep, a new oak floor has been laid in the Garrison Room, with a new door and an accessible ramp from street level. The doorway into the mural chamber has been re-opened for the first time in over 70 years, creating a much more interesting and sensible route through the building at this level.

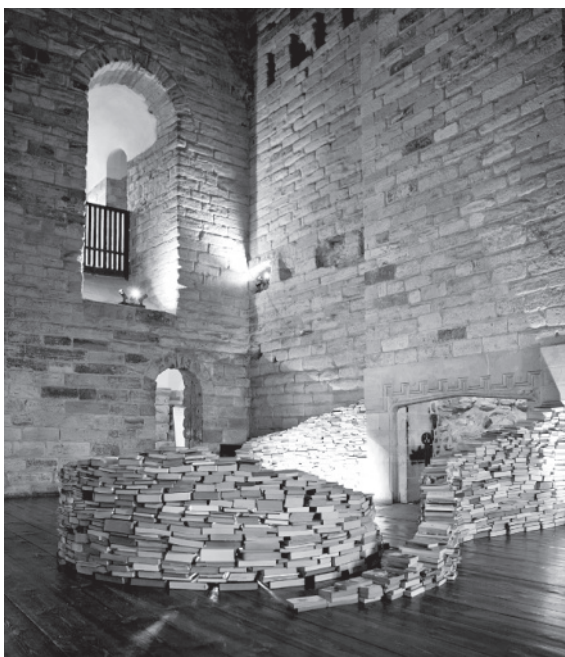
Kate Sussams

Artistic Exploration of 200 Years

I have been honoured to be Artist in Residence with the Society during this important year. I have spent time with Society members, the artefacts, and the archives learning about the Society and its role in preserving and presenting the history of this region. I have also had the chance to spend time with school children, talking with them about the Society and its collection while inspiring them to conserve the objects and places which tell the stories of their own time, as they are the antiquarians of the future.

The work they made became a part of my evolving artwork for *Tales of Antiquarian Adventure*, the exhibition at the Great North Museum. The piece began as a cabinet with artefacts and images about the Castle Keep, but these were replaced each week with the work created by school children about objects from their own lives.

My time in residence will conclude with an exhibition, running from 28th November until 17th December, at the Castle Keep. The cabinet will reappear alongside artefacts



Dawn Felicia Knox's installation in the Castle Keep in May this year; picture by Dawn

relating to Hadrian's Wall, and some images and stories from the children. In the Great Hall, an installation will bring to life the Mithraeum which once stood in the shadow of the Housesteads Fort.

Dawn Felicia Knox

DEATHS

A full obituary of our Past President Constance Fraser, who died in June this year, is included in the 2013 edition of *Archaeologia Aeliana*.

We are also sad to announce the death of our member Ian Colquhoun, born in 1954, archaeologist and expert on Bronze Age

swords. At the time of his untimely death he had surveyed almost the entire total of 600 bronze weapons known in this country. Many members will recall him from his lectures, adult education classes, and the walks he led in the Northumberland countryside.

Our long-standing member Fred Bettess has also died, on 31st October aged 94. He was an authority on the history of Alnmouth, publishing an e-book about it only in March this year, and was the author of *Surveying for Archaeologists*, published by Durham University Department of Archaeology in 1992.

Sue Ward

CHANGES AHEAD FOR THE NEWS BULLETIN?

In our increasingly electronic world, we have been discussing the future of this printed *News Bulletin*, and are now ready to put forward ideas to you, the members. Over 200 members are now receiving our monthly e-circulars, produced in a rather low-tech format as a Word document and a PDF. The current idea is that in the next few months (as soon as I have learnt how to do it!), it should move up a gear with active links to our website and others embedded in it. From the next edition of this *News Bulletin*, we would also be embedding links in the PDF version of that (already available, and archived, on the website). In due course – perhaps from mid-2015 – we would stop printing the *News Bulletin* and send it by e-mail as a PDF, in June and December as now.

I, and the Publications Committee, would be glad to hear views and comments on this.

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 is 5th May 2014. The mailing date will be 11th June. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Secretary by 4th June. The Spring Mailing will be on 12th March, and inserts must be with the membership secretary by 5th March. Anyone who wants an insert included in either mailing 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 document or pdf) so that it can be included on the website.