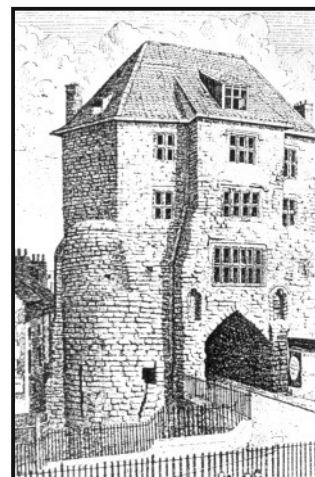


NEWS BULLETIN

THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No.56 June 2014



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 nearly 800 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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OUR INTREPID NEW TEAM



Our new President Derek Cutts in a non-antiquarian position. Picture from Derek's collection, though obviously not taken by him!

A Message from our New President

Thank you to everyone for the welcome and support I have received in the first months of my period of office. Working with the officers and members of such a varied society with such a breadth of knowledge and interests can only be a source of pleasure.

For those who do not know me, I have been asked to supply some information. I was born in Leeds after the end of the Second World War but before the end of sweet rationing. At school I expressed an interest in a career in museums, only to be told very firmly that there was no future in it and that I should instead pursue a career in education. I read history at Newcastle University, and having taught the same subject in North Tyneside schools, I am now retired.

I worked as a volunteer on excavations from Yorkshire to Scotland, discovering my wife in a Neolithic pit, where I (ill-advisedly) pointed out

she had missed a bit of pot. We have three children and one grandchild.

I enjoy hill walking, mountaineering and rock climbing and am currently engaged in testing the physical limits of bi-lateral hip replacements. I do some work as a freelance rock climbing coach. I collect late 18th and early 19th century porcelain and pearlware, and ephemera of the same period, especially of a political nature or related to estate management. I am interested in the field archaeology of land management and the history of the economic exploitation of upland areas.

I have been a member of Council since 1983, Joint Secretary since 1989 and a Vice President since 2005. I chaired the Library Committee from its formation until the end of 2013 and looked after Country Walks for a while.

Shortly before I took up office, our Membership Secretary Sarah Walter resigned, and so I was plunged into making arrangements to fill the vacancy and cover the interregnum in the office. This has proved an excellent way for me to get to grips with the Society's systems. I intend to take care to preserve the things which members feel work well already, but I am conscious of the need also to take care with the Society's finances. Last year, phone, stationery and postage cost the Society nearly £8,000, over a third of subscription income. I believe that ways can be found to continue to improve our provision of news and information to members while reducing its cost. If we can do that, it will help us to be in a position eventually to develop the Library and to extend our collections in the way that we would like, as well as continuing to ensure the regular publication of a high quality journal and the provision of a wide range of excellent activities for members. The hard work and expertise of all the Society's officers are essential in these aims, but I would not wish their efforts to be frustrated by a simple lack of funds.

Of course, communication by post and paper will continue so long as a majority of members want it, but even a modest shift to greater use of e-mail and electronic payment methods will save money for better things. The electronic version of this very News Bulletin has colour pictures and hyperlinks, and if we move to fully electronic distribution it could have more pictures and more news. Some members may prefer that.

I look forward to meeting more members at meetings, on activities and in the office in the

GNM, and to hearing their views on the Society and how it works.

Derek Cutts

...and from our new Joint Secretary



*Ann Marie having 'fun' on her retirement.
Picture courtesy Gordon Shon, [Trike Tours Scotland](#)*

Last year I applied for retirement from my job, and thought I might do a 'bit of archiving' for SANT, as I had enjoyed taking part in the Blair project in 2003 and 2004. But then I went on the Catterick trip in July, held the register and knew at that moment that my destiny had changed... I spoke to a few people about my new freedom and was asked if I would like to become Joint Secretary with Nick Hodgson when Derek Cutts moved on to become President. This is the story so far.

I have attended four monthly Executive and one Council meeting and spent much time assisting the President and Membership Administrator. We are all newbies together. I've also helped with the last mailing; all those labels were lovingly applied by my own fair hand, so indirectly I have met everyone in the Society. After nearly 20 years of being a regular attendee at meetings, trips and social events, I'm now starting to take a part in the Society's running; it is fascinating to see all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes to make it all run efficiently. I thank everyone who is supporting me in this new part of my life.

Ann Marie Nicol

WELCOME TO OUR NEW ADMINISTRATOR

Finally, welcome to our new Membership Administrator, Brendan Derham, who started

in the office on 2 April. He is working for us 12 hours a week, partly in our office on the top floor of the Great North Museum and partly at home. He should always be available in the office on Wednesday afternoons, for anyone who wants to phone or drop in with a query. As well as the duties previously carried out by the Membership Secretary, he has taken on bookings for certain events and in due course will also be dealing with sales of our publications.

His predecessor, Sarah Walter, stepped down from her post on 31 January 2014. Sarah was first appointed in 2001, and throughout her time in the job dealt with membership administration, answered and deflected many of the numerous and sometimes bizarre enquiries that come the Society's way, and quietly and effectively encouraged many of those enquirers to join the Society. She also helped manage the difficult transition as the Society moved its home from the Black Gate to the GNM. She brought her own academic speciality to bear in work on researching the Society's art collection and was always diligent in promoting the Society. We are glad to say that Sarah is continuing as an active member of the Society.

Sue Ward

OBE FOR LINDSAY



Lindsay displaying the plaque commemorating our 1813 founding

Congratulations to our immediate past president Lindsay Allason-Jones, who has been awarded an OBE for her contribution to archaeology.

Lindsay has been a pivotal member of the Society at least since she joined Council in 1981. Her care of its vast and rambling collections has been sustained and thorough. In

particular, she oversaw the move of the material from the Museum of Antiquities to the Great North Museum. She is active not in just conserving our collections, but equally important, in bringing them to attention.

She undertook her presidential term at a time of unusual demands. In addition to the usual role of President, representing the Society in public and in meetings with a seemingly endless list of public bodies, she managed the Society's withdrawal from the Keep and the Black Gate, ensuring that the buildings have a secure and useful future and that the contents have new homes. The process had difficult moments, but Lindsay has secured a happy outcome.

Above all, the Society had a Bicentenary year which, while the fruit of the hard work of many individuals, enjoyed its success very largely because of the drive and co-ordination skills of Lindsay. She set out to ensure that the Society had a jolly good time, and she succeeded. Not only that, but she made sure everyone appreciated the varied and vital nature of the Society, through a wonderfully successful exhibition and a programme with something for everyone. She left her period as President with the Society in good heart. Her careful management of publicity has ensured that the Society is recognised and held in high regard.

Derek Cutts

NEWCASTLE CASTLE



Spring at the Black Gate, with the new lift up its side. Picture courtesy Graeme Peacock

The newly-refreshed Newcastle Castle – the Black Gate and Castle Keep, once more

together as a single unit for the first time since the railway viaduct cut them asunder in the nineteenth century – is due to open in July. There will be new permanent displays, focusing on the history of the buildings and the people who lived in and around them.

The Old Newcastle Project team are working hard on finalising the material. Volunteers from the Society and students from Newcastle University have been helping with valuable research. Topics have included Patrick Black (of Black Gate fame), Irish immigration, and its impact on nineteenth century life in the Castle Garth. Others have been researching images from various local and national institutions (including Newcastle Libraries, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, English Heritage and the Royal Collection). One Newcastle University student has even been looking at biodiversity potential in the immediate surrounds of the Black Gate.

The new lift-shaft went up in the middle of winter, and has been generally praised; we think the design has managed to make it look both modern and in keeping with its historic surroundings. It is made from European larch, and will gradually weather and hopefully match the creamy colour of the surrounding stone. The external lighting scheme means that the lift shaft, access walkway and bridges are lit up at night with beautiful LED lights.

A fit-out contractor has been appointed to construct and install all the new interpretation material. A new website is also under development. There is currently a holding page – www.newcastlecastle.co.uk – and the finished site will be unveiled shortly before the grand opening. People can keep up to date with developments on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/OldNewcastleProject.

Kate Sussams

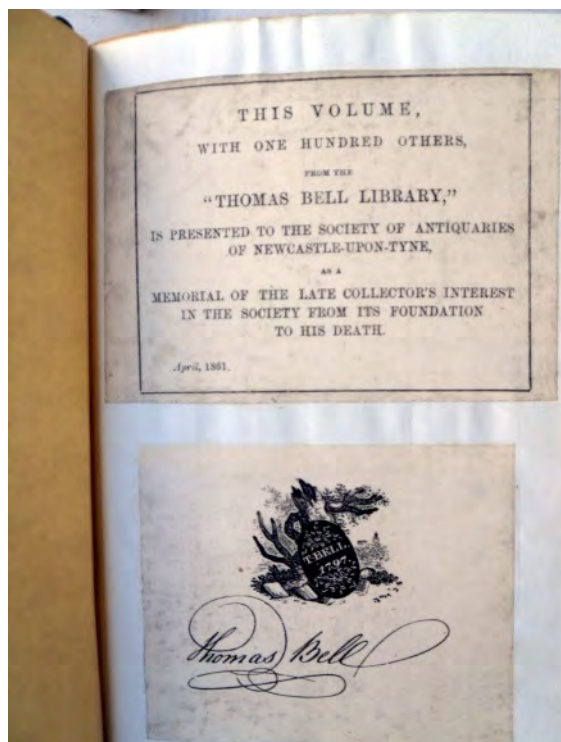
Your chance to see the changes!

There is still (just) time to book for the President's Evening at the Castle on 20 June at 7.30. This gives you an opportunity to see the exciting changes in the Keep and the Black Gate, including the refurbished Garrison Room and a sneak preview of some of the new interpretation displays. Kim Bibby-Wilson will be playing the Northumbrian pipes for us, and Ian Ayris will be our speaker. The cost is £15 per person, to include a buffet (with a selection suitable for vegetarians as well as carnivores).

Numbers are limited. See [our website](http://www.newcastlecastle.co.uk) for

more information and booking details or, if you are not on the internet, phone organiser Pauline Allen on 0191 263 5947 to check if tickets are still available.

LIBRARY NEWS



Bookplates in one of the hundred books bequeathed to the Society by Thomas Bell, second son of our founder John Bell. Picture courtesy Denis Peel

I am pleased to announce that Howard Cleeve has joined me as a second librarian. He has taken on the task of looking after that important part of the Society's library – borrowing and, even more important, ensuring returns and he is bigger than me! I am looking after the periodicals and we jointly share listing and shelving new acquisitions.

All Barbara Harbottle's 2,300 slides have now been scanned and labelled, and are in store at the Discovery Museum. They may be viewed on request, on the SANT laptop in the library. Numerous people responded to the request for help with the image printed in the last *News Bulletin* (it was Morpeth Castle gatehouse), and thanks to them all. If you would like to continue the good work and suggest where and when other images come from, please do this in the library, and pass the information to Ian Bower, the librarian.

We have also now finally dealt with the

backlog of odd items found in the dim recesses of the Black Gate following our move from there in 2009. However, the best planned moves sometimes fall apart or in the words of our own (or soon to be foreign?) Robbie Burns ‘the best laid schemes o’ mice and men gang aft a-gley’. In our case it was getting our books recorded on the University Library Catalogue. The necessary staff were in place, but the electronic links to the Hancock building were not and no sooner had our books been shelved, than they had again to be re-boxed and sent to the Robinson Library for cataloguing. In this process some appear to have gone astray. We have completed a thorough check of our shelves, but as all librarians who creep into a library at midnight know, it is not only toys that come to life and dance but books also. They don’t always return to their rightful place afterwards. Several lines of enquiry are being pursued, and I am still hopeful that we will find them.

Arising from this problem has come the realisation that each of our books has its own history, and we are now starting a project to record their provenance and all the interesting additions including bookplates.

Denis Peel

HADRIAN’S WALL PILGRIMAGE 2019

Believe it or not, we are now half-way between the 2009 and the 2019 Pilgrimages of Hadrian’s Wall. As the first step in advance planning, our Society and the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, which have jointly organised the Pilgrimages since 1886, are putting together the committee to organise the 2019 event. It will probably meet first in the autumn, to consider dates and other priority matters. Members of the Society will be kept in touch with the planning of the Pilgrimage, one of the Society’s significant excursions, and will have the opportunity to book early.

David Breeze

PILGRIMAGE BADGES

At the second Pilgrimage in 1886, participants received a ‘distinguishing badge – a scallop



Pilgrimage badges from 1969 and 1979, picture Rob Collins

shell in silver’. Ever since then, it has been the tradition for participants to be issued with a special badge, and in recent years guides have also had a separate, distinguishing badge. Thanks to the kindness of Jennie Du Cane, the owner of Carrawburgh fort on Hadrian’s Wall, every pilgrimage from 1886 onwards is now represented in SANT’s collection. Jennie has kindly donated the badges that she and her father Richard received over the years for their contributions to the Pilgrimage, a total of nine badges. This includes those for previously missing years 1969 and 1979 (pictured). The design quality of the badges has varied – the 1989 badge was in bright red plastic!

Rob Collins

THE LINDISFARNE HOARD

The Lindisfarne Hoard of gold and silver coins was recently declared Treasure Trove, and the race is now on for SANT to raise the £30,900 needed to keep the Hoard in the region. We are applying to grant-giving bodies for the bulk of this, but need to raise £7,000 locally.

The pottery jug containing the hoard was found by Richard Mason when he was underpinning the foundations of a house on Lindisfarne in 2003. It wasn’t until 2011, however, that he realised that the jug contained coins, and brought them to the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

There are altogether ten gold and seven silver coins, the latest dating from the middle of the sixteenth century. Four of the gold and six of the silver coins come from English mints, but others are from much wider afield. There is a silver thaler minted at Annaberg by the Electorate of Saxony, two gold *écu au soleil* coins of Francis I of France, and two gold Burgundian crowns of Charles V of the Netherlands. A very rare find is



*The Hoard and its jug; photo courtesy
Portable Antiquities Scheme*

a gold scudo of Pope Clement VII (1523–34). The earliest coin is a silver groat of Henry VI, minted in the late 1420s or early 1430s; the latest is a silver sixpence of Elizabeth I, minted in London in 1562. The jug in which the Hoard was found is a Bartmann jug from the potteries of Frechen in the Rhineland.

Astonishingly, a similar jug containing a hoard of 50 silver coins, also of Elizabethan dates was found in 1962 at the same property on Lindisfarne. As the Island was used largely for a garrison in the Elizabethan period, with the priory given over as a supply base, the original owner of the two Hoards was probably a military officer who had seen service on the Continent. We already own the earlier hoard, so are keen to add this one to it.

You can donate towards the appeal through BT's MyDonate website (<http://bit.ly/1jJnyUV>), or by old-fashioned cheque or bank transfer.

Rob Collins

SANT ART GOES TO WOODHORN

SANT's collection of topographic prints, watercolours, oil paintings and associated ephemera is diverse and covers a timescale from the early seventeenth to the twentieth



The Night Attack by Robert Spence, part of our collection. First entitled The Attack on Housesteads, the artist withdrew it from the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition of 1910 after criticism by SANT members, reworked it under a generic title and then donated it to the Society in 1912

centuries. Some of the best examples were on show in our *200 Years* exhibition last year. Those that did not already have other homes have now been transferred to Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn, having been mostly deframed to help with their preservation. This is the last part of the Society's move from the Black Gate to be completed. Our office looks enormous without the wrapped packages which have been sitting there for so long.

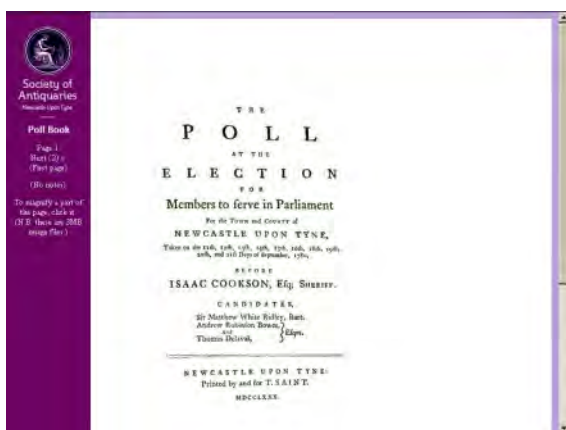
Some of the empty frames, however, have taken a return journey. They have been donated to the Heart of the City Project to help dress the new displays in the Black Gate.

Lindsay Allason-Jones

THE NEWCASTLE POLL BOOK

One of the hits of the *200 Years* exhibition, this is a record of the voting in the Newcastle Election of 1780, with additional manuscript notes of the canvass for the 1784 election. It has been digitised and is now on [our website](#), but we are looking for volunteers to do further work on it.

In the unreformed eighteenth century House of Commons, constituencies usually returned two members to Parliament. In Newcastle's



The front page of the Poll Book as it appears on our website

case, the electors were the freemen of the borough. There were about 2,500 voters, which made it a large constituency with expensive elections.

Voting was spread over several days, and each voter had to declare his votes in public. They were recorded in a manuscript poll book, often later printed as in this case. It served both as a record of who had voted for whom, and as a useful guide for those ‘canvassing’ – asking people for support for a particular candidate – in future elections.

In the 1780 election, the candidates had been Sir Matthew White Ridley, Andrew Robinson Bowes (known as ‘Stony’ Bowes) and Thomas Delaval. Ridley and Bowes had won, but Delaval had come only 50 votes behind Bowes. In 1784, the candidates were Ridley, Bowes and Charles Brandling. Bowes’ agents used a copy of the 1780 poll book as the basis of the canvass, and it is this working document which survives. The agents have added notes of who had died, who had become freemen since 1780 and how different people promised to vote. In the event, Bowes withdrew before the poll began and Ridley and Brandling were elected unopposed.

We now need volunteers to help in indexing the pages, transcribing the manuscript notes, and researching the names. It’s something that could be done from home and in small slices of time. Ann Marie Nichol had volunteered to co-ordinate, but has had to drop out now that she is Joint Secretary. So if you are willing either to co-ordinate or to join in, please email Sue Ward on sue.ward@phoecoop.coop.

Derek Cutts and Sue Ward

OTHER PROJECTS

We have several other projects on the go, or waiting to start.

Our collection of Edgar Lee’s 19th century photos is currently on exhibition at Woodhorn Museum (www.experiencewoodhorn.com) until 15 June. In collaboration with Woodhorn, the Side Gallery and the Mining Institute, we are now working on a feasibility study for a project to find out more about Edgar Lee, pull together all his work and make it accessible on-line so that the images can be identified and their wider social context appreciated. So we are looking for volunteers who have an interest in the social history of the North-East and/or expertise in photographic history, to investigate a small group of the photographs as a pilot to see how much can be discovered about Edgar Lee and his work. Lindsay Allason-Jones is co-ordinating this; contact her (Allason.Jones@btinternet.com) if you are interested.

In the last *News Bulletin* we also highlighted the rediscovery of our copy of the Bayeux Tapestry. The project to clean it will be starting very soon, and is being co-ordinated by Sally Bird (sbken@hotmail.co.uk). She would be glad of more volunteers, who will be armed firstly with soft static brushes to get the loose muck off; then, very carefully, to use artists’ erasers to clean further. It will involve one afternoon a week or so in the Castle Keep, and may also function as a display to visitors of working conservation!

And finally, *Archaeologia Aeliana*. The project to digitise and make that available on the internet goes on apace; we should be able to announce that it has reached significant milestones within the next few months. Meanwhile, we have plans to move the book reviews section from future printed volume to the website, which will mean that reviews can be made available to members as soon as they are ready. For this we need a volunteer. He or she will have to receive copies of books for review and chase publishers for others, to identify and approach suitable reviewers, and to edit and pass on the the text of completed reviews to the website manager. Anyone who is interested should contact AA editor Humphrey Welfare (hum@fossecott.demon.co.uk).

SUBSCRIPTION RISE

Council has agreed an increase in subscription levels with effect from 1 January 2015. This

will probably come as no surprise to anyone who has read earlier contributions from me. The Society has been spending more than it earns on its investments for the past four years, and has incurred substantial deficits. It is therefore time to raise subscription levels, to get the Society back on a more even keel and to put it into a better position to add to its collection and use small investments to lever grants and support from elsewhere.

However, we recognise that times are hard for many members and have sought to keep the increases to a minimum. This means that the Society itself will need to continue to find more efficient and cost-effective ways of running its affairs and in particular to look to make more use of digital technology. Change will be gradual, as befits a 200-year-old institution, and there is no intention at the moment of ceasing to provide printed copies of *AA*, but our plans for the News Bulletin and for mailings should substantially reduce our postage costs.

We decided not to raise student subscriptions, as the Society would not want to put off students from joining, but we have introduced higher charges for hardback *AAs* to reflect the increased postage costs. Traditionally we haven't charged foreign members a higher rate, but this has become impossible to justify given the significant extra postage costs the Society has to incur, so their rate too has gone up. We have also introduced a new category of joint membership, to replace the system of full and associate members. Joint membership is for two people living at the same address who share one copy of *AA*.

Membership reminders with the new rates will be sent out before the end of 2014, so you will all get a reminder of the new rates. If you pay by direct debit, you need do nothing. If

you pay by standing order, you will need to contact your bank to change the payment. If you were to change to direct debit at the same time, the discount would soften the blow!

Please contact me with any queries, by e-mail (simon.pallett@ncl.ac.uk) or via our office at the Great North Museum.

Simon Pallett, Hon. Treasurer

NEW BOOKS BY MEMBERS

Life in the Limes: Studies of the People and Objects of the Roman Frontiers is the Festschrift for Lindsay Allason-Jones announced at our Bicentenary Dinner. Only the cover, not the bound and printed publication, could be presented to Lindsay then, but it has now been published by Oxbow Books (<http://goo.gl/IZXzhl>). The editors, Rob Collins and Frances McIntosh, hope you will agree that it has been worth the wait! Normal price is £45, but SANT members can obtain a 20% discount ordering online. Enter code SANT20 in the voucher box after you have added the book to your basket.

Newminster; Monks, Shepherds, and Charters, Bridget Gubbins, £10.99, available in Morpeth bookshops and the Morpeth Chantry, bookshop in Newcastle Grainger Market, or by cheque to Greater Morpeth Development Trust (+ £3 postage).

Ode to Bully Beef, WW2 Poetry they Didn't Let You Read, and Tommy Rot: WW1 Poetry They Didn't Let You Read, both Rosie Serdiville and John Sadler, [History Press](#) £9.99 each.

Table; old and new membership rates

Category	Current	New	New
	ALL	UK	Abroad
Student membership	£20	£20	N/A
Individual membership with softback AA	£33	£40	£48
Individual membership with hardback AA	£39	£48	£55
Joint membership with softback AA (NEW)	£57~	£64	£72
Joint membership with hardback AA (NEW)	£63~	£72	£79
Institutional membership with softback AA	£38	£45	£53
Institutional membership with hardback AA	£44	£53	£60

~ effective current rate

£3 discount per membership for paying by direct debit.

Roman Frontiers in their Landscape Settings, David Breeze, Published on-line (only) by the Lit and Phil (www.litandphil.org.uk) (their Charles Parish Lecture 2011).

You might also like to know about *Traditional Food in Northumbria*, Excellent Press, £19.99, available in Beamish Museum's gift shop (www.beamish.org.uk). Peter is our August 2014 speaker and hopefully will bring copies with him.

GRANT FOR MANUSCRIPT

We have been given a grant of £10,340 from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust (www.nmct.co.uk) for the conservation of some of our manuscripts at Woodhorn. They are the three volumes of *Morpeth Collectanea*, part of the William Woodman Bequest.

Woodman was town clerk of Morpeth in the nineteenth century and his daughter bequeathed his papers to SANT. The volumes include information on all sorts of topics, ranging from the development of the threshing machine, rules of Morpeth Gaol, national elections and electoral reform, the anti-slavery movement, Catholic Emancipation, Board of Health reports and Morpeth bridge. The 19th century bindings will have to be removed so that the individual documents can be repaired and then the bindings will have to be restored. Many thanks to Sally Bird for putting together the successful application.

COMMEMORATING WORLD WAR ONE

With the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund, Tynemouth World War One Commemoration Project (www.tynemouthworldwarone.org/project.html) has been actively investigating the impact of the 'war to end wars' on the borough and its people. The fruits of its research will be freely available on the internet from 28th June this year with all records open to download for personal, private or academic research.

Tynemouth lost 1,700 residents to causes associated with the war and their service. The Borough created a Roll of Honour, published in 1923, containing very brief details of them all. Volunteers with the commemoration project have prepared detailed biographies of those men, with the aim of reminding the

population today of that loss and also to explore the social and economic consequences for the town and its inhabitants. They have also plotted on a map, with timelines, the streets in which every casualty from Tynemouth lived, and have plans to place individualised memorial markers where the property survives.

Most unusually, the Roll of Honour includes one of the men executed for military offences, a teenager who may well have been under age at enlistment. Local poet and playwright Peter Mortimer has written a play about him, *Death at Dawn*, to be performed at the Linskill Centre at North Shields in September. Based on the actual Court Martial records, the play explores the story of William Hunter and his treatment by the authorities which led to his execution by firing squad less than two months after his 18th birthday.

Sue Ward

MONTHLY MEETINGS

January 2014

As well as being introduced as the new President of the Society, Derek Cutts was the lecturer at the January meeting, on the topic of *The Battle between a TOWN COUNCILLOR and an ARCHITECT and the POLISS* – the title of a widely circulated ballad about an incident at the railway station at Howdon on 11 November 1839. (You can find the first few verses on the ballad [on our website](#)).

Newcastle town councillor James Archbold and architect John Dobson had been 'in drink' at the station after a dinner party, and Dobson had been struck on the head by a railway policeman in a fracas. The two were bundled onto a train bound for North Shields, but once there a Director of the railway company had taken charge of them and undertaken to see them home. The pair had the policeman prosecuted for assault, and he was fined the steep sum of £15 but the railway company immediately paid this.

Derek pointed out that the case highlighted a number of social phenomena of the time. The two men had drunk an astonishing amount at the dinner party, a networking event full of local dignitaries. To judge by the ballad and press comments at the time, their state occasioned mainly amusement, as it would have done in earlier decades, but in the course of the 1830s more people came to see such

public drunkenness as disgusting.

There were other examples in the local press of the police acting with considerable violence, but on the other hand they had to deal with new public order issues. The Battle had been sparked by Archbold wandering along the railway line 'to see if the train was coming'. The railway authorities had to learn how to handle large crowds, and people who did not understand the speed and danger of trains. The line had been open only since mid-June, but by the end of August over 16,000 people had already travelled on it.

Derek can be contacted on derek@cuttsd.fsnet.co.uk

February 2014



An archaeologist menaced by a giant opencasting machine at Blagdon Park. Photo Nick Hodgson

Nick Hodgson, archaeologist and the Society's Secretary, spoke on *The Iron Age on the Northumberland Coastal Plain*. The classic view on the topic was, he said, that Northumberland was sparsely occupied because it would have been too difficult to settle and farm on the clay-ey soil.

However, in the 1960s crop-marks in aerial photographs, especially those taken by Norman McCord, had shown that there had been extensive settlement. Archaeology following some of these up found very few datable finds, no more than a few sherds of handmade pottery and bangles. As a result, George Jobey and others had tended to assume that the heyday of the settlements had been in the heyday of the settlements had been in the Roman period, with life going on much as before the Romans coming, and spread across both sides of Hadrian's Wall.

Recent developer-funded large scale excavations had changed the picture. From the

excavation of three complexes, they had obtained 60 radiocarbon dates, and had also been able to use optically stimulated thermoluminescence to date the pottery. This had revealed that settlements were widespread from the end of the Bronze Age (800–700 BC) onwards.

Blagdon Park II, now completely mined out, had a complex set of phases, starting with unenclosed settlements of round houses. Big ditched settlements with inner and outer rectangular enclosures, began around 200 BC, and were monumental, built to impress. This and other enclosures each covered an area as extensive as that taken up by a typical Roman fort of the period. The biggest were in more prosperous, heavily economically exploited areas. Growth, therefore, pre-dated Roman rule and was certainly not caused by it. At the same time, there existed a number of small enclosed settlements, not previously seen in the region, close to the major enclosures and perhaps dependent on them.

The most intriguing aspect of this recent research is that the extensive radiocarbon dating, made possible for the first time through developer-funded archaeology, shows that all the settlements dated so far were abandoned shortly after the building of Hadrian's Wall. This casts doubt on the idea that the Wall was built to regulate the economic movements of local people. Rather, on the Northumberland coastal plain the Wall seems to have brought a centuries-old agrarian civilisation to an end.

The report, *The Iron Age on the Northumberland Coastal Plain* by Nick Hodgson, Jonathan Mckelvey and Warren Muncaster, is available from the Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums online shop (www.shoptw museums.co.uk).

Nick can be contacted on Nick.Hodgson@twmuseums.org.uk

March 2014

The March lecture was given by Paul Gething, co-director of the Bamburgh Research Project, about archaeological evidence at the Anglo-Saxon fortress of Bamburgh. He explained that Bamburgh was known from documentary evidence to have been one of the principal centres of the kings of Northumbria. The project had started in 1996, to investigate the Castle and its environs. Brian Hope-Taylor's earlier excavations had indicated occupation for at least 2,000 years, which the Project could now extend to 5,000 years or more!



One of the gold artefacts found at Bamburgh. Picture courtesy Bamburgh Research Project

The excavations had centred on the Castle's west ward, especially St Oswald's Gate. They had found the stone foundations of a number of buildings, and some tiny but beautiful gold artefacts. There was 'hammer scale' (iron oxide scale which forms when objects are heated for forging) and small spheres of metal indicating high temperature work all over the excavation area at the same level.

There were also a number of broken swords, which X-rays revealed had been made by pattern-welding. This involves layers of iron being twisted to form complex patterns and then edged with steel. A sword made in this way would be flexible enough to take the shock from a sword blow and stop the blade bending or snapping. Such work would take hundreds of hours of a skilled smith's time.

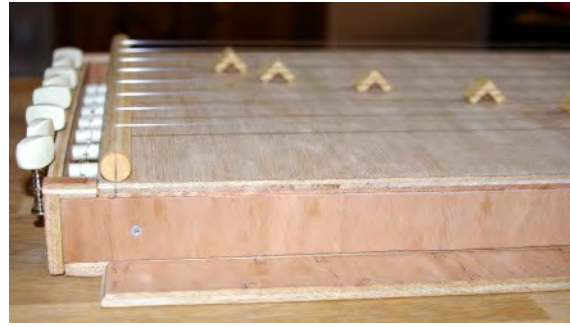
The same trench also produced a hoard of *stycas*, base-metal Anglo-Saxon coins. Over 300 coins could be identified, and came mainly from the reign of Aethelred II of Northumbria in the mid ninth century.

The Project has also excavated at Bradford Kaims, three miles or so to the west, around a series of former lakes formed in the post-glacial period 10,000 years ago, now under pasture. They had found a series of interleaving burnt mounds right on the edge of one of the lakes, and a round-wood timber platform out into the wetland, with a timber paddle lying on the platform. These could be dated to around 4000 BC, at the beginning of the Neolithic period.

More information about the Bamburgh Research Project is available on website www.bamburghresearchproject.co.uk and Twitter [@brparcheology](https://twitter.com/brparcheology)

April 2014

Dr David Creese, Lecturer in Classics at Newcastle University (standing in after a late cancellation by Dr David Gill) spoke on



The ancient Greek octachord reconstructed by Dr David Creese, (who also took the picture)

Making stones sing in tune: canonic and the reconstruction of ancient Greek melody.

He explained that the third- or fourth-century author, Aristides Quintilianus, had written a piece *On Music*, which included the Greek symbols for musical notation. Several centuries earlier, Plato had discussed the different 'modes', saying that some made people cowardly and others brave. It was generally accepted that the notation given by Aristides was genuinely ancient, as he had claimed, and related to Plato's modes.

There were in fact two parallel and very similar notation systems, one vocal and one for instruments. Over sixty examples of notated music are now known, most of them discovered since the late nineteenth century, including just one Christian hymn. One example was a small stele found at Tralleis, near Ephesus, when a railway was put through the area in the 1870s. The text was published in 1883, but it took another ten years for people to realise that on the line above each line of the main text were notation symbols. The song it recorded was essentially an exhortation to 'eat drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die'.

Western ears are attuned to equal-tempered intervals in music, while other cultures, including the ancient Greek, dealt in smaller and less regular intervals (e.g. quarter-tones), which made them sound strange to our ears. Some Greek musical theorists saw the scales as a series of mathematical ratios, though there was much controversy about which were the best ones. In the stringed instrument called a *kanōn*, a ruler and a moveable bridge allowed for tuning in these different ways.

Dr Creese had brought along his own 'octachord' (an eight-stringed *kanōn*), with a moveable bridge for each of its strings, and he demonstrated what he was talking about in practical terms, not only by playing this but

also by singing, quarter-tones and all. Altogether, it was one of the most unusual monthly meetings the Antiquaries has had, but also one of the most intriguing.

Dr Creese can be contacted on david.creese@ncl.ac.uk, and there is a Society for the study of ancient Greek and Roman music, at www.moisasociety.org

NEWS BULLETIN CHANGES; AN UPDATE

Following the article on this in the last edition, and responses from a number of members, we have now refined our ideas on how to move forward smoothly into the electronic age. The monthly e-circular is now being produced as a PDF as well as a Word document, and we have an improved 'list management' system attached to the website, which should prevent the mailings being classified as spam by some servers and so being bounced back.

We're using the same system to send out this *News Bulletin* as a PDF to *everyone* for whom we have an e-mail address, in advance of the printed copies going out by post. The electronic version has its photos in full colour, and hyperlinks to items referred to on our website and elsewhere, so it is an enhanced version rather than simply a copy of the black-

and-white printed one.

If having seen the PDF, you feel you don't need to have a printed copy as well, let us know (admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk) and we will delete you from the snail-mail labels list (much to the Treasurer's delight). If you *didn't* receive the PDF, despite having an e-mail address, it is probably because you've not told us what it is, or not told us when you changed it. So please e-mail it to us now, and also let us know if you would like to be included on the monthly e-circular list.

We would be interested in any reactions to these developments, and will take them into account before moving further in electronic directions.

Sue Ward

Correction

In the March mailing, the flyer for our Country Meetings gave the wrong address for organiser Mary Longley. The correct address is
19 Leazes Crescent, NE1 4LW
Apologies to her and to anyone inconvenienced by the error

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 8th Nov 2014. The mailing date will be 10th Dec. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Administrator by 3rd Dec. Anyone who wants an insert included should contact the Membership Administrator in good time for details of the requirements. An electronic copy of any insert must also be provided (as a Word or pdf document) so that it can be included on the website.