

NEWS BULLETIN



THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No.66 June 2019

CONTENTS

All Change in 2019!.....	1
Our new President and Secretary.....	2
From our New President.....	2
New Initiative our Flickr site.....	3
Converting to a CIO.....	3
News from the Library.....	3
A Dutch Engineer in Edwardian North East England.....	5
Rosemary Cramp at 90.....	6
HLF supports Manorial Documents Project.....	6
Jolly Archaeological Japes the New Mechanics' Institute.....	7
Meetings and Events.....	8
Coffee House Talks.....	11
Robin Birley a Correction.....	11
Edwarde Potter's Booke of Phisicke.....	12

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 activities. 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 SANT, Great North Museum: Hancock, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT, phone 0191 231 2700, e-mail admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk

ALL CHANGE IN 2019!

This year we have a new President, a new Secretary, and new venues for our monthly meetings.

To start with the meetings 2018 and 2019 have been a bit like musical chairs, as we are no longer able to use the Mining Institute. For the first five lectures of 2019 we have been in Lecture Theatre 3 in Newcastle University's Herschel Building.

Unfortunately that room, and the one we had originally booked into for the summer lectures, are both undergoing renovations so we are moving again. The June, July and August lectures will be in the Armstrong Building 2.98, and those from September onwards in a different room again, yet to be announced, but still on the university campus.

Apologies for the changes, but after being in the same venue for more than eighty years,

finding a new permanent one will take some time. In the meantime, please be patient with the moves and check the website and e-bulletins to find out where each lecture is being held.

OUR NEW PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY



Nick Hodgson, our President, and Graeme Stobbs, our Secretary

Both Nick Hodgson, our new President, and Graeme Stobbs our Secretary, are Geordies and archaeologists by profession. Nick is well-known to members because he has been Secretary of the Society since 1996. He has worked for Tyne Wear Archives and Museums (TWAM) since 1986, spending much of that time excavating at the Roman forts of South Shields and Wallsend. He is currently acting as Manager of Collections and Research for TWAM.

Nick is the author of several excavation reports, and of *Hadrian's Wall: archaeology and history at the limit of Rome's empire* (2017), and with his colleague Paul Bidwell, *The Roman Army in Northern England* (2009).

Graeme too worked on the South Shields excavation, and has also excavated widely on Hadrian's Wall, on sites in the hinterland of the Wall, and on commercial archaeology projects throughout the North East, ranging from the prehistoric to the industrial. He too worked for TWAM until 2012, when he became Assistant Curator of Roman Collections for English Heritage, based at Corbridge Roman Site. In 2018 EH restructured and abolished Graeme's post. He is now undertaking consulting work.

Graeme regularly acts as a tour guide on coach tours and for groups and societies. He was a guide on both the last two Pilgrimages of Hadrian's Wall, and will be playing the same role in the 2019 Pilgrimage.

FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

I am glad to be taking up my post, but should say first that our Society owes a great debt to its outgoing President Richard Pears. He showed during his term of office an astonishing ability to find time amidst a busy family life and work as a University librarian. He has chaired our meetings in style, he has contributed his learning both to our meetings and the pages of *Archaeologia Aeliana*, and has been a calm helmsman in some difficult times. He has been a key member (alongside Editors Jenny Proctor and Don O'Meara, and our production wizard, Roger Fern) of the team that ensures that there is a high quality journal, year after year. I hope you will all join with me in thanking Richard for the selfless guidance and service he has given us.

I will be following Richard's example in pushing for the Society to lose the somewhat cobwebby image that the word 'antiquary' conjures up, to be better publicised, and to be made more welcoming to an ever wider range of people. Membership levels remain broadly static, and if we are to prosper in the coming years we must welcome a larger, younger and more diverse membership. This will involve some changes in the way we do things and no doubt an end to some long standing traditions, such as the formal process of nominating and 'electing' new members. We need to get across the message that anyone with a genuine interest in the history or archaeology of the region is welcome to join us. Even as some of the formality fades away, members can be assured that the Society will never lose sight of its key aims to promote the preservation, research and enjoyment of the heritage of the North East.

We do not all read every page of *Archaeologia Aeliana*, but our support for it ensures that archaeological and historical research is recorded for all time. Being a member helps ensure that our archaeological collections are preserved intact and accessible to the public. Your membership also supports our library in the GNM, one of the foremost collections of archaeological and historical literature in Britain. This is accessible to all – but only you have borrowing rights. The Library is yours – use it!

It may sound like a serious duty, having to carry these great assets forward into the twenty-first century, but we can have a good time while doing it. I look forward to discussing and enjoying the history and archaeology of the region with you all at meetings, socials and other

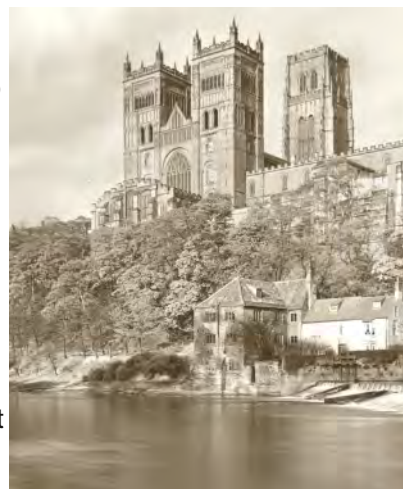
events, and hope you will go out and encourage others to join in.

Nick Hodgson, President

NEW INITIATIVE OUR FLICKR SITE

We now have our own Flickr site at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/newcastle-antiquaries/albums>. For the uninitiated, Flickr is an image hosting service, allowing registered users to upload photos and share them with others.

Our site will be the repository of scanned images from the Antiquaries' photo archive, grouped in 'albums' and tagged with keywords. The first two batches have now been uploaded, from Geoff Briggs's and John Hume's collections, and others will follow. We now need your help! Many of the images are of interesting-looking buildings and landscapes, but some are unidentified. If you can offer a name for any image currently entitled **Unknown**, and have a Flickr account, please add a comment in the box below the photo. If you don't have an account, send an email to photoarchive@newcastle-antiquaries.co.uk, including, if possible, a link to a photo or website as 'proof'. More images will be added as time goes on, so please keep an eye on the site.



One of John Hume's pictures, now on the Flickr site

Irwin Thompson

CONVERTING TO A CIO

At its meeting in February 2019, Council agreed to develop proposals to convert our Society into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), and to present them for approval at a future general meeting.

A CIO is a relatively new charitable format under which the charity has corporate status and is regulated by the Charity Commission. Previously, the only way for a charity to gain corporate status was to become a company limited by guarantee regulated by Companies House and be subject to company law, while still remaining subject to the Charity Commission. This involves quite a heavy burden of regulation.

SANT is currently an 'unincorporated organisation'. This creates some challenges in holding assets and making contracts, because the Society itself is not a legal entity, merely a collection of individuals. Our assets have to be held by holding trustees on the members' behalf, and this can be a little cumbersome. It also makes it harder to contract with other parties. Members of Council as charity trustees also have unlimited personal liability for the debts of the Society, which can be off-putting to those who are not used to this. By contrast, the trustees of a CIO have limited liability, provided they are not grossly negligent.

Conversion to a CIO will take some time, as we will have to rewrite the constitution and go through certain legal steps. The change will then only take place if you, the members, agree to it. Whatever happens, SANT will remain a charity with the same charitable objectives, with membership on the same basis as at present and with the ultimate power lying with the membership.

Further details will be available in due course. If any member has queries, I'd be happy to answer them. Please e-mail me at simonpallett@waitrose.com.

*Simon Pallett
Hon. Treasurer*

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY...

Featured Book of the Month

A new item in the Library section of our website is a **Featured Book of the Month**. The first,

uploaded in April, is *Hadrian's Wall in 1801, Transcription and Photographs from the Journal of Rev. John Skinner*, edited by Howard and John Coombs in 1978. Skinner was a Somerset vicar, and the original manuscript is in the Museum of Somerset at Taunton. His observations can be compared with those of William Hutton, who had walked the Wall just six weeks before Skinner.

The featured book for May is a beautifully bound collection of items about Newcastle Castle, put together by our member John Ventress in the 1850s. Queen Charlotte's book, noted below, will be featured later. If you have a favourite book that you would like to see discussed, please let me know.

Howard Cleeve

Provenance? What Provenance?



One of the hand-printed endpapers from Queen Charlotte's book, courtesy Howard Cleeve

A chance discovery in a 190-year old edition of the *Newcastle Courant* has shed a new light on an obscure book in our collection, with the daunting German title of *Die gottesdienstlichen Alterthumer der Obotriten, aus dem Tempel zu Rhetra, am Tollenger-Zee*. Its Library reference is GY 138, but it has no bookplate, no owners' names written on the end pieces or frontispiece, no comments on or near the text, no graffiti on any of the pages nothing to indicate its heritage.

However, in March this year the Hon Librarian of the Natural History Society of Northumbria, Dr Leslie Jessop, researching a natural history topic, found a reference to it in the *Courant's* edition of 17 January 1829. There was an announcement of a number of gifts to the Society, made at the Anniversary meeting the week before. One of these, from member James Christie, had the English title of *Antiquities relating to the Idol Worship of the Obotriten, from the temple of Rhetra, on the Tollenger Sea, with engravings from the originals published by Daniel Woge, and explanations by Andreas Gottlieb Masch*. According to the report the book, published in Berlin in 1771, came from the Library of the late Queen Charlotte, wife of George III.

When we retrieved our copy from the shelves, we realised that at one time it must have been a beautiful volume. It has a binding of rather worn silk, but the end papers are well conserved and a work of art, with what appears to be a handprinted pattern of flowers of several different designs, and the page edges are gilded. The first page carries a dedication to Queen Charlotte, and the next page a poem in her honour. Thanks to Andrew Cleeve for translating this

To the Monarch,
who with sharp looks sheds light on the darkness of antiquity
And who passes correct judgements on the surviving pieces of ancient art.
Here a book approaches your eyes,
which represents the remnants of the old world in real pictures.
May it be good enough to please you!

Further research has included contacting Christie's auction house, since James Christie, made an honorary Member of SANT in 1827, was the son of its founder. In due course it will be one of the Featured Books of the Month on our website. There are no plans to rebind our copy – but it is now in a special place on the shelves and will in due course be housed in an acid-free card box.

Howard Cleeve

Donations from Philip Brooks' Library

Philip Brooks, who died in July 2018, was an amateur local historian and avid collector. We are very grateful to his widow Barbara for donating a significant number of his books to the Library.

Philip was born in the South and qualified as a pharmacist, but then went on to study town planning. He and his wife, Barbara, moved to Northumberland in around 1970 when he started work for Northumberland County Council. They lived in Wylam, where he was a Parish

Councillor for more than forty years, and an independent District Councillor for a similar period. He was part of a team studying the (Wylam) Blakett papers, depositing them in the Northumberland Record Office when the last Blakett died. He was a keen member of the Association of the Northumberland Local History Societies, and together with Denis Peel, ran the Wylam Local History Society, until it closed in 2009.

One of the donated books is *Hadrian's Wall in 1801*, discussed above. Another is *A History of Corbridge*, by Robert Forster (1881). This volume is unique, as it was considerably extended in manuscript by the author, and no second edition was ever published. Photographs of all the tipped-in insertions will soon be available on our Flickr site, and a file with transcriptions of all of them has been put on our website.

Denis Peel

Sacrilege and Rescue

The removal of plates from a book can be regarded as a most sacrilegious act, but it happened to all the illustrations from a copy of *The Beauties of England, Northumberland* by Rev. J Hodgson (1813), with plates by F C Laird, which came into our possession earlier this year. Oddly, though vandalised the volume had been beautifully rebound – possibly as part of a book binding exercise. A member of our Society (who wishes to remain anonymous) came across both this copy, and another in an ordinary cloth binding but with all its plates, in a sale. Since *The Beauties of England* was written by a founder member and one of the first Secretaries of SANT, in the year of the Society's establishment, she bought both copies and kindly donated them to the Library. The Hon Librarian has copied the missing plates from the one volume, and book binding expert Georgina Peel has attached the copies in their correct locations in the other. You can now see both volumes in the library, shelfmark AH 600.

More about Photos

In the last twelve months two sets of photographs of books in our Archives have been added to the laptop in the Library our first Cash Book, covering the period 6 Feb 1813 to 3 Feb 1845, and our first Minute Book of Monthly Meetings, starting at the same date but running to 3 Jan 1844. Both of the originals are at Woodhorn, but have been damaged by fire and are fragile. Further physical access to them needs to be avoided. Please ask the Librarian if you would like to see them on the laptop. In due course you will also be able to look at them on our Flickr account.

Denis Peel

A DUTCH ENGINEER IN EDWARDIAN NORTH EAST ENGLAND

Hidde Petrus Nicolaas Hilbertsma (1853–1929) was a Dutch engineer who designed many water towers in the Netherlands, and spent time in North East England at the start of the twentieth century. Thanks to the generosity of his grandson Joost Halbertsma and his wife Lisette Moormann, the Society now has two albums with a total of about a hundred photographs taken during his visits. De heer Hilbertsma clearly had an interest in transport and engineering and the photographs provide many images of these aspects of North East life, from general street scenes and the Newcastle tram system and local railways to ships and bridges on the Tyne. There are also pictures of a political gathering and an army camp.



Hilbertsma's view of North Shields Fish Quay

The pictures will be scanned and go on our Flickr site. We plan to enlist the help of members in identifying the scenes and setting them in context. Some scenes are easily recognised others are less obvious. The albums themselves will join the Society's collections at Woodhorn.

Many thanks to the Halbertsma family for their foresight in identifying a suitable home for the pictures, and for taking the trouble to contact us.

Derek Cutts

ROSEMARY CRAMP AT 90



*Rosemary Cramp, photo courtesy
Jeff Veitch*

Many congratulations to Professor Dame Rosemary Cramp, who has been a member since 1958, on reaching her ninetieth birthday in May. Her career as an archaeologist began at the age of 12, when she discovered a Roman villa on the land that her family farmed in Leicestershire.

At Oxford she read English, but when she went on to teach Anglo-Saxon at St Anne's College, her interests in Anglo-Saxon literature and archaeology came together. An early publication was an article in the first volume of *Medieval Archaeology* entitled 'Beowulf and Archaeology'.

In 1955 Rosemary arrived in Durham, and joined the Antiquaries and other local societies at the instigation of Eric Birley, and also began playing a key role in national organisations like the Council for British Archaeology. In 1959 she began excavations at the site of the monastery at Wearmouth in advance of a house clearance scheme. Then in 1963 Rosemary and her team started to dig at Jarrow, with the final major season of excavation only in 1978.

Besides publishing numerous articles and reports on her excavations, Rosemary instigated the *Corpus of*

Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, of which she remains the General Editor and a major contributor, currently working towards the completion of the final three volumes, to provide a valuable resource covering the whole of England. Rosemary has never passed by an opportunity to communicate her passion for archaeology, and generations of students have cause to be grateful for her inspiration, encouragement and support. Her excavations also involved the local people from the communities in which they took place, many of whom have fond memories of the digs. She continues to inspire and enthuse the next generation with her lifelong love of archaeology.

Belinda Burke

HLF SUPPORTS MANORIAL DOCUMENTS PROJECT

Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn has been awarded a grant of £73,100 from the National Heritage Lottery Fund for its project to promote the usage of records of Northumberland manors. This is a follow-up to the work already done, revising the Manorial Documents Register for Northumberland. This is now available in digital format at <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manor-search>.

The grant will allow us to work with volunteer groups across Northumberland including volunteers from SANT. Group members will transcribe core manorial documents from digital copies, and both transcriptions and digital copies will be web-mounted and made available on the Northumberland Archives website. Workshops in venues across the county will bring manorial records to new audiences and encourage the use of these records in community and family history research. We are also planning a travelling exhibition and a programme of talks across Northumberland, and a series of guides to manorial records, in both physical and digital format.

At Whitley Chapel First School, pupils will research the history of a property in their community using manorial records, develop a related arts activity and host a community day. This should provide a model that can be used across other schools in Northumberland. Finally, we will launch a free detailed online tutorial to introduce researchers to manorial records, their content and format.

Work on the project will begin in September 2019. It will run for 30 months and will involve working closely with Northumberland Estates (the ducal archives at Alnwick Castle), since the Estates hold 41% of all extant Northumberland manorial records.

Sue Wood

Note Sue is our October speaker, and will be talking about the Manorial Documents Register and the project.

JOLLY ARCHAEOLOGICAL JAPES THE NEW MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

Professor Tony Birley has written to ask whether any of our Members can supply information about the 'New Mechanics' Institute'. "This" he says, "is one of numerous questions which I regret not having asked my father Eric Birley (who died in October 1995). All I can find are four entries in the Visitors Book at Chesterholm, where Eric lived from 1929, in the cottage which is now the nucleus of the Vindolanda Museum, and some verses by John Charlton and by Eric". The entries in the Chesterholm Visitors Book are for meetings on the last Wednesday in June between 1934 and 1938 (but not including 1936). Those who attended include Eric Birley, Percy Hedley, Peter Hunter Blair, and Ian Richmond.

All the signatories wrote 'Mechanics' Institute' in the Address column of the Visitors' Book. One signature not in any of the entries is that of John Charlton, the author of the poem below, one of three in the files.

In VIEW OF recent PRESS REPORTS
alleging SERIOUS DISTURBANCES at a
recent MEETING of the MECHANICS'
INSTITUTE, the following NOTICE is circulated
for INFORMATION:

THAT evening at the Moot
(of which you must have heard)
Of all the Institute,

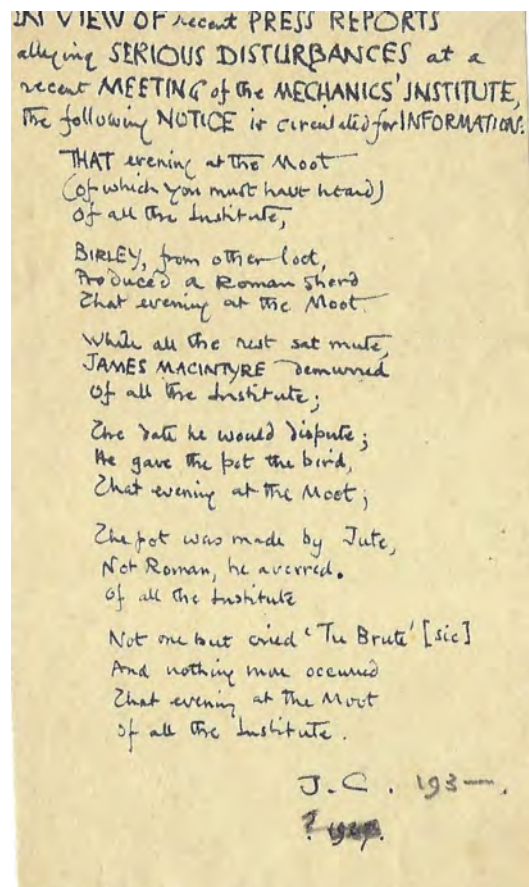
BIRLEY, from other loot,
Produced a Roman sherd
That evening at the Moot.

While all the rest sat mute,
JAMES MACINTYRE demurred
Of all the Institute

The date he would dispute
He gave the pot the bird,
That evening at the Moot

The pot was made by Jute,
Not Roman, he averred.
Of all the Institute

Not one but cried 'Tu Brute' [sic]
And nothing more occurred
That evening at the Moot
Of all the Institute.



IN VIEW OF recent PRESS REPORTS
alleging SERIOUS DISTURBANCES at a
recent MEETING of the MECHANICS' INSTITUTE,
the following NOTICE is circulated for INFORMATION:

THAT evening at the Moot
(of which you must have heard)
of all the Institute,

BIRLEY, from other loot,
Produced a Roman sherd
That evening at the Moot.

While all the rest sat mute,
JAMES MACINTYRE demurred
of all the Institute;

The date he would dispute;
He gave the pot the bird,
That evening at the Moot;

The pot was made by Jute,
Not Roman, he averred.
of all the Institute

Not one but cried 'Tu Brute' [sic]
And nothing more occurred
That evening at the Moot
of all the Institute.

J.C. 193—
1938

The manuscript of John Charlton's poem about the New Mechanics' Institute

Editor's Note I have had to edit Tony's note heavily, due to lack of space. The full text, including all three poems, and photos of the manuscripts, have been included on our website (click through from the News and Events page). Any information will be gratefully received and passed on to Tony Birley!

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

November 2018 monthly meeting

Colm O'Brien, standing in at short notice for the scheduled lecturer, spoke about *Brinkburn and Warkworth: a search for lost landholdings of St Cuthbert*. The *Historia Sancto Cuthberto* (HSC), he explained, was an eleventh-century text written to assert claims retrospectively to the lands given 'to the saint', that is to the monks at Lindisfarne, and in some cases taken from them later.

His starting point was the lands given to St Cuthbert by King Ceolwulf when he became a monk at Lindisfarne. One estate was centred at Warkworth, but was lost in the ninth century, broken up, and not brought together post-Conquest. HSC's description of its extent was not



Brinkburn Priory, picture courtesy Derek Voller on Geograph

clear or detailed enough to be able to map it on the ground. Another Durham document, the *Chronica Monasterii Dunelmensis*, which overall was consistent with the HSC, linked Warkworth to Brainshaugh. There was then no other information until the feudal records of the mid-twelfth century.

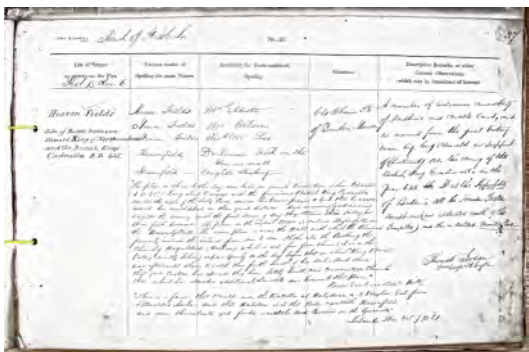
However, one could use such records, following historians such as John Jolliffe and Geoffrey Barrow, to find traces of the earlier landholdings and boundaries. Other fragments of evidence suggested that St Cuthbert's monks retained a pastoral presence even after the estate was lost, and so considering the boundaries of the very large parish of Warkworth could also be helpful.

Mysteriously, the *Historia* described Brinkburn as a 'civitas', with only Carlisle and York otherwise being described that way. Bede had applied this term especially to places of Roman origin. The Coquet was also referred to, under an earlier form of the name, in the Ravenna Cosmography, both as a river and as a 'civitas'. These references suggested that the promontory fort at Brinkburn might have been a place of some importance, perhaps a minster. Was it still occupied in the eighth century when Ceolwulf gave it to Lindisfarne?

A magnetometry survey had shown some interesting traces. The retention of the Augustinian Priory church with parochial status post-Dissolution lent support to the idea of a pre-Conquest Lindisfarne minster here. The *Historia's* reference to a boundary point on the Devil's Causeway, mid-way between the rivers Coquet and Aln suggested the possibility that the shire of Felton, within which Brinkburn is sited, and which was held in the medieval era as part of the Mitford barony, was once a Lindisfarne holding. The analysis presented led to a proposed mapping of the lands granted by King Ceolwulf to the church of Lindisfarne, indicating a systematic policy of estate planning on a most ambitious scale.

Colm O'Brien can be contacted on colm.francis@hotmail.co.uk

January 2019 monthly meeting



The entry for Heaven Fields in the Northumberland Name Books

Diana Whaley spoke about *Northumberland and its Names c. 1860: New light from the Ordnance Survey Name Books*. In Northumberland in the years 1857–64, she said, parties of blue-uniformed men could be seen peering at theodolites on the top of windy hills, dragging chains across boggy moors, and ducking in and out of buildings with notebooks in hand. The Ordnance Survey's monumental Survey of Britain and Ireland was under way, and fortunately the 'OS Name Books' recording the Northumberland fieldwork survive in The National Archives, Kew. Most of the surveyors were sappers in the Royal Engineers, but there were also Civil Assistants, and overseeing the work was a small

group of officers, mostly men of quite high social standing in their late twenties.

The Northumberland Name Books project, set up in 2016 and run with volunteers and modest funding, was digitising and transcribing all the books, so that in due course they would be accessible online. So far they had a virtually complete set of images, and transcriptions of all the indexes and of about eighty of the 104 Main Books.

The names to be engraved on the map were established by consulting oral (and sometimes written) authorities. OS policy was to prefer respectable and educated informants, but small farmers, woodmen and shepherds, fishermen and lighthouse-keepers such as the Darlings were also cited. The only women were owners of property, landladies of pubs, or schoolmistresses. The Survey provided an invaluable Gazetteer of place-names as well as clues about the meaning of many of them.

The 'descriptive remarks' attached to each entry gave glimpses of many facets of life and landscape in a time of great flux, from pubs to chapels and wells to wagonways. Sue Ward, giving a brief 'volunteer's eye view', illustrated the wealth of information about schools.

Often the surveyors were the first to describe an archaeological site, produce ground plans and assign labels such as 'Roman remains' or 'Camp'. Only in 1920 did the OS appoint its first Archaeological Officer.

Diana can be contacted on diana.whaley@newcastle.ac.uk

February 2019 monthly meeting

In February, Rob Young discussed recent excavations on a group of workers' cottages at the Derwentcote steel cementation furnace site in the Derwent Valley, County Durham. The steel furnace is five miles north of Stanley and Rob and Jane Webster of Newcastle University have led a student and community-based training programme to examine four cottages that housed some of Derwentcotes workforce. Long-term, it is hoped that English Heritage will consolidate and display the buildings.

The site was first mentioned in documents, he explained, in 1569. In 1749 the 'cementation' process was introduced to convert imported Swedish wrought iron into 'blister' steel. In the nineteenth century the original furnace was succeeded by a small crucible steel works. This had disappeared by 1891, to be replaced by coal mining for a period, with the old cottages now occupied by miners. The cottages were visited by Time Team in 2010, and they had drawn up a site plan – though further work had shown this not to be completely accurate. One of the four cottages on Forge Lane was inhabited until the 1950s.

Rob took us in detail through the complex phases of the site. The excavators had discovered that there was originally a single long, possibly open-fronted, building there, presumably used for industrial purposes. This was later converted into two and then four cottages. Partitioning had been done cheaply and badly, with walls only a single brick wide in one phase. An early re-used hob grate fireplace survived in one cottage and in the last inhabited cottage, post-war lino was still evident in one room interestingly, the student excavators did not know what lino was! There were outside toilets, to the north of the buildings, and a good drainage system.

Rob can be contacted on robyoung1917@gmail.com

Arctic Archaeology in March

In mid-March, we sponsored, alongside the Northumberland Archaeological Group, a lecture at the Newcastle Arts Centre by climate archaeologist, Matthew Ayre, Now at the Arctic Institute of North America, University of Calgary but originally from the North East, he told us about his activities tracing the 1902 wreck of the Dundee whaler *Nova Zembla* on the remote Arctic coast of Canada. He had, he explained, uncovered a first-hand account of the ship's loss, and working with an underwater archaeologist had been able to piece together clues about the wreck's position.

Matthew gave a cliff-hanging account of how, with the support of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society but few resources and little time, he and colleagues had put together a chilly seven-hour visit to the correct bay, directing a borrowed underwater drone from a rubber dinghy. They had been able to take photos of wreckage on the beach where the ship had grounded with a telephoto lens, but did not have an archaeological licence to land and explore further – though they hope to do so in a future visit. Even from this short trip, lessons had been learnt which could feed into future work, for example on the *Terror* and *Erebus*, the two ships from Franklin's doomed expedition.

There is more about the trip and its discoveries at arctic.ucalgary.ca/update-search-nova-zembla



Returning to the Ship after discovering the wreckage of Nova Zembla (Picture courtesy Dave Sandford)

March 2019 monthly meeting

Dr Thea Ravasi, Visiting Lecturer in Archaeology at Newcastle University, spoke about her research on Roman wall-paintings in a house in Pompeii, part of Newcastle University's Expanded Interiors project (see <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/> for details of this) Her research had also covered a house in Herculaneum, but the Pompeii house was particularly interesting for the links between ideology and display.

It was on the main road, in an area first developed in the second century BC. Two separate houses had been thrown together to create one of the biggest houses in the area, with a porticoed garden at the back. Later, the garden had been filled with soil and the original portico transformed into an underground space (a *cryptoporticus*, very unusual in a town house), with rooms added on the first floor. In AD 62, an earthquake had damaged the house and it was then divided up, with corridors walled off.

The house had originally been excavated in the 1920s, and the decoration of the underground corridor had been well-preserved at that time, and luckily was drawn at that stage,



Pompeii, House of the Cryptoporticus, west wing of the cryptoporticus (Photo: T. Ravasi, Expanded Interiors)

as it was then damaged in wartime bombing. The paintings at the top of the frieze incorporated illustrations from the Iliad and another epic cycle, the Ethiopis. These, and others elsewhere in the house, emphasised the roles of Aeneas, Venus and Mars. They were considered as progenitors of the Roman people, and held a special part in Augustan and Julio-Claudian imperial ideology. There were other references to the world of Apollo, all popular themes during the rule of Octavian/Augustus, and echoing pictures in the House of Augustus on the Palatine Hill in Rome.

Other examples of decoration using these themes were known, but almost all in the public rather than the private sphere. The house also had a complete bath-suite, whereas most other baths in private houses were only one or two rooms. All this pointed

to the owner being very much a member of the elite.

Thea can be contacted on thea.ravasi@ncl.ac.uk

Nenthead Mines in April



The intrepid participants in the Nenthead visit

A dozen members gathered in mid-April at Nenthead in Cumbria, to explore the remains of the lead and zinc industry in this valley. Nenthead Mines Conservation Society (NMCS), the group of volunteers who look after this immense network of mines, water management systems and buildings, had agreed to take us down the section called Carr's Level.

For over an hour they guided us through the network of tunnels, up ladders and along rails, giving a vivid glimpse into the lives of the men who had worked there for two centuries. A display of some of the fascinating geology of the valley waited

round one corner with specimens of local minerals to be enjoyed. I had not appreciated the beauty of fluorescent rocks until we turned our headlamps off and the UV torch went on. The end of the tour brought the greatest surprise. Opening a door, we found ourselves standing on the edge of a waterfall, created by the outflow of drainage pipes bringing up the water – so important in the processes of the industry.

A lead mine is very different from a coal mine there is far more room and the temperature is steady at around 12°C. The chance to explore somewhere so unusual is only possible because of the work done by NMCS, who have responsibility for the site. Their team of volunteers preserve and conserve the site, provide access for the public on a series of open days, and offer education visits for schools. Many of them have a history in mining, engineering and geology and are able to offer an informed account of how the site was used. They displayed another valuable skill at the end of our tour – producing wonderful homemade cakes and a cup of tea to reward us for having so much fun.

Rosie Serdiville

See www.nentheadmines.com for more information on the lead mines. Our next outing is to Beadnell Bay on 6 July.

April 2019 monthly meeting

Henrietta Heald talked about *Magnificent Women and their Revolutionary Machines*, her book about the inspirational individuals who founded the Women's Engineering Society in 1919., to be published in September by Unbound (<https://unbound.com/books/mw/>).

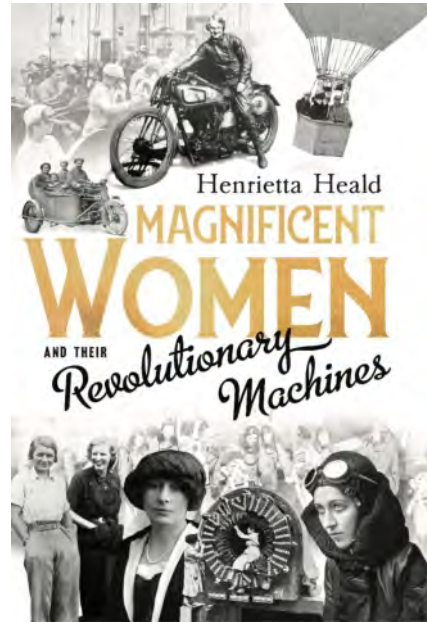
Henrietta explained that the Women's Engineering Society (WES) was the first professional organisation of its kind in the world. During the First World War, hundreds of thousands of women had been employed in engineering and related industries, but this was only after an agreement between the government and the engineering trade unions that such 'dilution' would end after the

war. In consequence, in 1919 the Restoration of Pre-War Practices Bill began its way through Parliament. It threatened to make it illegal for women to be employed in engineering factories where they had not been present before the war. The WES was founded partly to campaign against this Bill, but they were unsuccessful and it became an Act. One of their founding members, Laura Willson, was prosecuted at the end of 1919 for continuing to employ women. The society also campaigned to promote educational and job opportunities for women.

Even today, only 11% of the UK engineering workforce is female – a lower proportion than any other European country. The WES still exists, and achieving equal pay has always been one of the Society's aims, along with improvements to employment conditions.

The founding members of the Society were a distinguished group, including Rachel Parsons, daughter of Sir Charles Parsons, who had been a director of his company during the War. Rachel later sat on the London County Council, and stood for Parliament. Another member, Pauline Gower, set up the women's branch of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) during the Second World War their job was ferrying planes from the manufacturers to the airbases, or indeed right across the Atlantic.

Henrietta can be contacted on henrietta@cloudesley.co.uk, and the website for the Women's Engineering Society's history is at <https://www.wes.org.uk/content/history>.



The cover of Henrietta Heald's new book

COFFEE HOUSE TALKS

A new addition to our programme is a series of Coffee House Talks. Held monthly on Wednesdays in the cinema space of the Quilliam Brothers Tearoom, close to Newcastle University, these evenings of informal talks on archaeological subjects (accompanied by tea and cake) have been very popular with students and early career researchers. Subjects have ranged from Roman pottery, considering the neglected ceramic industries of the fourth and fifth centuries AD, to archaeological glass and archaeological science.

Since its foundation in the Turk's Head Inn over two hundred years ago, the Society has had a long history of swapping ideas and discussing archaeological subjects in front of brews: we have just exchanged cold ones for hot ones, added some cake and provide a space for talented researchers to showcase new ideas in a friendly environment.

The talks are now taking a summer break. They will return on 16 October, with a talk on representation of death in archaeology, and another, on a topic yet to be decided, on 13 November. Talks are open to both members and non-members, but spaces must be pre-booked by emailing SANTtwitter@gmail.com.

ROBIN BIRLEY A CORRECTION



A talker and audience at the first Coffee House Talk in March

Apologies to readers for inaccurate information in the last issue. Professor Tony Birley has written to say that 'A correction is needed to what Richard Pears wrote in his final Presidential contribution, *Bulletin* no. 65, December 2018, at p. 2: "One death which was not that of a member, but still deserves noting with regret, is that of Robin Birley..."', followed by a brief and welcome tribute. My brother Robin was in fact a Member of the Society, indeed a Life Member. Our father Eric Birley made us both Life Members in the 1950s'.

We are now checking the membership database to ensure that Life and Honorary Members are properly recorded.

EDWARDE POTTER'S BOOKE OF PHISICKE



The manuscript of Edward Potter's Booke of Phisicke and Chyrurgery

Edward Potter's *Booke of Phisicke and Chyrurgery* is a manuscript dating back to the early seventeenth century, which came into the possession of the Antiquaries early in the last century. Our transcription project is going well, with more than half of it now complete and on the website. However, we are no nearer finding out who Edward Potter was, or why he wrote his book.

The book offers remedies for all sorts of diseases and injuries, along with a number of recipes for sweetmeats and cakes. Many of the remedies are very gruesome, and most are in the 'don't try this at home' category. Some use the blood and even the skin of animals, while others include minerals such as red lead and mercury, and large numbers of different herbs and spices. Some are folk remedies, some follow the doctrines of the ancient physician Galen, who believed in the need to balance the four 'humours', and some take the more recent (and controversial at the time) approach of Paracelsus.

The material comes from miscellaneous sources, and indeed parts of it are plagiarised from printed books (without acknowledgement). In other cases, however, the individual who devised the remedy is noted, including the court physician to King James I and VI, the Vicar of Warlingham 'who was told them by the fairies', and the Countess of Oxford. The first 240 or so pages are neatly laid out, with some corrections in the margin, so that it looks as if it was being prepared for publication. Perhaps Potter died before this could happen – we have been able to find no trace of the book, or of him, so far in the archives we have searched.

The book and its transcriptions can be seen at <http://newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk/uta/images/edwarde-potter/>. Volunteers to help with the transcription are welcome please send an e-mail to hlf@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk.

Sue Ward

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I am always 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 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.

Copy deadline for the next edition is 15 Nov, 2019. The mailing date will be 11 Dec. All inserts must be delivered to the Membership Administrator by 4 Dec. If you want an insert included, please 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 in the electronic mailing.

Printed in England by yourPrintDepartment