

NEWS BULLETIN



THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

No.77 June 2024

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ABOUT US

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 600 members, and always welcome new ones. We have a full programme of public events, lectures, walks and visits, and social activities. We are guardians of worldclass 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, email admin@newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The life of the Society continues to run smoothly, thanks to the efforts of the many officers and volunteers who collectively deliver the wide range of activities we offer. But as time goes by, faces inevitably change, and this July will see the retirement of our Honorary Secretary, Past-President Nick Hodgson, and his replacement with Charles Dodds, one of the growing number of younger members that we have been successful in recruiting to the Society. Nick has kindly contributed a farewell note, and we will hear from Charles in the December bulletin.

Other changes, forced on us by the inexorable passage of time, are also being addressed. Our long-time webmaster, Roger Cornwell, who has given many years of excellent service to



Rob Collins, being congratulated by his fellow archaeologists on his promotion to Professor, at the recent Hadrian's Wall In Our Time book launch.

the cause, is retiring shortly, and our website needs overhauling to keep pace with technological developments in the digital world. We extend our thanks and best wishes to Roger for all he has done for the Society over the years.

Another change in the near future, which has been forced on use through external circumstances, will be re-locating our Monthly Meetings from the Common Room, to a new venue. I thank the Activities Committee for their sterling work in exploring the best options, and we will, of course, notify members as soon as we have definitive details of the new venue.

One further change, that I have been looking forward to for sometime, is the re-establishment of the Society's Research Committee, headed up by Dr Sarah Collins. She shares some of her thoughts about the exciting new directions the Committee will explore.

Finally, our intimate relationship with the premier archaeological monument of our area, Hadrian's Wall, has been the subject of much thought and discussion recently, partly triggered by the felling of the iconic tree at Sycamore Gap. Our distinguished Past-President, David Breeze, contributes two pieces on that theme, one directly topical, and the other reflecting the long tradition of continuing engagement with the monument, symbolized by the huge amount of planning and preparation that goes into mounting the decennial Pilgrimage.

And finally, finally, congratulations are in order to Rob Collins, who is so active in our interested in the local corridors of power, on his elevation to the title of Professor of Roman Frontier Studies.

PASSING ON THE BATON OF SECRETARY

I am stepping back from the role of Hon. Secretary of the Society this July. By then I will have filled this role for over 28 full years (with a three-year break when Graeme Stobbs served when I was President). I've enjoyed following in the footsteps of my namesake (no relation) John Hodgson, one of the founders of the Society, who himself served as Secretary for 21 years. In 2024 our journal *Archaeologia Aeliana* is still regularly published and acknowledged in the archaeological world to be of the highest quality, and our Library and Collections are more accessible to the public than they have ever been: it's good to have played a small part in helping our members to make those things happen. I've seen much change in my time: our meetings have become more informal and we've said goodbye to our historic home in the Castle. Most hearteningly membership has held up and people like you continue to join and support the Society.



28 years is not the record – Robert Blair of South Shields (closely involved in the Roman site there, like me) was secretary for a full 40 years (1883–2023) – but it is perhaps enough for now, and it is time that a younger generation (busy as they are) got involved. I also need to spend more of my time on completing the publication of the excavations at South Shields Roman Fort (Arbeia) which I did as part of my day job – there are opportunities for volunteers to help with that, by the way (get in touch at Nick.Hodgson@Durham.ac.uk).

I will not be disappearing from the Society and am pleased to say that one of our younger members, Charles Dodds, has agreed to step into the Secretary's shoes. You will be hearing more from him in the next *News Bulletin*.

Nick Hodgson

INVESTIGATIONS IN 2022 AT SHARPINGTON EDGE FARM, COQUETDALE



In May 2022 excavations were carried out on the site on an enclosure west of Sharpington Edge Farm, Coquetdale and on the adjacent course of the Roman 'Link Road' which passes through the valley on its route between Redesdale and Bridge of Aln.

The excavations confirmed the presence of a late prehistoric enclosure west of Sharpington Edge and the survival of the Roman road to the north-east. The road survives reasonably well, albeit more disturbed than where uncovered on Holystone Common in 2018, and on a slightly different course to that projected on modern maps. The enclosure, previously described only by Smart in 1822 and shown on Greenwood's map of 1828, was investigated by geophysical survey followed by selective trenching, revealing a defensible, enclosed settlement with deep, partially rock-cut ditches containing homogeneous fills. Internally, remains of a flagged surface were revealed with associated finds of coarse pottery and burnt daub, a glass-

bangle fragment and large cup-marked stone. Other Roman finds recovered by metal-detecting in the immediate vicinity include a silver denarius of Hadrian and various cavalry pieces, suggestive of Roman influence upon the site which it is speculated could have occurred during enforced infilling of its ditches, which stratigraphic evidence suggests occurred as a single-phase event. It is hoped that further work, including palaeo-environmental and radiocarbon analysis will lead to more nuanced conclusions.

These investigations, carried out for Holystone History & Archaeology Group and the landowner, Mac Young, benefitted from the support of Tarmac's Harden Quarry Community Fund and the involvement of Coquetdale residents including Jan Frazer, Ian Glendinning, David Jones (CCA), Kevin Milburn, Julian Philipson and Dave Robinson. Geophysical survey arranged with Dave Armstrong of the Roman Roads Research Association was undertaken by James Lyall, with excavations supervised by the author, Terry Frain and Marc Johnstone, and additional finds reporting by Peter Ryder and Rob Young.

Richard Carlton

THE PILGRIMAGE OF HADRIAN'S WALL

We are all familiar with the butterfly effect. In this case, in 1848 the butterfly fluttered her wings in continental Europe leading to uprisings in several countries and preventing John Collingwood Bruce from undertaking his planned holiday to Rome. Instead, he went on a tour of Hadrian's Wall, taking his son Gainsford, the drawing masters at his school, Charles and Henry Richardson, and accompanied by his groom William. Over the following winter Bruce gave lectures on the Wall in Newcastle. The audience was surprised that so much survived so close to the city we have to remember that this was in the very infancy of railways. As a result Bruce offered to lead a 'pilgrimage' along Hadrian's Wall. This took place the following year and retrospectively became designated the first Pilgrimage of Hadrian's Wall.



It was not until 1886 that the next Pilgrimage was held, with Bruce, now in his 80s, leading the group along the central sector of the frontier. On this occasion, the Pilgrimage was organised by both the northern societies, the Cumberland and Westmorland Society joining the Newcastle Antiquaries, setting a precedent for the years to follow. A 10-year pattern was also set, but it was interrupted by two world wars, so it was decided in 1949 to hold a 'Centenary' Pilgrimage, and the 10-year pattern was reasserted.

A special committee is formed by the two societies to organise each Pilgrimage, and they have to deal with the same issues which have faced every of its predecessor committees: accommodation, transport and food. We are now exactly half-way between the 2019 and the 2029 Pilgrimages and the committee has been formed and over the next months will start planning for the 15th Pilgrimage, the oldest archaeological tour in Britain. Watch this space!

THE CHAINSAW MASSACRE AND ITS AFTERMATH

On 8 May, a *centurio* or so of Roman archaeologists and enthusiasts, including many members of this society, gathered in the Royal Station Hotel in Newcastle to launch *Hadrian's Wall in our Time*. The book is a response to the cutting down of the tree in Sycamore Gap on Hadrian's Wall on 27 September. I invited 80 friends and colleagues, many of them members of this Society, to write about their favourite place on Hadrian's Wall. The result is a wide-ranging group of personal contributions about the Wall, its artefacts and records, including a new composition for the Northumbrian pipes, *Mind the Gap*, played at the launch.

Nick Merriman, Chief Executive of English Heritage, writes 'I greatly welcome the publication of *Hadrian's Wall in our Time*. This superbly illustrated book demonstrates the affection which so many people hold for Hadrian's Wall. English Heritage has been involved in the care of this great Roman frontier for 100 years and I am delighted that we continue to play our part in its protection, presentation and interpretation'.

Chris Snook, formerly of Archaeoplus Books, comments, 'this will be seen as a snapshot of the Wall and its hinterland through the eyes of the early 21st century, which will ensure that it



David Breeze, centre, with Mike Schurer and Ben Heaney of Archaeopress with *Hadrian's Wall in our Time*

will be an “evergreen” title.’

Hadrian’s Wall in our Time is available at www.archaeopress.com and can be purchased at 20% discount from www.archaeopress.com until 31/07/2024 (voucher code RAC-TRAC24)

David Breeze

FUNDRAISING FOR THE NORTHUMBERLAND ARCHIVES



NRO 00876/277 Undated glass slide of three farm workers, posing in front of hay cart, taken by Canon R.C. Macleod, Vicar of Mitford, and probably taken in the Mitford area. Copyright Northumberland Archives.

Recently I took over as Chair of the Northumberland Archives Charitable Trust, established in March 2020 to support the Northumberland Archive Service. The Trust’s primary job is fundraising, mainly from charitable trusts.

COVID slowed progress, but by December 2023 my predecessor could announce that we had raised £100,000. From small beginnings, our turnover doubled three years running and progress continues.

There have been mutterings that Northumberland Archives do not make all their holdings accessible. This happens when collections are not yet catalogued. As the recent problems at the British Museum have shown, uncatalogued material should not be publicly accessible for security reasons.

Northumberland Archives hold one of the richest collections of Estate records in the country, many uncatalogued due to a long-standing shortage of

resource. They pertain not only to landed families: providing information about agricultural and other activities on the estates and all those who lived and worked on them.

A core Trust aim is to improve access: my principal goal as Chair is substantially to reduce the cataloguing backlog. We have started raising funds to recruit more archivists to do the work at pace. It will not be easy: the very word ‘cataloguing’ is off-putting to some and there are so many other causes competing for charitable funds. One major heritage funder has recently limited its funding criteria and the Foyle Foundation will wind up its grant-giving programme in 2025. We need to convince people that an online catalogue unlocks collections for all researchers interested in social, economic, cultural or family history, or the history of communities. Catalogued material can and will be used for outreach and for educational purposes at all levels.

Please wish us luck and have a look at the Trust’s website <https://northumberlandarchivestrust.org/> We welcome new members, and any donations you care to give us.

Sue Shaw

RESEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that after a lengthy hiatus the Society’s Research Committee is back! The committee has a diverse range of expertise and interests, including but not limited to landscape archaeology, print history, urban history, regional heritage and material culture. If we can be of assistance with individual research projects or promoting work in the region by members then please let us know by contacting sarah.collins@ncl.ac.uk (indicating – ATTN: SANT research committee).

Most members will be aware that the committee oversees the Society’s annual research grants. These grants are important in demonstrating our commitment to archaeological and historical research on subjects related to the old counties of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne, and support members and non-members alike. If members are interested in applying for the November 2024 round, or know of projects that would benefit from Society support, then further information can be found on the website. This year the Society has been able to support two projects: *Exotic Fauna at Early Medieval Lindisfarne*, from Dr David

Petts, which will support further analysis of exotic faunal material, and *Linbrig and Aldensheles*, from Coquetdale Community Archaeology, which will support radiocarbon dating.

In addition to grants, the committee will establish an educational and research programme for members, which we will update you on as news progresses. These endeavours inevitably take time, but it is our hope to introduce programmes similar to the Society's *Unlocking the Archives* project (2017–18) to provide volunteering opportunities. In the meantime, members can look forward to the introduction of a new annual research conference – to be held in autumn 2024 – that will promote the work of postgraduates researching northeast history and archaeology.

We look forward to sharing our plans with you as they progress.

Sarah Collins



The inner of the two south walls of the Linbrig chapel that was dedicated to St. Nicholas. (Photograph: David Jones, Coquetdale Community Archaeology)

REFLECTING ON THE WOMEN IN THE LEDGER STONES PROJECT

Seven months have passed since I began my PhD project, currently titled 'The Women in the Ledger Stones: New Histories at Newcastle Cathedral, 1640–1815'. At first, it was overwhelming to be confronted with over 200 ledger stones, but I am lucky that there has been such an eagerness at the Cathedral to share the knowledge that has been collated over time, mostly consisting of biographies of those buried below the church floor.

These biographies raised questions for me as a researcher interested in both Newcastle as a town and women's history: how can we use Newcastle as a case study to investigate wider trends? What can we learn about women's experience of business in the long eighteenth century? What can women's memorials tell us about their lives?

As I have sought to answer these questions, the challenge so far has been finding the ledger stone women in male-centric sources. Some are easier to find than others. Dame Jane Clavering (1669–1734) has been an early focus of the last few months of my research thanks to her distinctive grave, which describes her as 'a Lady of ye most Exemplary Life'. But what did it mean for a woman to be 'exemplary' in this period? Perhaps it was her generous donations to the poor, leaving £50 a year to each parish. Maybe it was her role at the head of the family business, something that anyone familiar with the so-called 'War of the Waggonways' will know. Was it her tenacious attitude that made her so 'exemplary'? She certainly rejects the notion that Newcastle's women were passive agents in town life.

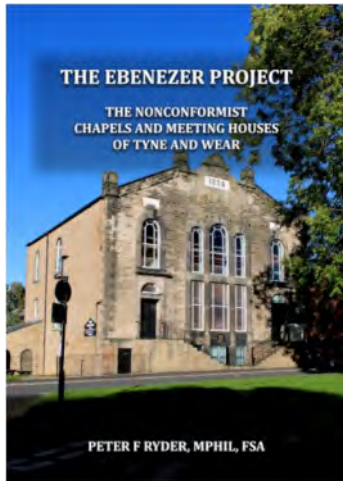
As my work continues to develop, and I look forward to updating you further on the lives of the women in the ledger stones.

Abby Hammond



THE EBENEZER PROJECT. THE NONCONFORMIST CHAPELS AND MEETING HOUSES OF TYNE AND WEAR

Peter Ryder has written a set of three fascinating books exploring the rise and demise of Protestant Nonconformity in the North East. The recently published Tyne and Wear volume was funded by Newcastle City Council as the result of a Historic Environment Record (HER) enhancement project, and is published by Vindomora Solutions. It is available from Amazon for £22.00. Peter writes:



'Ever since the Civil War the history of the Christian Church in England has been characterised by a threefold division, into the Anglicanism of the State, Roman Catholicism slowly being tolerated again and the fastest growing sector, Protestant Nonconformity. The great urban expansion of the 19th century saw the building of thousands of new chapels and meeting houses which form a significant part of the built heritage of our cities, towns and villages.

This study covers Nonconformist buildings in the modern Metropolitan county of Tyne and Wear, including the two cities of Newcastle and Sunderland. Taking World War II as its cut off point, it identifies almost 900 chapels, only about a quarter of which survive today, with barely half of these still in their original use. They vary from the huge Town Chapels seating over a thousand to tiny "Tin Tabernacles". A surprising contrast emerges between the

traditional Anglicanism of Newcastle (where the 1851 census shows that there was a chapel for every 1145 inhabitants) and the fervent Nonconformity of Sunderland (where there was a chapel for every 639).

Nonconformist buildings are of importance both architecturally and as witness to social history. The dwindling of congregations means that many have been demolished or turned to other uses and they, and their builders, have not received the attention that they deserved. This book aims to be their Ebenezer – an Old Testament word for "a stone of memorial" – and do something to redress that balance.'

The Tyne and Wear book can be purchased for £23.14 + p&p from

The Ebenezer Project: The Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses of Tyne and Wear : Ryder, Peter, Morrison, Jennifer, Carlton, Richard: Amazon.co.uk: Books

Or while stocks last, it can be bought from Newcastle City Council for £15 + p&p (or collect it for free by prior arrangement from Civic Centre)

Email Rachel.Grahame@newcastle.gov.uk

For the County Durham and Northumberland volumes please email pfryder@broomlee.org

Jenny Morrison

THE TYNESIDE GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE



The Society has recently been gifted a number of copies of the *Tyneside Geographical Magazine*, a journal that flourished at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They are a generous donation from Emeritus Professor Tony Champion of Newcastle University. The magazine was the 'house' periodical of the Tyneside Geographical Society, established in 1887 and which, before the First World War, became one of the leading such societies in the UK, creating its own premises at the now long-demolished former Presbyterian Church adjacent to St Thomas's on St Mary's Place. Its membership of 200 in its first year peaked at over 1,300 in 1897 and its significance is indicated by the fact that lectures were given by international figures such as H.M. Stanley, Roald Amundsen, Ernest Shackleton, Winston Churchill, Fridtjof Nansen (who stayed in Newcastle for several months), Sir Halford Mackinder and Captain Scott. These were either reported on or reproduced in the journal.

The contents also include many fascinating accounts of the Society's activities, including its support for the Anglo-Siberian expeditions of Captain Wiggins and his endeavours to find a northern sea-route to the mouths of the great Siberian rivers. The commercial origins of the Society continued and was signalled by the fact that its second Secretary, Herbert Shaw, was also Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. But the inter-war period saw gradual decline and the Society eventually ceased to exist in 1944.

Unfortunately, there are a number of gaps in the run of the journal and, given its rarity, it is

unlikely that these could be filled. As several of the copies were very much the worse for wear it was decided to have them bound. This is now completed and the seven volumes are located in the Controlled Stack area of the Library.

Mike Barke, Hon. Librarian

GATESHEAD LOCAL LIST

In 2003/4 Gateshead became the first local authority in Tyne and Wear to create and publish a list of locally significant buildings, parks and gardens which have special architectural or historic interest, which, whilst not of regional significance to warrant listing, were so locally significant they should be protected from harmful developments. This inspired other Tyne and Wear authorities to follow suit, and the selection methodology and process influenced the later, Historic England guide to Local Listing.

Over the last 20 years the Local List has led to several entries becoming statutorily listed, such as the Former Open Air School on Joicey Road, and others protected from inappropriate developments. The lack of statutory protection for the Local List has placed a significant pressure on the quality of the local plan policies to protect these assets, which is now, further supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In 2021, Gateshead, with Newcastle and South Tyneside local authorities were one of 22 regions selected for funding under a Local Heritage List campaign run by the (now) Dept. for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The project would renew all three local lists, with community engagement and participation, expertise from different fields including architecture, gardens and archaeology. The new lists, published through the Historic Environment Record (www.twsitelines.info) and Council webpages, will continue to influence decision making and place based improvements for the wellbeing of local communities.

The review of the original list, and community engagement, saw a further 45 entries proposed, including The Glasshouse (formerly The Sage Gateshead) and former Wagonway and coal pits in Longacre Wood. Of the 45 nominated sites, 40 were approved for inclusion in March 2023. There are now 361 entries on the local list, which will be able to be searched on the Gateshead website later this year (end of summer).

Clare Richardson, Project Manager, Gateshead MBC



CAPTION: The Glasshouse, Gateshead - added for its contribution to architecture and development of the River Tyne gorge.

BLACKFRIARS

As part of Blackfriars Cloister Garden developments, I wrote about last June, we intended to revise our historical interpretation panels and produce a digital trail app to allow visitors to enjoy a self-guided tour of the precinct. We also had plans to launch a microbrewery in the friary's Chapter House which was subsequently used by the Brewers and Bakers Guild.

Good progress has been made with the trail app which Animmersion, our photorealistic 3D visualisation app developer, have largely completed – save for some GPS location positioning.

Furthermore, our architectural heritage partner, New Vision, with the help of some archaeological friends, have re-imagined the complex of buildings (including the demolished church) to stunning affect – see attached picture. The hope is to allow visitors to use augmented reality to 'walk through' the site using their smart phones to see how it looked back in the 14th century.



Visualisation of the cloister and church at Blackfriars by Iwan Peverett.

It's all very exciting though, as often happens with multi-disciplinary initiatives that rely on each other for their workings, a small delay in one area cascades down through the remaining functionality.

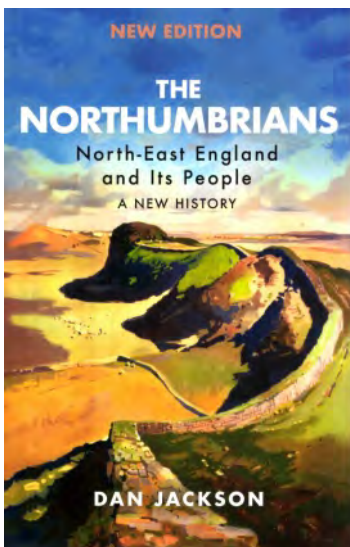
In this case, we're still waiting for the British Library to grant permission to use the images we're hoping to display. Without this our brilliant graphic designer, Ben Smith (who incidentally was responsible when working for the council for the existing panels) is unable to print and install the replacements. And without these, we're unable to align the GPS-location of the app.

I hope my next update will bring better news but in the meantime, I can report the brewery equipment has been installed and commissioned with a range of historically inspired Trappist pale ales, lagers and IPAs now being brewed by our Belgium brewer, Ben Hall, and served in the Parlour Bar. Do come and sample one of his refreshing ales in our secluded Cloister Garden – when the sun comes out!

Andy Hook, *Blackfriars*

MONTHLY MEETINGS BY SUE WARD

January lecture



In January, author Dan Jackson spoke about *Understanding the Northumbrians*. He explained that he was interested in 'cultural archaeology', the concept of the persistence of cultural traits which had their origins in deep history. People elsewhere in Britain had opinions about Newcastle which they did not have about other cities, he suggested. The North East was unusually well defined compared to some other regions. There was an understanding, going well back into history, that as the impoverished north, it was the antithesis of the rich and fertile south.

His own interest had been sparked by military history, especially that of the Northumberland Fusiliers, whose motto was 'We go where we are sent'. It embodied the region's macho culture. Its personnel included Northumbrian pipers, who wore the traditional black-and-white checked plaid. One could argue that the military traditions were established as long ago as the Roman period, and had carried on with the need to repel the Vikings, and then defend the border from the Scots.

All this was long gone, but there remained a 'cultural half-life'. Part of this came from geology, and especially the presence of coal, which largely dominated the country's economy from the 1500s onwards. The mining villages were single-industry communities, with a feeling of 'we're all in it together', but with this went a surveillance culture, with everyone knowing everyone else's business. In 1910, 40–50% of all adult males in the area worked in the pits, and it was a badge of honour that their wives did not go out to work. At the same time, there was also a culture born of the Enlightenment, with a generation of auto-didacts like the Pitmen Painters, and also one of sociability. Blaydon Races, Dan suggested, was effectively Tyneside's version of the National Anthem. The culture found an outlet in socialism, although the particular brand of Labour politicians were quite conservative. The trade union tradition was long-standing – some people reckoned that the South Shields shipwrights society, founded back in 1797, was the oldest true trade union in the world.

Dan's book, *The Northumbrians*, is available in our library. Dan can be contacted on dr.dan.jackson1@gmail.com.

February meeting



David Jones and Richard Carlton described *The Late Medieval Settlement of Linbrig*, a set of ruined buildings in Upper Coquetdale in North Northumberland. David explained that many of the settlement's structures were clearly visible – it was probably noted by John Leland circa 1543 and John Hodgson drew a plan of it in 1820. Part of one building was excavated by Barbara Harbottle and John Philipson in 1967, and there had been a survey of the site in 2005. Coquetdale Community Archaeology (CCA) started excavations in 2018, with four

further seasons following.

Several structures were investigated, including a domestic dwelling and a grain-drying kiln. There were regular finds of apparently ecclesiastical stonework and in 2022 a CCA volunteer found some coloured glass known as flashed ruby and imported from Normandy or the Rhineland. Two fourteenth-century references to a chapel on a Cheviot manor called Aldensheles were identified and research showed the site had been on this manor. Armed with this information and detailed LiDAR analysis, in 2023 Scheduled Monument consent was granted to examine a building in the centre of the site.

Richard Carlton of the Archaeological Practice described the high-quality stone walls CCA found, with chamfered plinths typical of an ecclesiastical building. Two closely-spaced south walls were identified, probably because the structure had been built on a slope with inadequate foundations, had begun to subside and had been reconstructed. With a stone-tiled roof, the remains of a flagstone floor and little domestic pottery it was almost certainly the remains of the lost medieval chapel. Perhaps built in the late thirteenth century, it was probably sacked by the Scots in 1318 and then abandoned, but the memory of a sacral place was strong enough for a body to be buried within its precincts 150 or more years later.

Richard and David are at richard.carlton@newcastle.ac.uk and domj49@yahoo.co.uk, and there are reports of the excavations in the 2022 and 2023 volumes of *Archaeologia Aeliana*.

March meeting

Beverley Prevatt Goldstein spoke about *Discovering African Lives in Northern England*. Since August 2020 this project had produced three calendars, a wall chart for schools, a booklet and an ongoing series of walks. Several Antiquaries had been among its early supporters, and we had acted as fund holders and guarantors. Beverley thanked our Treasurer, Simon Pallett, for his generosity with his time and expertise.

The project had involved researching many people who had lived in, or had visited Northern England, some well-known like Martin Luther King and Frederick Douglass, but the majority much less known. The aim was to provide an alternative to the 'standard' narratives, that black people were recent arrivals in Northern England and their role was subordinate and peripheral that the region contributed to the abolition of slavery through the goodwill of celebrated figures, religious groups, and ordinary people (all white) and that Northern England was a friendly non-racist place. Providing this alternative was important for historical accuracy to provide recognition for African descendants in the Northern England and to challenge racism, demonstrating that black people were not guests or interlopers, but builders, creators, and inhabitants.

The process of discovery was complex, often depending on several layers of contacts between people who might know, or know of, someone else. Her first example of this was Jimmy Durham, the first black soldier in the British Army to have been treated (and paid) as equal to other soldiers. It happened that his best friend, who appeared in a group photo with him in the 1900s, was the grandfather of the person who first suggested the calendar, Barbara Kentish. Another example was Robert Wellesley-Cole, the first black doctor in Newcastle, who had graduated in 1934. Through several different contacts they had been able to trace his daughter and nephew, and found out from them a richer history, and details about Wellesley-Cole's sister, Irene Ighodoro, the first woman from Sierra Leone to qualify as a doctor. However, many narratives remain incomplete, and assistance from Newcastle Antiquaries would be welcomed.

The *African Lives* project has a website at <https://www.africanlivesnortheast.co.uk/>. Copies of the booklet are available via that site, at £5 plus postage and packing, and there is also a series of walks. (One is being planned jointly by the Antiquaries and the Northern Architectural History Society, probably at the end of September 2024).

April lecture

In April, Ken Smith, who has co-authored a number of books on the history of the North-East coal miners, talked about *North East Miners' Banners*. They were, he said, important survivals of the North East pit communities. Emblazoned on them were scenes and mottoes reflecting the history and values of pitmen and their families. They emphasised the importance of trade unions, with the most frequent motto being 'Unity is Strength'.

Today, new banners were still being made to replace old ones, with traditional themes repeated. Others were being repaired and restored. These were expensive processes, but





A close-up of the Dawdon Lodge miners' banner. It was produced by Durham Bannermakers. Photo: Tom Yellowley.

there had been help from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and community banner groups had done much fundraising. A number of historic banners from County Durham, Ken said, could be seen at Beamish, while there was a display of Northumberland ones at Woodhorn Mining Museum. Others were in former Miners' Welfare buildings, community centres, schools and churches.

The craftsmanship that lay behind them should not be underestimated, he went on. The main manufacturers were a firm called G. Tutill, based in the Whitechapel area of London from 1837 onwards. Their customers could choose a stock design out of a pattern book, or provide their own. The most expensive versions had a background woven from heavy silk on a jacquard loom, with the central roundel and ribbons handpainted. Cheaper versions were on a plain background with much more handpainted.

Nowadays, they might well be on polycotton.

Ken showed us a whole range of banners, some more than a hundred years old. They included motifs such as the Miners' Hall in Durham, the miners' convalescent homes and aged miners' homes, and portraits of personalities including Marx and Lenin.

One from 1869 showed a key moment in the Durham miners' struggle against the 'Bond', the harsh employment terms to which they were subjected, while others showed union officials visiting sick miners, or consoling miners' widows and orphans. The Durham Gala had begun in 1871, and it was the custom there that for those pits which had experienced casualties during the year, the banner would be paraded draped in black.

Ken can be contacted on tyneship@btinternet.com. His recorded talk is available to our members, in the Members' Section.

NOTES FROM THE LIBRARY

It was great to welcome new SANT members into the Library in April. It was the first time that the majority of the participants had visited. When asked what they liked about the Library, people commented on the range of books and diverse collections housed here. One member commented that they were 'surprised to find such a pleasant room and the other collections were a welcome bonus'.

It got me thinking ... perhaps some of you may not be entirely aware of the Library?

The Great North Museum: Hancock Library is on the second floor of the Museum. Our opening hours are currently Monday to Thursday, 10am to 2pm (except Bank Holidays). The Library holds three different collections: the SANT collection, the Cowen collection (Newcastle University's School of History, Classics and Archaeology), and the Natural History Society of Northumbria's (NHSN) collection. NHSN's North East Nature Archive is housed within the Library (viewing by appointment only). There's also a small children's collection for our younger visitors. As SANT members, you are able to borrow books from the SANT collection, but you are most welcome to browse any of the books on the shelves.

We have volunteers who look after SANT's collection, led by Mike Barke, your Honorary Librarian. They look after the journals, check locations of books, investigate what's inside some of the older volumes, add new books to the collection and much more!

The Library is open to everyone to use. Society members, volunteers, independent researchers, academics, students, members of the public and Museum visitors are all welcome to undertake research, browse or just take a moment. You can find out more about using the Library, and check our opening hours, on our website: <https://greatnorthmuseum.org.uk/collections/library-and-archives>

I hope to see you in the Library soon!

Rebecca Knight, TWAM Librarian



JANET ELIZABETH, 'JENNY', VAUGHAN, 21/10/1946 – 28/3/2024

Our thoughts are with Richard and Ailsa and John Nolan, her partner for the last 38 years.

Jenny studied Ancient History and Archaeology at Birmingham University 1965–68. After graduation she had paid work at various digs. She married John Vaughan, and had Richard and Ailsa. Subsequently they separated and in 1980 Jenny and her children came to live in Pelton in a house provided by John Vaughan.

Jenny soon got seasonal work in the Tyne and Wear County Council's Conservation Team on Barbara Harbottle's excavations at the Castle and Black Friars, developing her skills as a small finds specialist. Her wide-ranging expertise in small finds – pottery, glass, metalwork, bone and ivory, leather and clay tobacco pipes – is evidenced in her specialist reports for Harbottle's digs (AAs 1981 1983 and 1987). Jenny also worked at various times with all the archaeological organisations in the region, and some beyond. Her wide-ranging finds knowledge led to several appearances on *Time Team*. She contributed to the work of the Bamburgh Research Project, coining the name *Bamburgh Ware* for a distinctive pottery type and served on the committee of the Medieval Pottery Research Group.

As well as paid work Jenny gave freely of her time, knowledge, and enthusiasm to amateur groups – TillVAS (particularly the Flodden500 Project) CCA's excavations at Barrowburn SWAAG's 'Big Dig' at Reeth. She joined NAG, the Northumberland Archaeological Group, in 1981 and was on its committee by 1984, secretary by 1990 and in 1997 she was elected President of NAG. Following her three-year stint as President she continued on the NAG committee in one position or another until her death, working tirelessly arranging meetings, talks, trips and walks, calling on her extensive network of professional colleagues at times to put together each year NAG's programme of activities. Organisations like NAG cannot exist and be successful without dedicated people like Jenny, who give freely of their time and energy, without expecting any reward.



Gordon Moir

EDITORIAL

This will be my last editorial as I am very pleased to be able tell you all that Mike Barke will take over as editor of the bulletin for the December edition. You will all be very familiar with the excellent work he has done since he took over as Hon Librarian, and we can all look forward to future editions that will benefit from his deep scholarship and wide range of contacts in the region. I am sure he will not neglect to seek contributions from within the ranks of our own membership, and I will assist him in his labours, by continuing to ask for copy from colleagues and acquaintances. I hope some of you will help by either offering pieces for the bulletin (300 words plus one illustration) or by pointing Mike in the direction of those who are doing things our members might like to know about. The next edition will be in your in-boxes, or on your welcome mats before Christmas, and the deadline for material to be in the hands of the editor is the middle of November.

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