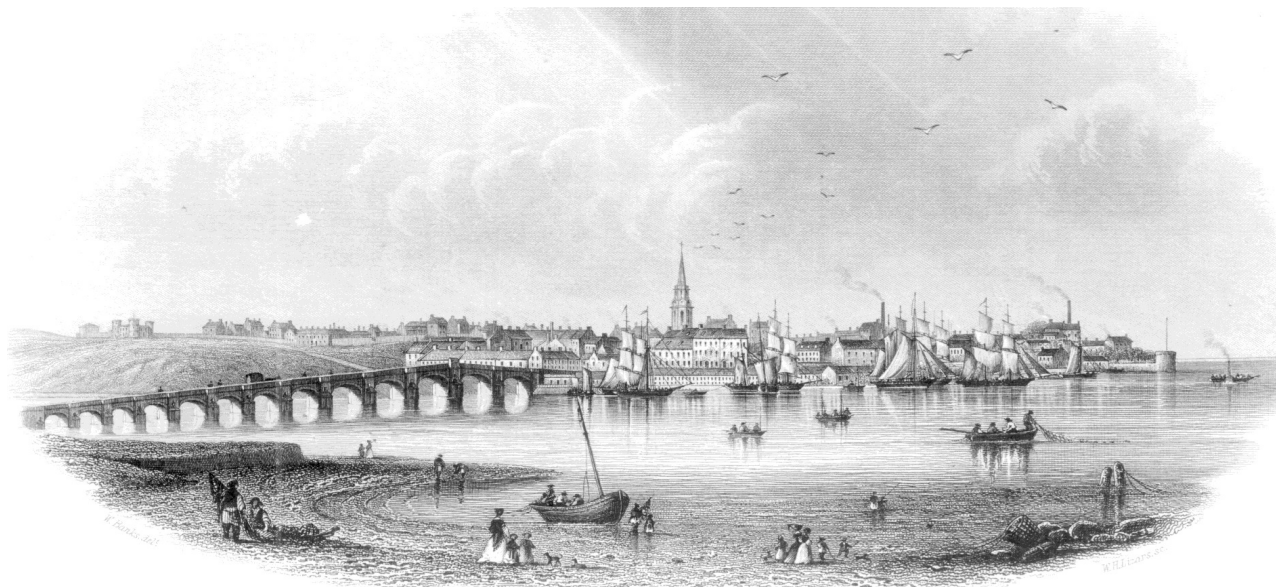


Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 68—DECEMBER 2010

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 14th

BRO 30 TALKS AND EVENTS

Arriving:

Railway Porters: 7.00pm at Parish
Centre

Friday 14th January 2011 and Saturday
15th January

Turn Back Time : Berwick Shops and
Businesses : Exhibition; Quizes and trip
down Memory Lane, 10 –12 both days.
All Welcome.

Friday 11th March 2011

Friends AGM and Talk by Dr Paul Carter
re The Workhouse Project. AGM at 7pm;
talk at 7.30pm at Parish Centre

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Time:7.30 p.m.

Friday 14 th January 2011	Bednelfysch and Gode Red Herring: Katrina Porteous
Friday 11 th February 2011	The Joys of Volunteering : Various Contributors
Friday 11 th March 2011	Dr Paul Carter : Living the Poor Life, The Workhouse Project
Friday 18 th March 2011	Archive Film Night in the Maltings – admission charge. More info in next newsletter

BERWICK LIBRARY – LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY EVENTS

Wednesday 29 th December 2010	Turn Back Time : Berwick Shops and Businesses. Drop in to reminisce about shops and businesses, 2.00 – 4.30 pm with talk at 2.30 by Wendy Scott, local historian
Thursday 6 th January 2011	Traces of the British in Kaliningrad : Irina Tren
Friday 14 th January and Saturday 15 th January 2011	Turn Back Time : Berwick Shops and Businesses. Drop in Session; quizzes; introduction to online trade directories; talk re researching businesses and shops. 10 -12 both days. Contact Library or Record Office for further information.

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Ayton Community Hall

Time:7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 25th January 2011
Tuesday 22nd February 2011
Tuesday 29th March 2011

A History of Robert Burns: Rev Bill Paterson
The Irish Potato Famine : Ernie Cox
AGM followed by The First Railway across
the Border : Tom Thorburn

BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 26th January 2011
Wednesday 23rd February 2011

Shipping at Alnmouth: Adrian Osler
Archives of England and Scotland : Robert
Steward
From Ditch to Bastion : Jim Herbert

Wednesday 23rd March 2011

BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time:7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 19th January 2011
Wednesday 16th February 2011
Wednesday 16th March 2011

Upsettlington and Ladykirk : Eleanor Moffat
A Tale of Three Breweries : Dr Peter Maule
Border Murders: Norrie McLeish

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 7th February 2011
Monday 7th March 2011

Prehistoric ceramics: Graham Taylor
TBA: Jeremy Paterson

BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Corn Exchange, Melrose

Time: 2.30pm

Sunday, 27 February 2011

Old Maps : Laragh Quinney, Map
Library, National Library of Scotland

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 6 th January 2011	Scottish witchcraft: Mr Roy Pugh
Thursday 3 rd February 2011	Duns Greenhouse: Mr Derek James
Thursday 3 rd March 2011	Society AGM 7pm prompt followed by Ford Estate at the time of Lady Waterford : Linda Bankier

DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Duns Social Club, 41 Newton St, Duns.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 26 th January 2011	Dunse Masonic Lodge - 250 anniversary- Open Night
Wednesday 23 rd February 2011	The History of the Swinton Family : Major Gen. Sir John Swinton
Wednesday 30 th March 2011	The Coldstream Guards and the Restoration of the Monarchy : Andrew Tulloch

GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: The Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.

Time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 12 th January 2011	The Alnwick Freeman & The Dukes 1757 to date: Cliff Pettit
Wednesday 9 th February 2011	The Northumbria Language and it's Dialect: Kim Bibby-Smith
Wednesday 9 th March 2011	The Last Feudal County, Estates & Estates Management in 19 th century Northumberland: Ian Roberts. This talk will be followed by the exploration of a specific Estate

NORHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Norham Village Hall

Time : 7.30 pm

No information available

NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 26th January 2011
Wednesday 23rd February 2011
Wednesday 23rd March 2011

Party Night with Dave Herbert
Poem of Northumberland : Noel Hodgson
Spare the Rod-schooling 1850-1950: Alan

Wednesday 27th April 2011

Fendley
A Nineteenth Century Diary from
Outchester: Joan Wright

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH

Venue: Bell View Resource Centre, 33 West Street, Belford

Time: 10.00am

Saturday 15th January 2011
Saturday 19th February 2011
Saturday 19th March 2011

Members Forum
Title to be confirmed
Monkey Business at a medieval Abbey:
Barry Mead

ARCHIVE NEWS

The end of the year is fast approaching and I'm not quite sure where it has gone to. However, 2010 has certainly been a busy year.

Over the past couple of months the Record Office has been extremely busy with various initiatives including the following :

At the moment the Northumberland Archives Service and Berwick are working on a joint film project trying to locate cine films of the county and events that have

happened here. As part of this, in September, I held a Film Show for the Probus Club and was involved in the Film Festival where I helped Huw Davies present a selection of films from the Reverend Jackson Archive, an amazing collection from the 1920s to about 2005. Some of you may remember Reverend Jackson who was involved with the Friends and helped us hold our first Film Night back in 1996 in the Guildhall. Until the end of March, we have access to money to convert old cine film to digital format and so, if anyone has any old cine of the area, please do get in touch. We would, of course provide you with a copy of the cine on DVD free of charge.

As a new term has started, the Record Office is working with various schools again. This year, I am undertaking a Learning Links placement with St Mary's First School with the aim of creating resource boxes for Early Years Children. I have been into the school to observe the children, talked to the teachers about what they would like in the Resource boxes relating to Families/At the Seaside and Toys. At the beginning of next year, we will take in what we have created to see what they think. This work with Early Years children has also led me to mentor another Archivist who wanted to create resource boxes for this age group. This has involved me going to County Durham to help deliver a session on Families to a group of 3 year olds at a Surestart Centre. It is a challenge working with this age group and introducing them to archives but it is also very rewarding.

This term and next, we are undertaking an exciting project with a Year 5 class in Berwick Middle School as part of the Changemakers Project and Berwick's Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme. The children are going to look at Bridge Street past, present and future to see how it has developed and will develop. I have gone into school with the other partners to talk about the project and hopefully, weather permitting, we will start look at the historical resources before Christmas!

Thanks to the MLA (Museums. Libraries and Archives Council), Northumberland Archives and the Berwick Record Office, have been awarded a grant to undertake a couple of projects in relation to Family Learning and Early Years work. As part of this, we are trying to create an historical walk for families visiting and living in Berwick. There will also be walks created for Woodhorn and Haltwhistle. Fingers crossed, we will have the proto - types ready for the end of January. As part of this project, I have also given a talk at a Family learning training course in Newcastle and will be helping to run a workshop at the Family learning Conference in Hartlepool at the end of January – there's always plenty going on.

Finally, I have given a couple of talks recently and had some more arranged but they were cancelled due to the weather !. I have talked to the North Northumberland Branch of the NDFHS (Northumberland and Durham Family History Society) and a group of people on Holy Island. Following on from the talk on Holy Island, we are hoping to set up a Community Archive group.

That's all for now. There are lots of other things going on but there are too many to remember.

Linda Bankier

TURN BACK TIME : BERWICK SHOPS AND BUSINESSES

Some of you may have been watching the BBC1 programme about the History of the High Street which I found fascinating. It was interesting to see how important and thriving it was up until the early 1960s but then slowly declined. As a follow on to this, the Record Office and Berwick Library are running a couple of events in late December and January. All the events will take place in Berwick Library. The Record Office will be mounting a display on Shops in Berwick, starting 21st December and lasting about a month. In addition, there will be a couple of drop in sessions – Wednesday 29th December (2.00 – 4.30); Friday 14th and Saturday 15th January 10 -12. Both sessions in January will include quizzes to jog your memory about shops in Berwick. On the Friday, we hope to be able to show you websites you can access to find out information from trade directories and on Saturday morning, I will give a short talk on researching shops and businesses. Do drop in and see what we have put together and reminisce about shopping in the past which is very different to today!. There is something for everyone, young and old. For further information, please contact me here at the Record Office (01289) 301865 or Diane Wright at the Library (01289) 330451 .

BRO 30

Most of you should be aware that this year is the 30th anniversary of the Record Office and as part of this, we are holding a number of events and talks to celebrate this milestone. Under the Dates for Your Diary, you will find a list of the talks being held and below, you can read Barbara Herdman's report on the talk about the History of the Record Office.

You may recall that in the last newsletter, I mentioned that we were holding an Archive Study Day in October. This was an extremely successful event which was attended by nearly 50 people. We held it in the Parish Centre and the Record Office, covering topics, including care of Archive and Photographs; Reading Old Documents; Getting started in Family History and Researching from Newspapers. It was great to see so many people coming along who had no connection with the Archives or the Friends before. The feedback on the day was very positive and we would hope to run something similar again in the future.

There are still lots of events to take place. These include a Local and Family History weekend in mid May. If you can help us with this in any way – volunteering to steward or help with the refreshments – do let me know. There will be more information about it in the next newsletter.

On Friday 19th November, we held a very special talk which brought together all the Berwick Archivists, both past and present. This was the first time that we all had actually been together in the one place although we do all know each other! Below is Barbara report on the talk :

THE STORY OF BERWICK'S ARCHIVE SERVICE

What a heartening evening in the Parish Room last Friday evening. The Friends of Berwick and District Museum and Archives held another of their lectures promoting the 30 years of the Archives service. This lecture, entitled "The Story of Berwick's Archive Service", was given by, and in the presence of, archivists who have worked for many years with the County and the Borough to conserve the treasures held by Berwick.

Mr Bob Steward, former Deputy County Archivist for Northumberland, gave a comprehensive overview of the fortunes of all the paper work which constitutes the record of Berwick's history. Over the years there has been a long drawn out battle as to where Berwick's documents should rest. Fortunately Berwick has always won and to this day the Record Office holds our heritage safe. Because so much legislation lies within these documents they have always been held securely but not always in the best of conditions.

Searching through the mass of paperwork Bob Steward unearthed many gems telling of the unfortunate housing of documents and dirty and mouldering papers of great value lying uncared for in damp rooms and cells. People were concerned but not able to get much done. There seemed to be a fairly consistent request for the papers to be catalogued and bound and this was done, ensuring that our heritage is recorded and safe. In 1940, when the Salvage Committee was formed, documents were removed for safe-keeping, but there is no written record of where they went. Calls to send the documents to Melton Park in Newcastle were turned down and Berwick's Records stayed in the Cells in the Council Buildings. The County Archivist decided that there should be a dedicated Berwick Record Service, overseen by the County.

In 1973 it was suggested that the Barracks should become a heritage centre housing the Museum and Art Gallery and the Archives. (This suggestion has reared its head many times and is once again being investigated) At this time, under the Job Creation Scheme, two people came to Berwick to help catalogue the ever increasing load of paperwork which consisted in some part of historical documents, council and police minutes and private papers. They were Ian Martin and Margaret Rennison. Margaret, now Fox, continued the lecture by giving an account of her tenure of the Record Office from 1977 to 1983. From being a history graduate in Edinburgh she did 6 weeks with the Job Creation Scheme and then as assistant archivist she did one day a week in Berwick. She remembered the overwhelming amount of work involved in the cleaning and tidying and cataloguing of papers in the dingy world of the cells in the Town Hall and in Wallace Green.

In 1983 the Museum and Art Gallery moved into the Clock Block at the Barracks, but the Archives stayed put as the conditions were not good for the documents. More years passed and a pair of 200 year old cottages at Wallace Green was transformed into a brand new Record Office. Linda Bankier was now the archivist with responsibility for Berwick and the Borough and County decided that they would fund a full time post. Linda applied and got the job. The Berwick Record Office had its

official opening on 25th April 1990 by the then Mayor, Mrs. Kate Robson. Now the reputation and the service began to grow. The building became the depository for all local records, and estates such as Haggerston and Ford and Etal transferred their documents to Berwick.

Since 1990 the County's wish list has been implemented more than satisfactorily by Linda. Education, outreach and the encouragement of using the depository facility have blossomed. With the inception of a phalanx of volunteers helping with the growing tasks of transcription and research, and the founding of the Friends of Berwick and District Museum and Archives in 1994, the Record Office has gone from strength to strength.

Printed works include A Young Explorers Guide (being updated now), Berwick on Tweed Illustrated, 1894 - 1994 and The History of Spittal School. Education using the Archives has reached children as young as the 3 -5 year- olds as this year the Records Office received the Archives Pace Setter Award for Linda's ground - breaking work with these youngsters.

In 2003/2004 The Union of the Crowns attracted great numbers of visitors to Berwick as there were so many events organised during this celebration of settlement between two nations. 2009 saw the purchase of the Berwick Roll, Tudor documents of great importance to the town. Each year sees a growing interest in Heritage Doors Open days when historic buildings, not usually accessible to the public, welcome visitors. Linda also deals with the Freeman and their history and has a huge interest in promoting interest in the Archives by using drama to attract young people to an aspect of their lives they might never have thought of approaching.

The lecture ended with two big queries, "Where do we go from here?" One question with two meanings! What further work can be undertaken by the Records Office, and where can the ever- increasing load of valuable, historic local documents covering from 1400 to the present day be housed? We need to be able to answer Linda Bankier's questions and we need to answer them soon.

Barbara Herdman

RIOT ON HOLY ISLAND

RIOT ON HOLY ISLAND

When doing some research for the talk on Holy Island, I came across a document on the Northumberland Communities website which referred to a riot on Holy Island in 1889. I was intrigued and wanted to know more as I had never heard of it. I checked the local newspaper and found the following report :

1 March 1889

SERIOUS DISTURBANCE AT HOLY ISLAND

On Saturday night. Matthew Cromarty, fisherman, Holy Island, was brought before Col. J.E. Forster at Berwick Townhall at a special court of the Norham and Islandshire Petty Sessions, charged by Thomas Johnston, police constable, Holy Island, with wilful damage by breaking a pane of glass in the police station at Holy Island. The complainant said that he was standing in front of his house which is the police station, a few minutes past ten o'clock. The prisoner broke a window with a stone and witness arrested him. On searching Cromarty, witness found a stone in his pocket. He was close to the prisoner when he broke the pane, which was in the window lighting the passage and about four feet high. The damage was done wilfully. Cromarty did not stagger against the window. He was a little the worse of drink. It was dark at the time of the occurrence. The value of the pane witness thought was 1 shilling. The prisoner was by himself, and was only a short distance from witness. He struggled on being taken into custody. Cromarty was liberated on bail of £10. The arrest of this man led to a serious disturbance on Holy Island on Friday night. The SS Shadwan of Newcastle which foundered off Goswick in November last, had a valuable cargo of provisions, and from time to time, those have come on shore. On 3rd February some bags of flour were cast up at Holy Island, PC Johnston detected two young men named Straughan and Patterson carrying away several stones of this. This was at a late hour at night. The men had ripped up the bags in which the flour had come ashore, and emptied some of the best into bags with which they had provided themselves. Johnston took possession of the flour and reported the case to his superiors. The Customs Officials decided to institute proceedings against the two men and summonses were issued against them. They were served on the afternoon of Friday last by Johnston. There can be no doubt this proceeding was looked upon with much disfavour. It so happened that also the fishermen had that day received payment of a sum of some £80 or £90 for

salvage from the wreck. It is to be regretted that a portion of this money was spent in drinking during the evening. Shortly after ten o'clock at night PC Johnston was standing at the door of the police station, when the man Cromarty walked up and deliberately cast a stone through the window. The officer turned round, collared him and "ran him in". Johnston had just done this and shut the front door when an imperious knock was heard. Johnston did not open the door but a colloquy ensued between those outside and the policeman inside. The object of the visit was to ostensibly to secure the liberation of Cromarty. This Johnston, refused firmly, whereupon the crowd outside decided to break down the door. Stones were thrown in great number. The shutter of the window soon gave way and in a few minutes there was not a whole pane of glass on the premises. The inmates of the house, Johnston, his mother, an old woman of about 70 years of age who was in bed at the time, and a sister – were greatly alarmed for their safety, and kept out of the line of fire as best they could. ...The police station was never built to stand a long siege and it was quickly minus windows, whilst the door also quickly gave way. An entrance could now easily have been effected to the interior but no one ventured forward. In the meantime, Johnston's sister had got out by the back door and went to get the aid of the Coastguardmen. When they arrived upon the scene all was quiet and the crowd had disappeared. Johnston also sent a messenger to the police station at Belford to summon the assistance of the police there. Inspector Spratt received intelligence of the disturbance about three o'clock on Saturday morning. He at once along with a police constable drove off, leaving telegrams to be despatched in the morning to Chief Constable Derry at Newcastle and to Superintendent Kennedy at Wooler. When Inspector Pratt arrived on the Island about five o'clock he found everything as quiet as usual, the dilapidated appearance of the police station being the only evidence of the disturbance. As a result of the telegrams despatched to Wooler and to Newcastle some 25 policemen arrived at the Island in the course of the day, twelve of those having been sent from Newcastle by the two o'clock fast train which stopped at Beal in order to leave them there. These men were sent back immediately on their arrival at the Island, there being no need of their presence. The man Cromarty was removed to Berwick in the course of the day. There was no demonstration. All has since been quiet on the Island.

Linda Bankier

MUSEUM NEWS

Visitor Numbers

The museum has closed for the season. Visitor numbers for 2010 are as follows

PV	6963
Groups	16
Free	1252
Members	3847
<u>Education</u>	<u>55</u>
Total	12,133

At the joint partners' meeting on 1st October, it was proposed that next year's days of opening would be Monday – Friday. Reasons given were that visitor numbers have been relatively poor at weekends, and the KOSB have issues with enhanced pay being required for weekend working.

Accreditation

Sam Rowlands of the MLA has been in contact to indicate that the case for full accreditation for Berwick Museum was due to be presented to the Accreditation Board's quarterly meeting last week, with the recommendation that full status be awarded. Confirmation that this has gone through should arrive by post soon. (www.mla.gov.uk)

MLA Effective Collections programme.

The tender document re Berwick's social history collections went out in October, with the aim of completing the first part of the process by the end of December. Christine Stevens, who was previously Head of Collections at Beamish, has taken on the brief of reviewing the social history collection. This task will entail looking at the collections in situ at the museum as well as items currently being kept outside in the Coal Yard at the Barracks, and artefacts being stored at Allerdean Farm. (www.museumsassociation.org/collections/effective-collections)

Changemakers Project.

Ruth Scrase has been appointed as Changemakers Young Advocate for Berwick Museum. Ruth is in her second year as a history student at Newcastle University, and has worked in several museums in a voluntary capacity. She is working on her project over the winter months, aiming to get young people involved in the

museum's exhibition for 2011 - *James Wallace & the Quintet*.
(<http://www.aliveandgiving.com/CharityDetails.aspx?id=264415>)

Grant Funding

A Renaissance in the Regions Accreditation support grant of £1,000.00 has been awarded to purchase conservation supplies re Berwick's costume collection.

Exhibitions and events

The museum's opening exhibition for the new season will be *James Wallace & the Quintet*. 2011 will be James Wallace's centenary year. This fact, coupled with the new acquisition of Wallace drawings and watercolours which the museum accepted earlier this year, should make for an interesting opening exhibition.

Collections Care Framework

The museum was visited by Liz Branigan (Durham University) & John Old (Bowes Museum) to give advice & support re the fine art collection. While in the area, a visit to Lady Waterford Hall was arranged, to look at conservation issues re the murals at the Hall. These are in a very fragile state.

Donations

Berwick Floral Art Group has donated 4 pictures – of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John - to the museum.

Loans Out

A number of items from Berwick will be going out on loan in the New Year.

The Bowes Musum has asked for the loan of several still life paintings for an exhibition *Fantin-Latour and the Impressionists: Still Life Painting in the Nineteenth Century*, which will run between 16th April – 9th October 2011.

The Barber Institute at Birmingham University has asked for the loan of a James Wallace watercolour *A Game of Tennis in Battersea Park* for an exhibition about the game next summer.

Anne Moore (Museums Officer North, Woodhorn Trust)

FLODDEN 500

As many of you are no doubt aware, 2013 is the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Flodden which took place on 9 September 1513. It was a pivotal battle for both the English and the Scots and was of huge significance to the history of Great Britain. Not only was it the last occasion on which a British Monarch was killed in battle, but also, crucially, a Scottish victory at Flodden may well have forced Henry VIII to return from France, implying that the subsequent development of the Holy Roman Empire (and therefore Europe) might have taken another course...

Within two or three generations of Flodden, the thrones of England and Scotland were united under a Scottish King. It heralded the dawn of peace.

This is too important an anniversary to miss. Plans are already under way to run a series of events and create a legacy for the area which will last long after 2013.

As part of this legacy, an “eco-museum” is being created. This may not be a term which is well known but the criteria for an “eco-museum”, as outlined by Professor Peter Davis of Newcastle University who is an expert in this field is “*a community-based heritage project that supports sustainable development*!”. This may still seem a bit vague but in essence it involves linking together places and sites that have a common theme – in this case their connections to the story of Flodden. It includes widespread community involvement; the adoption of a ‘split-site’ approach to interpretation; the search for sustainable approaches; an interest in developing low-level tourism; contributing to a sense of pride and identity for local communities; an appreciation of the special nature of the Borders as place; and linking nature and culture.

The following sites will be linked to form the eco-museum :

Baseline sites of the Flodden ‘web’ for the eco-museum.

These sites are already in existence and require little work apart from linked interpretation and signage.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Functions/Notes</i>
Heatherslaw Corn Mill	Mill working in 1513.
Flodden Field	Battlefield walks, interpretation, website
Norham Castle	Besieged before the battle
Etal Castle	Besieged / taken in 1513. Exhibition of Border Warfare.
Twizell bridge	Crucial river crossing point for English Army
Coldstream Museum	Site of Coldstream Priory.
Barmoor Castle	Surrey’s camp.
Weetwood bridge	River crossing point.
Branxton Church	Adjacent to the battle-site.
Fletcher Monument, Selkirk	Monument erected in 1913 for the 400 th anniversary
Flodden Wall, Edinburgh	Erected around Edinburgh after the battle.
Ladykirk Church	Built by (and contains a bust of) King James IV.

To help take the project forward, a Project Officer has been appointed on a job share basis – Dr Chris Burgess whose expertise is archaeology and Jane Warcup who has experience in working with community groups and marketing. They will be working with the Steering Group and also consulting local communities about the project.

Although there will be key events to commemorate Flodden 500, similar to the Union of the Crowns Project run by the Friends in 2003/4, there will also be a series of smaller, community run events. If you have any ideas on events which could be run or would like to become involved in the project in anyway, please e-mail flodden500@gmail.com or contact me.

We will include further updates on the project in future issues.

James Joicey

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS, VICTORIAN STYLE

On December 23rd, 1864, the Berwick Advertiser carried an advertisement for A & R Robb's of Coldstream

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR GIFTS

Nothing more appropriate can be given to Friends at this Annual Festive Season, than "FLODDEN FIELD WOOD WORK", consisting of upwards of 50 different Articles, each Article is embellished with some object of interest in the district. To be had only at

A & R ROBB'S

HIGH STREET, COLDSTREAM

What is obvious from the advertisement is that, then as now, some folk left their Christmas Shopping to the very last minute, though, perhaps then with more justification, since working hours were far longer, and for many working people the 'weekend' did not exist. But what were these 50 different articles and their embellishments? In another advertisement, the Robbs list them. They included: book marks, card trays, cigar cases, glove boxes, ink stands, match boxes, needle books, pin cushions, photo albums, rules with pencil, silk winders and scissor cases. The embellishments were attractive transfer pictures of, among others, Etal, Ford, Norham and Twizel Castles, Coldstream and Twizel Bridges and Ford Fountain and Ford Schoolhouse.



Sadly, no records appear to survive of what the Robbs actually sold that Christmas; but from the ledgers of Brands of Wooler, who dealt in similar items, this time made

of
to identify
bought in

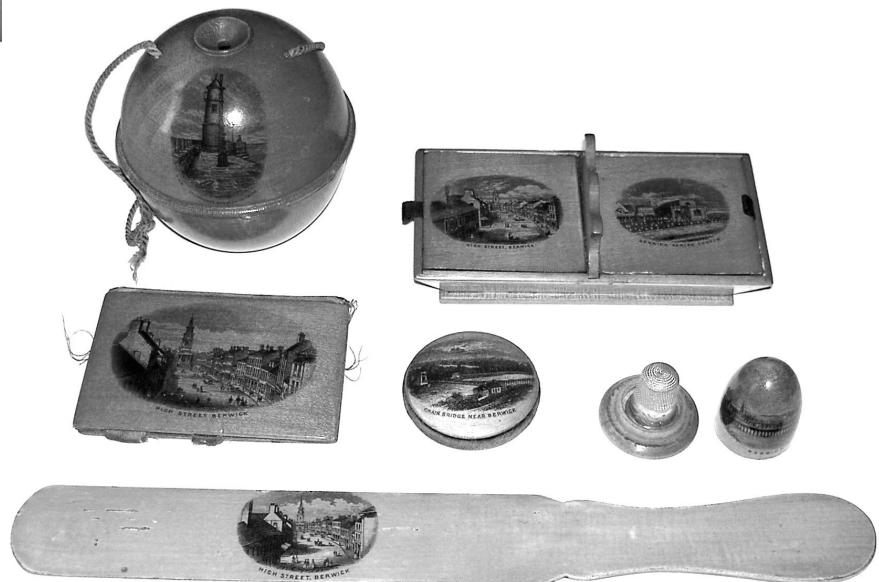
example
bought a
22nd of
Culley

album
20/-



Chillingham Wood, it is possible that such items were regularly December, presumably for Christmas presents; for Robert Walker, Esq. of Wooler Fern Wood Box for 6/6 on the December 1873, and Mr. T Esq. of Coupland Castle on 16th December 1875 bought a photo made of Chillingham Wood for

Although the retailer is not known, it was possible also to purchase Berwick items for presents. These carried pictures of the Old, Railway and Chain Bridges, the High Street, the Parish Church and the Lighthouse.



The makers of the treen, however, also produced suitably customised items for Christmas and the New Year, some in conjunction with other manufacturers, so that, for example, the Happy New Year thread box was produced on behalf of Clarks, Thread Manufacturers, Paisley.



Jane Bowen & Jan Ward

**CHARLES DICKENS AND
SARAH NICHOLSON**

The following death announcement appeared in the Berwick Advertiser on January 14, 1932:

‘Nicholson—At “The Hollies”, Horncliffe, on 13th January, Sarah Nicholson, third daughter of the late James Robert Nicholson of Thornton, Berwick-upon-Tweed.’

This announcement created a problem for a group of people in Berwick who had decided that it would be appropriate to commemorate Charles Dickens’ Stay at the King’s Arms Hotel and his reading of some of his own works at the same place in 1861 by putting up a plaque in memory of the event. They started raising money towards this project, and at the end of 1931 they announced that the amount needed to pay for the plaque was nearly there, and that the owner of the hotel had given his permission for them to put up the plaque in the wall of the building.

On Old Year’s Night 1931 Miss Sarah Nicholson fell and broke her leg, and she died two weeks later.

But what has Miss Nicholson’s death got to do with putting up a plaque commemorating Charles Dickens? The answer is that Miss Nicholson was one of the last persons alive in 1932 who had been present when Charles Dickens gave a reading on November 25 1861 and it had been hoped that she could have unveiled the plaque.

In an interview that Miss Nicholson gave shortly before her death she told about being present at the reading in the King’s Arms Assembly Rooms. At the time of her death she was 89 years old, so she would have been about 17 in 1861. She said that she had not planned to go to the lecture, and that she was staying with some friends in Tweedmouth, visiting from Horncliffe where she lived, when some cousins from the country came and asked her to accompany them. She also said that when they got there all the front seats were filled and she had to sit on a chair in the gangway.

The unveiling of the plaque took place on 3 March, 1932, without anybody who had been present at the readings there, but a letter was received from Mr James Cuthbert, Walton-on-Naze, in Essex, the last surviving person to have been present at the King’s Arms Hotel in 1861. In the letter he apologises for not coming to Berwick for the unveiling, but due to old age and bad health it was not possible.

The plaque can still be seen on the wall of the King's Arms Hotel, which currently seems to be going through financial difficulties. But we can only hope that whatever happens to the building the plaque commemorating Charles Dickens' visit and reading in Berwick will be preserved.

Lars Rose

SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

Berwick Advertiser, 3rd September 1869

THE INTERNATIONAL BOAT RACE

On Friday afternoon, the banks of the Thames, from Chelsea upwards, presented a spectacle the like which has not been equalled before. The anxiety felt by the people of the United States that their champions should do honour to their country is strikingly shown by the number of Americans who have come over to witness the race. The crimson colours indeed made but a small show compared with the dark blue; but the former were to be seen in sufficient abundance to prove that the partisans of Harvard were by no means few. The race originated in a challenge from the Harvard gentlemen to the president of the Oxford University Boat Club. The Americans had been training, and indeed are always kept in condition on the River Charles, on which their city is situated, and about six weeks ago embarked on board the City of Paris. Five weeks ago they arrived at Putney, after which they shortly commenced practice on the Thames.

Time, as taken by Benson's chronograph:- Start, 5h.14m. 61/2 s, ; arrival(Oxford), 5h.36m.47s.; arrival (Harvard), 5h.36m. 53s. Duration of race :- Oxford, 22m 411/2 sec.; Harvard, 22min. 471/2 sec.; difference in time in favour of Oxford, 6 sec. Both crews rowed bravely, but the steering of the Americans was bad throughout. Mr Hall steered excellently, the Oxford boat never swerving in the least.

Berwick Advertiser, 10th September 1869

BERWICK BRIDGE IN THE DAYS OF CHARLES 1

From the volume of the Calendar of State Papers (Domestic) we learn that the Berwick Bridge was the subject of an application to King Charles to recommend to the Archbishop of Canterbury the despatch of a reference touching a pontage, whereby His Majesty might be freed from £100 a year for the bridge, and £2,000 granted by King James for building a church in the town. From a former volume of the Calendar (1637), we quoted a petition of the bridge surveyor, Lancelot Branxton, informing Charles that his father, having bestowed great sums of money upon building a fair stone bridge of fifteen arches at Berwick, granted the petitioner, besides the yearly charge of maintenance, a pension for life of £40 per annum for his daily attendance in continued repairs. Being thus tied to constant residence, he had not been able to attend the Exchequer for his pension which was all that he and his family had to live upon, so that he had not in sixteen years received a penny; whereby he had been reduced to great misery, and forced to contract great debts; and for want of timely reparation the bridge was in great danger of ruin. Suggested that if a toll were charged for goods and carriages, as on other bridges, the collection would suffice for repairs and his pension. Prayed that some of the privy-council might consider what composition was fit to be paid, and might give order for establishment thereof. Such was the petition of Branxton, June 27, 1637; and two things would appear from his subsequent application; First that the matter had been referred as requested; secondly, that nothing had yet been concluded about it.

Berwick Advertiser, 17th September 1869

OLD BERWICK BRIDGE

In last weeks Advertiser we gave a notice regarding this structure from the "State Callandar Papers". It may be interesting to many in the borough to know, that the workmen employed in building the bridge received their wages and obtained their refreshment at the "Thatch House Tavern," situated in the West End of Tweedmouth, at present and for years occupied by the family of Heslop; and that the blacksmith's shop, at the end of the bridge, now used by Mr Robert Taylor, was the forge where all the tools were made and repaired. It might prove interesting if the directors of the Museum would employ some artist to photograph these old buildings. In the Town such are fast going to decay-whether through the "ruthless hand of time" or the "restoring hands of Mayors and Town Councillors" Some record of these buildings could easily be obtained and used, with photos, to adorn the walls of our Museum. In a few years a very interesting gallery of local illustration would thus be formed.

Berwick Advertiser, 22nd October 1869

THE CHEMICAL WORKS AT SPITTAL

Sir,- In the spring the chimney stack at these works was partially pulled down. So it remained until two or three months ago, when it was again lowered, and reduced to its present altitude, about half the original height. The consequence is, that the sulphurous smoke which proceeds from the chimney, instead of being carried off, is precipitated, to the annoyance and discomfort of all who reside in the locality. In damp, mist weather, the nuisance is much aggravated, as then this noxious and offensive exhalation, which is denser than ordinary smoke, fills the whole surrounding atmosphere.

I wish to ask if there is such a functionary in the borough of Berwick, as an "Inspector of Nuisance?" and, if so, whether his avocation extends to Spittal? It is time something was done to abate this intolerable nuisance- Yours truly PRO BONO PUBLICO.

Carole Pringle

FRIENDS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Just to remind you that Friends Subscriptions are due at the beginning of January – we will send out notices. This year the subscriptions will increase to the following :

Single : £7.00
Family : £10.00

This is still great value for money.

Finally, Carole, Anne, Jim and Linda wish you all Merry Christmas and Best wishes for 2011.