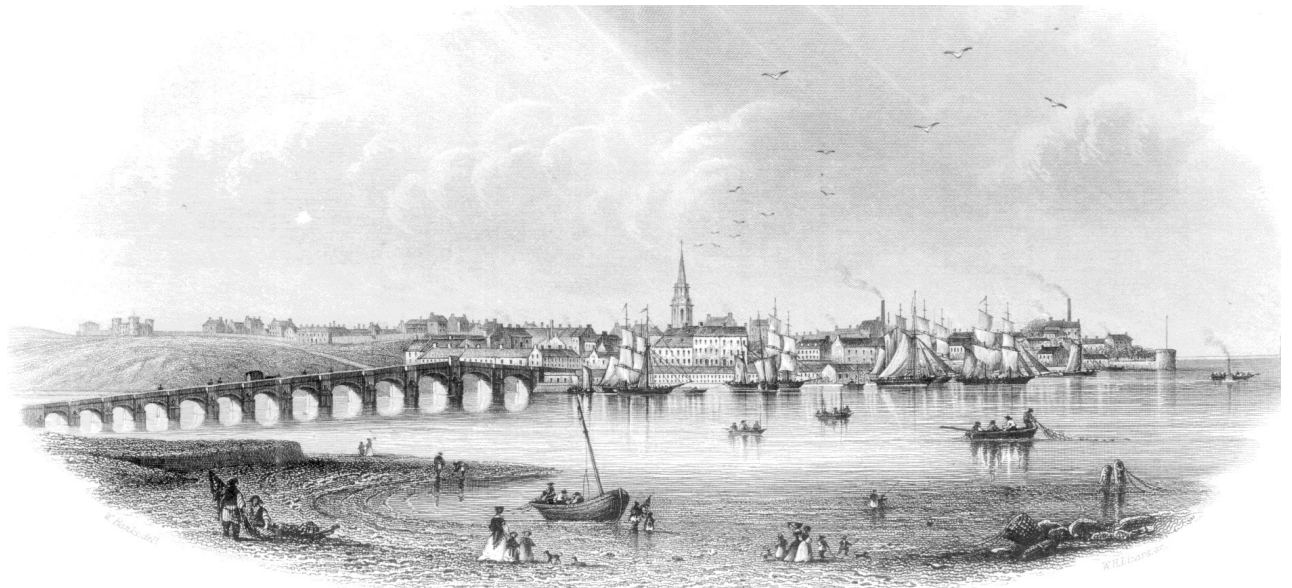


# Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



*NUMBER 71—SEPT 2011*

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 10am - 4pm  
and

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 11am - 4pm

Berwick Record Office: Past, Present  
and Future: - exhibition and film  
shows, See article

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Times Past – bring your jigsaw pieces  
about Berwick and North  
Northumberland. Parish Centre 7pm

## **OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES**

### **AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Ayton Community Hall**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	Educating Women- a long unexciting history: Fiona Sutherland
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	A History of Berwick Archives: Linda Bankier
Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Celtic Connections: Rev Robert Higham
Tuesday January 31 <sup>st</sup> 2011	Flodden: Christopher Burgess

### **BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	AGM for 2011-2012 followed by Berwick projects and Snippets from Archives: Linda Bankier
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	The Lord Crewe Papers: Dr. Liz O'Donnell
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2011	Pont- Cartoonist for Punch: Mrs A Melville-Mason
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Christmas Party at the Community Club.
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	Local Photographs-Steve Newman Northumbrian Language: Peter Arnold

### **BERWICK CIVIC SOCIETY**

**Venue: Berwick Parish Centre.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Combined meeting with the Berwick History Society. Crossing the Tweed, an illustrated lecture: Philip Miller.
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	An Eco-Museum for Berwick : Derek Sharman MBE.
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Christmas Dinner at the Maltings Kitchen
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	A talk to be given by a representative of one of the Councils. Details to be announced

later.

### **BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.**

**Time:7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Crossing the Tweed: Philip Miller (Joint meeting with The Civic Society)
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Following in Dr Henry Richardson's Footsteps in the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century: Jane Bowen
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Ford at the Time of the Waterfords: Linda Bankier
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	The Drama of the Lives of the Stuarts of Traquair 1491-1875: Margaret Fox

### **BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	Recent Discoveries on Hadrian's Wall: Paul Bidwell
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2011	Altogether Archaeology-new research in the North Pennines: Paul Frodsham
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	The Fascination of Northumberland's Past: Stan Beckensall
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Something Local-Possibly Interesting: Roger Miket

### **BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Corn Exchange, Melrose**

**Time: 2.30pm**

Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	The Witchcraft Trails of The Borders:
----------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Mary Craig Looking at Local Families: Gregory Lauder-Frost. <b>This meeting will be held at Foulden, Village Hall.</b>
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	From Kelso to Kalamazoo: Margaret Jeary

### CHIRNSIDE HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Community Centre**

**Time: 7.30pm**

Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	Chaplaincy in the Armed Forces: Chris Ledgerd
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	History of the National Parks: Sandra Gann
Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2011	Cromwell was here: Laurie Petit
<b>December No meetings</b>	
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	Celtic Connections: Bob Higham

### COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Scottish Witchcraft: Roy Pew
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2011	Old Film Night: Linda Bankier
Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2011	Visit to Lodge St John, Coldstream
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Christmas Social

### DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

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

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	Help for Heroes: Colonel Clive Fairweather
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Bondagers: Willie Anderson
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Excavations at Fishwick: Kristian Pederson

## GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: The Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.**

**Time: 7.30pm**

Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	The Craft of a Wheelwright: Peter Thompson
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	The Heart of the Fortress: Graeme Young
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Lord Armstrong the man-his life and his initiatives: Andrew Sawyer
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Berwick's Victorian Food Heritage: Derek Sharman
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	The History of Our National Parks Featuring the pioneering role of John Muir of Dunbar: Sandra Gann

## LOWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Lowick Village Hall**

**Time: 7.30pm**

Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	The Romans': Michael Thomas
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	"Northumbria's Golden Age": Derek Sharman
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Christianity comes to Lowick: Revd. Victor Dickinson, Vicar of Lowick
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	Tracing your Ancestors: Linda Bankier

## NORHAM AND LADYKIRK HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Norham Village Hall**

**Time : 7.30 pm**

Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Viking Cooking : Paula Constantine
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Ford Moss : Doug Nevins
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Social Evening and a delve in the Society's Archives

## NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	Spare the Rod: Alan Fendley
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Court in Action: Andrew Findlay
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2011	To be arranged
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	Party Night with Arlene Cadman & Friends

**NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH**

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

**Time: 10.00am**

Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2011	AGM: What's New in Family History?
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	Member's Forum
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	Pests, pestilence and the perception of history: Isabel Gordon
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	Christmas Lunch
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2012	Member's Forum

**BRO 30-EXHIBITION:  
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE  
24<sup>TH</sup> AND 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

To complete our series of events to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Record Office, we are holding an exhibition in the Guildhall on the above dates. This will look at many different aspects of the Record Office's work both past, present and future, including the History of the Record Office; what we do; projects we have been involved in and the Friends. In addition, because it is the Film Festival that weekend we are showing a number of Archives films in the Council Chamber whilst

the Film Festival will be showing films in the Cells upstairs. The following is the timings for both sets of Films :

**ARCHIVE FILMS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER :**

**SATURDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

11am – Canney View of Berwick and The Investigator(1970s )

1pm - Berwick Films (1911 – 1970s) – includes Visit of the Queen Mother, 1972; Goswick Rail Crash,1947; Mayor’s Sunday, 1947; Snapshots of Berwick, 1929; Horse Procession and Berwick Fair, 1911.

3pm - Fred Stott’s Berwick in the 1950s

**SUNDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

11.30 am – Canney View of Berwick and the Investigator

12.45pm Berwick Films – as above

3pm Fred Stott’s Berwick in the 1950s

**FILMS IN THE CELLS AS PART OF THE BERWICK FILM & MEDIA ARTS FESTIVAL:**

**Fri 23rd - Sun 25th Sep, 11:00 - 17:30 and Artists’ Talk: Sun 25th Sep, 13:30 - 14:30 ALL FREE**

**La Tristesse Riche** by Erwin Olaf  
Netherlands | 2010 | 11min HD Video *UK Premier*

In what appears to be a beautiful 19th century costume drama, the world of Sophie is invaded by intruders who are invisible to the rest of her family. Is poor Sophie mad, or simply a visionary?

**Rammatik** - by Marianna Mørkøre & Rannvá Káradóttir Mare  
UK | 2011 | 6min | Super-8 transferred to Digital Video *World Premiere*

Commissioned by Northumberland County Council in partnership with the Festival, and featuring members of the Maltings' Youth Drama and Dance Company, *Mare* was filmed on the Berwick coastline, while the title refers to the 'sea' and the folkloric meaning of the spirit in nightmares.

**Unravel: The Longest Hand- painted Film in Britain (Berwick excerpt)** UK | 2011 | 14min 16mm transferred to Digital Video by Maria Anastassiou, Kelvin Brown, Joanna Byrne, Chris Paul Daniels & Mark Pickles *World Premiere*

This time last year, over 100 people in Berwick participated in the first of many workshops all over the country to create the longest hand-painted film in Britain. This year, the Festival is proud to be premiering the resulting film.

**Solar Sight** : by Lawrence Jordan *UK Premiere*  
USA | 2011 | 15min | Video transfer from 16mm film

A dreamlike collaged landscape of free association, transformation and mythical symbolism. This latest work by the influential US avant- garde animator, Jordan, is a poetic reflection on the place of the human being in the cosmos. Courtesy of Lawrence Jordan & LUX, London.

**The Golden Age** : by Toby Tatum  
UK | 2010 | 6min | Digital Video

A return to the fabled Golden Age of antiquity where the inhabitants of a secluded utopia dedicate themselves to relaxation and artistic pursuits. Featuring British Sea Power's Abi Fry, who also composed the film's original score.

All the films will be shown on a loop.

If you are in Berwick on either of these days, please do come along and see the exhibition and/or watch the films. If you would like to help steward our exhibition, please let me know.

*Linda Bankier*



## **ARCHIVE NEWS**

Life in the Record Office is as hectic as ever. We seem to go from one project to another which certainly keeps both of us on our toes ! The following is some of the things that we have been involved in.

Firstly, although it seems ages ago now, we held our Bygone Borderlands weekend in the Guildhall in mid May. This was very successful with nearly 1500 visitors. There was a great atmosphere throughout the weekend and lots of interest shown in all the exhibitions. I may think of running another one but in two years time! We have also put together a number of other exhibitions in the past couple of months. Our work with the Army Cadets culminated in an exhibition on the Northumberland Fusiliers which was shown in the Drill Hall as part of the Armed Forces Day in June. It was well attended and we hope to show it again next year when the event will be based in the Guildhall. Over the past couple of months, I have been working with a group in the Glendale area who want to record the heritage of shepherding in the area. They have received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and as part of that, we are helping them to locate and scan old photographs and also record local people's memories of this important activity. The group had a stand at the Glendale Show and the Record Office produced a display of shepherding photographs both old and new. A lot of people were very interested in what we are doing and have promised to help. If anyone has any photographs of shepherds, sheep or craft activities associated with wool in the area or would like to help with the project in any way, please do get in touch.

At the beginning of September, Berwick traditionally takes part in Heritage Open Doors. I do tours of the Council Offices but this year, we also produced an exhibition for the Magistrates Court on Crime and Punishment in the town to help celebrate the 650<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Magistracy in England. We also did some research on a Berwick Case which they re-enacted. I couldn't go on the day but I have been told that the re-enactment was excellent. Hopefully, I will see it next year !

Over the past couple of months, the Record Office has also continued its Education Work. To complete the Challenging History project all of Year 5 at Berwick Middle visited the Record Office as part of their own Project on the Coming of the Railways to Berwick. They also spent a Drama Day at the Maltings with Wendy Payn re-

enacting Queen Victoria's visit to Berwick to open the Royal Border Bridge. They had a great time, particularly as they had the chance to dress up in the costumes we had from our previous productions.

I have also continued my work with Early Years children. In June and July, we worked with Berwick Children's Centre to run a course Think Together, Talk Together, aimed at parents and under 5s to encourage them all to talk. The themes were based around our Resource boxes and also included visits out. The course was very well received and they are very keen to run it again.

During the summer, we had a University student on placement who was keen to gain some work experience in Archives and Museums Work – Heather was great and helped us with a number of things, including some cataloguing and digitisation of slides.

As part of the BRO 30 programme, I have contributed to two talks - The Impact of Computers on Research and the History of Berwick in Ten Objects. The latter was a joint act with Anne from the Museum which was very successful. I have also talked at the AGM of the Northumberland and Durham Family History Society in Newcastle and hosted a visit to the office by Tillvas – a new archaeology group in the Till Valley area.

Usually the summer time can be a quieter time for the Record Office but not this year !

*Linda Bankier*

## **THE TEMPORARY RAILWAY BRIDGE ACROSS THE RIVER TWEED**

Following on from the History of Berwick in Ten Objects Lecture where Anne Moore talked about the painting of the temporary wooden bridge which was erected to carry trains whilst they were building the Royal Border Bridge, I thought the Friends might be interested in this account of the completion of that Bridge which appeared in the Berwick Advertiser on 2 September 1848 :

## **BERWICK ADVERTISER, 2 SEPTEMBER 1848**

### Railway Viaduct across the Tweed

The timber structure intended to form a temporary passage across The Tweed was finished on Saturday , and but for the incompleteness of the masonry on the south side of the river the through passage would have been perfected; as it is, the rivers breadth is fairly spanned. Great exertions had been made by the workmen throughout last week, and about three o'clock on Saturday afternoon the completion of the undertaking was announced by a discharge of small artillery placed at the centre of the immense frame work, where also some barrels of ale, furnished by the contractors, were broached and their contents distributed among the workmen. A third class carriage covered on the outside by passengers was, by manual labour, propelled from the station of the North British Railway along the roadway to the centre of the bridge., being the extent to which the rails are laid down; flags also were planted at intervals along the balustrade; and a great crowd of persons traversed, for the first time the new viaduct. Since Saturday, the erection has been visited by an immense number of the curious, and all fears for its stability seem to have vanished. The structure is intended to unite the North British Railway with the Newcastle and Berwick one. The embankments and other works necessary to render the connection complete are to be ready by the 30th of the present month, and as a similar passage over the Tyne at Newcastle has now been effected, the line of railway will then be uninterrupted between Edinburgh and London. The construction of this temporary bridge was begun in February 1848. It consists of 90,000 feet of timber. It is 39 feet wide at the base, and gradually contracts to the breadth of 13 feet at the summit. It is 1,200 feet long, and in the centre of the river is 120 feet high. The expense of its erection in labour alone has been £2,900. The railing laid down is of a peculiar construction, consisting of a double line of rails, the inside ones being raised about 2 inches above those on which the wheels of the carriage are to traverse, thus rendering their deviation from those rails almost impossible. The permanent stone bridge which is being erected close alongside, is making rapid progress. It is to be completed and ready for use by the 30th July 1849, when the present timber erection will be dispensed with.

*Linda Bankier*

# MUSEUM NEWS

## Curator's Report:

**Visitors** came along in droves as soon as the school holidays began – the opening week in August saw 613 visitors – 221 on one day alone. The poor weather has contributed to the good numbers. Heritage Open Doors weekend broke all records, with almost 1,000 visitors over the 2 days.

**The Wallace Exhibition** is still proving popular. The Barber Institute is displaying two volumes of the Quintet in its *Court on Canvas* exhibition – as well as the watercolour of *A Game of Tennis in Battersea Park*, a cartoon was found of George Green returning a serve in a very athletic manner, as well as a related letter from James Wallace describing the game.

The tea drinking exhibition to coincide with the Food Festival has had to be postponed due to circumstance. The display in the Berwick Library case has been changed to an exhibit of geological specimens, including fossils and semi precious stones.

New postcards, mainly of the Burrell paintings, have now arrived and are selling well.

The **Effective Collections** is continuing, and likely to do so for some time, though the final meeting with our MLA contact (Joanne Irvine) has now taken place.

The work which had been carried out in the social history store – sorting the artefacts into sections, and putting up racking in place of the old museum display cases – came good following the flood, as there was a clear area which could be put to immediate use to transfer the collections from the affected store room opposite.

An area at the top of the back staircase had been set aside, cleaned and decorated to install a new natural history display. This is now being used as overflow storage for items in exile from the fine art store!

## The Flood...

I had reported a small leak into the store room on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July, which EH had promised to investigate. However, when Jim checked the room on Saturday lunchtime, the small leak had become a somewhat larger one, then a deluge. We owe thanks to a number of the Friends who responded immediately to the incident – notably Brian, Lars and Jane, as well as Annie & David Robinson. David Antcliffe and Michael Shepherd also helped out. A number of staff from Woodhorn came up after their Saturday shift to help – Elona Wells, Jemma Swinney, Stuart Shiel and Lorna Wynn, and these were followed on the Sunday and Monday by Sue Wood, Keith Merrin etc. We also got extremely swift help from Tyne & Wear Museums, who sent up a van and a paintings conservator as soon as they were asked. Their Conservator Rachael Metcalfe has visited since to give advice. The firm Polygon were on site first thing on Sunday with industrial dehumidifiers and fans.

There has been very little damage done to the museum collections. (The exception being a suit of samurai armour which got wet - we needed to take swift action to dry it).

However, the Burrell Gallery and the store room above need thorough cleaning before anything is allowed back into store. (The carpets needed to be thrown out, and there is water damage on the ceiling and on the display equipment).

Burrell paintings are now stored safely away from the gallery for reasons of safety and security.

## **Degas & the Dance**

The Degas pastel is now in situ at the Royal Academy in London, in readiness for the exhibition opening on September 17<sup>th</sup>. The picture is in very good company, hanging in a room with pictures on loan from the National Gallery in London, the Burrell Collection in Glasgow and the Musee d'Orsay, Paris. The Curator attended the RA on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September to help with the installation of the picture, and to talk - very congenially - with the exhibition organisers. The exhibition, extending to six large rooms of paintings, drawings and photographs of dance subjects, is expected to be extremely busy; admission being by timed ticket only. One of the highlights is some film of the Russian (actually Ukrainian) dance troupe depicted, which has been recently discovered in the Biblioteque Nationale in Paris. The filming, by the Lumiere Brothers and Felix Nadar, is exactly contemporary with Degas' drawings.

*Anne Moore - Museums Officer, North Northumberland.*

## **A QUIET SATURDAY AFTERNOON (16 July 2011)**

It was a routine Saturday until the telephone call. It was from Jim Herbert who was on duty at the Museum - "We have a flood – volunteers are needed – get down here quickly." At the Museum we went to the top floor and saw that water was beginning to trickle down from the ceiling towards the Storage Sector and some stored paintings. We began moving everything from the Sector across the landing into the Library.

It was a strange sensation, casually picking up a portrait by Opie, or a sketch by Géricault or a painting by Frank Wood and carrying it across the landing and leaning it respectfully against a wall. Slowly we emptied the storage area of pictures and then Jim suggested we turn our attention to the Burrell Gallery below where water was already beginning to drip from the ceiling. We unscrewed all the pictures from their positions and began carting them off to the Medieval Gallery.

Then Anne Moore arrived from Morpeth, having rounded up a group of young volunteers from Woodhorn to help with the rescue work. I was upstairs helping move objects from the shelving in the Storage area when suddenly there was an horrendous crash followed by a torrential cascade and a scream from my fellow worker that would have guaranteed her a leading role in a Hammer Horror film. Then we all moved quickly to find more buckets, more plastic boxes and any other sort of container and place them strategically under the water-flows.

Then the Fire Alarm went off, followed by the arrival of the Fire Brigade. They were able to silence the Fire Alarm and slowly the flow of water began to reduce and Anne began to start her assessment of the damage to the Museum. The initial finding seems to show that there has been no major damage to the Collections but the walls, ceilings, floors and squelching carpets are another matter.

Grateful thanks from the Friends' Committee to everyone who rallied round to help on an otherwise quiet Saturday afternoon.

*Brian Chappell*

The Flodden 1513 Steering Group, initiated to consider the options for marking the quincentenary of the Battle of Flodden, has adopted a twofold approach; to create the Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum and encourage groups and societies in their own commemorative projects. The hope is that the anniversary will leave a lasting legacy, will support tourism in the area and enhance the cohesion and 'sense of place' for local residents.

On 14<sup>th</sup> September the fifth Stakeholder Meeting will take place and will see the launch of the Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum, a dynamic, sustainable and community-led way of presenting and managing the heritage of the Battle of Flodden.

An ecomuseum is a museum without walls- the separate museum sites are likened to individual pearls on a necklace, clasped together by a common theme. The resonance of the Battle of Flodden spreads beyond the battlefield, through the journeys of the two armies, the aftermath and the commemorations. The initial twelve sites, always connected in spirit, will now be physically connected through signage and a virtual visitor centre website ([www.flodden1513.com](http://www.flodden1513.com)). The website will be so much more than just a point of information about the sites however. It will include local businesses, attractions and community groups. It will also feature a calendar of Flodden related events and projects that are being undertaken to mark the quincentenary of the battle.

So far we are aware of over 30 different project proposals that are being undertaken by groups and societies. Ranging from the small (local research, a community play, improved access to the battlefield site) to the national (BBC Songs of Praise, a special composition for the Scottish National Chamber Orchestra) to the international (Amateur radio broadcast, visiting clan members). It is up to each group or society to design and manage its own project, but the Steering Group acts as a facilitator, encourager and central hub of communication.

The meeting on the 14th September will therefore not only see the Flodden 1513 Ecomuseum 'go live' but also be an opportunity to bring together as many of the 'strings' of the projects as possible so people are aware of them and so that we can produce an early draft of a Calendar of Events during 2013.

**FLODDEN 1513  
SITES**

1. Flodden Field

2. Branxton Church

3. Etal Castle

4. Heatherslaw Mill

5. Coldstream Museum

6. Twizel Bridge

7. Norham Castle

8. Ladykirk Church

9. Barmoor

10. Weetwood Bridge

11. Fletcher Monument

12. Flodden Wall

The next stage will see a Heritage Lottery application to move the project forward towards 2013. For further information please go to [www.flodden1513.com](http://www.flodden1513.com) after the 14<sup>th</sup> September.

*Kendra Turnbull*

## **TREASON TRIALS UNDER THE LAW OF ARMS**

On 13 July 1405 Henry de Boynton, knight, was brought before the Court of Chivalry of England, sitting in Berwick at a place called 'Waleisgreene', and was there condemned to death for high treason. His crime had been that of levying war against the king in his own realm, in the company of Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland. The evidences of his guilt were a series of warlike acts against the king's lieges, committed 'si notoirement et si publicement que par nulle tergiversacion nautre excusacion queconque purra estre concele ne denie'. He had ridden in arms, robbed, plundered and taken ransom in the lands of his liege lord, and he had surrendered the keys of Berwick into the hands of the king's enemies, the Scots. He had refused his sovereign entry into the town when the royal host lay before it, so that the king had been forced to fire his cannon at the walls of his own city. These acts amounted to notorious treason, and as such they were judged by John of Bedford, constable of England, presiding in the court, 'par<sup>1</sup> comandement mon tresredoute seigneur et pere le roy avantdit ton liege seigneur'. Boynton was therefore condemned to death, to be hanged, beheaded and quartered, and all his goods and chattels to be forfeit to the king.

*Carol Griffiths*

## **THE BANK ROBBERY AT BERWICK**

I found the following article in the Times, dated 27 August 1846 which may interest you :

The excitement created in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, by the robbery of the North of England Joint Stock Bank in Bridge Street, has been sustained by the discovery at intervals, during the course of the rigid investigation which was being



pursued, of the circumstances which seemed to indicate very clearly that the plot was circumscribed by the scene of its executions, and did not extend beyond the bank premises. It has been already stated that a ladder was found placed against the yard wall, as if for the purpose of getting over the wall; but as no impress from the ladder was discovered on the soil upon which it rested, and it having been ascertained by experiment that the weight of an ordinary person would cause it to sink to a considerable depth, it was at once concluded that no one had passed into or from the yard in that direction, or by means of it. Even the suspicion was not at once directed towards the inmates of the house.

In the course of Friday, however, Mr. Cameron, the police officer at Tweedmouth, who, in conjunction with Mr. Proudfoot, of Berwick, was aiding the investigation, happened to look into the water-butt in the yard, and observing the water had been disturbed he put his stick in and found something soft and bulky at the bottom. He drained the water off, and then discovered two packages, in strong brown paper, with a course towel round them. These turned out to be parcels of silver, which had been made up in the bank on the afternoon of Thursday. Mrs Thompson came into the yard with others, when it was known these parcels had been found, and, among other remarks said, "She hoped the whole of the money would be found." After deliberating on these circumstances, it was determined to search the house, which was done by Mr. Cameron, but nothing found to throw further light on the mysterious affair.

In the meantime, intelligence had been sent off to the head officer of the bank in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, when a meeting of the directors was immediately held, and it was at once determined to place the matter in the hands of Mr. Stephens, the Superintendent of Police at Newcastle, who received instructions to proceed to Berwick without loss of time, and investigate the affair. Mr Stephens reached Berwick early on Saturday morning, and after carefully surveying the premises, and receiving such information as the parties who had previously been concerned in the matter had obtained, he proceeded to examine the various inmates of the house, whose statements he took in writing. This examination having been conducted privately, we are unable to do more than state the substance of what transpired. Mr Thompson having only returned home on Friday night, could, of course, throw no light on the transaction.

Mr Short the bank clerk, said he balanced the books as usual at 4 o'clock, and left the bank at that time, Mr Watson the bookkeeper, being engaged some time after that in making up the books. He closed the safe, and attached the bolt, so that

everything was safe. He returned to the house about 11 o'clock and went to bed immediately; and knew nothing of the robbery till he was awoken the next morning by the servant girl, who told him the bank had been robbed.

Mr. Watson saw the safe-bolt secure when he left the bank, and after closing all up he gave the keys to Mrs. Thompson.

Isabella Lamb, the nursemaid, gave a very unsatisfactory account of the matter, as far as she was concerned. She slept in the same room with Mrs Thompson, it being on the floor as the dining room, into which the safe-bolt passed. She said she was awoken by her mistress about half-past 1 o'clock, when her mistress said she had heard a terrible noise. Her mistress got up and said she saw two men in the next yard to the bank with a lantern. She went to sleep again and slept till morning.

Mrs. Thompson went to bed about 10 o'clock, and heard Mr. Short come in at 11. Between 12 and 1 she said she heard a noise and got up, and looked out of the window into the yard, when she saw two men in the next yard. She says she awoke the housemaid, and asked her if she was to ring the bell; but the girl said "No, no; if there is anyone in the place we shall be murdered." She accordingly did not ring, but lay still (as she said) till the perspiration poured off her. (This part of Mrs Thompson's statement was contradicted by the girl, and indeed the whole story seemed quite improbable.)

At this stage of the proceedings it was deemed necessary to institute a more strict examination of the house and premises than had been made in the first instance and the result was the discovery of nearly all the property. A quantity of gold and silver was found hid under the cellar stairs. The bank-notes were found in Mrs. Thompson's bed and pillows, and in the pillow of a small cot bed, which had been opened out to conceal the property and sewn up again. In short, one discovery succeeded another, till the entire property missing was found with the exception of 2s.

Mrs. Thompson, on learning the discovery of the property, fell into hysterical fits, in which she continued some time, and from her dangerous situation, she being at the time *enceinte*, it was not thought proper at the moment to take her into custody, but she was placed under the surveillance of the matron of the gaol. What future step may be taken will depend upon the bank of directors.

The greatest credit is due to Mr. Stephens for the manner in which he has investigated the affair, and succeeded in recovering the whole property.

Postscript to this article; Mrs. Thompson was found *Not Guilty* at her trial in October 1846, this being due in part, apparently, to the 'unreliable evidence' given by the witnesses.

*Kevin Graham*

## **SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER**

**Berwick Advertiser, 22nd April 1870**

### STEALING HENS

George Moody, fisherman, Spittal, was brought before the Rev J G Rowe in the Townhall, on Monday forenoon, charged with stealing, between two and three o'clock on Sunday morning, two hens from the henhouse of Mr Robert Smith, Hive acres. It appears that Mr Smith's son had been sitting up attending a cow which was ill, when he heard a noise in the hen house. He went to the place and saw the prisoner among the hens, two of which had been killed. Moody carried a cudgel, and a struggle ensued between the two men. Mr Smith's son then called upon his father, who went to his assistance, and they together, after freely using the cudgel on the prisoner's head, succeeded in mastering him. Police officer Armstrong was afterwards sent for, and he took the prisoner into custody. Moody had several very severe wounds to his head, caused by the blows he received from his opponents while endeavouring to make his escape; he lost a large quantity of blood, and was so ill in the lock up on Sunday that Dr MacLagan had to be called. He now stands remanded till the monthly meeting of Norham and Islandshire Petty Sessions.

**Berwick Advertiser, 22nd April 1870**

### GOOD FRIDAY

Friday last being Good Friday, there was divine service at all the Established Churches in the borough. The day was observed as a holiday in the town; all the shops were closed, and business suspended. The North British Railway Company ran a cheap excursion train to Edinburgh and other places in the north. The

numbers who availed themselves of this excursion were- to Edinburgh to return the same day 305; to return the following day, 75; to Glasgow, 37; to Perth, 6; and to Dundee, 11. Excursionists to the three last mentioned places were allowed to return on any day up to last night. The weather was remarkably fine, the temperatures approaching that of summer, and many people took long rambles into the country, Whiteadder Bridge and the Chain Bridge being points where pleasure-seekers settled down to refresh their weary limbs, and to add to their enjoyment by pensively musing on the scenery around them. There were also numerous boating excursions up the Tweed, the banks of which, and also of its tributaries, were thronged with anglers, who plied a gentle art all day, although the sport was not enticing. Altogether Good Friday was well spent holiday.

*Carole Pringle*

### **Berwick Advertiser, 6th May 1870**

#### THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S BIRTHDAY

Monday being the anniversary of his Grace the Duke of Northumberland's birthday, his Grace having on that day completed his 60th year, it was observed at Alnwick with the usual demonstrations of rejoicing. From an early hour in the morning flags were displayed from the windows of many of the inhabitants and public establishments. At noon, detachments of the Percy Volunteer Artillery, under the commands of Lieut. Colonel Sandford, paraded the hills in Barneyside to the east of Alnwick Castle, and fired a salute of nineteen guns in honour of the occasion, at the conclusion the men giving three hearty cheers. The bells of the different churches rang out merry peals, and the church towers were decorated with Union jacks. In the afternoon, a public dinner in celebration of the event was held in the Corn Exchange, under the presidency of Mr Thomas Robertson, which was attended by

upwards of 146 of the tradesmen of the town, farmers, and other gentlemen connected with the Northumberland estate-Mr John Horsley officiating as Vice-Chair man. The tables having been cleared, and the usual loyal and other toasts drunk.

### **Berwick Advertiser, 13th May 1870**

#### Gun Tax

Sir,- is the Berwickshire Tenantry to remain silent regarding this iniquitous Tax? When so many herds are required to frighten crows and wood pigeons, a large proportion of the farmers in the County requiring one or two herds for a proportion of the year; and any season of the year Tom, Dick, or Harry with a gun could not be sent to frighten the crows or wood pigeons from the stacks or turnips without first paying tax.

Although I consider it a most unjust tax, yet if it cannot be done away with, let all who use the gun for sport or otherwise pay it, unless for such purposes as I have indicated; in fact, an, old gun for the scaring of crows is considered one of the farm implements; and the tax is only looked upon by the tenantry as another attempt of the upper classes, (as in the case of the Dog Tax), relieving themselves at the expense of their poorer brethren.

I saw a very good proposal in the Scotsman some days ago, to put the tax upon the gunpowder, instead of upon the gun, and if there is to be any equity in the matter, let a tax be put upon gunpowder; and the gentlemen who use the gun from the 12th August to the 2nd February, will then pay their due proportion of the taxes

The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that the "Game License duty is evaded and not easy of collection, but he could not have this to say of powder, as it could be both easily laid on and cheaply collected at the manufactory-I am, yours respectfully  
H.R.

### **Berwick Advertiser, 13th May 1870**

#### Accidents

Some rather serious cart accidents occurred towards the end of last week. On Thursday, a son of Mr James D Wright, Palace, was knocked down by a cart belonging to Mr Holmes when turning the corner at the foot of Hide Hill. The child was taken into the shop of Mr Carr, butcher, and was afterwards removed to home, when it was found that the child was not seriously injured. On Saturday afternoon, a

boy named Daniel Ferguson, about six years of age, living in Walkergate Lane, was knocked down near his home, by a cart belonging to Mr Weatherburn, coal-seller, Hatters Lane. The boy had been playing with marbles, and one of them having got in front of the cart while it was in motion he ran after it, unobserved by the driver, and was knocked down. The poor boy was removed home, and attended by Dr Flucker, who found that his right thigh had been broken. He is now recovering.

**Berwick Advertiser, 27th May 1870**

Captain William Rowland

Captain William Rowland, belonging to Berwick-upon-Tweed, of the clipper ship Elizabeth Dougall, built by William Duthie, of Aberdeen, has made the quickest passage from Shanghai to New York this tea season, he having accomplished it in 98 days; he also sailed from New York to London in 17 days, this being one of the quickest passages on record.

*Carole Pringle*