



Friends of Berwick & District
Museum and Archives
Newsletter



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[Selected articles]

1994 June

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

KIRKNEWTON - CEMETERY SURVEY

This has been arranged for Saturday 2nd July from 11.00am until 3.30pm. As time and weather are against the long term survival of lettering on gravestones, it has been decided, as a first project, to visit a churchyard where the gravestone inscriptions have not so far been recorded.

Linda Bankier's investigations discovered that the churchyard at Kirknewton has over 480 gravestones which have inscriptions not yet recorded in archives. In conjunction with Linda Bankier's findings and to assist her in organising the work, Keith Wills has prepared a site plan of the churchyard showing the position of all the stones. It has therefore, been decided to make a day of it with as many volunteers as possible.

The vicar Rev. A. Hughes, the Church Warden, the P.C.C., the Parish Council and the people of Kirknewton have been warned of the invasion! Headquarters for the operation will be the Village Hall from where Linda will organise the work, which will be as much or as little as volunteers wish. Since the church itself is fascinating, maybe a visit inside and outside would interest members, or for those not wishing to be in the churchyard all day, there is a 4 mile - 2½ hour walk from Kirknewton and back. This is one of the Northumberland National Park walks to Hethpool which is both interesting and delightful.

Details to consider:-

1. Transport - can you get there under your own steam? Can you offer seats in your car? Do we need a mini-bus?
2. Food and Drink - bring a packed lunch. Tea, coffee and fruit juices will be available. The toilets are outside.
3. What do you want to do? Recording the lettering is the main activity. You do not need to be an artist since it is only the wording that is needed. A survey of the graveyard in its entirety could be done should there be photographers, artists, botanists or biologists in our midst. Are there?
4. It is hoped that local people may be able and willing to come and talk with the volunteers regarding aspects of the church and village.
5. Linda Bankier is willing to look at any family documents which volunteers care to bring along but, whilst detailed research into any such documents on site is not possible, she may be able to point enquirers in the right direction.

This is a most exciting and worthwhile project deserving support. Any one wishing to assist the project should complete the enclosed application form.

RECORD OFFICE SNIPPET

A house in the town was described in 1849 thus:-

"No drainage at all, damp walls, no ventilation, the residents having no furniture, just dirty heaps of shavings and straw in a corner of the room serving as a bed. In one room 22 feet by 16 feet there can be as many as 27 inhabitants and all the cooking, washing and drying is carried on in the same apartment."

Some but not all things change!

Dennis Nicholson