



Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 79–SEPTEMBER 2013

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 13th September 2013

Heritage Open Days Magistrates Court ,
Berwick : Talk on “Crime in the 18th and 19th
centuries in Berwick” by Linda Bankier (see
article)

Saturday 14th September 2013

Heritage Open Days : Tours of Berwick Old
Goal (Council Offices) - first Tour, 10.30
am, last one 1.30 pm (see article)

Tuesday 15th October 2013

Breaking of Britain Workshop at Berwick
Library, 1.30 to 3.30 (see article)

Friday 1st November 2013

Friends Autumn Lecture : The
Belaney/Skelly Affair by David Donaldson.
7pm in the Parish Centre, Berwick

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Ayton Community Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 24 th September	Victorian Souvenir Wood Ware and its Border Connections: Jane Bowen
Tuesday 29 th October	Wilson's Tales- A Local legacy of literature and social history: Andrew Ayre
Tuesday 26 th November	Someone to watch Over Me-Kirk and Community : Margaret Fox

BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 25 th September	A.G.M followed by talk on Sir William Beveridge-the Man, the Report and the Berwick Division: Mike Fraser
Wednesday 30 th October	Aln Valley Railway: Roger Jermy
Wednesday 27 th November	The Pegasus and its wreck: Jane Bowen
Wednesday 11 th December	Christmas Social

BERWICK CIVIC SOCIETY

Venue: Berwick Parish Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 16 th October	Combined meeting with the History Society, European Walled Towns: David Bruce MA
Wednesday 13 th November	A silent auction and Quiz evening, details to be announced
Friday 6 th December	The Christmas Party, details to be announced

BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time:7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 16 th October	European Walled Towns: David Bruce. A joint meeting with Berwick Civic Society.
Wednesday 20 th November	A glimpse into the Archives at Paxton House: Martha Andrews and Chris Pawson.
Wednesday 11 th December	Sir William Beveridge, the Man, the Report and the Berwick Division: Mike Fraser

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 2 nd September	The Lady of CAO- A warrior Queen, 1600 year old mummy and its mysteries: Professor Maria Chester
Monday 7 th October	Into the glare of history- Paleoecology, Archaeology and the written record in the Northern Cheviot Hills: Dr Richard Tipping
Monday 4 th November	In with the bricks- Survey and surveyors lurking in the shadows of our past: Stratford Halliday
Monday 2 nd December	“SCAPE”-The Scottish Coastal Archaeology and the Problem of Erosion: Tom Dawson

BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Corn Exchange, Melrose

Time: 2.30pm

Sunday 29 th September	Memories and Memory-how good are yours?: Mrs Ann Reid
Sunday 27 th October	The Foul Death of the English: Mary Craig, Stow Town Hall, Earlston Road, Stow TD1 2QS
Sunday 24 th November	The Caribbean Connection: Professor : Geoffrey Palmer

BOWSDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Bowsden Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 7 th October	Grace Darling, 175 years of a Local Legend: Jack Arrowsmith
Monday 4 th November	The Alnwick to Cornhill Railway: Dr John Addyman
Monday 2 nd December	Christmas Quiz and Social Evening

CHIRNSIDE HISTORY GROUP

Venue: Community Centre

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 16 th September	Polwarth Kirk: Rosie Letts
Monday 21 st October	R.N.L.I: Michael Avril
Monday 18 th November	Battle of Halidon Hill: Jim Herbert
Monday 16 th December	Wilson's Tales of Borders: Andrew Ayre

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 3 rd October	Bronze Age Weaponry in the Borders: Mr M Skelly
Thursday 7 th November	Eleanor's Diary: Miss J Wright
Thursday 5 th December	Berwick to the Bield: Mr J Rogerson
Thursday 12 th December	Members Night and Christmas Social

DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

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

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 25 th September	The Flowers of the Forest :Isobel Candlish
Wednesday 30 th October	The Baron of Eyemouth: his descendants: Fenton Robb
Wednesday 4 th December	The Cockburns of Langton: John Marjoribanks

GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.

Time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 11 th September	Barmoor Castle & Estate: John Nolan, Archaeologist
Wednesday 9 th October	England's Rough Wooing (A follow on from Flodden): Mrs Isabel Gordon
Wednesday 13 th November	Mauchline Ware: Victorian souvenir Woodware and its connection with the Borderlands: Mrs Jane Bowen
Wednesday 11 th December	Restoring the Record in Northumberland (Historical paths & tracks); Mrs Sue Rogers

LOWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Lowick Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 14 th October	Speaker to be confirmed
Monday 11 th November	Ford at the Time of the Waterfords : Linda Bankier
Monday 9 th December	Speaker to be confirmed

NORHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Norham Village Hall

Time : 7.30 pm

Monday 12 th September	The Bishop Wars: Ollie Hofer
Monday 14 th October	Mesolithic Age: Lizzie Young
Monday 11 th November	To be confirmed
Monday 9 th December	Social Evening

NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 23 rd October	Sir William Beveridge, the man, the Report, and the Berwick Division: Mike Fraser
Wednesday 27 th November	Emily Wilding Davison-Northumbrian Suffragette: Andy Griffin

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH

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

Time: 10.00am

Saturday 21 st September	In search of Emily Wilding Davison, Northumbrian Suffragette-Sorting the facts from the fiction: Andy Griffin
Saturday 19 th October	Members' Forum
Saturday 16 th November	Making Sense of the Census: Anthea Lang

TILL VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Crookham Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Saturday 7th September

Flodden Forum : question and answer session with panel of experts in **Etal Village Hall**

Wednesday 2nd October

Excavation at Shaftoe Crag on Salters Nick:
John Davies

Wednesday 6th November

The Role of Women at Flodden: Clive
Hallam Baker

Wednesday 1st January 2014

New Year's Day walk

FLODDEN EVENTS

FLODDEN COMMEMORATION WEEKEND, 7th – 9th SEPTEMBER

From the 7th to 9th September, various events will be taking place at Branxton and the surrounding area to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Flodden. They can all be found on the Flodden 1513 website – www.flodden1513.net . On Saturday and Sunday (10 – 4), there will be family activities in the marquee at Branxton. As part of the commemoration on **Monday 9th September**, my Volunteer Transcription Group will have a small display on their work in the marquee at Branxton – what we have found so far . There will also be some other local history displays and some of my volunteers will be there transcribing documents. You can also have a go at transcribing a 16th century document yourself !. The marquee is open from 11am to 3pm . Why not drop in and find out about our project and try out your palaeography skills?!

HERITAGE OPEN DOORS WEEKEND

13TH - 15TH SEPTEMBER

The annual Open Doors weekend takes place in Berwick from 13th to 15th September. A full list of buildings open in Northumberland as well as the various events taking place can be found on <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=10399> .

Some of the following may interest you :

Friday 13th September : Magistrates Court in Church Street, Berwick. You can see around the Court, talk to some of the present JP's and hear two talks – 11am and 2.30 pm. The court is open from 10 to 1 and 2 to 4.

Saturday 14th September : Tour of the Council Offices (Old Goal) in Wallace Green. As usual, I will be running my guided tours in which you can find out about the history of the building and inspect the cells !. The first tour is at 10.30am and they will take place every half hour, with the last one at 1.30pm. For those not wanting to go on the tour, there will be a small local history exhibition in the foyer of the Council Office building.

Sunday 15th September : Story of Spittal Guided Walk. Come and enjoy a guided walk around Spittal and find out more about its history. They start at 11.30 am and 2pm. Meet at the Lifeboat Station at Carr Rock.

Sunday 15th September : Belford Hidden History Museum : Come and see this excellent little Museum in Belford which has lots of hidden little gems about the village and its past. The Museum is in the Market Place and is open from 10 am to 4pm.

All the above events are free to attend.

BREAKING OF BRITAIN

The Northumberland Archives Service has been working with Lancaster University on helping to promote a Project they have been involved in called the Breaking of Britain. The project covers the period 1216 to 1314 and includes two databases for the period – one relating to Scotland and the other to Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmoreland in the North of England. To help promote the project and its databases, the Northumberland Archives and the Berwick Record Office are running a series of workshops in Northumberland Libraries which will provide some background to the databases and practical guidance on how to use them. I will be running three workshops in North Northumberland :

Friday 11 October	Seahouses Library	2.30-4.30pm
Saturday 12 October	Wooler Library	2-4pm
Tuesday 15 October	Berwick Library	1.30-3.30pm

The workshops are aimed at those interested in local and family history. They are free to attend but must be booked in advance via the library or the archive. If you want any further information, please contact me or look on the Northumberland Archives Facebook page which lists all the workshops being held in the county.

ARCHIVE NEWS

The past few months and the summer have flown by but at least we have had good weather which has been a great bonus. As ever, the Record Office has been very busy with various projects as well as our normal day to day activities.

The Flodden Project has kept me very busy with various things. Just after the last newsletter was produced in May, we held our Bygone Borderlands weekend in Berwick which was extremely successful. About 1400 visitors came in over the weekend to look at the displays put together by the Local History groups and hear

the various talks – some Flodden related, others about the local history of the area. The event had a really good atmosphere and we got very positive feedback from the visitors which included some Americans. The Flodden Project will hold a similar event next year but on the Scottish side of the border – watch this space for further information ! As well, as Bygone Borderlands, I have been looking after the transcription volunteers who have been working very hard transcribing Flodden documents. I'm checking over their work and we hope to make some of it available on the commemoration day – 9 September(see later article). To help put their work in context, Clive Hallam Baker took us on a guided walk around the Battlefield site in June which was very enlightening – you need to see the landscape to understand the battle. We couldn't have asked for better weather. We won't have transcribed all the Flodden documents by 9 September but over the next few months, you will hear more about our work. It will also be featured in a BBC 1 North East programme "Inside Out" , produced by Chris Jackson which is to be broadcast on Monday 2nd September at 7.30pm or find it on I- Player

As well as Flodden, I have continued my work with the National Archives and have had two trips to London in the past couple of months – their building is becoming very familiar ! The second trip was to provide local input into Postgraduate Workshops on using national and local archive sources for research. It's very interesting to see how little exposure some postgraduate students have had to working with actual archives as part of their research. However, they all certainly went away with a better knowledge on how to extract information from different classes of archives (poor law; courts of law; education) and what they might contain.

During the summer I have continued to work with the Holy Island Community Archive group. We were approached by a lecturer at Edinburgh University who visited us; told us about a fascinating set of linguistic tapes which had been recorded in the 1970s by a German student and played some of them. It was fascinating to hear how older people on the Island spoke at that time – their accent was so different to today and at times, it was difficult to work out the words they were using. The lecturer is going to place a copy of the tapes in the Community Archive and the Record Office. We have also met with Julie Crawshaw from Newcastle University who is working on a Northumbrian Cultural Exchanges Project and is interested in building up her links with Holy Island. The Peregrini Project has been awarded Heritage Lottery Funding for its Landscape Partnership Initiative and so hopefully, work will begin in earnest in the next couple of months on establishing the Archive.

Over the past couple of months, various volunteers have continued their work on the Photocentre archive. Sheila Ford and Jim Waugh are typing up the handwritten index which is helping us to understand what we have – a wide selection of photos on so many topics about the area. In addition, we have been very lucky to have a great deal of help from Cameron Robertson who is studying photography at Carlisle University. Cameron has been helping to assess what conservation materials we need; repackage the collection; identify and scan interesting glass plates and negatives including material on the Convent School at Longridge; and provide us with some background information on the types of glass plates used. His work has helped us appreciate even more the importance of the collection and the need to make it available to a wider audience which we will as time goes on. It doesn't seem like a year since the mad rush to box it up and bring it to the archives !

There are probably lots of things that I have forgotten but at least I have the opportunity to let you know about them through the new Friends website!

Linda Bankier

FIRST WORLD WAR SNIPPETS

As everyone is very aware of the approaching First World War centenary, I've found some snippets from the Berwick Advertiser which may interest you :

14 May 1915

Letter from a Wooler Man at the Front

The following letter was received on Monday last by Mr Thomas Waters, timber merchant, Wooler, from Private John K James, who was formerly in his employ, and who is now serving in the 7th Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers. It is dated 5th May :
“Just a few lines to let you know that I am still in the land of the living, although we have had had ten days under continual fire. We are back from the firing line now, having a rest at some barns, but we expect to go back shortly. We had General Sir John French down at the billets yesterday complimenting the Brigade on the attack

upon the enemy. He gave us great praise and I may say we deserve it. We drove the Germans back a good way, but their machine guns are most deadly. We brought down an aeroplane as well. I suppose you see it in the papers. We saw it in a paper we got from some passing troops, and were quite surprised to see it in. We are not allowed to say very much about the war, so I can give nothing more than a few details. We are not allowed to say where we are either.

With kindest regards to all in the Yard

Jack

15 Oct 1915

DCM

Great interest was taken in a public demonstration which was held in the Town Hall, Berwick, on Saturday evening on the occasion of the presentation of a D.C.M medal to Private J. Yourston, of the 7th Northumberland Fusiliers, son of Mr and Mrs A Yourston, 42 Main Street, Tweedmouth, in recognition of his heroic conduct in the battlefield in rescuing Platoon Sergeant Robson at St Julian in April. The demonstration took the form of a recruiting appeal, and the hall was crowded in every part. The band of the 7th NF was in attendance, under Mr Charles Johnston, and rendered a fine selection which was greatly appreciated

11 Feb. 1916

Wounded in Remarkable Manner

News reached the town on Wednesday that Corporal T.P. Johnston, "A" Company, 7th Northumberland Fusiliers, Berwick, had been wounded in action. Details have just come to hand from which it appears that Corporal Johnston had a most wonderful escape from being killed. As a grenadier, he was about to fire a rifle grenade from its stand when a piece of shrapnel hit its head, exploded it, sent the stick back down the rifle, smashed the bolt, but only wounded him slightly on the head and hand.

Corporal Johnston has been out with the 7th NF's for nine months, coming unscathed through all its actions and numberless occasions in the trenches. He has shown much proficiency in bombing and has done much daring work patrolling in "no mans land"

He was one of the members of Berwick Territorials who mobilised at the commencement of the war, and volunteered for imperial service. On mobilization, he

was a Lance Corporal, having got his second stripe abroad. Prior to the war he was a clerk in the employ of Messers Johnson and Darlings Ltd., Hide Hill. His parents reside at Wallace Green.

18 Feb. 1916

Sympathy from the Trenches

Mrs Cockburn, Blakewell Road, Tweedmouth, has received the following letters of sympathy from Lieut. H R Peters, and Rev. W E Harper, Brigade Chaplain, in reference to the death of her son, Private Mark Cockburn, 7th NF :

7th Bn., North. Fusiliers

9/2/16

Dear Mrs Cockburn, - I regret to inform you of the death of your son, No. 1582 Private M. Cockburn, who was killed whilst in the trenches last Sunday afternoon about one o'clock by hostile artillery shell fire, and to convey to you and your family my sincere sympathy and condolences in your sad bereavement. I am glad to be able to tell you that your son's death was a merciful one, as he suffered no pain, and to assure you that everything possible was done for him. He was a good soldier, cheerful and very popular with his comrades, who greatly miss him. I know you will feel his loss most bitterly, and can quite understand your feelings and grief, but hope that you will take consolation in the fact that he has died the death of a hero, and that he did his duty nobly and well. If there is any assistance or information I can give you, ask me without hesitation.

Yours sincerely,
H R PETERS,
2nd Lt., 7th BN. NF

7th Northumberland Fusiliers

149th Brigade, B.E.F.,

February 8th 1916

Dear Mrs Cockburn – May I sympathise very deeply with you over the loss of your son, Priv. M. Cockburn, 7th N.F., out here at the front. I buried him on Sunday night about 7.30 pm behind the trenches in the presence of some of his comrades, and used the Church of England burial service. A cross, with name, etc, is erected over the grave. May God bless and comfort for you in your deep sorrow. Your boy died bravely for his country and his faith. "I am the Resurrection and the Life" saith the Lord.

Yours in deep sympathy,

Rev. W.E. HARPER
Chaplain, 149 Brigade

P.S. Mark Cockburn is buried at Maple Copse Cemetery in Belgium. His age is not given on the Commonwealth War Graves website

Linda Bankier

CAN YOU HELP? – OXFORD ISOLATION HOSPITAL

I have been contacted by a gentleman who would like to find out more about the Isolation Hospital which was at Oxford, near Scremerston. He has a relation who died there in the 1840s. From my own general knowledge of the area, I know that there was definitely an Isolation Hospital there, albeit a very small building. However, does anyone know any more ? When was it demolished; when was it last used and does anyone have a photograph of it. If you can help in any way, please contact me at the Record Office on (01289) 301865 or e-mail me on : lbankier@woodhorn.org.uk

Linda Bankier

MUSEUM NEWS

We have had an excellent season this year, and it seems like the months have gone by at double speed. The weather was lovely over the summer months, and there were lots of tourists in town not only enjoying the good weather but also taking advantage of the free admission to the museum over the Sundays in August we decided to open!

Our opening exhibitions, both featuring calligraphy went very well, tying in as they did with the 2013 visit to the north east of the Lindisfarne Gospels.

Tom Fleming – A Life in Letters displayed the work of the Chairman and founding member in 1989 of the Northumbrian Scribes. Tom is Scottish by birth, but has lived in Northumberland for many years. Having now passed his 90th birthday, this retrospective exhibition was long overdue. We have sold lots of his prints, a bargain at £5.00 each, particularly those featuring Lindisfarne

The Lindisfarne Gospels – Northumberland's very beautiful limited edition facsimile codex – were on display until the end of May, and have now almost completed a tour of Northumbrian churches. Some of the museum's paintings of Lindisfarne paintings, together with the brilliant seed pictures of "Tetramorphs" made by Berwick Floral Art Club, went on display in a recent exhibition across the river at the Watchtower Gallery.

The *BBC NE Wildlife Photography Competition* exhibition is on display until the end of the season, and includes all of the prizewinning photographs. We have shown a selection of the natural history collection from the museum itself alongside the photographs. We set up a children's area in this area, having noticed how popular our animal trail is with younger visitors, including some books and jigsaws. This has been very successful indeed over the summer. A recent very hairy and fun donation to the museum by the town's halberdier, Mr Paul Morgan, is a rather large Berwick bear (– a former exhibit at the Berwick Open Exhibition, entitled "Bear Wick on Tweed"), has also been popular for people to take their photos with. I suspect he has featured extensively on Facebook over the past few weeks!

And talking of which, Berwick Museum has now got a Facebook page. I am still getting the hang of how it works, and am currently reliant on the younger members of staff to keep me straight! We hope to keep it up to date with interesting pictures and facts, notice of events etc. Please do check it out, and tell us what you would like to see on there.

The museums of the Woodhorn Trust were awarded a large Arts Council grant to enable them all to set up and run a series of family friendly events over the course of the year. We are busy at the moment deciding exactly how to spend this money, to begin with ordering in large supplies of craft materials to provide some exciting activities for children for the rest of this season and next. In the meantime we have set up a children's area in the downstairs area, with special small seats and tables for our young visitors to use for their colouring in sheets and animal trails. We have already ran a couple of kite making sessions, which have worked very well, as the

Barracks Square is an ideal place to fly the kites! On the days without any wind, Liz has been demonstrating her spinning wheel, which seems to be popular.

We will be open for the weekend of the Food Festival – always our busiest time of the season, and also on Sunday 15th for Heritage Open Days. Then it is downhill all the way until the end of September. Where has the time gone?

Over the winter, we have plans to smarten up the “Education Room”, so we can actually use it for education sessions, meetings, family learning activities etc next season. This will entail finding a home for the stuff currently stored there, and some decorating work. No easy task, but we do enjoy a challenge!

Anne Moore - Museums Officer, North Northumberland.

www.berwickfriends.org.uk

The new website of the Friends 'went live' in August. With input from many hands, and technical design by Northern Lab, it now provides an online showcase for the activities of the Friends, as well as a good deal of information about the history and cultural life of North Northumberland.

In addition to presenting an outline of the resources and services provided by the Museum and the Record Office, it gives an opportunity to document the Friends' activities, both past and planned. And not the least of its purposes of course is to widen awareness of the organisation and, we may hope, to encourage more people to join us.

A blog feature for News & Events offers a current awareness service for lectures, exhibitions and other events of relevant interest, with 'headlines' for the latest additions displayed on the Home page.

A particularly rich resource is constituted by the back issues of this Newsletter, with its many accounts of historical discoveries, excerpts from documents, and local curiosities. All the issues from 2000 to 2011 are now available to view online and to download, and the plan is to extend this range both forwards and backwards. However the loyalty of subscribing members will be recognised by postponing the

appearance of the most recent editions until at least 12 months after their publication. The current year's issues will continue to be exclusively available to members.

So those who have perhaps not managed to collect a complete set of newsletters of their own can now remind themselves, for example, of the chequered career of the pirate John Crabbe, whose engineering inventions thwarted Edward II's siege of Berwick in 1319 [June 2003, p.10], or, in this period of Flodden commemoration, explore the historical background of Sir Walter Scott's great narrative poem *Marmion* [September 2003, p.14], or ponder the palatability of some 18th century recipes for food and drink [June 2001, p.15], or else amuse themselves with the astonishing story of the sheep which jumped off the Royal Border Bridge [December 2008, p.20].

Another feature of the website is a set of short histories of places in the area; this has begun with sections on Berwick, Norham, and Belford, and it is hoped that an expanding list of local towns and villages can be added to these.

A further area of future expansion is envisaged for the work of Friends and volunteers in the Record Office and the Museum, with an opportunity to give online access to any suitable reports, lists or descriptions which have resulted from their efforts and which would benefit from wider dissemination.

The website is young and still establishing itself with the search engines. We hope that gradually it will contribute wider publicity to the work of the Friends, as well as building a valuable resource for anyone with an interest in the heritage of "Berwick and District".

Kevin Graham
John Spiers

VISIT TO WOODHORN

Fourteen Friends met up at Northumberland County's Museum and Archives in Woodhorn on a sunny afternoon, Tuesday, 25 June. We were greeted in the Archive's spacious search room by Sue Wood, Head of Collections, who served

coffee and biscuits—which were very welcome after the long drive from northern Northumberland. We marvelled at the number of readers with ample space for notebooks and writing materials, the neat cabinets of large drawers for maps and other over-sized documents, and the rows of tables, again, affording much space for the researcher to spread out. Indeed it was the envy of us accustomed to the cramped conditions at the Record Office in Berwick, although, when we thought about it afterwards, it lacked some of the cosiness and intimacy we were used to (something in between would be nice, was the conclusion we came to concerning our own Record Office).

After refreshments Sue took us round the premises. First stop was the office of Robin Brownlee Sayers, Digitisation Assistant. Robin showed us some of the work he was doing in digitising various documents, maps, etc, many of which came from other archives and museums— both in Northumberland and further afield. The income this was generating would help the Archives further its work. Cutbacks had not affected things too much yet, said Sue, but they were quite aware that the Museum and Archives could be adversely affected in years to come. She also aired the possibility that at some point the Archives in Berwick could include a conservation laboratory, which could generate income by conserving items for museums and archives in both England and Scotland, but did admit, that given the current economic climate, this was unlikely to be soon.

Finally, we visited the various strongrooms. Rooms were climate controlled (meaning they were rather chilly), and, in case of fire, the oxygen would be sucked out of them to hinder the fire from damaging contents (there were warning signs to *vacate immediately* should the fire alarm go off). Of particular interest to us was Strongroom 5, where, among other valuable items, Berwick's own Degas pastel of ballet dancers was resting after being displayed— and thereby exposed to much light—at several exhibitions abroad. Bookcases and storage racks were on rails and could be pushed together to save space or separated to form aisles. Sue demonstrated the mechanism and assured us that there were safety devices to prevent anyone from getting crushed by moving racks.

After the tour, where there was plenty of time for questions and answers, most of us adjourned to a pleasant pub by the lake in nearby Queen Elizabeth II Country Park for a meal and lively talk about the interesting things we had seen. Our thanks to Sue Wood and staff for a very pleasant and informative afternoon.

Jane Pigney

SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

Berwick Advertiser, 9th December 1870

BERWICK CHRISTMAS CLUB

The first Annual Show of the Club will be held (by permission of the Directors of the Border Counties Agricultural Association, within their Premises, at the Auction Mart, Berwick), on Monday, Dec 19, when Prizes to the amount of £82 10s, will be offered for Cattle, Sheep, Swine, Dogs, and Roots.

In addition, the Town of Berwick gives a Silver Cup, value Twenty Guineas, to the Best fat Ox or Heifer on the ground; and Earl Percy, M.P., one of the value of Ten Guineas, for the best Pen of Fat sheep. The gates will be opened at 9 o'clock a.m. Members will be admitted free on showing their member's tickets. Admission to non-members is before 11 o'clock, and 6d after that hour.

Berwick Advertiser, 9th December 1870

We Observe that Mr James H Crossman of the firm of Messrs Mann, Crossman, & Paulin, Brewers, London, has been elected one of the five members, to represent the borough of Hackney, in the London School Board, after a severe contest, there being sixteen candidates in the field. Mr Crossman is a freeman of this borough, and second son of R Crossman, Esq, of Cheswick House.

Berwick Advertiser, 16th December 1870

Life in Japan

The Courier, a Japanese paper gives the following attractive account of life in Japan. It is dated Nagasaki, April 9, and says: We have had two instances here lately of the hostile feeling of the native officials towards foreigners, and the hourly danger the latter are in from armed Yaconins. An English naval officer was walking in the native town a few evenings ago, and got jostled by a Yaconin that was passing him by, who immediately drew his sword, but before he had time to use it, was knocked down by the gentleman and disarmed; and yesterday, as a Mr Botilens, a Dutch merchant, was walking near his own office in Desima, he got jostled by a Yaconin, who drew his sword on him, and pursued him for some distance. This occurred in

the middle of the day, in the foreign settlement. Another fatal affray occurred between two officers of the Prince of Satsuma on the following day. After some alteration of words, the one (a high officer) struck off the other's head with his sword, and then went home and committed Hari Kiri by disembowelling himself! This seems quite a Japanese amusement.

Berwick Advertiser, 16th December 1870

A Missing Island

A circumstance has occurred which places us all in an unpleasant position. A large island is missing. Captain Plock, of the barque Adolphe, bound from Iquique to London, states that while passing the New Hebrides islands he discovered that Aurora Island has entirely disappeared, and no trace of it was to be seen on the face of the ocean where it was before situated. What makes this occurrence more deplorable is that Aurora was one of the most fertile of the group of islands of which it formed a member. It was last seen in latitude 15.2 S., longitude 168.25E.; it is described as having been about 36 miles in length and upwards of five miles in breadth. Any information respecting it will be thankfully received, and it becomes a question whether a reward should not be offered for its recovery. If large islands take to disappearing in this fashion we shall soon cease to congratulate ourselves on our "insular position". There is, however, this consolation-that if England were to disappear like Aurora Island there would be no doubt, be a rigid investigation made into the circumstances by the rest of the world., and whoever saw her last would have his "boxes searched" to a certainty. Even Bismarek himself would probably be perturbed in spirit if he suddenly heard that England was missing. Indeed, the effect of the world would be highly complimentary to ourselves. France would miss a useful depot, for her refugees; Ireland would suffer from ennui with no one to abuse; and we may be sure that, unless we had previously settled the Alabama claims, America would never rest until she had fished us up again; at all events, General Butler would thoroughly explore the bottom of the sea in a diving bell, and leave no shell unturned so long as there was a hope of recovering anything-*Pall Mall Gazette*.

Carole Pringle