

# Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



*NUMBER 86-AUGUST 2015*

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Friends 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Party at the Maltings-  
7pm. See enclosed/attached document for  
more information.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Autumn Lecture-The First World War-  
various aspects from the Archives-7pm at  
the Parish Centre, Berwick.

## **OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES**

### **BERWICK 900 -FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

- Friday 4<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September Berwick Food Festival at the Barracks
- Friday 11<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September Heritage Open Days see listing on website - <http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/directory/town/berwick-upon-tweed> . This includes :
- Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September Tours of the Council Offices, former Goal from 10.30 to 1.00 on the hour and half hour.  
Walk around the Greenses, highlighting the area and the families. 3.00 pm start. Meet on the corner of High Greens and Bell Tower Place. Pre booking required  
Stained Glass windows of Norham Parish Church : talk by NADFAS in the church at 2pm  
Walk down Ravensdowne and along Quay Walls
- Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> September highlighting the area and the families. 3.00pm start at top of Ravensdowne. Pre booking required
- Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October Our Families Project – Family History weekend in the Guildhall. Talks, displays and opportunity to talk to Family History experts. 11 – 4 each day
- Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October Heritage Music Concert at Berwick Parish Church at 4pm
- Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October 1715 and the Northumbrian Jacobites
- Friday 16<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October Berwick Literary Festival
- Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October The Great Performing Rope
- Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October Arty Facts – Creative Berwick

### **AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Ayton Community Hall**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> September	John Cairns, son of an Ayton shepherd: Dr Adam Hood
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> October	The history of the Union Bridge: Gordon Miller
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Sport in the Borders: Henry Gray

### **BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

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

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> September	Old and new Slides of Belford: Alison Wooley, Bell View Camera Club
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> October	North East War Memorials: Janet Brown
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> November	Land Army Girls: Rosemary Bell

### **BERWICK CIVIC SOCIETY**

**Venue: Berwick Parish Centre.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	Combined meeting with the Berwick History Society. Ancient and Modern democracy and the separation of Powers: Dr Peter Jones
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	The Emergent Community and its Architectural Expression: A Berwick Place Study: Dr Adam Menuge

## **BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	See Civic Society.
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	Extraordinary peculiarities of the Anglo Scottish Border Line: Dave Welsh
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> December	“Does my country really need me”?. The work of Berwick-upon-Tweed Military Service Tribunal 1916-1918: Mike Fraser

## **BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> October	The Dr Malcom Aylett Memorial Lecture: The Ness of Brodgar-investigating a prehistoric enigma: Nick Card
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Heritage Management; not as dull as it sounds: Rori McDonald

## **BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Corn Exchange, Melrose**

**Time: 2.30pm**

Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> September	An Illustrated talk on the village of Moffat: Richard Torrance
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> October	The Parish Registers of the Roman Catholic Church Housed at the Scottish Catholic Archive and those still in the Parishes: Donna Maguire
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> November	The Register of corrected entries and its use for Scottish family history research: Ken Nisbet

## **BOWSDEN HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Bowsden Village Hall**

**Time: 7.30pm**

Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> September	Lindisfarne Castle: It's the fort that counts: Nick Lewis
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Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October

Me and my bus: John Wilde

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November

Nuisance of Bowsden c1890-c1920: story  
with cast compiled by Julie Gibbs

### **CHIRNSIDE HISTORY GROUP**

**Venue: Community Centre**

**Time: 7.30pm**

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September

Improvement and Lowland Clearances:  
David Mclean

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October

Viking Costumes & artefacts: Paula  
Constantine

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November

First Railway across the Borders: Tom  
Thorburn

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December

A year in life of a laird 300 years ago: Brain  
Webster

### **COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October

A family Life Revealed-The Stuarts at  
Traquair, 1491-1875: Catherine Maxwell  
Stuart and Margaret Fox

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November

Churchill's secret Army: David Blair

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

Wilson's Tales of the Borders: Berwick's  
forgotten literacy legacy: Andrew Ayre

### **GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

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

**Time: 7.30pm**

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September

Thomas Bewick-Northumberland's greatest  
artistic engraver and naturalist: Anthony  
Atkinson

Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	Biddlestone Chapel and Selby family: Tony Henfry
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> October	Outing: Exclusive entry & Guided Tour of Biddlestone Chapel: Tony Henfry. Meet at 10.30am
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	Put the lights out: wartime law in Northumberland: Philip Rowett
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	Vita vinum est: life is wine: Romans and their wine: Jeremy Patterson

### **NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland** **Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> October	"Does my country really need me?" The work of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Military Service Tribunal 1916-1018: Mike Fraser
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> November	Delavals-the rise and fall of an illustrious family: Andy Griffin

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

**Venue: Bell View Resource Centre, 33 West Street, Belford** **Time: 10.00am**

Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> September	The Flodden transcription project: Linda Bankier
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> October	Death, funerals and memorials: Members' Forum
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> November	Smuggling on the North-East Coast: Tony Barrow

### **TILL VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**Venue: Crookham Village Hall** **Time: 7.30pm**

Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September	The Limestone Industry on Holy Island:
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**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October**

Roger Jermy

**James IV Memorial Lecture-“The King in the North”: Max Adams in Etal Village Hall**

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November

Excavations at Bradford Kaims: Graeme Young or Paul Gethin

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

Stories of the Tweed: Martha Andrews

## **ARCHIVE NEWS**

It's now quite a few months since we produced a newsletter which is really down to what has been going on at the Berwick Record Office. As you are all aware, the Record Office has had to move out of its premises in Wallace Green which we had occupied for over 25 years – all my time as the Berwick Archivist. It has been a big upheaval and a lot of work, however, looking on the positive side, it has allowed us to employ some people to work on the collections for a limited time and create a locations index which will be very useful in the future. The next year or two will bring a lot of change and challenges for us. However, we will continue to preserve the archives in our care and also provide a public service to the local community and visitors. It won't be easy but if it leads to a longterm solution for the better preservation of the archives and their access, it will be worth it.

At present, our archives are kept in one location – being well looked after – and the public service is run from the Workspace in Walkergate, Berwick. We have kept the same opening hours and were only closed for one week. So far, this has worked well and we have had a mixture of visitors and locals using the service, including some who have not been before. See later on for further information.

The move has obviously taken up a lot of our time but as “light relief”, the Record Office has been involved in a lot of other activities in the local area. Since the beginning of April, there have been a number of events as part of Berwick 900. The Record Office has played an active part in most weekends, mainly through the “Our Families” project. We have covered many aspects of Berwick's history which are illustrated through the archives – Church; First and Second World War; Maritime; Fishing; Military; Spittal ; Lifeboats – and still have more to do ! This has been very

successful and a good way of raising the Office's profile, particularly at this time. It has also been enjoyable as it has involved working with different groups. For example, I did a lot of work with Berwick Youth Theatre, helping them to find out about the First World War and the Military Tribunals which took place in the town. This led to a three part Street Theatre performance as part of the First World War weekend which was well received. Also, with the Maltings, we have worked with some children in the summer holidays developing a play in a week based on a fishing theme. For me, it is great to see young people engaging with archives and learning from them but in a fun way.

At the beginning of May, we held another very successful "Bygone Borderlands" weekend in the Guildhall. Thank you to all the groups who took part, creating displays about their own communities. We also had a series of talks and family activities upstairs in the Goal area. Despite the poor weather on the Sunday, we had almost 1000 people attend which is brilliant. I would particularly like to thank all the Friends who helped with the stewarding which is a very important element of the event and ensures that everything runs smoothly.

The Record Office has also been involved with other projects – Waite and Sea, a heritage music project - which covers a topic we have not looked at before. This has led to the deposit of various Oral History recordings and research in our archives about music in the area and the opportunity to catalogue some of the KOSB Music in our care. There is also the "Our Families" Project which is part of Berwick 900 and researching the family names found in Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal. I have trained Beginner Family Historians and also provided training for those who are more advanced. During the Beginners course, we looked at the Manuel family who lived in the Greenses and this has led us on to further research on the fishermen families living in that area which has been fascinating. We have uncovered some wonderful stories which will be preserved in the archives.

As part of Berwick 900, there is also another project which the Record Office has supported – the Great Performing Rope – whose project will culminate over the last week of the Berwick 900 festival on 24 and 25<sup>th</sup> October. As part of the project, the November Club who are running it, are trying to collect people's memories of Berwick and their hopes for its future which can be attached to a 900 metre rope which will go round part of the town. These memories will also be permanently preserved in the Record Office. In Berwick you can pick up and complete a postcard in various locations and in addition, you can also post your memories online on [www.thegreatperformingrope.com](http://www.thegreatperformingrope.com) .



Our First World War project continues and we have found some fascinating information in our records and the local newspapers – the move unearthed some material which I had forgotten about. We are still doing our weekly blog of articles from the Berwick Advertiser which can be found on [www.northumberlandarchives.com](http://www.northumberlandarchives.com) and I produce the 100 years ago section in The Berwick Advertiser. As part of the Berwick 900, First World War weekend, we ran some very successful school workshops for Year 5 pupils out at Longridge Towers where the children could find out about life in the Army and also the Home Front. The volunteers have found through their research some fascinating information. Did you know that a riot started in Berwick in 1915 outside a German butcher's shop (Hick) who was which was a naturalised citizen? One of his descendants came over from Ireland for the weekend and is still making sausages ! We have also transcribed a War diary of Captain Miller who was with the KOSB in Gallipoli. His diary paints a picture of the extremes endured by the men- unbearable heat in the summer and then freezing cold in the winter, never mind living in trenches. All this information along with the other little snippets about the home front help us to build up a really comprehensive picture of life at the time.

The Flodden Project also continues and in June, there was another very successful Big Dig at Ford Moss where school children and adults came along and had a go at unearthing artefacts and finding out about the history of Ford Moss.

Just to finish, you can find below the procedures for using the Record Office. We can still be contacted on the same telephone number and e-mail address – (01289) 301865 and [berwickarchives@woodhorn.org.uk](mailto:berwickarchives@woodhorn.org.uk) and for the present our postal address remains the same – Berwick Record Office, Council Offices, Wallace Green, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1ED.

## **OPERATION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE AT BERWICK RECORD OFFICE, JUNE 2015 ONWARDS**

After operating its public service for 25 years from the Council Offices in Wallace Green, the Berwick Record Office has moved. Until at least February 2016, the

public service will operate from the **Workspace in Walkergate Lane, Berwick, after which it will move to Berwick Library**. The following information is important for users and potential visitors to the Record Office.

## **OPENING TIMES**

- **Wednesdays and Thursdays**, 9.30 to 1.00 and 2.00 to 5.00.

## **PROCEDURES**

- **Family Historians** are still able to use our transcripts and resources on microfilm as well as internet resources and we will continue to provide advice and assistance as before. However, advance notice of a visit is appreciated, particularly for any resources on microfilm.
- **Local Historians and other Researchers**- the archives are stored off site and so, those wishing to consult **original records**, must contact us in advance to let us know when and what they wish to consult to ensure their availability. This can be done by telephone (01289 301865) or e-mail ([berwickarchives@woodhorn.org.uk](mailto:berwickarchives@woodhorn.org.uk) ) . Ideally we need a couple of days notice of a visit. However, in certain circumstances, it is possible to visit in the morning and request documents which can be consulted in the afternoon.
- **Volunteers** – we need to know in advance when you intend to come in so that we can ensure that the documents you are working on are there for you.

## **GENERAL RULES**

- All visitors to the archives must report to and sign in at the main Reception Desk in the Workspace. A member of staff/ volunteer will collect visitors from there and take them up to the public searchroom. The building does have a lift and so it is easier to access.
- The same Searchroom rules apply as before – only pencils to be used with original documents; no food or drink to be consumed in the room and visitors must sign in.
- Photocopies and digital copies of documents can still be provided but there will be a delay as we do not have photocopying facilities on the premises. Orders can either be collected at a later date or posted out.

*Linda Bankier*

## **GREENSES FAMILIES**

Whilst researching the Greenses area of Berwick, the Our Families volunteers came across references to a William Burgon who died in 1907 but was the coxswain of the lifeboat and had been involved in a rescue in 1902. Being curious, I followed it up in the newspaper and found the following article about the rescue of the crew of the Demetra :

**Berwickshire News, 3rd June 1902**

### **BERWICK LIFEBOAT RESCUES THE CREWS LANDED AT EYEMOUTH**

On Sunday morning an exciting scene was witnessed off Berwick. From early a vessel had been seen tossing about in a heavy sea. At nine o'clock she showed signals of distress, and Berwick lifeboat, accompanied by the Harbour tug, Flying Cloud, went to her assistance. Dr C.L. Fraser of Berwick, local Secretary to the Lifeboat Institution accompanied the crew. There was a big sea running at the time. The vessel, which was seen to be a barque, was about six miles off Berwick. By the time the Lifeboat arrived at the scene, a screw steamer, the Halval of Nardsund, had got hold of the barque, and was endeavouring to tow her north, a task in which she appeared to be labouring under difficulties. The barque proved to be a Norwegian, the Demetra of Christiania, manned by a crew of eight. The vessel was bound from Middlesbrough to the Shetlands, with 350 tons of salt, and had been out in the gale of the past few days, and suffered badly. The Captain, who was an old man, was almost helpless, and the crew, many of whom were cut and bleeding about the head and face, were helpless at the pump, being thoroughly exhausted. It was evident that the barque had sprung a leak and was making water fast. Her sails were blown away, only two or three, partly in ribbons, flying from the spars. After some negotiations between the tug and the steamer, it appeared that the crew of the steamer were unwilling to let go, and the crew of the barque seemed anxious for the lifeboat to remain alongside. As the vessel was in great danger, the coxswain had a line attached to the barque, and the tug, taking hold along with the screw, an attempt was made to reach the Firth. The Captain had asked for assistance at the pumps, and three of the lifeboat crew were on board, and worked hard to keep the vessel up. The main mast and the main top mast of the barque were sprung, and every lurch of the vessel threatened to bring them down on the heads of the crew.

The cable chains had also broken adrift, and the men were driven from the pumps. About three o'clock in the afternoon off St. Abbs, the lifeboat's cable parted, and a heavy sea struck the barque. At this time the vessel's top hamper was beginning to break up, and the lifeboat signalled to the tugs to stop. After a lot of hard rowing the lifeboat made up on the barque and got another line aboard. The crew reported that they made five feet of water since they left Goswick, and that there were fourteen feet of water in the hold and the vessel was sinking. Shortly after the main top mast came away, and another big sea brought down the mizzen top mast and the spanker gaff. It was considered prudent, in view of the helpless state of the crew, and the imminent danger of the vessel sinking at any moment, to have the men taken out of her, and as they call for help the breeches were brought into play, the sea being too rough to get alongside, and all the men successfully taken from the barque to the lifeboat. The three members of the crew who were put aboard were invaluable in greeting the sailors expeditiously put into the breeches and in the working of the lines, else the rescue might not have been so quickly and safely carried out. Johnston Borthwick was the last to leave the barque, and all of them behaved as coolly as at practice. As soon as the men were put off the tow-line was cut, and the lifeboat made for Eyemouth, which was eight miles off. The crew had a desperate hard row for it, but reached the harbour safely at 8.15, they were welcomed by the whole turnout of the town and cheered most heartily. The crew of the barque were well cared for at Mr Hughes' hostelry, and the lifeboat crew with Dr Fraser were looked after at the Ship Hotel. The same night, the crew and the Doctor drove to Berwick, leaving the lifeboat at Eyemouth. The barque, in a sinking condition, proceeded in tow. The starboard bollard of the lifeboat was sprung going alongside the barque in the heavy sea, and the boat was otherwise damaged. We think the greatest credit is due to the crew for the rescue they effected, without doubt one of the best in the history of the boat. The men were out for nearly twelve hours in a heavy sea, and without food, and bore their fatigue bravely and cheerfully. We compliment Coxswain Wm. Burgon on the rescue, and would also like to state that the courageous conduct of Dr Fraser met with much approval in the town. Hundreds of people anxiously watched the proceedings at Berwick on Sunday, and were much relieved by the news of the safety of the crew and the rescue they had effected. The Demetra is an old vessel, forty years of age, and the captain's name is Jorgensen. She is 437 tons register, and not insured.

Our Eyemouth Correspondent writes: - On Sunday evening, considerable excitement was caused here by the landing of a shipwrecked by Berwick lifeboat. It appears that the ill-fated vessel was a Norwegian barque, named the "Demetra" of Christiania, bound from Middlesbrough to Lerwick with salt. She encountered severe

weather on Friday, and as the gale continued in force she sprang a leak, and all efforts to keep the vessel aright were in vain. The steam tug "Flying Cloud" took her tow off the crew. Up to this time nothing is known of the vessel as to whether she has sunk or been taken to port.

*Linda Bankier*

## MUSEUM NEWS

The museum is especially busy at the moment with the school summer vacation in full swing. We are opening all week round, and weekend visitors are able to gain free admission.

We have two temporary exhibitions open. Our natural history exhibition seems to be fascinating young and old visitors; one visiting geologist was thrilled to see such a good example of an ichthyosaur while one young boy was desperate to take the megalodon's tooth home with him!

We have an exhibition of World War 1 recruiting posters on loan from the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne in gallery 2. These are supplemented by items from Berwick Museum's collections; magazines from the period from England and Germany, medals and paintings. Centre stage is a WW1 Memorial plaque, which came into the museum collections some time ago, and had been thought to be from Berwick Grammar School. After extensive research we do not now believe this to be the case, and though several of the people listed did attend the Grammar School, most do not appear to have done. The men mentioned on the plaque come from Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal, and are from all strata of society, from architects to tailor's apprentices, from booksellers to plumbers. All the information we glean will eventually be placed on the North East War Memorials website ([www.newmp.org.uk](http://www.newmp.org.uk)). While the plaque is on the wall, Jenny has been carefully cleaning it, so that the names inscribed thereon will shine once more.

Elsewhere in the museum, we have been revamping the medieval gallery, to make a more fluid visitor flow, and to make the room more accommodating for the increasing number of schools visiting. Jane Miller has been devising new workshops for schools based around medieval medicine, local abbeys and monasteries, and prehistory. We have installed a new dressing up zone and a revamped brass rubbing area for the summer vacation, and over the winter we will be working on a medieval timeline to place inside the dragon.

Going with the medieval theme, we now have a new interactive donations box. As Friends will no doubt be aware, we do not receive a share of the site admissions money, and we pay substantial rent to English Heritage to boot. So, Arts Council England has funded the design and manufacture of a special donations box, themed around Berwick's medieval history. On loading up a cannon with a coin at one end of the box, the coin is fired into a range of slots marked with the dates that Berwick changed hands between England and Scotland. According to which slot the coin lands in, an appropriate flag is raised at the other end of the box, accompanied by a short commentary read by Mr Jack Weatherburn, who has the perfect accent for the job.

We have a new range of merchandise for sale, based mainly on the Burrell collection and including greetings cards, prints, tea towels and mugs. We are pleased with the range, and sales are going well.

The season is almost over, but before it is we have the excitement of the Berwick Food Festival and Heritage Open Days on successive weekends in September. We will be reopening briefly for October half term, when be playing host to the North East Wildlife Photography Competition 2015 winning photographs once again. We would love to see you, so do please come along!

*Anne Moore - Museums Officer, North Northumberland.*

## **URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY**

The value of the minutes of Urban Sanitary authorities are well known for containing the medical reports of the local Officer of Health which describe in detail the health and living conditions of the local community, and often include recommendations for improvements to be made to these living conditions. However, in addition to these reports, the minutes contain a wide range of information of interest to local historians. A recent examination of Berwick's Urban Sanitary Authority minutes for the years 1877-1894 ( E1/6&7 ) for the area of the Greenses in Berwick, shows them to be very informative. The Greenses were, until recently, occupied by a vibrant fishing community living in poor housing.

The residents were very active in responding to their poor conditions, and through regular petitioning, were ready to 'take on' the town's authorities. In December 1889 they petitioned against the 'danger and nuisance' caused by the Foundry of Messrs

George Craik & Sons in the Greenses, especially the foundry's low chimney which was perceived as a danger to houses and the volume of smoke it discharged, being 'injurious to health and prosperity'. Since this petition only had 15 signatures, one wonders if the local workforce were more concerned about their employment. More popular was the petition of August 1893 when 37 locals from the Greenses, led by an Alex Manuel complained about the overcrowding and lack of housing in the Greenses. Similarly in July 1894, there was a petition of 59 residents, led by an Alex Robertson objecting to use of the Port Sanitary Hospital ( in the Greenses ) for emergencies arising from infectious diseases. The petitioners complained that The Hospital had been built originally as a Port Sanitary one, and not as a general hospital – to alter its character was deemed ' a breach of faith'. Indeed the petition went on to say that the time had come for the hospital to be removed from its position as a hospital for the port, in consideration of the residents 'duty to ourselves and children'. The Port Hospital clearly remained, since, in September 1894, there was talk in the minutes of a mortuary and wash house being built at the Hospital.

Some years later, the minutes of November 1896 reveal deaths from diphtheria and fever in the Greenses, arising from choked drains and effluent from byres and stables being situated too close to the houses there. This is a reminder that, in those days, milk came not in bottles, but from cows housed amongst the populous. Indeed in 1890 a list of licensed dairies in Berwick, noted that there were 2 such dairies housing cows in High Greens, and another in Low Greens, despite the health problems these posed to the residents there.

In July 1893, the Officer of Health was moved to report his regret that 'Councillor Weatherston's scheme for opening up of the Greenses was not carried out' as better access would have been a stimulus for builders to invest and speculate on improved housing in the area. The minutes record attempts at small improvements to the Greenses – a public urinal near the Greenses mission hall; additional lamps to be placed in Low Greens and near the Port Hospital; a new, improved footpath in Featherbed Lane ( now Brucegate ), in response to a 51 signature petition from the Greenses residents.

*Bob Steward*

## THE GENERAL ELECTION 1886 STYLE

### Problems with the voters in 1886

I recently purchased, at auction, a group of documents which dealt with the arrangements for the election of the Berwick M.P. at the time of the July 1886 General Election, and came from the Belford Committee Room of the Liberal-Unionist candidate, the Hon. F. W. Lambton, the son of the Earl of Durham. It is therefore a somewhat limited picture, but is particularly interesting in the attitudes shown to the Hinds or Farm workers, who had been given the vote only in 1884. It was generally assumed that they would vote for the Liberal party, rather than for the Conservatives who were seen as representing the landed interests. In 1886, however the problem was that the Liberal Party itself had split, with Gladstone Liberals (which included the sitting MP for Berwick, Sir Edward Grey) favouring Home Rule for Ireland, the remainder, who became known as Liberal Unionists, bitterly opposed this move. In this crisis, the votes of the considerable numbers of Hinds would be critical in deciding who would win the Berwick election. Much of the correspondence to and from the Committee Room reflects the difficulties of gauging how these men would vote.

Mr. Wilson, writing from North Sunderland/ Seahouses highlighted the issue of how fully the Hinds understood the Home Rule issue:

The great difficulty in this most important Crisis is to get many of the new electors to grasp the real nature of the issue before the country. The predominant feeling amongst imperfectly informed liberal Voters is, 'we must support Gladstone'.

Mr. Ryott of East Horton, who had taken on responsibility for the Chatton area and attempted to canvass the Chatton cottagers, reported back on 28 June:

none of them cared to join the Liberal Unionist Association as they are mostly all tenants of the Duke of Northumberland and do not care to be brought before the public.

The Belford Squire, George Dixon Atkinson Clark, on 29 June, advised on the need to get one of their own class to canvass the Hinds. Any one else is worse than useless with them.

That was certainly the experience of those from other areas.

On 5 July, General Bell, writing from Bells Hill was succinct:

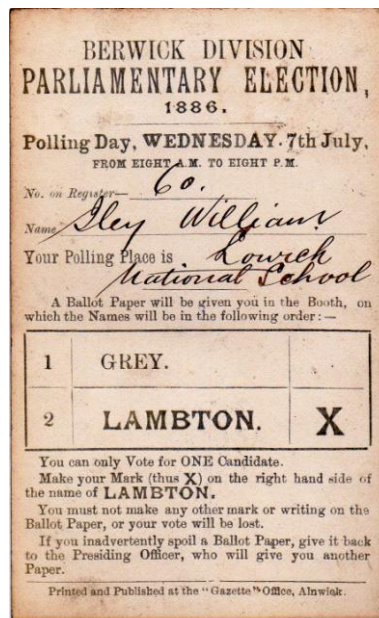
The ignorance and obstinacy of the Hinds is such that I find it but waste of time & patience speaking to them on the subject of their vote.



Mr. Hume of Berrington, writing the same day, offered a similar view at more length. I have not a copy of the register by me, & if I had, I should have to send it with nearly the whole of the Farm Servants marked doubtful, for we have not been able to get at their opinions (if indeed they have any) & the information thus given you would be of exceedingly little value to you. The Farm Servants now as in the last Election decline to give any pledge & in my opinion canvassing amongst them does no good whatever – on the present occasion there seems to be great apathy amongst them, and any forecast of the result of the Election must be utterly unreliable.

Interestingly this last was a view also held by Lambton's election agent in Belford, the solicitor Alfred Monnington, who replied to General Bell:

The hinds are about as capable of exercising their votes as their own pigs - & it is fearful to think that their verdict should soon in the smallest degree influence so important a question as Home Rule for Ireland.



Preparations to get voters to the Poll and make sure they did the 'right' thing on election day were remarkably thorough. At the beginning of the campaign Monnington had collected information about those voters who might need help to get to the poll, and the message had got through to the men on the ground. Mr. Emmeson from Chatton, for example, was concerned *to look after the voters on the polling day*. Polling Cards were posted out, reminding voters of where they should vote and the hours of polling. As can be seen from the example shown here, as well as explaining how not to vote, the cards also demonstrated clearly exactly how to vote for Lambton whose name appeared in bold and larger letters on the card. On 7 July, Polling Day, the Belford Committee Rooms received telegrams from across the

area keeping Monnington up to date with voting patterns. On the whole it seemed as if their efforts had been successful:

Chatton 11.30 – Lambton 32 unknown 21

Seahouses 3.40 – Polling slow but satisfactory leading 50, 130 voted

Lowick 3.45 – Voting slow nothing to note

Alnwick 4.30 – polled 850; majority for Lambton 350

But it was an illusion. When the results were declared the following day, Sir Edward Grey gained 4,131 votes, Lambton only 3,709. This was a considerable victory for Sir Edward, who bucked the National trend. Across the country as a whole the Conservatives and Liberal-Unionists together gained 143 seats, the Liberals lost 127.

*Jan Ward and Jane Bowen*

## **VISITORS TO BERWICK**

In the 1860s the Berwick Advertiser began publishing lists of visitors to Spittal, giving names and titles, where the visitors had come from and with whom they were staying. Clearly, at this period, most visitors were from the middle and professional classes – middle ranking army officers, clergymen and “Esquires” (when this meant more than a mere courtesy title). The same names occur in several years so Spittal was obviously a popular holiday resort from late May to early September. Although it is frequently “Mr. and Mrs.”, often “with family”, there are also many single women or women with their children. A Berwick resident almost a century later recalled going to Spittal for her holiday with her mother and siblings, to be joined by their father only at the weekend. Single men are also listed, sometimes in a group of friends from the same Border town, Kelso, Galashiels, Hawick, Duns (spelt “Dunse”). Even occasional residents of Berwick sometimes crossed the Tweed for their holiday!

Probably 90% of the visitors to Spittal in these early years were relatively local, but there are occasional exotics. On 11/6/1864 the Misses Lambert “from Florence, Italy” are listed; on 13/7/1861 Mr. Ramsey from “Gauls, Waterloo, America” came, and on 16/7/1864 Mr. and Mrs. Young from “Gault, America” came; on 27/7/1864 W. H. Fairbairn Esq. from “Chicago, North America” (could he be a relation of the Fairbairns with a business in Berwick today?); on 6/8/1864 Mr. Miller from “Upper Canada, America” is listed as is Miss Young from simply “America”; on 21/7/1865 Mr. Miller seems to return and on 4/8/1865 Mr. Robinson of “Upper Canada, America” is listed. This number of visitors from North America may reflect the scale

of emigration in the nineteenth century suggested by the frequent advertisements in the Advertiser for fast sailings.

We look forward to seeing if visitor numbers in the later part of the Nineteenth century, when many small local resorts begin to list holiday makers, show any changes in these patterns.

*Jean Watts*

## **FRIENDS' COLLECTIVE ACTION**

Our Constitution states that the object of the Friends is the education of the public by promoting supporting, and assisting:

- the preservation of archives relating to the Borough of Berwick-upon-Tweed and North Northumberland and their accessibility for historical research; and
- the use of the Berwick- upon-Tweed Borough Museum and Art Gallery.

Among the ways this is to be achieved are to:

- engage in, support and co-ordinate voluntary assistance for the archives and museum and art gallery services;
- publicity;
- advertising; and
- fund raising for specific purposes.

Over the last two months, the shutting of the Wallace Green Office has involved the Friends in voluntary assistance, publicity and advertising, and we have achieved a public promise that the Archives will not be removed from Berwick. Establishing a new permanent home for both the Archives and the Museum (which is also in the Council's sights), is however likely to be a slow and costly process, and in the interim there are the greater running expenses of the temporary accommodation at the Workspace. The Friends' Committee have considered these issues, and concluded that it would be sensible to try to build up our available funds, both to help should an emergency arise, and to plan for the acquisition of modern equipment for use by both the Archives and the Museum. It is also thought that should the Friends require to apply for any grants, the fact that we have made our own efforts to raise funds would stand us in good stead with external funders.

Firstly, in the months ahead, we should try to organise some fund-raising events - if you have successfully run such events, we would be very glad to learn from your

experiences, and welcome your assistance.

Secondly, we are registering with the **Give as you Live** Website. This site acts as a portal to most on-line purchasing sites including supermarkets, Amazon, E-bay. If we begin with the **Give as you Live** website when we shop on line, the Friends will receive a small percentage of the shopping spend - somewhere between 1% and 4% depending on the store concerned. Although individual sums may be small, over time, they should make a significant difference to our income.

Thirdly, we are arranging to have a **Donate** button placed on our website, in the hope that it will encourage Archive users, near and far, including overseas researchers who have benefitted from the support of the Record Office, to contribute to this drive. This will be operated by **BT MyDonate**, who will charge 15p per donation or 1.3% where a credit card is used.

It is hoped to have the fund raising links live on our website by the beginning of September 2015. Please keep checking.

We realise that not everyone is comfortable using the internet, so it will also be possible to make donations to the Friends in the traditional way, by cheque, in an envelope addressed to our Treasurer, Graham Robson.

We would not be Friends, if we did not feel we needed the Archives and the Museum, but at this particular time in their history, more than ever before, your Archives and Museum need you!



The Archives and  
Museum need  
**YOU**

*Bob Steward, Chairman and Graham Robson, Treasurer*

## **TWO BERWICK PLANTATION OWNERS**

In the February 2015 Newsletter, John Spiers and Eric Herbert published an article about the Buglass family of Berwick upon Tweed, picking up on the threads of a story which had originally appeared in an article by David Brenchley in the June 1970 Newsletter. Then Janet was assigned the Buglass family to research as part of the 'Our Families' Project. Out of all this emerged the story of Caleb Buglass, a successful mason, baptised 1709, who had a large family, including sons, Caleb, who became a bookbinder, Ralph who became a doctor, and Robert who became a

mason like his father. We established that Ralph had emigrated to Tobago, and that Caleb junior, having failed as a bookbinder in Berwick, deserted his family there and moved first to Grenada in the West Indies, where he purchased a plantation *Mon Tranquille* and then in 1774, to Philadelphia. There he remarried, producing a second family, and again set up business as a bookbinder, still, however, retaining his Grenada property. He had the distinction of providing the binding for the first Book of Common Prayer of the United States. There the story of the overseas Buglasses largely rested until, last month, we watched the fascinating BBC2 documentary about the Slave Compensation Scheme, *Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners*. This highlighted the existence of a searchable University College London on-line database, *Legacies of British Slave Ownership*, [www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs) based on the compensation paid to slave owners at the time of abolition. This database enables researchers to look for individuals or for known slave owners within a geographical area. Out of curiosity, we looked to see if there were any Berwick connections and found the Buglass name surfacing again. In particular the database was a rich source of information about Dr. Ralph Buglass. In 1769 he had purchased land in both St. John's Parish and St. Paul's Parish in Tobago, and also held land in St. Lucia.

His will is quoted in full:

In the name of God, Amen. I Ralph BUGLASS late of the Island of Tobago Esquire, but now of Philadelphia, being weak in body but of sound mind and memory do make this my last will and testament. First, I give and devise unto my Brother Robert BUGLASS, of Berwick upon Tweed in the Kingdom of Great Britain and to his Heirs and Assigns forever my two houses and four lots in the Town of Carenage in the Island of St Lucea [sic]. Second, I appoint my Friends Charles WIGHTMAN Esquire of Tobago, and Michael Morgan O'Brien Esquire of Philadelphia guardians and trustees for my natural son Charles BUGLASS, a Mulatto Boy to receive his Rents until he becomes of age, and to put him apprentice in Philadelphia to the trade of a Carpenter, and to educate and bring him up until he is of age. Third I give and bequeath my German Flute and Musick proper therefore equal to one half to Willson WOODHOUSE of Philadelphia. Fourthly, I give and bequeath my Violin and Violincello and Musick proper therefore equal to one half to Colonel Michael WENTWORTH, of Boston, New Hampshire. Fifthly, I give, bequeath and devise unto my brother Caleb BUGLASS of Philadelphia my Negro Woman Popotte and a Negro Boy La Valle who are or lately were in the said Island of Tobago, also the sum of Two Hundred Pounds Sterling which Charles WIGHTMAN of the said Island of Tobago by a certain Agreement bearing date the tenth day of November, One Thousand Seven hundred and Eighty six is bound to pay to such person as I shall

bequeath and devise the same. Also all the rest, residue and remainder of my estate he the said Caleb BUGLASS paying my debts and funeral charges in Philadelphia out of what I have bequeathed and devised to him. Lastly, I appoint my brother Caleb BUGLASS the executor of this my last will and testament hereby revoking all former or other wills by me made. [Signed]

*Will transcribed by Ruth Appleby (email 14/07/2015) sourced to Philadelphia Will Book T, page 556, No.66. Copy obtained from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, [www.hsp.org](http://www.hsp.org)*

Caleb in turn left Ralph's estates and his own estate in Grenada in trust for his second wife, Mary Early, and the daughters of that marriage, Ann and Hannah.

*Jane Bowen and Janet Ward*

## SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

**Berwick Advertiser, 9th June 1871**

### A COW SUSPECTED TO HAVE BEEN DRIVEN INTO THE RIVER

On Saturday a cow, the property of Mr Thomas Hogg, of the Salmon Inn, was observed struggling in the river almost opposite to the malt-house, and after some difficulty the animal was dragged on to *terra firma*. Crummie, however, was so much exhausted that it was found necessary to kill her. The cow, which had been grazing in the Pier Fields, is supposed to have been driven down the Pier steps into the river by some mischievous boys. A reward of £5- one half by the Association for the Prosecution of Felons, and other half by Mr Hogg- has been offered for the apprehension of the offender.

## **Berwick Advertiser, 9th June 1871**

### PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A BATHING STATION

Yesterday forenoon a preliminary meeting was held in the Committee Room of the Townhall, to consider what steps should be taken in order to construct a bathing station at the Greenses harbour. The Mayor was in the chair. A plan which had been prepared by Mr W. Wilson, plumber, Church Street, was laid before the meeting, by which it was proposed to construct the bathing station between the "Man's Hole" and the "Narrow Lane". Its breadth was estimated at seventy feet, and it would have a maximum depth of six feet. It was also proposed to provide a sluice by which the water could be drained off, and the bottom of the basin cleaned out when necessary. The Mayor intimated that he would issue handbills to convene a public meeting on Monday at twelve o'clock, when it was expected that Mr Gray would be present to give an estimate of the probable cost of the work, and a committee appointed to collect subscription.

## **Berwick Advertiser, 9th June 1871**

### HOW A VAGRANT SUCCEEDED IN RE-CLOTHING HIMSELF

At the Petty Sessions on Tuesday – before the Mayor and A. R. Lowrey, Esq. – a tramp, who gave his name as Frederick West, and represented himself to be a native of Bethnal Green, was charged with having maliciously torn his clothes into tatters while resident in the workhouse during the previous night. Mr Mitchell, master of the workhouse, stated that the accused was accommodated in one of the vagrants' wards on Monday evening and during the night he deliberately converted his habiliments into a bundle of rags. The reason which the prisoner assigned for his strange conduct was that his clothes were in such a ragged and filthy state that he could not possibly wear them any longer. In order that the fellow might be brought before the court Mr Mitchell said he was under the necessity of attiring him in some cast-off clothing. The prisoner, in reply to the Mayor, said his clothes were so very bad that he could not for shame appear in the streets. He had walked from Dunbar to "Coppersmith" on Monday. The Mayor – Oh, I did not know that the London people knew there was such a place as Coppersmith. The prisoner added that he had tramped from London to Glasgow, and left the latter city last week, with a view to return to the former. Mr Mitchell- he has been on his summer tour, but he does not like Scotland, and is not inclined to give the Scotch people a good name, for the

entertainment, I suppose, they gave him. He is, however, a civil sort of a lad, and not so refractory as the general run of his class. The Mayor thought the prisoner had given vent to his civility in rather a wild fashion by destroying his clothes. The charge not having been pressed the bench dismissed West with a suitable admonition and instructed the police to convey him without the precincts of the town.

*Carole Pringle*

***Please note that the contact details for the Friends are still :***

***FBDMA  
c/o Berwick Record Office  
Council Offices,  
Wallace Green  
Berwick-upon-Tweed  
TD15 1ED***

***Do remember to keep looking at our website where we include events not always listed in the newsletter and update the Photocentre index regularly as well as constantly adding new information – [www.berwickfriends.org.uk](http://www.berwickfriends.org.uk)***