

# FRIENDS OF SWALEDALE MUSEUM



## Newsletter No.12 Autumn 2011



## W elcome to the Autumn 2011 Newsletter

I now know that winter is coming, as the Museum closes at the end of October, and that means, at least for the volunteers, an end to a very interesting season, working alongside and getting to know other volunteers, and meeting so many lovely visitors. It has, as always, been a pleasure.

*Janet Bishop, Chair of the Friends of Swaledale Museum*

## C urator's Report

Despite the gloomy economic forecasts, thanks to our visitors and Friends we have kept on an even keel this year. In anticipation of fewer visitors we pulled the stops out with extra events, extra talks, exhibitions & activities which has helped us keep our profile up! I would like to thank our wonderful membership secretary Tracy Little for realising one of my key ambitions this year - to get more stories in the Press to help advertise our presence. She has responded with a stream of fascinating coverage, from the donation of 'John Wesley's Chair' to the Museum by Margaret Batty to features on the mysterious 'Adelaide' who gave her name to the lead mine level & keystone, the latter loaned by the Yoredale Mine & Cave Group.

We are also fortunate that stalwart Friends of the Museum have helped us in many other ways. One of our long term Friends, Dr Jonathan Morgan sadly died just over a year ago. He worked at Dr Williams's Library, the pre-eminent research library of English Protestant nonconformity. Established under the will of Dr Daniel Williams, the Library is one of the oldest open to the public still conducted on its original benefaction. We always looked forward to Jonathan's

annual visits with Alan Argent & Jane Giscombe, his tantalizing snippets of information about dialect & the history of local Nonconformism, his extensive purchases of second hand books from our shop, his enthusiasm & wry wit. We were also very surprised that he left £2000 to the Museum in his will. We are delighted



*The Knitting Group's version of the Royal wedding featured at Reeth School's celebrations in the Community Orchard before heading to London for a*

that we can use this very generous sum towards the creation of a special archive room over this winter. I would also like to thank Alan and Jane for their wonderful support.

Some of you may also remember Jean Henderson, the daughter of Jack

Wagstaff, who helped us greatly with our text panels on Chert Quarrying & local history. The family very kindly decided to nominate the Museum as her 'good cause', & money that would have gone on flowers at her funeral, has come to us. We are delighted that we have seen a good deal more of Bill this year, & other members of the family. We want to work on panels associated with May Sinclair & other female writers who have written about Swaledale & Arkengarthdale with the proceeds, ably assisted & advised by Jean's daughter Anne. It was Jean who first introduced me to May, & I feel that reminding visitors of her importance would be a good way of permanently thanking her for her help.

Some of the highlights of this year's events include the recent day in honour of Lawrence Barker in September. To celebrate his immense contribution to our knowledge of the history of the Dales we invited a first class group of speakers to talk on various aspects of the landscape & culture. The contributions of Tim Laurie, Robert White, Duncan Bythell, Keith Sweetmore, Richard Smith, Mike Gill, Ian Spensley & Janet Bishop were hugely appreciated by a packed audience. We are delighted that the day has been captured in a special edition of the Northern Mine Research Society's proceedings, which will be available via the Museum (please telephone or e-mail) from early December, thanks to the editorial work of Richard Smith.



*Some of the Artyfacts getting in the mood for Brief Encounter - we think this is technically known as an Undress Rehearsal!*

We have had three top class exhibitions this year. Our third show in association with the Richmond & Leyburn Embroiderers' Guild spotlighted small needlework accessories, & complemented the historical examples in the permanent collection. We are looking forward to next year's project, perhaps focussing on the theme of 'Commemoration'. Paul Steggles & David Harper brought us all the excitement of the lead mines with their spectacular underground photographs; we hope to make some of them a permanent feature as they have been so well received. We have also had the immense privilege of hosting Stuart Howat's photographs of 'Dales Folk'.



*Edith Owen with her own portrait in the Dales Folk Exhibition*

These stunning portraits have generated huge admiration, & I will greatly miss them. We know that

Stuart will soon be a stellar artist, & we can only feel proud to have been the first to host a solo show of his work. We do however hope to have some of his work in our 2012 show, which will explore the idea of the Object & Art, & will include work by Stuart's friend Tessa Lamb, the celebrated Edinburgh print-maker. *Cont on page 3*

**This Geissler Tube**, donated by the Waltons of Reeth belonged to Mrs Walton's father, John Davies, who was born in 1911 & became an electrical engineer. The tube is filled with a rarified gas & when a high voltage is passed through it makes it glow with beautiful iridescent colours, lighting up a room with a weird flickering light (hence the ghoul in the centre of the bulb!). If you would like to find out more about these 'toys' see J.W. Sims, *The Boy Electrician*, 1962. Our intrepid researchers are off to Glaisdale soon to see these objects in action at the Museum of Victorian Science!



### **SWAAG: The Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group ([www.swaag.org](http://www.swaag.org))**

Since our report for the Friends' Summer Newsletter, we have been awarded a Yorkshire Dales LEADER grant of nearly £37,000 for 'The Swaledale Project - 7000 Years of a Landscape and its People'. Funding is being made available through the Rural Development Programme for England, which is jointly funded by Defra & the EU. Over the period to December 2013, *The Swaledale Project* will bring to life the interaction between the physical environment & historic human settlement & activity in our two dales. Our programme will include surveys, records, reports & guides on the geology & vegetation of our area as they relate to past human activity; surveys, excavation & reports on a range of sites; regular guided walks; activities with local schools; liaison with local tourist providers to develop walking trails: & opportunities for volunteers to develop skills relating to all these activities. PLEASE monitor the Swaledale Project Activities & Project pages & our main SWAAG Home & Meetings pages for news of activities & events.



*Earthworks at the left- and right-hand sides of the large field at Cogden Hall*

On 7 September we published on the website SWAAG Archaeological Report No. 2 ('The Daggerstones Survey') on the very complex features in the fields around Daggerstones & Bank House above Healaugh, to which Jeremy & Pippa Morrogh-Ryan kindly gave us access. The report documents indications of occupation from the Bronze Age right through to the present.

We worked with local primary school pupils who produced in clay their interpretations of what modern-day rock art might look like, which were displayed in the Community Orchard in Reeth during the Swaledale Festival. Also during the Festival, SWAAG members led four guided walks (themed on geology, ancient woodland, mining & Maiden Castle) & a 'stationary walk' for people of limited mobility to point out the geological & historical features visible from the viewpoint at Reeth School. We repeated these from 25-30 July as the SWAAG contribution to the Festival of British Archaeology. On 22 July we held a very enjoyable flint-knapping workshop with Karl Lee, a nationally and internationally known flint-knapper, at Philip Bastow's workshop.



*'Rock Art' produced by local school children*

And of course people continue to record sites & finds in the database section of our website. Please note that recording is VERY important. Artefacts divorced from their context may be interesting but they lose much of their historical relevance.

Autumn will be busy with **opportunities for all to participate in excavation, geophysics training, surveying & field walks**. New members are always welcome: contact us through the website, the Museum, or in person (you know who most of us are).

*Peter Denison-Edson*



*Curator's Report continued from page 2*

Our summer tea party in the beautiful Community Orchard was also a huge success. After a slow start & spots of rain you all came out in force to huddle in the conservatory - we raised nearly £350! I don't think I have ever made so many consecutive cups of tea - so thank you immensely, both those who came & all the wonderful volunteers who baked and helped.

We have had some wonderful new acquisitions for both Museum & Archive. It is very difficult to select just a few, as they are all of interest & therefore of great value to us. Thanks to the Waltons we have added whole new sections to the Museum on dairying, ice cream production & electrical toys! Alan Forsyth is single-handedly making sure the history of the RECCE Corps is remembered in the dale, while the Swaledale Festival has kindly provided conservation boxes to house their archive which is coming under our stewardship.

This year has been marked by a growth in the number of our regular volunteer helpers. It is thanks to them that we have been open everyday from early April to the end of October. Gill Savage has transformed our archive database & organised a wonderful visit to Wathgill; Emily Dunn joined us before starting her MA at the Victoria and Albert Museum & was a real trooper - we do miss her now; Nicky Cocovini & Carol Dorman have made an absolutely ace duo, meeting & greeting with gusto. Carol has kept the shop in good order & Nicky has fascinated visitors with her hooky rug making. Christine Price has been incredibly thoughtful in helping with the refreshments at Fremington, teaming up with Anne Hewitt our craftswoman in residence to knit up the lovely wool &



*This beautiful little japanned dressing table pot has come all the way home from Australia! It was given to us by Maureen E. Kearton, & belonged to her Grandmother. Maureen has very fond memories of the Dales, & we are delighted to have found a special place for this in our Museum.*

manning the Museum, as well as heading our Knitting Group. Margaret Abson (& Judy when here) have provided local knowledge & woman power, while Marjorie Daniels has continued to bring delight most Wednesday afternoons with her spinning. In fact on some days there is definitely a party atmosphere! We have benefited hugely from the presence of Anne whose beautiful hand spun & dyed wools have graced our shop, it has been a real privilege to have her with us every Thursday, & many visitors have come to the Museum to see her. Thank you too Christine and Michael McDermott who have taken the helm at short notice, & joined our happy band!

A few extracts from this year's visitors' book to end: Fern Durling thought that the Museum was 'perfect for our D of E presentation!'; Fred Robin from Perth in Western Australia wrote: 'Do not ever close!'; the Nivens thought us 'an exemplary local museum', the Muirs of Gretna in Scotland were 'Glad to see someone is keeping the history alive', while Mary Syke from Dublin writes 'Brought back memories of my uncle Sam Smith delivering goods around the dale'. while Bob & Marion Hill from Milton Keynes thought we were 'great...& not just 'things' its about the people who lived here'.

A big thank you to Janet Bishop for organising this year's excellent lecture programme, chairing the Friends' Group so well & also doing regular Museum duty. Janet together with the Friends Committee are one of the main reasons we keep going. We look forward to seeing you at the Christmas Party, & thank you all for your support this year!  
*Helen Bainbridge*

**T**he exhibition of 'Dales Portraits' opened in August with a private showing for the 'sitters' who promptly found themselves in front of the lens once again as the party included the Owen family from Ravenseat who were being filmed by ITV for the new series of 'The Dales'.

Last summer Stuart Howat left his post as a local primary school teacher to pursue his passion for photography at the London College of Communication. During his Easter break, he began a series of portraits documenting people living & working in Swaledale, A'dale & Wensleydale. Armed with a linen backdrop, he visited nearby markets, cattle marts & remote farms to photograph local people. His inspiration for the project was a talk given at the Museum in 2010, on the history of photography in the Dales from the first mobile studios onwards. "I loved the idea of taking the studio to the people," he says, "and photographing people who were not necessarily used to having their pictures taken". The resulting portraits have a 'timeless' quality & many look as if they could have been taken a century or more ago.

These 'Dales Portraits' along with an accompanying book were displayed as part of his final exhibition & contributed towards his graduating with a distinction. Stuart is extremely grateful for the warmth & hospitality shown by local people & their eagerness to help & participate in this project, & was delighted to bring the photographs back to the dales to share with the people who helped create them.

Stuart recently won a portrait competition securing him a contract with a London based publishing company. Currently spreading his time between there and his native North Yorkshire he is keen to develop his Dales Portraits series and would love to hear from anyone living in the dales who would like to participate. Stuart can be contacted through his website: [www.stuarthowatphotography.com](http://www.stuarthowatphotography.com) or call 07896-019972. If you missed the pictures in the Museum you can see a virtual version on the same website & some of them are on the Museum's Facebook page too.



*Filmed for posterity - or at least, for next year's series of The Dales*

## New Acquisition rescued from a jumble sale

An album in rather tatty condition, with its spine having come loose, has been rescued from a jumble sale & given to the Museum. The label on the front, below the embossed lavender & blue pansies, says "Poems by J. N. C." This was Joseph N Cooke, born in 1864 in High Coniscliffe. The poems were written between



1914 & 1943, many of them as songs for the Salvation Army, & all of them demonstrating his deep & abiding love of God. Some are annotated that they have been submitted to a publisher; some are written about places in the Dales, such as Reeth, Richmond & Muker; & some have been written by other

people. Almost all the poems are handwritten & signed J. N. Cooke, then stuck into the album, some overlapping others. He wrote about courage, the Empire, God's love, the two World Wars, women, family & the King's Jubilee. This has a note against it stating that it was 'accepted by his Late Majesty, King George V'.

A newspaper cutting, unfortunately without a photograph of him, says that he had lived near Blackpool, within sight of the Goodwin Sands. Joseph Cooke died in 1944 having lived for several years at the Sir Edward Walker Homes, 9 Coniscliffe Road, Darlington.

### God's Loving Kindness

Throughout my life, thy loving Hand hath led me,  
In all its varied conflicts joys and fears.  
From sin's deep poverty and tribulation,  
Hast made me rich, and dried away my tears.  
Oh God! How wonderful Thy loving kindness,  
To think of me, whose sin did cause Thee grief.

Janet Bishop

**H**istory came back to life & met fiction in the summer courtesy of Reuben Frankau (known to members for his research into Percival's Bus Company) who arranged a recreation of one of the photographs in his family album.

Just a few miles from Reeth is Ellerton Abbey which found fame in its own right as the home of Mrs Pumphrey & Tricky-Woo in the BBC's *All Creatures Great & Small*. In late 1932 Major Charles Montagu Hewlett retired from the army whilst stationed at Catterick & took over the tenancy of the house from the Thorp family. The Hewletts lived there until 1940 & kept a wonderful record of their time in the dale in a series of photograph albums which are now in possession of Reuben, Major Hewlett's great grandson. Unusually for a family album the pictures are well labelled, it's possible for us to identify many of the locations in the pictures & of course Reuben is able to fill in much of the background.

The Museum has been allowed to use several of the photographs to produce a series of sepia tinted cards based on 'Pictures from a Swaledale Album' including this one (*top right*) of Cynthia, the Hewletts' eldest daughter, about to set off for a picnic with Brigadier Mike Hinde. The Brigadier (known as Ting-a-Ling) was a frequent visitor to Ellerton, invariably arriving with a substantial saloon car which on this occasion was a Humber.



In early August Reuben was able to arrange for a visit by Harvey Cooke of Northampton, Treasurer of the Post-Vintage Humber Car Club who were holding a rally at Newby Hall. Harvey & his wife kindly drove their 1935 Humber Pullman up to Ellerton where we were able to reconstruct the picnic photograph for Reuben's family album & admire a rather classy car at the same time. Ellerton Abbey is now a private house again so many thanks to Lee Lowther for allowing us to take over her home for the morning!

The cards are available from the Museum at £2.20 each.

*Also at Ellerton, Phil Johnston is looking for any information on the Johnson family who ran Ellerton Abbey Farm in the 1920s. If you can help please contact Tracy Little 01748-884759 or email [tracy@swaledale.org](mailto:tracy@swaledale.org)*

## THE "RECCE" CORPS AND REETH

The Reconnaissance Corps of the British Army was formed in 1942 to provide a modern, heavily armed, motorised series of regiments which would scout ahead of an infantry division during the advance. It would also provide flank protection or cover during a withdrawal.

The training for the individual soldier, known as a trooper, was long & intensive because of the complexity of the vehicles, weapons & personal skills needed for the task.

Having survived the IQ tests, mechanical aptitude & 'trade' courses, weapon training, driving & maintenance, & radio, including morse, the Battle School at Reeth was by far the toughest before actual combat.

The Assault Course began just above the camp which was on the east bank of Arkle Beck in a farm which had been taken over by the army. The course crossed over & through the river, up & down the fellside & of course, was undertaken in full battle order of live fire & thunder-flashes. It was by far the toughest & longest of the five or six others which I had completed at other places.

The battle schemes, section & troop exercises & forced marches through Gunnerside, Muker & to Richmond, generally in rain or sleet in the late summer of 1945 all added to the fun.

In 1946 the Corps was disbanded, almost unnoticed & we dispersed to all points of the compass. If you were a 'Recce' lad, the Museum & your old comrades would like to hear from you.

Alan Forsyth



*RECCE Corps badge donated by Alan Forsyth*



**A cautionary tale from the curator ..**

In the last newsletter we reproduced a picture of a mystery object. Well the problems ensuing from the discovery of its identity are worth re-telling!

It turns out to be a humane killer, patented in 1919 for despatching animals. However it is also a rare section 5 weapon; that is prohibited because it fires ammunition still available. In order to keep the object it requires de-commissioning involving dealers, & despatch to either Birmingham or London, This would cost well over £100 so sadly we have had to give this object to the Police - & it will be sent to a steel smelter, alas. Thanks to Inspector Nigel Slater from Bedale for taking it away, Anne Maria Seaton from Firearms HQ at Newby Wiske for her help & advice, & to Paul Fowell Fire Arms Enquiry & Explosives Liason Officer for explaining the whole thing to us! Who ever said a curator's job was a boring one?

**Mystery Object**

Hopefully not so lethal as the last Mystery Object - these are a collection of small hallmarked silver items with a ring at one end & a small disc like a tiny tamper at the other end.  
Any suggestions gratefully received!



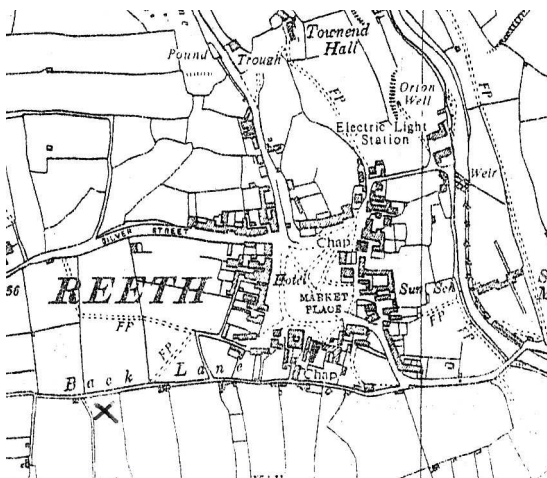
**Quakers** were very active in Swaledale during the 17<sup>th</sup> century in spite of bitter persecution. During the following century the increasing lead mining industry gave rise to a growing population, including children, in Reeth. A Quaker, Leonard Raw, became concerned about the education of young folk in the town & before his death ensured that the residue of his estate should be used to build a school at Reeth & to support a master who “should be a member of the Society of Friends...” He died in 1785 aged 31.

Two years later his brother George bought a plot of land for £2, “lying in the high end of the close called the Wheat Close adjoining a lane called the Back Lane...extending the whole breadth of the said Wheat Close & thirty yards in length from the said Back Lane.” A modern dwelling now stands on the site and is called *Quaker Garth*.

The school was a one storey, single roomed stone building, 35 feet by 20 feet. The Quaker Flags ensured that children arrived with relatively mud free boots, and are a reminder of the first Quaker School in Reeth.

*Don Cole*

*Don has kindly provided us with this map marking the exact site of the first school in Wheat Close & the additional information that part of the original school wall is still incorporated into the field wall on the south side of Back Lane.*



*X marks the spot where the school stood, roughly opposite the present children's playground.*

**Talking of tampers....**

This strange object (*left*) might look like a bit of tree with a handle - in fact it is a highly important survival. According to one of our visitors, Robert Huxford of the Institute of Civil Engineers Municipal Expert Panel, he thinks it might be the only example left of an historic flag tamper. He visited us in May and became very excited when he saw it. The label says that it was the property of J Pedley of



**Brief Encounters**

When we threw down the challenge to the celebrated Artyfacts - 'could they make a whole evening's entertainment from our collection of underwear?' - we thought we had really had them. However with their usual energy, enthusiasm, eccentricity and élan - they pulled it off! On 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> October they filled the Memorial Hall in Reeth, & gave us all a hugely humorous treat. We would like to thank them for the hard work, imagination & professionalism in producing such a heart warming performance, & raising £1000 for our archive room project. Five years on from *Beauty & the Beast* (as televised ) it is wonderful to see them going from strength to strength. They bring so much happiness & cheer, thank you the ARTYFACTS!

We will be taking the some of the hand made items (*right*) from the Museum shop to Richmond Station for the Arts and Craft Fair on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November from 10am to 4pm. Entry is **free** & there will be 27 stalls selling 'original artwork & hand crafted gifts all designed & made by the skilled craftspeople living in Richmond & the Dales'.



June Hall with Annemor Sundbo who took this year's Knitting Day at Hudson House when we had a record turnout to learn all about Norwegian Knitting. Many thanks to Elizabeth Johnston for asking to have Annemor and to all those who came. Annemor bought a 'shoddy mill' in Norway and discovered, while shredding the knitted garments, the variety of traditional patterns. Soon she was keeping samples as a record of the rich design diversity of Norwegian knitting, and we were fortunate to have her in Reeth for a day.

**Friends' Programme of Talks 2011 - 2012**  
**All to be held in Fremington Sunday School**

**9<sup>th</sup> November, 2pm**

Glenys Marriott,

'How to publish your history – two different approaches'  
*Those who left the dales v The Cumpstons of Hull, Master Mariners*

**14<sup>th</sup> December, 6pm**

*Friends Christmas Party in Reeth Memorial Hall*

**No lecture in January**

**15<sup>th</sup> February, 2pm**

June Hall,

*Folk Knitting Traditions across Northern Europe*

**14<sup>th</sup> March, 2pm**

Jane Hatcher

*Isabella - A Swaledale Foundling*

**18<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30pm**

Janet Bishop

*Alexander Fothergill and the Turnpike Road*

**16<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm**

Jeffrey Gardiner

*The Hartley Colliery Disaster*

**13<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm**

Tony Nicolson, University of Teesside (retired)

*'In the Attic'*

**18<sup>th</sup> July, 7.30pm**

Gill Savage

*Safe haven or battle ground? Is the Ministry of Defence protecting archaeology on its land or destroying it?*

COST: £3 for Friends and £4 for Visitors

More information : 01748 884118

[museum.swaledale@btinternet.com](mailto:museum.swaledale@btinternet.com)

Please watch the local press for occasional alterations to time/date & posters and, if coming from a distance, **please check with the Museum** before setting off.

The full programme is available on the website

[www.swaledalemuseum.org](http://www.swaledalemuseum.org)

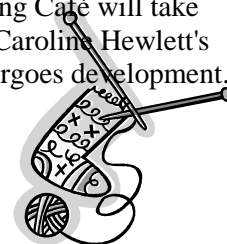
**CULTURAL OLYMPIAD**

The Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Dales Countryside Museum have sent us the following request for information. The volunteers at the Dales Countryside Museum want to "develop activities and ideas focusing on competition (traditional games, sports, village and agricultural shows and the competitive spirit within Dales communities) linking with the Olympic theme". All the UK National Parks are to be involved in the Olympiad with a common theme for 2012. The National Parks theme for 2012 is 'Winning Landscapes'. This will combine Olympic celebrations with recreational links along with a focus on young people". Friends of the Dales Countryside Museum are collecting photos, sports programmes, old sports equipment, indoor games, old newspaper articles and modern press cuttings from the Darlington & Stockton Times courtesy of Pip Land. If you think you can help then please do contact Geoffrey Keeble directly at [g.b.keeble1@btinternet.com](mailto:g.b.keeble1@btinternet.com) telephone 01969-650774 or leave a message at the Dales Countryside Museum on 666210 not at the Swaledale Museum!

**KNITTING CAFE DATES:**

Not just for Knit Wits! All sorts of crafts have been turning up so bring along whatever you're into. Everyone welcome, all at 2pm. From November to April the Knitting Café will take place at the Vicarage in Reeth thanks to Caroline Hewlett's offer of a 'home' while the Museum undergoes development. The dates will be :

28 November	23 April
12 December	28 May
30 January	25 June
27 February	23 July
26 March	



**We found Adelaide!**

In the last Newsletter we appealed for a photograph of Adelaide Denys, later Lady Adelaide Lamont, who gave her name to the Adelaide Level lead mine in 1865. Not even the descendants of the Denys family had a picture of her but Mary Lamb from the Clan Lamont Society came up trumps with a photograph (*right with her baby daughter*) from an old book & a description of the lady herself in relation to her marriage to Sir James Lamont.



"Whether his choice was due to supreme good fortune, or to the possible fact that in this case love, instead of being blind, was possessed of a penetrating insight into character, it is impossible to say, but certain it is that in all the wide world he could not have found a lady more fitted by a gentle disposition & devotion to duty to fill the difficult position of being his wedded wife."

This was written by the couple's daughter & there's a hint of just how difficult a position marriage to Sir James proved to be in a reference by Sir George William Denys, Adelaide's father, to an episode on Blakethwaite Moor between himself & James Lamont in which Sir George claims to have been insulted, just a few years after the marriage. A further reference in family papers at the North Yorkshire County Record Office hints that by 1880 Adelaide was even considering a judicial separation although her family advised her against it.

Sir James died in 1912 & Adelaide survived him until 1925. Sadly none of their three children married & there are no descendants alive today to be proud of the fact that the entrance to Adelaide's namesake mine has been restored.

The story goes on however, & we've now started following the family back on the trail of their connection to the Swaledale lead mines – en route we've discovered a notorious 19<sup>th</sup> century court case along with links to the East India Company, assorted Jacobite plots, Judge Jeffries & possible links to an early 18<sup>th</sup> century French ballet dancer. All will be revealed in the next instalment!

*Tracy Little (with thanks to Mary Lamb & Alan Gibson)*

Don't forget to come to the Friends'

**2011 CHRISTMAS PARTY**

14th December, 6pm - 10pm at **Reeth Memorial Hall**

Any contributions of food/drink will be gratefully received!

On the same day we will have a Christmas Stall in the Hall for those last minute presents, from 3pm - tea, coffee & mince pies will be served - so do come along & support the Museum Shop

