



FRIENDS OF SWALEDALE MUSEUM

Newsletter No.3 Summer 2007

News from the Curators

We have been very busy over the winter months, so do come and see what we have been doing! The old front door to the School has been reinstated with a splendid set of steps in local sandstone quarried from near Keld. This gives us a greater sense of space and another entrance/exit for greater flexibility. The ceiling has been painted white and a new cork floor laid upstairs. We are in the process of introducing new sections to the Museum on local geology and archaeology with the advice and help of Mike Gill and Tim Laurie. We have put an application in to the Northern Mines Research Society for help with 11 new proposed panels on lead mining, bringing them up-to-date and with more photographs and diagrams.

We were very sad to hear that John Hardy, one of our greatest supporters died in February this year. We will miss his regular visits, although he will always be part of the Museum, because of all his generous loans that make the collection so special.

Our 'mobile museum' has been on tour with talks given to many local groups including the Dales Wives, Muker Ladies Guild, Low Row Ladies Circle, Friends of the Dales Countryside Museum, and Giggleswick WI. These sessions have brought information, objects and a poet-in-residence to us. We are delighted that Chris Considine will be visiting us regularly to gain inspiration for a



The new entrance

collection of poems based on the Museum and its collection.



The cast of *Beauty and the Beast* - Photo: *Scenic View*

Forthcoming Events

- 28 May, 2pm**
Curriculum Kitchen demonstration in the Museum Kitchen
- 13 June, 7.30pm**
Janet Bishop - A window onto the Poor of Arkengarthdale in the 18th century
- 16 June, 2.30pm**
Strawberry Tea & Artyfacts Concert
- 7 July, 7.30pm**
The Harp Singers
- 22 August, 7.30pm**
Barbara Buckingham - 'Remembering a Dales Farming Childhood'.
- 19 September, 2pm**
Talk - Land records for local historians - Linda Turnbull (NYCRO)
- 29 September**
A Country Dance in Reeth Memorial Hall
- 24 October, 2pm**
Alan Mills - A window onto the Poor of Reeth in the 19th century
- 31 October, 7pm**
AGM

See back page for details of walks to explore the archaeological and lead mining heritage of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale, and a programme of afternoon talks during the Swaledale Festival.

If you want to hear more about this come along to the Museum on 5th June when she will be reading her work and talking about the residency. This is part of another first for the Museum, a whole day of the Festival Programme in the Museum. Do come and support us. Throughout the Festival we will also be presenting a talk a day on aspects of life and work in the Dales, at 2.30pm. See our website and posters for more information, speakers include Duncan Bythell, Marion Moverley, Jennifer Jarvis, Kate Trusson and Alan Mills, as well as myself.



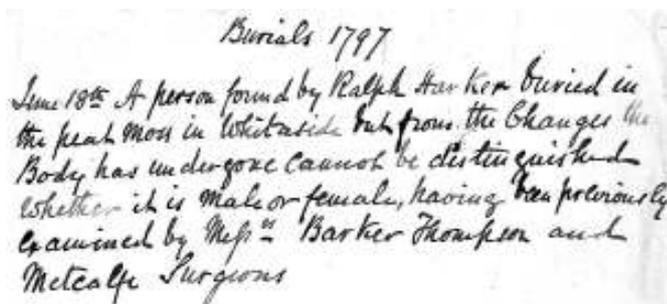
A Victorian sampler by Elizabeth Thompson - one of the many items illustrating the 'Fabric of the Dale'.

We are also developing our concert series. On 16 June the Reeth Artyfacts, fresh from their sensational success - the Pantomime, will be performing a medley of music and performance, followed on 7 July with a concert by the HARP singers. Tickets will go quickly so do book as soon as possible as places will be limited. If you missed the Pantomime, *Beauty and the Beast* will be the subject of a whole Dales Diary programme that will be broadcast this Autumn. We are tremendously grateful to all those involved in the pantomime who gave so much time and energy, to create such a memorable production. The money raised will go towards a much-needed bookcase for the ever expanding library and archive.

We have been dealing with an increasing number of family history orientated enquiries, as well as helping out with house histories. More unusual subjects we have tackled are 'old cars before 1930s' and anything to do with the local buses, part of a larger project by Reuben Frankau on Percival's. Our links to the Upper Dales Family History Group are invaluable, and Kate Trusson and I very much enjoyed giving a

talk to their group on 'Fabric of the Dale'. This you can hear again, with Kate in charge as part of the Festival Talks Programme.

I would like to thank all those who came and helped with the annual pre-Easter opening clean-up, which got us off to an excellent start. We have already had lots of visitors, including Phil and Sandy from Coventry who thought the Museum was 'cracking', while a couple from Rugby thought it was 'fascinating, full of unexpected extras!' Someone else commented 'Wonderful and Interesting. I wish my home town had the same'. We continue to be very grateful to our regular volunteers, especially Maggie Pilgrim and Gail Hall who tackle a mind-boggling range of jobs, from de-rusting and polishing Dr Speir's medical instruments to cataloguing the archives. We are delighted to welcome Jill Curry who is working on the Edmund Cooper papers and Aileen Jones & Rosemary Hawksworth, who are piloting a name and place index of the archives. We are fortunate that material keeps coming in, including an Inspector's Journal for the early 20th century in which there is a cryptic note on a piece of loose paper - see below. Does anyone know anymore about this?



I would also like to thank Keith Sweetmore, North Yorkshire County Archivist, for his invaluable advice and support.

Don't forget to visit our shop. We have a wide range of completely unique gifts, including hand-made cards, and of course our booklets on various aspects of Dale's history from Lead mining to Methodism, Dialect to Drinks! We have lots of second-hand books and journals, including back copies of *The Dalesman*, old maps, in fact something to suit everyone. Thank you all for supporting us, we need you, and appreciate you! I am just off into the Museum to prepare for a visit from 40 children from Wigginton School ...

Helen Bainbridge

Prehistoric Swaledale

While cataloguing papers in our local history archive we found mention of local antiquarian finds of arrow heads and bronze axes made in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Most of these finds are now in major museums and galleries such as York Museum, and the British Museum. This set us thinking that as the local Museum for the area we should represent this fascinating prehistoric past in our displays and in so doing, provide an account of the earliest landscape development of Swaledale. By great good fortune an invitation to hear a talk by the archaeologist Tim Laurie in Richmond, resulted in a meeting at the Museum, and Mr Laurie's generous offer to help us with the new displays representing Swaledale's prehistoric past.



Remains of a round house below Dickie Edge
Photo: *Shirley Gale*

This project began with a series of walks organised by Mr Laurie, to allow a 'guinea pig' group to learn about the prehistory of the area and contribute towards a photographic display of archaeological features that appear in Swaledale. The archaeological wealth of Swaledale is subtle and not easily recognised by the casual observer. It is more easily discernible when the sun is low.

Accordingly a programme of regular Monday walks took place between February and April. It included visits to see and photograph sites of all periods, mainly but not exclusively on the high heather moorland. We visited the locations with earliest evidence for human activity in Swaledale - lithic finds from Middle Stone Age (Mesolithic) and Early Neolithic occupation sites and the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age rock art on the high Swale/Tees/Greta Uplands.

Closer to Reeth, we visited Harkerside, Calverside and Gunnerside where Bronze Age co-axial (with parallel boundaries) field systems, unenclosed settlements, burnt mounds, ring cairns and round barrows have survived on the open moorland above the present day pastures. Burnt mounds in particular were new to many of us; these unassuming, often grassy mounds, are a large pile of burnt stone; it is believed that stones were heated in a fire and then had water ladled over them to make copious amounts of steam within a tent-like structure – an effective form of prehistoric sauna! We also visited the late Prehistoric Iron Age and Roman Age settlements within the present day pastures on Harkerside and above Healaugh and of course the enigmatic cross valley earthworks known as the Grinton-Fremington Dikes - now recognised as being of early post Roman Age and interpreted as Dark Age Boundary Earthworks.

Whilst out walking it became clear that the prehistoric woodland landscape of Swaledale was very different to the largely open treeless landscape of today. However, evidence for the character and disposition of the prehistoric woodland can be seen in the form of crowded tree remains at the base of 5m deep blanket peat on the highest moors (above 500mOD). At lower levels, precious fragments of native, semi-natural woodland survive to remind us of the character and variety of the woodland once widespread on soils derived from widely differing geological strata during later prehistory. These fragments can be seen today: at the head of remote tributary dales, as at Waitegate Wood on the Army Feldom Range, and within the marvellous woods of Lower Swaledale, for example on Whitcliffe Scar at Willance's Leap, where a single ancient native broad leafed lime tree survives on the very edge of a limestone scar inaccessible to grazing animals (and to any sensible walker without a rope!).

The resulting maps of the sites and photographs will be drawn together by Mr Laurie in a PowerPoint presentation that will be given as a talk, and turned into permanent display panels for the Museum. The highlight will be the loan to the Swaledale Museum Collection Trust of Mr Laurie's small, but important, lithic collection from Cringley Hill, Reeth Low Moor, a fine local reference collection for the Late Neolithic period..

These new displays will make an important and essential introduction to the rest of the Museum displays that explore life and work in the Dales from the seventeenth to mid twentieth century, moving from leadmining to tourism, both of which depend on our geological heritage. We also hope to organise occasional walks with Tim in the future which will be open to all Friends.

Alan Mills



Robbed out Boundary wall on
Calver Hill

Edmund Cooper Papers Archive

In my capacity as one of Helen's team of volunteer archivists, it has been my great privilege, over the last few months to archive the Museum's collection of 'Edmund Cooper' Papers, which were given to the Museum by Edmund's daughter, Jocelyn Campbell, who lives in Arkengarthdale. As a good Friend of the Museum, Jocelyn realized the historical value of the bundles of papers which she had looked after for years & decided to pass them on to the Museum so that the community could benefit.

Edmund Cooper was a local historian, who wrote many books on various aspects of life in the two dales, from pre-history to the late 1900s. Without the luxury of computers he had to gather all his material on paper, which has been a tremendous benefit to us, as we have inherited sheets of interesting gems of jottings which, in this computer age, would probably have ended up in the bin.

As a novice archivist, Helen warned me that the idea was to glance at each piece of paper & catalogue it in order. This is, I discovered, easier said than done, as I felt compelled to read every scrap which came before my eyes, devouring every juicy morsel of information. I only wish that my brain's capacity to retain said morsels was still up to the job!

The following are just a few of items which fired my imagination:-

In 1274 a Manorial survey stated that 'Hugh son of Henry holds the village of Fremington by the service of one-fourth part of a knight's fee and pays yearly one sporting dog'.



In 1834 The Royal Commission for the Poor Law sent out a questionnaire to Rural areas, which was answered by John Harland (an inhabitant) for Reeth Township.

Q - Do the Labourers in your area change their service more frequently now than formerly?

A - There is little or no change in this parish with respect to Labourers living under their employers' roofs. Labourers do change their service more frequently. The lowness of the wages may induce more frequent changes, with the hope of bettering their conditions; but I believe the principle causes are to be found in over-education, and the pains which have been taken by evil disposed persons to make the labouring classes dissatisfied with their situation.

The minutes of the Arkengarthdale Select vestry records in Nov 1819 state that Elizabeth Hutchinson of Reeth was granted clothes for a place if she could find one. If not, "she may go into the workhouse & the vestry will find her work and maintain her." She was granted a pair of clogs & a blanket.

In 1956 a letter from The British Museum dates a skull & tooth which Edmund Cooper had sent them as being post-Pleistocene, probably between 2 and 4 thousand years old.

Jocelyn, as the first person to benefit from being immersed in this amazing collection, a huge 'thank you' from me, *Jill Curry*.

Mystery Object



Sadly the last edition's mystery object remains just that, as no-one had any suggestions. See if you can do any better at identifying this one. No prizes but you are allowed to feel very smug if you can work it out without visiting the Museum to look for it!

Who wants to be a Volunteer...

Hello, my name is Maggie Pilgrim, and I have been working as a volunteer most Tuesdays in the Museum for about a year. Some time ago I approached Helen to explore the possibility of using the Museum as a work placement to support the Degree in Business Studies that I am currently undertaking at Leeds Metropolitan University. Since coming on board I have performed many duties that have been both thought provoking and rewarding, including cataloguing the archives, devising a visitor survey, developing shop stock, and helping with the new Fire Risk Assessment forms. I have also learnt the subtle skills of meeting and greeting the public who come to the Museum. They have provided various insights into how the Museum operates. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here so far, and look forward to further challenges!

Maggie Pilgrim

Don't forget to look at the Museum website at
www.swaledalemuseum.org

The Newsletter is now also available by email in a pdf format. If you would prefer to receive it this way, please send an email to jandt@cennick.fsnet.co.uk and we will arrange it.

Confessions of a Family History Addict (Part 2)

In the last Newsletter Jill explained how she first became hooked on family history; the 'confession' continues with the story of tracking down Martha Hird.

When I first moved to Grinton in 1983 my father gave me a Bible which he thought had come from his grandmother Annie Keenleyside who had bought it at a jumble sale but as the name in the front said 'Martha Hird of Fremington', he thought it might be of interest to me. I didn't take a lot of notice of it at that time but having discovered since that my 4th great grandfather was a William Hird buried at Grinton, I felt I ought to find out who this lady was and what connection we had.

It proved quite easy to find out that she was the last daughter of William, a lead miner, and Betty Hird (née Cherry) of Grinton, baptised on 1st Jan 1828. The 1841 census has Martha living as a family servant to Thomas & Mary Kendall of Grinton. In 1844 her father died and in 1846 she purchased the Bible in which she wrote her name, the date and that she was living at Fremington Lodge. I still haven't found out where Fremington Lodge actually was. A good guess would be one of the ancillary buildings to Draycott Hall but if any of you have any better ideas I would be delighted to hear them!

By the 1851 census both Martha & the Kendalls had left the area. I could find no more reference to Martha until she appeared in the 1881 census, aged 52, as a lady domestic at 232 Westgate Rd, Newcastle. Head of household was one John Harper Robinson, who I later discovered was a mining agent. At this point I loose track of her but upon going to a workshop at Reeth, my family history guru, Marion Moverley, suggested that perhaps I couldn't find her because her name had changed, perhaps she got married. I thought it unlikely that a domestic servant in her 50s would get married but started to look into it.

In 1883 Mrs Robinson died and 3 years later, Martha, the clever girl, bags her employer!!! December 1886 saw Martha marring the widowed Mr Robinson and the 1901 census has Martha Robinson, aged 73, at 5 South View, Barnard Castle with her husband and his son.

I promptly ordered an old map of Barney but South View was not mentioned. My neighbour Veronica & I just happened to go to The Bowes Museum to see the Turner exhibition soon after and as we were going along a cut through behind the high street I yelled 'stop the car' - luckily she is used to my eccentricities - I had spotted a stone sign on a row of houses saying South View. Referring back to my map I could see that this would have been a single terrace of stone built houses, swallowed up by an expanding town to become part of a long road. Then later the same month I managed to find her death (as I now had her new name) on 11 Nov 1904 & when the certificate came I discovered that she had died of '7 days gastritis senility' at 9 John St, Hartlepool - the home of her niece, Annie Keenleyside's mother. Mr Robinson had died in 1901, so when Martha passed away in her niece's home, her Bible was passed down through the family so that five generations later I could spend several years piecing together this lady's life and enjoying every frustrating minute of it.

Jill Curry

Songs and Poems of the Two Dales

Would you like to contribute to a small research project? I am collecting copies of songs and poems which used to be sung or recited in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale, with the intention of presenting an archive to the Museum. Most Dales residents and many visitors know the words and music of the two songs, 'Beautiful Dale' and 'Beautiful Swaledale', but there are a number of other songs and poems which are not heard so often these days. I am also interested in the types of songs which, whilst not written in the Dales, were heard at local concerts in former times, such as 'The White Cockade'.

Some of you may recall that Trevor Woolston carried out a small research project some years ago in connection with a WEA class which he ran on Dales music. He has donated notes made in connection with this class to the Museum and I have had access to them. In the notes he makes reference to a book of poems by Thomas Coates of Reeth and to a book called 'The Songs of Northern England' by John Stokoe 1893. If anyone has access to these works I would be most grateful to hear of them.

If, therefore, you would be interested in keeping any eye or ear out for any music and songs which you think would be suitable for the archive please let me know. You can contact me either by leaving word at the Museum or by my e-mail which is: veronica@swaledale.org In connection with the archive project I am hoping to carry out some more recording of people speaking in Swaledale. Whilst I have been given some advice re recording equipment and converting it so that it can be heard by others if there is anyone out there with an interest in technical matters such as editing tapes I would be very grateful if they could get in touch as matters technical are not my strong point.

Veronica Sarries



SUMMER WALKS PROGRAMME

Monday 2nd July - Roger Pettican - Mining in the Beldi Hill area. This is a rare opportunity to see a virtually intact lead mining complex - including hushes, mines, a smelt mill and a restored dressing floor. Meet in the car park at Keld at 2pm (nb subject to approval of landowner)

Monday 16th July - Roger Pettican - Mining in Gunnerside Gill. Visit the extensive remains of what was once a large and important lead mining area, including Sir Francis and Bunton levels and their associated dressing floors, the Bunton and Great North Hush and the Lownathwaite mines. Meet in the car park at Gunnerside at 2pm

Monday 30th July - Alan Mills - Mining in and around Sleil Gill. Discover levels, hushes, dressing floors and a crushing mill in the dramatic scenery of Sleil Gill. Meet in the public car park at Langthwaite at 2pm

Mondays 13th & 27th August, & 24th September - Neil Dyson - Lead mining around Langthwaite. Explore the extensive surface remains of Arkengarthdale's industrial past including hushes, mines and the smelt mill. Meet in the public car park at Langthwaite at 2pm.

Monday 10th September - Alan Mills - Uncovering Swaledale's past. Discover evidence of human occupation in Swaledale from the Bronze Age through to post-Roman times, spanning 4000 years or more, including roundhouses, field systems, burnt mounds and burial cairns. Meet at the Museum at 2pm

Each walk will be approximately 3-4 miles over moderate terrain, lasting 2½ - 3 hours. Bring a drink, and wear suitable clothing and stout footwear. There is no specific charge but donations to the Museum are welcome!

The programme may be subject to change - please contact the Museum on 01748 884118 before setting off.

AFTERNOON TALKS DURING THE SWALEDALE FESTIVAL

A series of daily talks presenting different aspects of the dales through time. The talks are all in the Museum, at 2.30pm. They will be about an hour long followed by refreshments. Cost £5 which includes entrance to the Museum & the talk, (or £3 for Friends of the Museum). Please contact Helen Bainbridge on 01748 884118 or email to museum@swaledale.org for tickets, as seats will be limited.

Sunday 27th May Alan Mills, Chairman of Friends of the Swaledale Museum, Treasurer of the Northern Mines Research Group - 'Swaledale's Leadmining Heritage'.

Monday 28th May Helen Bainbridge, Curator of the Swaledale Museum - 'Lost Meanings and Forgotten Uses: Objects from the Swaledale Museum Collection'.

Tuesday 29th May Duncan Bythell - 'Paupers, Potholes and Privies - Local Government in Swaledale in the 19th and 20th centuries'.

Wednesday 30th May Marion Moverley - 'Travelling Through The Dales'.

Thursday 31 May Helen Bainbridge - 'Swaledale in Print - Plays, poetry and prose that feature the Dale from Domesday Book to Alan Bennett'.

Friday 1 June Kate Trusson - 'Fabric of the Dale: Textiles that Reflect Life in the Dales'.

Saturday 2 June Jennifer Jarvis - 'Mapping the North Riding 1600-1850'.

Sunday 3 June
Alan Mills - 'Swaledale's Poor - the nineteenth century workhouse'.

Monday 4 June
Helen Bainbridge - 'Swaledale seen through the eyes of May Sinclair, *avant garde* authoress'.

Tuesday 5 June SWALEDALE MUSEUM DAY for the Festival 10.30-5.30. Talk, Poetry Readings & Performance (see Festival brochure).

Wednesday 6 June Helen Bainbridge - 'Shopping and Shops in Reeth, 1890s-1920s'. A short walk round the Green. Meet in the Museum.



19th Century Arkengarthdale Lead Miners

STOP PRESS:

Confirmation has just been received of the NMRS grant (see curator's report) to provide new explanatory panels for the lead mining section.