



FRIENDS OF SWALEDALE MUSEUM

Newsletter No.7 Summer 2009

The Friends are delighted to welcome their new Chairman, Janet Bishop, who was elected at the AGM in October....

I was nine when I first stayed in the Dales, at the Cat Hole Inn, in Keld, and until we moved here in 2000, we had at least one holiday here every year. My first holiday with my future husband was spent youth hostelling in the Dales. When he was made redundant from his job in Cambridgeshire, we thought he could work from anywhere; Arkengarthdale then seemed a perfect place, and it still feels perfect today.



Before we moved, I had studied at Ruskin College in Oxford, and having got the studying bug late in life, I then did a three year local history course at Lancaster. I am now in my third year of a Cultural History MA at Teesside and, having become involved in the Museum, for my dissertation I am looking at how women's work is represented in local history museums. Since moving here I have been secretary of the local branch of WEA, tutored women's history courses, (a particular interest of mine), and at present I'm working on the Poor Law Project, and the Oral History Project which will enable visitors to the Museum who use the listening post to hear local people talking about a variety of topics, including shopping, childhoods, haymaking, social life and school.

Janet Bishop



Another map of Swaledale comes to light

We are delighted to announce the arrival of another important local map in the Museum. The acquisition of the copy of the earliest known map of Swaledale (1708) last year, stimulated a local family to reveal that they had a copy of this made in 1898 (*above*). The dispute over land and mineral rights lasted several generations requiring the updating of the map at each successive challenge. We are grateful once again to Keith Sweetmore from North Yorkshire County Record Office for providing us with copies, which now hang side by side in the Museum. Both originals are now housed at NYCRO. This story proves how important it is to make public these discoveries which unearth further finds for us all to enjoy and reveal the generous spirit of both institutions and individuals.

Helen Bainbridge

New Acquisition

A handsome new addition to the Collection is a splendid silver trowel (*right*) given to Councillor Christopher Pratt on 8th June 1876 on the occasion of his laying the foundation stone of Gunnerside Literary Institute. This loan is accompanied by a newspaper cutting reporting the event, when members of the Reading Room gathered at 'three o'clock and, headed by a brass band, passed in procession through the village to the site, where a large company assembled'. After 'devotional exercises' Councillor Pratt was presented 'with a suitably engraved silver trowel' after which 'the company dispersed to partake of the excellent and substantial tea which had been provided'. A descendant of Mr Pratt has very kindly loaned the trowel, and donated accompanying archives to the Museum.



Chert Quarrying in Swaledale & Arkengarthdale

Out of the blue, some years ago, we had a visitor. She was Jean Wagstaff, daughter of Jack who built our house on the outskirts of Reeth in 1929. He and his father before him, she told us, had been managers and owners of chert quarries on Fremington Edge and in the Hungry Hushes in Arkengarthdale. Knowing nothing about chert and unaware of its former importance in this area, I was interested and over a period she gave me information, family photographs, letter headings and other items connected with the family business. It became clear that chert quarrying had provided employment for ex-lead miners and their sons for over 50 years, with up to 22 men being employed at the two sites, from about 1895 to 1955, a time when the former industry was dying or dead.

Chert is a very hard rock, similar to flint, first quarried here by prehistoric man to use as tools and weapons. But the demand in the period mentioned was from the pottery industry, mainly in Staffordshire. I have had great fun looking at where it was found, how it was got out of the ground and transported, who was involved and why the industry died. I managed to interview some of the former workers, now almost all gone, and their relatives, cadging old photographs from them if I could. Unsuspecting friends have been dragged around mills in the Potteries, the usual destination for the chert, and I've wandered the surface remains of the quarries on Fremington Edge, high up in Arkengarthdale and in woods near Richmond. Having to learn digital photography and Powerpoint has been challenging but meant that I was able to give an illustrated talk to the Friends of the Museum last autumn as a follow-up to an earlier exhibition and article in the *Reeth & District Gazette*.



Fremington Edge - The white areas are spoil heaps of waste from the levels

I am still learning and would love to hear from anyone who has any memories or artefacts to share. Helen is planning a new display at the Museum about chert and any information will be welcomed. Please contact myself on 01748 884426 or Helen through the Museum on 01748 884118.

Kay Jackson

Curator's Report

As there is so much news to report in this Newsletter my contribution will be short! I would just like to thank members of the Friends Committee for their tireless support, and to our many volunteers who help us behind the scenes in so many ways: Jo Pettican for enduring the cold and helping us get the Museum ready for opening; Julie and Laurence Scullion for manning the Museum; Nancy Tanner and Judy Abson for cataloguing the archive; Kate (and David) Trusson for creating wonderful patterns of our muffettes

which are selling so well, and other members of the Knitting Group who create wonderful things for us to sell; Veronica Sarries, Janet Bishop and their team who are bringing to completion the Oral History project. Margaret Abson is a pillar of strength, providing transport, and a home for the Knitting Group during the cold winter months, as well as so much else.



Produce of the Knitting Group

Alan and Judith Mills ensure our lectures are advertised widely and oversee the Summer Walks programme. Jenny Curtis manages our accounts with humour and professionalism. Julia and Alan Thorogood and Paul and Rosemary Hawksworth are always on hand to help. We are proud to be associated with the Vernacular Buildings, Poor Law and Landscape Archaeology teams which help us fulfil our mission to 'preserve, collect and display' our local heritage for public access. This Newsletter, as ever relies on the skills and energy of Tracy Little to bring it together (when she is not handling the Membership administration, and a thousand other things!). The Museum is a non-profit making enterprise, entirely run by volunteers and, according to the comments in our Visitors' book, enthusiastically appreciated by all who come. Although we only opened for the Season on 6th April we have had a record number of visitors which bodes very well for this year. We have lots of events organised, so spread the word and tell your friends and visitors about us!

Helen Bainbridge

The Knitty Gritty...

June Hall will be presenting our second **KNITTING DAY** on Monday 29th June, 10.30am-4.30pm. The theme this year will be *LACE KNITTING*. It is a great coup to get the American knitter Nancy Bush here, as she is only in the UK for 8 days for *Woolfest*. So do book early as places are strictly limited. Cost £25 to include home-cooked buffet lunch - contact Helen on 01748 884118.

Our 'Elizabethan Inspirations' embroidery exhibition is open from 23rd May to 7th June. We have a beautiful and inspiring range of wonderful 'Elizabethan' needlework on display, including samplers, bags & cushions; white, black & stumpwork, intricately sewn beetles, a miniature Tudor house, a Yorkshire rose; something for everyone & all the work of the Richmond & Leyburn Embroiderers' Guild. We are open everyday through the Swaledale Festival so do come and see this amazing craftsmanship. Ladies will be in the Museum demonstrating techniques, and we already have several school and WI groups booked in.



Poor Law Group

Members of the group are busy working on the correspondence between the Reeth Poor Law Union and the Poor Law Commission, based in Somerset House, London. These records give an interesting insight into the quality of life of the poor in the mid 19th century, as illustrated by the following two items.

A letter of 13th December 1847 from James R Tomlin Acting Clerk to the Guardians of the Reeth Poor Law Union is about the 'settlement' of a pauper family living in Austwick, near Settle. The family consists of Edward Bird, 31, an out of work railway worker, his wife Betty, 31 and three children, George, 7, Thomas, 3 and William, 1½. The family, now totally destitute, came to Austwick from Sedbergh where they had lived for about 16 years.

The issue in question was which Poor Law Union should provide support for the Bird family. This was more complicated than it might appear as at that time each person had a legal settlement; this was the place which was obliged to provide 'relief' to the poor and destitute. The law of settlement was complicated but in this case the family's settlement derived from that of the father's father, one George Bird, whose legal settlement was in Low Row, Melbecks. The family was therefore the responsibility of the Reeth Union, who wished to pay the family 5 shillings per week, 'which is as little as they can subsist on', until the father got work. Reeth wished to do this in order to avoid the expense of bringing the family to the Reeth Workhouse and 'the difficulty in obtaining work which is amply supplied by labourers of his class' in the Reeth area at that time. They requested the approval of the Poor Law Commission to do this.

The Poor Law Inspector with responsibility for the Reeth Union, W H Toovey Hawley reviewed this case. He rejected the request saying that for Reeth to provide relief, other than in the workhouse, would encourage able-bodied paupers to 'throw themselves out of employment'. It is not clear what then happened but probably the family, who had no real connection with this area, were brought to Reeth and put in the workhouse.

In November 1849 the same Poor Law Inspector, W H Toovey Hawley, inspected the Reeth Workhouse. His report is mainly on routine matters but one section is quite shocking. He stated that a male inmate of the workhouse who frequently wandered outside was being restrained by manacles to his wrist. Mr Hawley said that the man 'was quite inoffensive and quiet' and he ordered that the manacles be removed.

When they heard of this the Poor law Commission recommended that the man should be sent to a lunatic asylum, if it was necessary to restrain him from wandering. However the clerk to the Reeth Board of Guardians replied that the 'lunatic' referred to was perfectly harmless and it was not necessary to send him to an asylum; putting manacles on him to prevent him from wandering had not been sanctioned by the guardians and had been discontinued.

Alan Mills

Mystery Object

A mystery photograph this time! This picture has been donated by the family of Malcolm Scott. Can you identify who is there, where, when and why it was taken?



The previous Mystery Object (*right*) was a tool for docking horses' tails. Ouch! There might even be a connection with the photo above, as it is stamped 'Js Scott' on one side & 'C Scott' on the other.



Queries

Lots of visitors present us with enquiries. Please get in touch with Helen at the Museum if you can help with this one! Mr and Mrs Maddison who bought the Old School, Marrick are interested in locating any photographs of the building before they took it on in 1983, as the first residential occupants. The School was built in 1876. They have been busy at the North Yorkshire Record Office but are keen to learn more.

Conversations on Craft

A new series of events at the Museum begins on Saturday 25th July. Informal discussions with celebrated local craftspeople will give the audience the opportunity to see & handle new work, hear about influences & new projects, all in a convivial atmosphere with light refreshments. The series starts with Peter Cummings the furniture maker at 7.30 in the Museum on 25th July, followed by Jenny Davies on 8th August. Call Helen to reserve a place on 01748 884118 or email museum@swaledale.org

Saturday 11th July sees our third Annual Poetry Day & launch of the book of the previous two events. Tracey Ball will read her poems on the Dales, delightful and debonair Dominic Goodwin will be here again for his request hour when you choose which poems he reads, & our open reading session from you, our local poets, this year on the theme of 'Music and the Dales'. All this and lunch for £10, including a copy of the new poetry book! Contact Helen to secure your place!.

Banking in Reeth

Many people will recall Barclays Bank in Reeth; after all it only closed nine years ago. This brought to an end over 150 years of banking in Swaledale & Arkengarthdale involving not only Barclays and one of its predecessors, the Swaledale & Wensleydale Bank, but also the Midland Bank.



The origins of banking here are a little unclear. Barclays' archives note that a branch of the Swaledale & Wensleydale Bank opened in 1844, operating one day a week from a room at the Temperance Hotel. However, the source of this information is not documented. The Swaledale and Wensleydale Bank amalgamated with Barclay and Company Limited in 1899.

In 1904 the branch was described as a sub-branch to Richmond, open on Fridays (market day) from noon to 2pm. Later that year it moved to daily opening, with Mr JAHR Wiggins, a pensioner, as manager on a salary of £50 per year. It is possible that around this time, the branch also moved to the premises in Silver Street. In 1909 M Clarkson was manager, and in 1911 a telephone was installed (the branch's telephone number was number 2!). In 1915, RA Peacock was manager.



Barclays had a monopoly in this area until 1927, when the Midland Bank opened a branch on High Row. This sub-branch of Richmond was open once a week on Mondays, 11am-3pm, switching to Thursdays a couple of years later.

Lots of people use our archive, from family historians to those pursuing degrees. One of our most recent researchers is Fiona Savine who was asked to write a few words about what she is working on. We wish her well with her studies and hope we can persuade her to give a talk on the results!

"I am a student at the University of York studying for an MA in Landscape Archaeology. For my dissertation I'm researching the lead mining industry of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale, focusing in the 18th and 19th centuries, but considering the 17th and 20th as required. My likely study area is the Gunnerside to Low Row area of the dale, but I may also consider Hurst and through into Arkengarthdale. While a lot of work has been done on this subject already, my particular interest is the miners themselves. I am considering aspects of their lives away from the mines, for example secondary occupations, leisure time, religion and communications routes. Through this I hope to link these men and their communities with the landscape that surrounded them."

Fiona Savine

During the Second World War, increasing numbers of bank employees were called up to join the armed forces. Barclays reduced their opening to three days a week, whilst the Midland branch closed down. It seems Midland decided not to re-open in Reeth after the war.

In 1944 Barclays Bank purchased Hudson House in Reeth in exchange for the Silver Street premises plus £1200. A number of alterations were carried out to the building, including the installation of an alarm bell, and the new branch opened for business on 14 September 1946.

In 1962, three sub-branches, which had previously been under the management of Richmond, were placed under Reeth. Arkengarthdale was run from a room in the Wesleyan Institute, and Gunnerside and Low Row from rooms in their respective Literary Institutes. Similarly, Barclays Bank in Hawes operated sub-branches in Keld and Muker. All five branches were open just one day a week and all were closed in 1981, leaving only the Reeth branch which closed in April 2000. Fortunately we still have the Post Office!



My thanks to Mrs Maria Sienkiewicz, Group Archivist, Barclays Group Archives and Tina Staples, Head of Archives, HSBC Group Archives, without whose help this article would not have been possible.

Alan Mills

PS I would be pleased to hear from anyone with further information about banking in this area; for example, the Swaledale & Wensleydale Bank in Reeth and where was the Midland on High Row?

Swaledale Voices

Editing is now well underway and it is hoped that the first preliminary edited recordings will be in situ on the audiopoint in the near future. The first part should include memories of childhood in all parts of the dale and wartime memories. The next instalment should include farming and other industries, and the getting of provisions and shopping. A questionnaire will be provided for visitors to find out what other topics they would be interested in hearing about.

Veronica Sarries & Janet Bishop

Nobut a hap

In the Museum is a covering known as a hap. This word is of Norse origin and means to wrap. In this area it is used for everyday coverings or good quilts that have become worn at the edges and cut down to be used as a lap quilt or over the back of a chair to keep the draughts away. Another related word is happin[s] which can mean either a quilt or, more usually, all the bed coverings. The Shetland Islanders use the word hap for an everyday knitted shawl made from coloured sheep's wool, so yet another link with the Vikings.

Kate Trusson

New Archaeology Group

On Wednesday 10th June at 6.45 pm at the Museum, before the Friends' talk at 7.30 pm, we will hold the launch meeting of SWAAG – the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group. Like the Vernacular Buildings Study Group, SWAAG will be part of the Museum Friends. We took the difficult decision to reject SAG and SWAG as acronyms for the group, on the grounds that serious and responsible grant-givers might be underwhelmed; and for some extraordinary reason, "Time Team" is already taken.

We plan to contribute to the knowledge base of the history of our dales through the full range of archaeological activity, so there will be something to interest everyone: desk-top research on documents, Google Earth, aerial and site photographs; site surveying, mapping and drawing; field-walking; excavation; recording and analysis of finds; and producing published reports.

We will begin work in July and August in groups of three or four under the expert guidance of Tim Laurie who has kindly agreed to tutor us. Tim has offered a short course of field walks to help us identify clues in the landscape; and has identified several sites not yet studied in detail where he can teach us surveying, mapping and drawing, including a series of settlement sites sweeping down a hillside below Fremington Edge and a previously unrecorded lead smelting site. We hope over time to study a wide range of sites from prehistoric through Romano-British to medieval and lead mining.

So, if you are interested in research, surveying, mapping and drawing, excavation, finds analysis, or just walking beautiful countryside year-round or muddy ploughed fields in autumn, please come to the meeting and/or contact Peter Denison-Edson on 01748 886542; email peter123denison@gmail.com

Peter Denison-Edson

Several members of the Friends also belong to other local groups & send us details of their own events in the area which we circulate with the email updates. We've asked some of them to introduce themselves & tell us about what they do:

Middleham and Dales Local History Group

Are you interested in your local history? If so, why not join the Middleham and Dales Local History Group? The group, based at Middleham Key Centre, was formed three years ago, originally by local people who had attended the annual series of local history talks given by Marion Moverley and Stephen Moorhouse. Since then we have attracted new members.

Although based in Middleham, our main aim is to further the study of the local history of Wensleydale and Swaledale and their adjoining dales, including Coverdale, Bishopdale, Walden and Colsterdale, and hopefully build up an archive of information which can be made available to locals and visitors alike. One of our recent projects has been concerned with redundant churches in the area, particularly the Church of the Holy Trinity, Coverham, where we have carried out a detailed survey and recorded all its features. This will shortly be produced as a booklet and we have also produced laminated plan and information sheets which are available in the church for visitors to take round with them.

Our annual programme includes lectures on a variety of historical topics from guest speakers, one or two courses per year dealing with various aspects of the local history of the area, and a social event, which usually takes the form of a day in a local village with a slide show, a guided tour and lunch at a local hostelry. Annual membership is £10 and visitors are welcome to attend any of our lectures for a fee of £2, so if you are not sure whether the group is for you, why not come along to one of our meetings and see for yourself? All meetings take place at Middleham Key Centre from 2pm. The next one is 2nd June "The Knights Templar". Speaker Neil Reid - with special reference to our local Templars' Preceptory near Swinithwaite. A visit to Hipswell Hall is planned for 14th July & a Reeth Village Study Day with June Hall on 8th September. For further information, please contact Tony Keates, 01969 640436 or email dotandtonyk@btinternet.com

Rosemary Anderson



*Roman coins
from the Museum
Collection*



A recent donation to the Museum. The 'Langthwaite Prodders' 1971 with one of their proddy rugs made for chapel funds. Does anyone recognise themselves?

STOP PRESS: Second Grant from the Northern Mines Research Society for New Panels. We are delighted to report that the NMRS have very generously awarded the Museum funds to cover new text panels on Chert Quarrying, Coal Mining, and local trades associated with Lead Mining, as well as a Map of the Dale marked with key lead mining features, and Family Tree display connected with the Buxton Family. These panels will compliment those on Geology and Lead Mining which the Society funded last year. We will be working with Graham and Debbie from ScenicView in Reeth to create these important additions to the displays. We already have text prepared from Kay Jackson, Mike Gill and the Buxton Family.

John Place has been working in the Museum archive on a book on Reeth via his collection of local postcards. He has asked us if we will put the following advertisement in the Newsletter. We hope that we might persuade him to give a talk to the Friends when the project is completed:

Wanted! Old Postcards (pre 1950; 'real photos') of Reeth. Excellent prices paid. Please e-mail details to: jplace@mcsxford.org or write to John Place, Magdalen College School, Oxford OX1 5NU with details / photocopies. John says 'I will pay all postage/ copying costs.'

Programme of Walks 2009

Monday 6th July - *Mining in Gunnerside Gill*
Visit the extensive remains of a once large & important lead mining area, including Sir Francis anBunton levels & their associated dressing floors, the Bunton & Great North Hush & the Lownathwaite mines. Meet in the car park at Gunnerside at 2pm. Leader Roger Pettican.

Monday 20th July - *Lead Mining in Wensleydale*
A moderate 4 mile (6.4 km.) walk looking at the mining industries of Wensleydale & the associated geology, in the area around historic Castle Bolton. Meet in the car park at Castle Bolton at 2pm. Leader Neil Dyson.

Monday 3rd August - *Mining in & around Slei Gill*
Discover levels, hushes, dressing floors & a crushing mill in the dramatic scenery of Slei Gill. Meet in the public pay & display car park at Langthwaite at 2pm. Leader Alan Mills.

Monday 17th August - *Lead mining around Langthwaite*
Explore the extensive surface remains of Arkengarthdale's industrial past including hushes, mines & the smelt mill. Meet in the public pay & display car park at Langthwaite at 2pm. Leader Neil Dyson.

Monday 31st August - *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 & burial cairns. Meet at the Swaledale Museum, The Green, Reeth at 2pm. Leader Alan Mills.

Each walk will be approximately 3-4 miles over moderate terrain, lasting 2-3 hours. Bring a drink & wear suitable clothing & stout footwear. There is no specific charge but donations to the Museum are welcome! Please always check the arrangements with the Museum before setting off. (01748 884118) or email: museum@swaledale.org

Friends' Programme of Talks

10 June, 7.30 pm,
Helen Frisby, University of Leeds,
'Death and Dying in the Dales, c.1840-c.1914',
Swaledale Museum

8 July, 7.30pm,
Tim Laurie,
'Archaeological Landscapes in Swaledale',
Swaledale Museum

12 Aug, 7.30 pm,
Reuben Frankau, 'The Bus Up the Dale',
Swaledale Museum

16 Sept, 7.30pm,
Mike Gill,
'Lead Mining in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale',
Swaledale Museum

14 Oct, 2pm,
'Hidden histories revealed – the work of the
Reeth Poor Law Group'
Reeth Methodist Chapel

11 Nov, 2pm,
AGM &
Marion Moverley,
'Plumbing the line of the Croft family',
Reeth Methodist Chapel

Due to the popularity of recent talks, we are looking into the possibility of **alternative venues**. We will do our best to let members know of additions or alterations to the above programme but please watch the local press & posters and, if coming from a distance, **please check with the Museum** before setting off.

NOTICE BOARD

Coming up

18-20th September 'Make Do & Mend Weekend', come & darn, prod & french knit; re-discover those cost-cutting frugal crafts! On Saturday 19th Sept Prof. Barbara Burman will talk about 'Sewing Machines and Home Dress Making', at 2 pm. This is a follow-up to her talk last year on 'Pockets'. For further details please contact the Museum

In the next issue we will have an article about the evacuees who came to the dales during WW2. If you have any pictures (or memories) of the children who came to the area, we would love to hear from you.

Volunteers are always welcome to lend a hand in the Museum on a regular or occasional basis. If you feel that you could offer your services to staff the desk and talk to visitors, or have other talents to offer, the curators would love to hear from you!

If you have any memories or reminiscences of Swaledale & Arkengarthdale, or anything else relevant to local history which would be of interest for the Newsletter, the Committee would love to hear from you. We can't promise to use everything in full, but all contributions, however small, will be very welcome! Or is there something you would like to see an article about?
Please contact Helen on 01748 884118 or museum@swaledale.org

Don't forget to look at the redesigned Museum website at www.swaledalemuseum.org
The Newsletter is 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.