

# FRIENDS OF SWALEDALE MUSEUM



## Welcome to our Spring Newsletter.

There are lots of good things to look forward to in the Museum this season, including the programme of talks covering the usual wide range of locally based topics, free Wednesday afternoon screenings of images from the archives which are not usually out on display and of course the TEXT MESSAGE Exhibition based on our collection of posters and broadsheets.

Astonishingly it's a whole 10 years since the Friends' Group began and we'd like to do something later in the year to mark the occasion. Please let Helen know if you have any suggestions of ways we could celebrate. Once again we look forward to seeing you in the Museum during the year. Do tell your own friends about us - better still, bring them along!

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



*This delightful 18th c. mourning ring was found in the Swale in Richmond more than 40 years ago & will be visiting the Museum for a short time during the Season, watch out for information about this on our website.*

**A**s usual we have been busy while the Museum has been closed to the public over the winter. At long last we have begun to think about marketing, now the main structural rescue work has been completed on the fabric of the building (achieved with the wonderful support of the Friends). Our visitor books are full of compliments, but we need to spread their words! Thank you those Friends who responded to our call for any comments and ideas, you will see that we have taken action!



*You might be surprised by the range of requests the Museum receives. We were able to lend David Severs panels for his exhibition on Northallerton Clocks at Tenants in Leyburn last year which raised over £5,000 for the Friarage Hospital Scanner Appeal. The Swaledale Museum was also proud to supply Second World War props to the Artyfacts (above) for their production of 'Whisky Galore!' at the Memorial Hall in April this year.*

Thanks to Jo Fletcher-Lee we have created lists of contacts, re-thought our advertising and are concentrating on regular stories that reveal the varied and exciting role that the Museum plays not just locally but beyond. For example did you know that we have helped novelists as well as family historians, that we provide props for theatrical performances, and are a perfect venue for groups meeting up in the Dale, whether for family reunions or Morgan car rallies? Via our enviable network of specialists we have been able to answer enquiries relating to the identity of the person commemorated on an early 18th c. mourning ring found in the River Swale over forty years ago (page 4), and the Second World War Norwegian heavy water sabotage operation named Gunnerside (page 5).

We hope that you will notice our **new sign**. We have gilded the Edwardian lamp, which now glitters as a beacon - welcoming everyone to share the light we cast upon the past. It looks good against both blue skies and grey. It has

become our ‘logo’ and you will see this on our **new posters**, leaflets and events listings. Our new graphics are inspired by this year’s exhibition (which closes in early August so make sure you catch it!) on local posters. Their distinctive lettering using a range of typefaces catches the eye and evokes the past. Watch out for our ten good reasons to visit too.

Do take a look at our **new website** (still at the same address: [www.swaledalemuseum.org](http://www.swaledalemuseum.org)) that Graham at Scenic View Gallery has created for us. The old one had accrued many additions and as a result lacked clarity and freshness. We have many new additions and we hope it is easier to use. Huge thanks to Graham for working on this for us.

**How you can help us:** We would really like every Friend to put a Museum poster in their window or even better car window- one is enclosed (or attached) for you to keep, copy and use! Give them to your friends, relatives and visitors. You can also help us by mentioning us and our events on Facebook, and writing something about the Museum on *TripAdvisor*. If you belong to a society or group, perhaps you would like to tell them about us and our event, or perhaps they would like a special visit, tour and talk?

Another new venture this year are our free screenings. Every Wednesday afternoon in July, August & September between 2 & 2.30pm, repeated 2.30 - 3pm, we will be showing special films from our image archive. There will be no charge as viewing is inclusive of Museum entry

(which is free to Friends of the Museum). These special events enable you to see aspects of our Collection which are not on general public display for conservation reasons. We are indebted to Stephen Eastmead our digital archivist who has also been made the creation of these films possible, and who has been busy on our behalf adding more images to our online picture archive over the winter.

For the **Swaledale Festival** we have a small display from their archive which the Museum holds. This year we have selected a run of past leaflets which reveal the changing graphic fashions, from 1982 to the present. This complements the main exhibition on local posters, another type of engaging ephemera that contributes to the material culture of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale (more of this in a separate article).

We have a busy programme of groups booked including schools and local societies including the Thursday Club from Gunnerside, teams from Grinton Youth Hostel, SWAAG project school groups and Middleham and District Local History Group who are coming for a day seminar on the history of local shops and shopping. We are grateful to all the volunteers who help on these days, all those who have helped us with research relating to enquiries and our exhibitions and the speakers who will be contributing to our lively lecture programme.

We look forward to seeing you in the Museum, and at events - bring your friends, relatives and visitors.

*Helen Bainbridge, Curator*



**T**he Museum is always delighted to engage with students and their research. Last year Emma Woolfrey contacted us about a major project. Emma gave a brief description below, and we hope that she will give us a talk on the subject in the autumn:

“I am an MA student at the University of York currently in my second year of studying ‘Stained Glass Conservation and Heritage Management’. One of my modules this term is entitled ‘Concepts, Principles and Practice’ which explores the theory, politics and application of heritage management plans, specifically in larger site contexts. My assessment for this module consists of formulating a management plan for a site of my choice. I have known the site ‘Grinton Lead Smelting Mill and Peat Store’ in the dales for a number of years as my grandparents live in the area. I have chosen this site as the basis of my management plan and proposed its development as an Interpretative Centre for the lead mining heritage of Swaledale and the larger context of the Yorkshire Dales.

A major part of this project involves the proposal of long-term collaboration with Swaledale Museum which currently has no on-site interpretation for this important aspect of the dale’s heritage. Its status as a volunteer-run organisation would allow for greater participation of the local community with the site and the establishment of an interpretive programme with the Museum would greatly aid the understanding of ‘Grinton Lead Smelting Mill and Peat Store’s significance.”

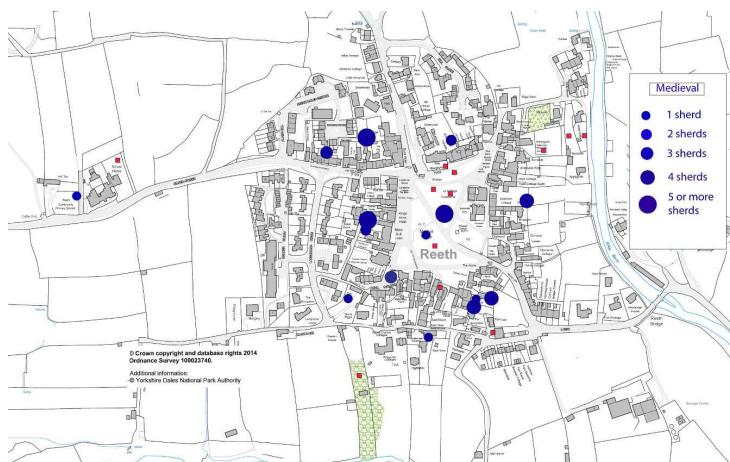
## CONNECTED COLLECTIONS

We are looking for objects in other museums and galleries that relate to ours, to cast new light on them. For example we have a brown glass Bovril bottle and an Edwardian ribbed inkwell - both found in a local rubbish dump. In the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford there are two such objects, the Bovril bottle (*right*) was turned into a paraffin lamp in Thailand, while an inkwell was made into an opium pipe, collected in 1912, and comes from Australia. If you find anything unusual that relates to one of our exhibits in another collection, do let us know and we will connect!



## The Swaledale Big Dig

We have now dug 29 test pits in Reeth, having completed a further two in April. A large number and wide range of finds have been recovered, as reported in the previous Museum newsletter. Over the winter we completed the initial analysis of the pottery finds. Altogether we have 52 medieval pot sherds, dating to the 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> centuries but only 21 Late Medieval sherds, 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> centuries; thereafter the number of pottery finds increases dramatically with over 450 from the 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. What caused this significant decline in finds between the 12th-13th and 14th-16<sup>th</sup> centuries?



*The distribution of 12th – 13th century pot sherds. The red squares show the test pits with no finds from this period.*

raids by them into Northern England. In 1318 the Scots ‘destroyed’ Marrick Priory. In 1322 the greater part of the Archdeaconry of Richmond was said to be devastated ‘with most of the religious buildings, villages and manors reduced to ashes and smouldering embers’. The defeat of the Scots at the Battle of Neville’s Cross in Durham, on 17th October 1346 put an end to large scale raids although the threat remained for some time.

Just as the area was beginning to recover from the Scots’ raids it was hit by the Bubonic Plague which brought a new devastation to the whole country in May 1349. There were further major outbreaks in 1361 and 1369. Perhaps as many as 1.5 million people died out of a total population of around 4 million.

It is then no surprise to find this dramatic reduction in the number of pot sherds in the Late Medieval period. The fragmentary records which survive suggest that this area took a long time to recover.

The above results are from our 2014 season. In 2015, our last season, we will continue to work in Reeth and also extend our investigations into Fremington and Grinton. The schedule is as follows:

Saturday & Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> May – Reeth  
Saturday & Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> June – Fremington  
Saturday & Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> July – Grinton

In addition we will continue our work with schools with test pits on Reeth green during June and also one test pit there with the Swaledale Festival on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May.

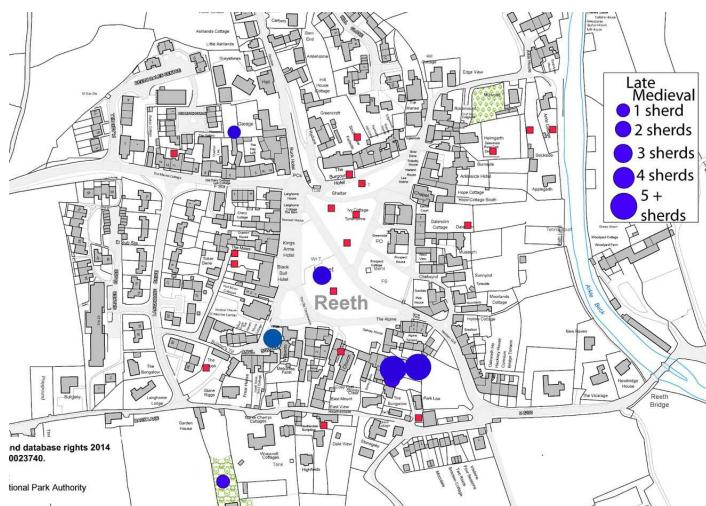
As a result of the Big Dig, we have established a Local History Group which we hope will be a lasting contribution to developing the understanding of the history and development of this area.

Members of the group have a wide range of interests including the history of the local schools, medieval medicine and heath, Marrick Priory, population studies, Roman roads etc. Several members of the group are busy transcribing the local tithe apportionments. These tell you who lived where in 1844, who owned what and the names of the local fields, amongst other things. We have finished the Grinton Tithe Apportionment and this is fully searchable on the SWAAG website at [www.swaag.org/TitheApportionmentDb/TitheAreaListing.php](http://www.swaag.org/TitheApportionmentDb/TitheAreaListing.php)

*Alan Mills - Swaledale & Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group*

This decline in the number of finds correlates well with the historical record. In the 14th century Swaledale was hit by a triple whammy; two natural disasters and one man-made. Firstly the climate deteriorated significantly early in the century; written records for Swaledale from this period are sparse but others provide accounts of severe weather which led to crop failure and famine. The poor weather continued into 1316 with harvests and animal feedstock devastated, causing the chronicle of Lanercost Priory in Cumberland to state ‘now in that year [1316] there was such a mortality of men in England and Scotland through famine and pestilence as had not been heard of in our time’. At the same time as Britain was in the grip of what later became known as a ‘mini ice age’, the Scots defeated the English at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

Thereafter, for a period of 30 years, there were frequent



*The distribution of 14th-16th century pot sherds.*

## A Mystery Solved!

This strange little item was our mystery object in 2010 when the best suggestion was that it might be a patella hammer from a medical bag. We've recently had an email from Chris Wilson who stumbled across an old Newsletter on the Museum website and wrote "This object is called a 'nipple key' and was used for extracting and inserting nipples (the vent to which the percussion cap was fitted) into percussion guns, pistols and rifles. The sharp pin that screws out of the top is called a pricker, this was used to clear the vent after firing. The two caps that screw off would have contained spare nipples inside them." Chris has sent us a photograph of an extracted nipple (*right*) to show what he's referring to.

### Any ideas?

This piece of glass (*right*) is about 4" long and was found in the Swale by a local fisherman earlier this year. It's obviously broken off something but he'd like to know what.



## T

**he lovely little mourning ring** pictured on the front page was also found in the Swale but at Richmond more than 40 years ago. Experts on the *Antiques Roadshow* were less than thrilled by it so it has languished in a jewellery box until the finder's wife mentioned it to Helen at a recent talk. Helen passed the query on to the Upper Dales Family History Group's email list who unearthed a fascinating story about the origins of the ring but we're none the wiser about how it got to Richmond, let alone into the river.

The inscription reads 'Judith St Paul OB 23 July 1774'. Searching online the Group members found that Judith St Paul who died on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1774 was born Judith Collins in London in 1693 and married Robert St Paul in 1723 in Scotland. Robert inherited Ewart Park in Northumberland where their eldest son built a substantial country house so they did have connections with the north east of England but their main power base was London where Robert was a brewer, JP, Deputy Lieutenant and Collector of Customs for the port of London before his death in 1763.

One of the UDFHG members found Judith's will online and transcribed it; she divides her personal fortune of £4000 between her five children but there is no mention of smaller bequests to friends or servants 'for a ring'.

The oldest son of the family, Horace St Paul, had a distinguished career in the diplomatic service and was made a Count of the Holy Roman Empire by Francis I for his service during the Seven Years War before dying at his Northumberland home in 1812. His involvement in that war only came about because he fled England for 15 years after getting involved in a fatal duel but that's a totally different story and obviously wasn't a bar to his later career!

According to several online family trees there were many descendants of the St Paul family but nothing to connect them with this part of Yorkshire. One suggestion was that the family may have been Catholic and it's interesting that the ring was found very close to the former Convent of the Assumption – maybe a female descendant was a member or the order or a pupil at the school? It's in quite good condition so maybe it was lost in more recent times?

The finders have kindly given permission for the ring to be displayed in the Museum during the coming season so that more people can see it. Although of little monetary value it's a fascinating example of a piece of now forgotten social history as well as a glimpse into the wider world of Georgian society.

Tracy Little

## Mystery Object

The scary object (*right*) was a prolapse clamp from the collection of veterinary equipment. For your next challenge we have a real mystery courtesy of Witney Museum as part of the *Connected Collections* project. The coin in the picture is a one pence piece for scale, it's made of metal and has 1096 stamped on the side. Any suggestions?



## T

**he Museum often receives requests** from overseas for information about the dale. In March Andrea Wallis Aven from Oklahoma sent us a photograph taken by a relative in the 1970s of Dyke Heads, Gunnerside, birthplace of her great great grandmother Ann Bell in 1823. She was hoping to locate the building before a family visit this summer.

Andrea writes: 'I'm looking for any information related to my family: John Bell (1794-1854) and Mary Coates Bell (1795-1858), Dyke Heads, Gunnerside. My great-great-grandmother, Ann Bell, was born at Dyke Heads... in 1823...The family emigrated to the U.S. approximately 1833-1837 and lived in Sharon Center, Medina, Ohio. Ann Bell married James Wallis 1843, in Sharon Center, and they moved to Dubuque, Iowa, where they raised two children: Sarah and John (my great-grandfather)."

We know where the house is but if you know anything about the family Andrea would love to hear from you on [andwallis@gmail.com](mailto:andwallis@gmail.com)

Andrea also sent us a copy of a Swaledale song which her ancestors took with them when they emigrated. Its not one we'd come across before – look out for the words in the Autumn issue!

## MORE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S EXHIBITION

### TEXT MESSAGE: Posters from Swaledale and Arkengarthdale

The collection of 40 plus posters in the Swaledale Museum has largely been acquired since 2004, when 10 were rescued from being burnt during a house renovation in Reeth. Dating from the 1940s and 1950s, they related to the life of the local Methodist chapels. This core collection stimulated further donations, and wider questions about them, as examples of printing technology and the local print trade, as samples of advertising, and as sources of local social, cultural and political history. The posters are rich in information and a vibrant reminder of how active life was in the dales before the common ownership of private transport and access to other forms of entertainment.

Our earliest 'poster' is in fact a broadside of 1835 (a large piece of paper printed on one side only and used to issue public notifications). Did you know that the word 'poster' was first used by Charles Dickens in *Nicholas Nickleby*, published in 1838, and was thereafter included in the *Oxford English Dictionary*? The most recent poster, undated but post decimalisation is a tender for mole catching on Reeth Moor! Both broadsides and posters are classified as ephemera, a word deriving from the Greek, meaning things lasting no more than a day. So it is a miracle that those we have in the collection have survived at all.

Our posters are diverse, advertising concerts and anniversaries, the Liberal Association and the 1840 Reeth Show where the first prize went to the miner with the most children under the age of ten brought up without parochial assistance! The exhibition explores local printers, like Jabez Raisbeck and John Spence; the technology of printing, and the people, places and events advertised. We are deeply grateful to a wide range of people who have assisted research, from descendants of individuals featured to specialists in the history of print. We have included not only posters but also other types of local printed ephemera in the show - and we would love to see any posters up to the 1970s which you might have at home. We would like to photograph them to add to our knowledge about this lively form of local material culture.

You can buy copies of most of the posters on display, and a selection of cards made from them, either in the Museum shop or via our website.

#### Margaret Ellebye sent this fascinating snippet to the Museum:

"I am a British expat, originally from Yorkshire, who stayed in Swaledale several times as a teenager, although we stayed chiefly in Keld and at Aygill. I now live in Norway and this year there has been a new serial on TV about the sabotage action carried out at Rjukan in Telemark in Norway (there have been several films on this, including *Heroes of Telemark* in 1943). The subgroup of one of the main resistance organizations in Norway was called *Gunnarside*. As I wondered if there was a connection between this group and the Yorkshire Gunnarside, I contacted the present day Telemark Battalion, but they didn't know. However, and perhaps you already know this, there was a connection, although rather a thin one. According to Wikipedia the leader of the SOE during at least part of the war, was Charles J. Hambro. His family used to own a shooting lodge at Gunnarside and his experiences there gave rise to the names of several other subgroups of saboteurs, such as *grouse*. I found this to be fascinating, that such a small village had a vague connection to such a famous event in Norway during the war! So, if you didn't know already, perhaps this is something which might be of interest to the museum!"



John Spence, printer and stationer of Reeth, outside his shop at Harker View, on the road down to the 'Bottom Shop'  
c.1920s-1930s.  
(Everill Squires Collection)

#### The Printed Ephemera Collection Project with the John Johnson Collection, Bodleian Library, Oxford

While researching the Museum's exhibition on local posters which opens on 23<sup>rd</sup> May we consulted the renowned John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera, one of the largest and most important collections of printed ephemera in the world. It offers a fresh view of British history through primary, uninterpreted printed documents which, produced for short-term use, have survived by chance, including advertisements, handbills, playbills and programmes, menus, greetings cards, posters, and postcards.

Sadly we found little material relating to Swaledale and Arkengarthdale. In discussion with the Librarian of the Collection we discussed the possibility of collecting local material to add to this internationally important resource. We are delighted to be able to invite you to bring in printed ephemera (in small quantities!) that relates to the Dale past and present which we will donate to the John Johnson Collection, which will be sorted into the John Johnson's pre-existing modern ephemera categories.

The Librarian is particularly interested in printed ephemera relating to the election on May 7<sup>th</sup> this year. If you would like to deposit anything please bring along to the Museum. You may also like to look at the John Johnson website which can be found at: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/johnson>

#### KNITTING CAFE & CRAFT GROUP

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 on Thursdays in a number of venues around Reeth throughout the year. For details of dates & venues please contact Christine Price [ewellprice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ewellprice@hotmail.co.uk) or 01748-884406.

## **Friends' Programme of Talks 2014** **All to be held in the Museum**

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May**

*So You Think You Know Your Swaledale & Arkengarthdale?*

Local history quiz based on the museum holdings presented by Helen Bainbridge. **NB this event will be preceded by the Friends of Swaledale Museum AGM which will start at 7pm.**

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June**

Tim Laurie - *The Prehistoric Round House in Swaledale*

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July**

Keith Sweetmore - *Three lost properties: Gang Hall, Eskeleth Hall, and the Old Church at Arkle Town*

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July**

Marion Moverley - *Travels with a Tea Cup - Global Connections and Methodist Material Culture*

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August**

Ann Henderson - *The Campaign for Women's Votes and Swaledale - The May Sinclair Connection*

On the same day Helen Bainbridge and Ann Henderson will lead a 'Walk Round Reeth in the Footsteps of May Sinclair' at 3pm, meet at the Museum (£4 for Friends £6 for visitors). The walk will last between 6 and 90 minutes.

### **September talk to be arranged**

Please watch local press & the website for details

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October**

Alan Mills - *The Work of the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Local History Group*

COST: £3 for Friends and £4 for Visitors  
More information : 01748 884118  
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.

Don't forget the Fifth

**GRAND OLD-FASHIONED TEA PARTY**  
in the Community Orchard, Hudson House,  
Reeth

from 3 to 6pm, on Saturday, 25th July  
China cups, fine linen, cucumber sandwiches  
...summer frocks, boaters and spats welcome!  
Offers of baking, sandwich making & general assistance gratefully received.

## **FREE SCREENINGS from the ARCHIVE & RESERVE COLLECTION**

Every Wednesday afternoon in July, August & September from 2pm to 2.30pm, repeated from 2.30pm to 3pm, we will be showing special screenings from our image archive. There will be no charge, as viewing is inclusive of Museum entry (which is free to Friends of the Museum). These special events enable you to see aspects of our Collection which are not on general public display for conservation reasons.

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July**

Exploring the Lead Mines of Swaledale with John Hardy

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July**

Postcards from Postgate's Electric Studio -local postcards of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July**

Stories from Local Samplers: Texts & Contexts

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July**

Shopping in Reeth 1910s-1970s

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July**

A Tour Underground - spectacular photographs taken inside our local lead mines by young photographers 2012-2014

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August**

Holiday in Swaledale - peek inside the photograph album of the Lonsdale sisters, who stayed at the Laurels in Reeth in the 1920s.

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August**

Highlights of our Textile Collection: Quilts, Coverlets and Pockets

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August**

People of the Dale - photographs of local people from 19th and early 20th centuries

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August**

Reeth Show in Pictures from 1899

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

A Tour Underground - spectacular photographs taken inside our local lead mines by young photographers 2012-2014

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September**

Postcards from Postgate's Electric Studio -local postcards of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September**

People of the Dale - photographs of local people from 19th and early 20th centuries

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September**

Stories from Local Samplers Texts & Contexts

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

Exploring the Lead Mines of Swaledale with John Hardy

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! Please contact Helen on 07969 823232 or email: museum.swaledale@btinternet.com