



FRIENDS OF SWALEDALE MUSEUM

Newsletter No.10 Autumn 2010

W elcome to the Autumn 2010 Newsletter

A huge 'thank you' is due to everyone who has been involved with the Museum in any way over the past year, and I would particularly like to thank the Friends Committee. We try to help and support the work done in the Museum and personally, I have thoroughly enjoyed being a volunteer and meeting so many visitors. They are, very largely, extremely positive about their visit. A comment often heard is that they have a real sense of pleasure in being able to touch objects, which gives them a much closer feeling to their history. This is one of the many things that makes this museum so special.

Janet Bishop



Susan Gibbings & Jo Evans from Leigh, North Island, New Zealand with the lead mining display. Susan is a geologist & primary school teacher who came to see Swaledale after reading Adam Brunskill.

C urator's Report

Although we have felt the effects of the 'Credit Crunch' with fewer visitors, we have had an action packed year & have every reason to feel positive. Thanks to our new links with Marrick Priory & the University of Leeds Access Department

we have had more children coming than ever before. They revel in the opportunity to come close to the objects. Kate & Emma wrote 'We love being able to touch things'.

We have also acquired an astonishing range of new acquisitions, including a 1911 portable typewriter used by First World War correspondents (perhaps the first lap top?); a pair of elegant silk wedding shoes c.1900; a splendid silver trophy for the Reeth Literary Institute Billiards Challenge; & a landscape painting by Christopher Croft. I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to our burgeoning collection.

It is our visitors that make the whole project worthwhile, & thank you all those Friends who have brought so many relatives & guests to see us this Season! The Chesneys from Tamworth declared that we are 'one of

the best museums on local history [they] have visited', & Martin Amos from St Annes-on-Sea commented 'Truly great things come in small packages'. We are delighted that the Davies from Buxton felt the Museum is 'a true gem - [&] captures the spirit of the Dales'.

Now the comment of one visitor, Mr Bucknell from Wells, got me wondering. He noted in the Visitors' Book that the Museum was 'A miniature House of Wonders', & gave us a helpful footnote, - Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*. The curator of the House in the novel is called the 'Keeper of Images', & in a way we are trying to reflect many different images of the Dales, through texts, objects & pictures. Through the stories that they tell we hope that they will live on, linking the past into the present. We hope these images are not imposed 'imperial constructs' but stem from the memories of the people of the Dales themselves. As larger museums seem to be moving away from access to real objects, many committed to deep storage offsite, & those that remain subjugated to technological interpretation & mediation, we are thrilled that Jane Darrall from Belper wrote 'Thank you for the treat of a real museum', that is having the real artefacts, which allow visitors to conduct their own conversations with them.



The portable typewriter which folds down into its own case (below)



The Museum is a place for many things, not least the serendipitous meeting. When Reuben Frankau came into the Museum little did he know that a 91 year old admirer of his grandfather was there, & on discovering Reuben's identity, keen to have his picture taken with the grandson of his theatrical hero. We were also able to unite the Barker & Buxton families via Lawrence & George (*photo right*); together again 400 years after the Barkers brought the Buxtons to Swaledale to work in the lead mines.

We are also delighted to have been involved with many external events & activities including the Upper Dales Family History Group's exhibition on 'Those who left the Dales' at Tennants; Hunton Historical Society's annual local history display; & Leyburn Tourist Information Centre's window dressing for the 1940s week end.



One of the great leaps forward this year has been

the increased presence of our volunteers. They have done a truly great job helping man the Museum; ever cheerful, helpful, informative, hard working & inspiring.

Thanks to Carol we won a first prize for our model of Thwaites the Drapers at Reeth Show! So now we can truly



say that we are 'an award winning museum'! Nicky, Margaret, & Janet, have been on duty every week, while Marjorie has spun. Our new recruit, Gill from Richmond, is making quick work of the Library catalogue & bringing our online

archive shortlist closer to completion. Mary has joined the crew demonstrating hooky, & Fiona is beavering away on the accessions catalogue. There are also many people who help us on a regular basis, whose skills we depend upon. For example Graham & Debbie from Scenic View in Reeth not only produce our display panels but manage our website, provide advice & help with illustrations for articles that promote the Museum. Our Friends Committee also works to keep the group going, & to whom we owe a great debt of thanks.

Don't forget the AGM after Jane Hatcher's talk at 2pm on 20th October in Fremington Sunday School We hope you will all join us on Wednesday 15th December from 6pm for the Friends' Christmas Party in the Museum, an opportunity to celebrate another exciting year. Thank you all!

Helen Bainbridge

ADVANCE NOTICE OF 2011 EXHIBITIONS

We are delighted to be organising an exhibition for next season entitled *Treasures from Underground*. We will be showing the original keystone from Adelaide Level, beautifully carved, & dated 1836. There will also be extraordinary pictures from the new photographic partnership of the Richmond based 'Inside Out'. Prepare to be astonished by the clarity, drama & detail of their photographs of the old lead mine workings. As part of this exhibition we will be working with our new Poet in Residence Tracey Hope, organising a practical workshop with Ann Holden to explore embroidery inspired by rocks, mineral and fossils, & on 18 June Gillian Hovell will give a talk on her book *The Muddy Archaeologist*. So lots of exciting events are planned.

From late May we will be hosting our 3rd project in collaboration with the Richmond and Leyburn Embroiderers' Guild, on Needlework Accessories. So if you have any historic or contemporary examples of needlecases, sewing boxes and other sewing associated equipment do let us know. As with this year's samplers exhibition we hope to make an exciting collection of work old & new, traditional & innovative.

We have just received a copy of a letter from Elsie Pedley who ran Grinton Post Office for many years, to her brother Robin, written on Ash Wednesday 1933, donated by her nephew William Pedley. If you think this year's snow fall was heavy, think again: *We have had a most wonderful experience in Swaledale. You have heard Mother & Dad say sometimes 'You know nowt about snowstorms now, we've seen when you could hardly get about at all', but they have never seen anything to compare with this! It began on Thursday evening to snow. Friday was a blizzard & Saturday morning when we got up was simply terrible! There was a huge drift just outside the house right across the road & all along the dykes was simply full & it was snowing as hard as ever. The mail arrived but could not reach the door so after a deal of telephoning Teddie & the mail man each carried a bag over the fields to Reeth ... It snowed & snowed on Saturday, & on Sunday morning it was worse than ever! You have no idea what it was like. People walking on Fremington were walking the height of the wall ... There was no service at evening. The vicar fell under a tree on the top path! The trees were almost to the ground. We could not see any wall out of our house - nothing but snow.... The telephone communications were all down too no news by phone or telegrams could be sent ...*



Elsie Pedley was organist at St Andrew's, Grinton, for many years - this pair of shoes which she kept in the church just to play the organ in, are now in the Museum.

Reeth Poor Law Group

Earlier this year the Group completed cataloguing the correspondence of the Reeth Poor Law Union in the period 1834 – 1871. This material is a rich source for social, local & family historians. It complements the records of the Reeth Guardians held at the North Yorkshire County Records Office in Northallerton which together provide a fascinating insight into the life of ordinary people in the 19th century. This correspondence between the Reeth Poor Law Union & the Poor Law Commission/Board is freely available on the National Archives website. The catalogue is fully searchable via www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue & there are literally hundreds of references to the people of Swaledale & Arkengarthdale.

For example, on the catalogue page of the website, a search for *reeth AND poor AND pensioners* in the period 1834–1871 & series *mh 12* will return a catalogue entry with a long list of people of Muker dependent upon the workhouse for support in 1835. You can then get more information by downloading the original documents, which are available free of charge.

Those of you with an interest in the spicier side of life could search for *reeth AND poor AND scissors* in 1855, still in the series *mh 12*. This makes interesting reading!

Paul Carter of the National Archives, Judith and I would like to thank all those people whose painstaking work made this brilliant resource publicly available.

Alan Mills



A cartoon from Punch illustrating the harshness of the Workhouse regime

Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group

Since our report in the Friends' Summer Newsletter, SWAAG have completed our Archaeological Report No. 1, "An Iron Age/Romano-British Landscape at Hagg Farm", 54 pages of text, photographs, maps and site plans which was published on 21 July on our website www.swaag.org and which you can read online or download.



The used arrow head

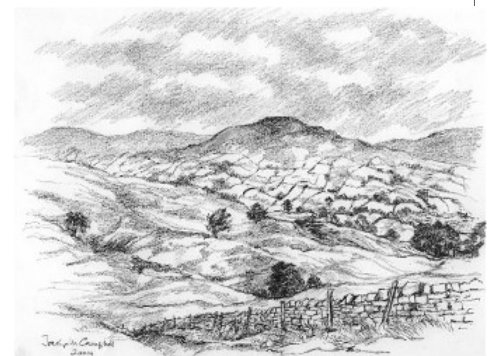
We have challenging plans for the coming year involving more detailed surveying, and excavation, as well as an outreach programme of work with schools and guided themed walks for the public on geology, archaeology and ancient vegetation.

The website is developing apace, thanks to a huge amount of work by Stephen Eastmead, and is now receiving over 600 visitors a month and 3000 page-views. I do urge everyone to keep checking for new material. In addition to completing the portfolio of Jocelyn Campbell's black-and-white sketches of landscapes and ancient trees, we now have a good collection of her new paintings of wildflowers in the two valleys (click on ARTWORK in the menu on the left-hand side of the SWAAG website homepage).

An important new development is the Historic Environment Record (HER RECORDS in the homepage menu) whereby everyone, whether SWAAG members or not, can upload photographs (with an accompanying record) to the website (which is co-ordinated with the HERs of the YDNPA and NYCC). Tim Laurie has entered a wide range of botanic items, including lichen, ancient trees (including many in very exposed locations), Ric Carter and Jocelyn Campbell have been busy with a wide range of general items, and Chris Twigg has kindly entered some stunning photographs from inside a range of lead mines.

So, for anything from miners' graffiti, stunning ancient tree survivals, an example of Dog Vomit Slime Mould as good as any in the reference works, or a Neolithic arrowhead found on 25 September showing evidence that it had been used and had hit something, to shocking evidence of what happens when a badger eats too many yew berries, please go to the website and enjoy, and consider sending us your entries (see the instructions on the HER Records page). New members are always welcome: contact us through the website, the Museum, or in person.

Peter Denison-Edson



One of Jocelyn's sketches

Muker Social History Project

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:

For two years now the Muker Social History Project has been rattling on at a steady pace collecting stories and recordings for their planned book on the lives of the people of Muker Parish. An idea started by Jane Braithwaite of Muker has mushroomed into a full blown Committee of members busy interviewing, transcribing and generally meeting for tea and cakes to gather the contents for the book. Between the busy schedule of the farming year: lambing, haytime, markets etc the members of the project have been visiting the people who live and shape the upper dale parish to interview them, collecting old photos and learning about the Dales way of life in general.

It has been a fascinating and fruitful experience for everyone involved. So many unexpected and interesting stories have been collected so far: the drama of the 1899 flood that flushed a family out of their home, the packed out parish concerts and dances in the local village halls, the war time air crashes on the upper moors, coping with the 'Big Freezes' of 1947 and 1963, the engineering ingenuity of farmers fashioning their own water wheels, providing their own electricity and inventing their own 'landwagons'.

The project is recording the way life was in living memory and what has changed. The domestic week and the farming year have so radically changed within the lifetime of some of the people interviewed. People who now, like the rest of us, pop a wash into their washing machine, put a meal in the oven and turn it on, remember washing with a 'set pot' and cooking on a range. Such interesting things have come to light: who knows what a flour poke is or even what ingenious uses they were put to aside from their original purposes? Who remembers 'chines', kitchen slopstones "slopstins" and the forehouse? All has been revealed in the interviews. The road from accumulator radios, home made cheese and butter and horse and sled muck spreading to Fergie tractors, internet shopping and satellite TV has been remarkable fast and radically changed lives and is captured in the stories told.

If you are a Muker parishioner, past or present, and you want to add your accounts of Dales life we would love to hear from you. Any enquiries please contact Jane Braithwaite on 01748 886822 or Ernest Whitehead on 01748 886968.

Tania Beatty

Old postcard showing James Ralph Place, great grandfather of John Place, in front of his shop on Reeth High Row (later Hillary's).

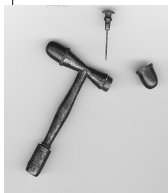


John Place, grandson of Reginald Place who was headmaster of Reeth School from 1926 – 1958, is currently working on a book on the history of Reeth through its old postcards. With the first cards appearing around the turn of the last century, the book focuses on the buildings and people of Reeth, together with sections on life in the village in the twentieth century and the many different postcard publishers of the area. John, himself a teacher at Magdalen College School in Oxford, would be very pleased to hear from fellow collectors and from anyone with postcards to share, discuss or sell. It is hoped that the book will be published sometime in 2011 and be a fascinating look back at Reeth over the last 120 years. John can be contacted at: reethcards24@hotmail.co.uk or by phone on 01865 458482 after 6pm (please leave a message on the answer phone together with your number).



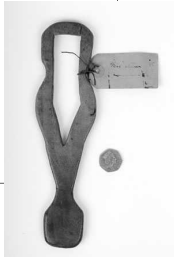
*Reeth Athletic Club Football Team from John's collection.
Is anyone able to date this card?*

Last Month's Mystery Object



This turned out to be a patella hammer, we think. Thank you Dr Anderson for this most plausible suggestion.

Amazingly the very first 'Mystery Object' (from Autumn 2006) has been solved. The strange wooden object (*right*) is an upholsterer's webbing tensioner and the solver was Mr Fred Claxton, antique dealer and Quiz Master, who has several! So after 6 years & more than 20,000 visitors, we finally have the answer!



Mystery Photo

Constance Hogan from Darlington brought this photograph (taken in Reeth) into the Museum and wonders if anyone knows about this troupe. Her grandfather, Andrew Lee Attfield is the man in the middle.



Tracey Hope who will be the Museum's next 'Poet in Residence' was born in Yorkshire and lives in Bedale with her husband and two children. Many of her poems have been inspired by artefacts and documents from the museum, including some of the medical instruments belonging to Dr Speirs.

Physik

For a man touched
in his wind and exhibiting
sombre blue sputum
that sinks in water,
might I suggest
wide-eyed monk kill?
The everlasting pill
atomic number 51
passed from father to son
created in the stars
but we won't overcharge.

Sir, you will find smoking beneficial
in relieving difficulty with your breathing.

Some might promote juniper berries
gathered from Fremington, as a cure all,
tossed on the hearth or chewed as desired.
I can only caution against such practices.

I have always believed
that an excess of scrofula can be
attributed to the limestone water
and the consumption of oatmeal.

In my humble opinion many symptoms can
be ascribed
to a long and habitual neglect of the
bowels.

We have a number of recipes for relief:
perhaps a purgative injection of senna?

And may I recommend,
from a gentleman who ranks high,
the self-administering enema kit:
beautifully presented in a velvet-
lined mahogany case,
telescopic, japanned brass
tube and flexible leather pipe
providing continuous stream
action; two rectum pipes
(extra strong, large and small).
Comes with additional
vaginal pipe. Tastefully finished
with exterior brass mount.

21 shillings: convenient,
economic and efficacious.

Tracey Hope

Any Ideas for the Swaledale Voices Project?

As you know the Swaledale Voices has been up & running for some time now. Two memory cards full of recorded memories & some poems can be heard at the Museum via the audiopoint. Many visitors have listened to it & it has been favourably rated by a professional from another museum. Several volunteers have continued the work but it would be interesting to know what Friends think would be the best way forward. It seems to me there are several possibilities:

1. Carry out more recordings, with possibilities of developing further themes or focusing recordings around items in the museum.
2. Leave the recordings as they are for the moment with the option of adding to them at some later date. The danger here is that some of us might forget all the technical aspects of editing, downloading & so on.
3. Do nothing & leave the project as it is with no thoughts of future recording.

We would welcome any thoughts from the Friends as well as the possibility of more volunteers.

Veronica Sarries

Don't forget to come to the Friends'

2010 CHRISTMAS PARTY

15th December, 6pm - 10pm in the Museum

Dress Code - thermals highly recommended

Any contributions of food/drink will be gratefully received!

Friends' Programme of Talks 2010 & 2011
Please note that all these events, apart from the Christmas Party, will be held in Fremington Sunday School

20 October, 2pm

Jane Hatcher: *Timothy Hutton of Clifton Castle & Marske*,
followed by the AGM

Please note - no talk in November

15 December, 6pm - 10pm
Christmas Party

12 January, 2pm

Helen Bainbridge: *Stories from Local Samplers*,

9 February, 2pm

The John Hardy Memorial Lecture
Janet Bishop: *The Coal Families of William Gill*,

9 March, 2pm

Chloe Parker: *Through the Dark Ages on a Hogback*,

13 April, 7.30pm

Mark Wyman: *From Domesday Book to Organic Veg*,
the Story of Richmond Market,

11 May, 7.30pm

David Johnson: *Lime Burning & the Land*,

8 June, 7.30pm

Tony Nicolson: *In the Attic*,

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.

The full programme is available on the website

www.swaledalemuseum.org

Knitting Café

A group of us have continued to meet this year in the museum and houses, mostly Margaret Abson's, to share knitting tips and problems. Some of us have tried new knitting techniques and others are spinning their own yarns. A knitting day was held in June and a loyal group who live too far away to come to the museum regularly, gathered to learn stitches used in knitting Russian lace shawls. A highlight of this day was the continuous commentary by our tutor, Galina Khemleva, who described her life in Russia. The bit that stays in my mind is that in winter your spit freezes before it hits the ground! The weekend before this a group of us were invited to demonstrate at Woolfest in Cockermouth. The stand created a lot of interest and the time was enjoyed by all who went. We enjoy occasional visits from June Hall of the Wool Clip co-operative in Cumbria. She has a wealth of knowledge about knitting and its history which she is only too happy to pass on. Anyone wishing to join us will be very welcome.

Kate Trusson

There will be no Knitting Café in November or December. Dates for 2011 are: 24 January, 28 February, 28 March, 25 April, 23 May, 27 June, 25 July, 29 August, 26 September, 24 October & 28 November, all at 2pm.

Contact 01748 884118 for more information.

Please remember: The Museum closes for the season from Thursday, October 21, and reopens at Easter 2011.

MUKER The story of a Yorkshire parish.

Edmund Cooper's book on the history of Muker was written during World War Two, the result of hours spent transcribing the parish registers, which had been hidden in a chest in the vicarage, & his interest in pre-history. Reprinted today it gives us a picture of the hundreds of years of slow change in the lives of those who lived in upper Swaledale. Lives which were about to change dramatically & rapidly as outside developments penetrated this remote valley.

In the post-war days of the mid-twentieth century cars ceased to be a curiosity, mechanisation in the farms made them less labour intensive, freeing young people, who were benefiting from universal secondary education, to find skills & employment further afield. When electricity arrived in the 1950s housework was transformed. No more beating rugs on the line, no more weary Mondays spent hand-washing the husband's muddy clothes & household linen; electric light & cookers completely changed the lives of the women.

Few remain today who remember those pre-war days. Muker now hosts lines of parked cars, holiday makers & incomers occupy the houses. The only shop & one pub have replaced those of the past.

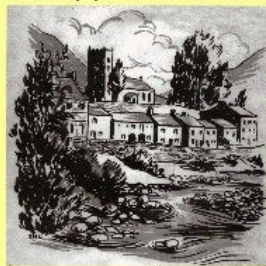
This book records the geology, history & slow development over many centuries, from the arrival of hunting man to the twentieth century, portraying a simple way of life with historical facts, traditions & anecdotes.

MUKER the story of a Yorkshire parish, price £15, is obtainable from the Swaledale Museum, Reeth Post Office, the Fat Sheep & Muker Shop, as well as bookshops in the area, or directly from me.

Jocelyn M. Campbell (Tel: 01748 884698 or email: jocelyncampbell@btinternet.com)

MUKER

The Story of a Yorkshire Parish



by EDMUND COOPER