

FRIENDS OF SWALEDALE MUSEUM

Newsletter No.26
Autumn 2018

A message from the Curator

We began and ended the Museum year on a high, although the hot weather kept visitors enjoying the sunshine and outside in between. If this is going to be a more permanent weather pattern we think we might invest in some Museum T-shirts emblazoned with the words 'It is COOL to be in the SWALEDALE MUSEUM'!

Our regular school visitors from Pannal and Belton came in April, they are always a delight, inquisitive and energetic, always asking interesting questions. They were followed by members of a Jolly Good Tours rally who all called into the Museum to find the clue to the question 'How much was a Swaledale Tup sold for in 2016?' If you don't know, you need to come and visit us next year!

The experiment with the AGM worked well. By having it on its own, rather than with an event, we had lots of extra time which resulted in really helpful ideas from those who came, for which great thanks. The season continued with a session with Arkengarthdale School in June and groups from Friends of Leeds Museum, Ure with Leyburn WI, and Val Menon's Expressive Art Course when we looked at ideas about the local landscape, and how it is depicted in word and image. As well as people coming to us, we go to them, including Middleham Local History Group, U3A in Leyburn, and the Bellerby History Group. It all helps spread the word about the Museum and the resources we have.

Funded by The Arts Society Wensleydale, the colouring book is designed to encourage children to explore concepts of pattern and design, using examples which can all be found in the Museum



The colourful display of rag rug pictures by local schoolchildren who had worked with local craftswoman, Kathryn Guy

Our talks have once again been popular, with many fully booked. The challenge to present a paper connected with the re-publication of Marie Hartley and Ella Pontefract's *Life and Tradition in the Yorkshire Dales*, led your curator to explore early concepts of Swaledale and Arkengarthdale. Thanks to lively audience participation Shaun Richardson and I are thinking about a broader project connected with 'The Idea of Swaledale'. We managed to persuade Duncan Bythell that his last ever lecture, 'Keld in Swaledale 1870-1970', would not in fact be his last, such was the enthusiasm of his audience and his hallmark erudition. Christine Hallas presented a wonderfully detailed evocation of the Garths of Crackpot, to which a member of the audience brought an extraordinary and extensive collection of watercolours painted by one of the family. David Johnson had to cancel his lecture on Lime Kilns, but is scheduled to appear next year. Roger Preston's dramatic and enigmatic photographs of them, on show in the Upper Gallery, kept them in our thoughts however, and will be on sale again next year. Jane Grenville joined us in August to report on her revision of Pevsner's architectural guide to the North Riding, with special reference to Swaledale and Arkengarthdale. Amidst a wealth of exciting new material she revealed the complex decisions behind what is allowed within the revised edition. We cheered her triumph in including the Kearton home in

Muker, and in reconstructing why the entry for Reeth was so brief - Pevsner passed through with his long-suffering wife Lola, his driver, after a busy day in Richmond, eager to get to the comfort of the CB Inn. Ann Henderson helped flesh out our understanding of Selina Cooper and the role she played not only in wider suffrage politics, but also the holiday camp at Keld. We owe a special vote of thanks to Richard Lamb who, despite boiling heat and road closure, led a morning and an afternoon tour of Grinton Smelt Mill and environs. It was revelatory for those who were made of stern enough stuff to persevere. Les and Sue Knight led an extremely well attended Lichen Drop-In, now something of a tradition, drawing in not only newcomers from afar, but also regulars who need topping up with their enthusiasm and knowledge. Thank you so much to all our lecturers, the popularity of these events is entirely due to their excellence.

One of the highlights of the year has been our selling exhibition of Knitting Sticks (*right*). It was a joy to have over seventy sticks together, which Scenic View kindly photographed for us, so we have a



permanent record of the collection as one entity. Nearly all the sticks sold, to ardent knitters, those building up teaching collections and the curious. It was a rare privilege to be able to handle and learn from them, and we are grateful to the owner for thinking of us as a venue. Although it was sad to see them go, their departure raised funds for both owner and Museum.

During the year we have assisted many people with their research. We welcomed family historians interested in the Guys, Hodgsons and Allens of Low Castle Farm, and the Buxtons. Later in the year Andrew Black, a graduate from Glasgow School of Art, came to see us about his interest in nostalgia and the Swaledale landscape, which with funding may become a major project, while Paul Greenan, from BBC Leeds came to see us (thanks to Helen Guy) in connection with a programme he is making on Swaledale, one of three on the Dales, to be broadcast in the Spring.

We were delighted to be invited to participate in Muker Show again, this time manning a Mobile History Rescue Unit. We recorded comments made

by visitors on their thoughts on the Show, how it had changed or not, if they had entered classes, won prizes, or had any photographs or memorabilia. It was gratifying to find that over 60% were visitors for the first time, and all valued the special nature of the Show, its 'timelessness', 'intimacy' and 'friendliness'. Thank you to Jenny Haywood for helping to man the stand. It was a gloriously busy day.

Much of our work would be impossible without help from volunteers. This year I would particularly like to thank Nancy Tanner who manned the Museum on the days we had to be away, Sue Nicholson, Jane Sammells and Jenny Haywood who help with the school parties, and Jenny too not only for further help at Muker Show, but also for master-minding our first Museum Colouring Book for children, funded by the generosity of Wensleydale Arts Society for which she is the Young Arts representative.

In our last week of the season we were privileged to be part of The International Guild of Handhooking Rugmakers Triennial Conference. Anyone who visited the exhibition of their work at Grinton Church will have gained an idea of the impact of these colourful, skilled, generous and energetic women made on the local community. We were frankly blown away in the excitement, and had a wonderful boost. We hosted three 'Fabric of the Dale' historic textile workshops, participants raised many new points of view, adding immensely to our understanding of the Collection. Cynthia Mackay for example made an unusual connection - between the pattern of a large cotton, wool-embroidered coverlet and Taatit rugs from Shetland - which share the same bold colours, striped design and 'pile' effect. An intriguing connection. Thank you Heather Ritchie and her ace team of organisers for bringing this wonderful event to Reeth. Thanks to Kathryn Guy the rag rug pictures made by local children were exhibited in the Museum after the TIGHR event. It was a delight to see so many parents with their creative offspring come into the Museum to see them.

Thank you all for supporting us, especially Tracy Little, who does so much. Thank you too to the Friends who suggest new ideas and approaches. In response to one very wired Friend we are looking at ways to increase our profile. We are encouraging visitors to recommend us on TripAdvisor, and are thinking about how our website can work more for us. Your help is our way forward!
Helen Bainbridge, Curator

Please note that the Museum has a new email address:
museum.swaledale@mail.com

Traditional crafts of all sorts are alive and well in the dales. In October the Museum was involved in a unique gathering of craftswomen from around the world when Swaledale played host to the triennial international convention of TIGHR (The International Guild of Handhooking Rugmakers).

For the past three years local resident (and Friend of the Museum) Heather Ritchie has been president of TIGHR. Rather than opting for an anonymous inner city conference centre or hotel, Heather and her team of helpers chose to bring the convention to the heart of the Yorkshire dales, building on the theme of 'back to your roots'.

One hundred and fifty delegates from the UK, Australia, USA, Canada, Japan and Dubai came together to enjoy four days of workshops and lectures as well as exhibitions of work and trips out to local places of interest, culminating in their AGM in the banqueting hall of Bolton Castle, with many staying on for additional classes and events after the main conference had ended.



Hooked angels cropped up everywhere!

Keen to involve the whole community Heather arranged for the delegates to use the Buck Hotel as their base while holding events in venues all over the village and beyond, ranging from the local church to the ice cream parlour, using every hall available as well as several local craft businesses and, of course, the Swaledale Museum.

As well as classes in different types of rug making and other traditional crafts, there were plenty of other activities arranged to help the visitors to enjoy the area – a trip to Beamish was a great success, as well as walking and cycling excursions, photography sessions, an astronomy evening and a visit to Tan Hill in the teeth of a howling gale.

Alongside the convention two exhibitions of work were running in the Buck and at St Andrew's church, Grinton, the latter attracting over 1000 visitors in three days and raising more than £2,600 in donations, to be divided between the church and Heather's charity Rug Aid cic.

Local schoolchildren were also involved, enjoying rug making lessons with local textile artist Kathryn Guy. They were taught the history of 'hooky' and 'proddy' rugmaking in the dales and all created their own pieces of artwork to hang in the exhibition which were then hung in the Museum for the last few days of the season.

We are delighted to report that Carol Bagg from Kent has kindly donated this wonderful little sampler (measuring 10 inches by 10 inches). It is stitched with the name 'Elsie Pedley', the place 'Grinton' and her age '9'. She purchased it at a car boot sale in Friday Street near Aldeburgh in Suffolk, and after a little research located us in Swaledale. We are immensely grateful to Carol for her generosity. We wonder how it got to Aldeburgh? We are delighted to add this precious item to our expanding Pedley collection, especially as, along with her mother's quilt, it connects us with the female side of this legendary local family.



Please note that the next Friends of Swaledale Museum AGM will take place in the Museum at 6.30pm on Wednesday 29th May 2019

Wearing a different hat for a moment, the Upper Dales Family History Group has a new website address: <https://upperdales.weebly.com/>

It hasn't yet been possible to put a redirection message on the original site or to remove it altogether, so if anyone has a link on their own site the UDFHG would be grateful if you could update the URL. Similarly, if you come across any links to the old URL please let us know so we can contact the site owner to get them changed.

We're gradually building up a list of links and adding more information to the site so please do have a look at it and let us know any suggestions to make it more useful to anyone researching in our area.

Tracy Little
tracy@swaledale.org



Welcome to St Andrew's. Those flowers are all made by hooking strips of fabric through a Hessian background. A far cry from the original 'hooky' mats designed to recycle old clothes into warm floor coverings

Further Exploration of Fremington's Romano-British Site



A 2000 year old tasting menu!

Following last year's successful dig on the Romano-British site at Fremington, the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group returned this summer to investigate the area north of the roundhouse, extensive yard area and terraced track way which they excavated last year, to help establish if further round houses were present on the site. Sweeping up the hillside in a series of reinforced terraces, the impressive courtyard included slabs of stone quarried from the nearby hillside and a section of sandstone paving, so expertly laid that it first appeared to be a natural feature until investigation revealed an older structure below.

Children from the local primary schools enjoyed visits to the ongoing excavation during the final week. Walking up the steep hill from Reeth gave them a chance to appreciate the strategic position of the

site, as well as how hard daily life would have been for the occupants nearly 2000 years ago. Once at the dig they were shown around by project manager Philip Bastow and were thrilled to discover that, apart from the dig team, they were the first people to walk on the paved courtyard since the last of the ancient inhabitants abandoned it.

On the site of the roundhouse uncovered in last year's dig, the children were greeted by Jane Sammells from *Curriculum Kitchen*. Dressed in the costume of a Romano-British householder, Jane introduced them to some of the food which would have been prepared and eaten in the house, including barley bread and home made cheese with nettles as well as recipes from the famous Roman chef Apicius. They were also shown everyday household items which had been discovered during the course of the dig such as querns for grinding grains for bread a lady's cosmetic palette.

The finds from the excavation are now being studied before any conclusions can be reached but the team are particularly intrigued by the discovery of more structures and the overall high quality of civil engineering across the site.

Tracy Little



The inhabitants would have had spectacular views down Swaledale

In the Footsteps of Thomas Armstrong

Thomas Armstrong's 1952-1953 driver's license (*right*) was recently donated to the museum. Coincidentally 1952 was the year that Uncle Tom's only story based in the dales, *Adam Brunskill*, was published. I don't know what vehicle he was driving at that time, but he did own an Armstrong Siddeley, which I believe is the car in this photo in front of



Lawn House, Low Row. And in biographical notes Uncle Tom provided to his publisher Harper Collins he described himself as 'sings when driving a car but is unaware of this!' Driving is also intertwined into many of his stories and, as with all subjects he wrote about, is described in great detail. In particular, I like the descriptions of Sam Pilling's poor driving: such as 'they heard the crash of gears in

Moorheaton Drive, a cacophony sufficient to identify the car and its driver.' I don't know who Uncle Tom based this bad driving description on but no one in my family is owning up!

Linda Bray, Great Niece of Thomas Armstrong

Lawn House Publications, email: lawnhousepublications@outlook.com

Mystery Object



The previous mystery object (*left*) was a tongue scraper - just what you need as a last minute Christmas present! This one is similarly unconventional.



This little pewter case is just over 2 inches long and has a perforated flap at one end.



Any guesses? Frankly we'll be astonished, and possibly slightly worried, if anyone has seen one of these before!

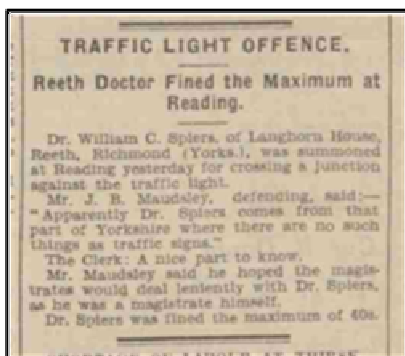
Venu Kumar from Letchworth is a member of the Writing Equipment Society and bought this pen decades ago. He has used it regularly, but then decided to find out who Dr Speirs was. The pen is engraved with the words: 'Presented to Dr W. C. Speirs for 50 years Faithful Service in the Dales'.

Venu told us that amongst pen collectors an extended inscription like this is unusual, and devalues it. Fortunately for us he decided that he would like to return the pen to its home, and made a special journey to Reeth to donate it to the Museum. For us the inscription enhances the pen, and we are delighted to receive this thoughtful gift. The pen is a special addition to our extensive collection of objects connected with Dr Speirs. We do wonder how it 'escaped' from Swaledale!

Elizabeth, Venu's wife, also provided us with this fascinating cutting from the *Leeds Mercury*, 26 November 1935 which also proves that the inability to spell names correctly in print isn't a modern failing!



Venu Kumar returning Dr Speirs's Parker pen to Swaledale



TRAFFIC LIGHT OFFENCE Reeth Doctor Fined the Maximum at Reading

Dr William C Spiers (sic), of Langhorn House, Reeth, Richmond (Yorks), was summoned at Reading yesterday for crossing a junction against the traffic light. Mr J B Maudsley, defending, said: -"Apparently Dr Spiers comes from that part of Yorkshire where there are no such things as traffic signs."

The Clerk: "A nice place to know."

Mr Maudsley said he hoped the magistrate would deal leniently with Dr Spiers, as he was a magistrate himself. Dr Spiers was fined the maximum of 40s.



A small part of the congregation who braved the elements on Remembrance Sunday

removed their ID tags. Robert Rukin was killed just 44 days before the end of the war. Waller Hutchinson died on Armistice Day itself.

All four men had wreaths laid for them by their nieces and nephews. Most of the congregation were related to them by blood or kinship. Keld remembers its four men, it knows their stories and their families.

David Pemberton

Ed - Do have a look at the Keld Resource Centre website: <http://keld.org.uk/> to see some of the talks & events going on there during the course of the year.

Even at the smallest remotest war memorials the Armistice centenary has been remembered. There are only four names on the memorial at Keld but over 80 people gathered for Remembrance, joined by soldiers of the Second Battalion, the Yorkshire Regiment, who had come to remember two of their own.

Keld, population 22, nestles off the beaten track in the hills at the head of Swaledale. Like other small communities all across Britain, Keld's men fought in the Great War. Four did not return; it was a disproportionate loss.

Thomas Clarkson was first to die, from terrible head-wounds. Richard Alderson's body was never found, he was in a raiding party that had



Do you remember Kardomah coffee, or have you ever had the need for Seidlitz Powders? Thanks to Rosie Tupper, who has been researching a basket of selected packages from the Museum, we now know more about what sort of products people of the Dale in the 1930s-50s shopped for. Rosie undertook this research as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award work, and we are delighted with the imaginative work she completed for us. Thanks to all of you who remember shopping in the Dale at this time who shared your memories with Rosie too. The basket went to Muker Show and elicited lots of comment, and will be part of

our permanent display next year.

Friends' Programme 2019

All talks to be held in the Museum at 7.30pm

Please note that other events may be added during the course of the season

Wednesday 29th May at 6.30pm

Friends of the Museum AGM

Wednesday 5th June

First John Squires Memorial Lecture

Shaun Richardson - *Landscape with Horses: Coal Mining at Tan Hill and Kings Pit Collieries.*

Wednesday 19th June

Richard Lamb - *Not once but twice: The introduction of innovative lead smelting technology into Yorkshire. But where? Marrick of course.*

Saturday 13th July

Field Trip with Richard Lamb, all-day outing to Surrender and Old Gang lead smelting mills

Wednesday 31st July

David Johnson - *Lime kilns in Swaledale & Arkengarthdale: the where, the when and the what for?*

Wednesday 14th August

Marion Moverley & Helen Bainbridge - *Read All About It No.2: More Historical Newscuttings from the Dales*

Wednesday 28th August

Grand Map, Print and Picture Auction

Wednesday 4th September

Will Swales - *Insights into the study of place-names in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale*

Wednesday 18th September

Helen Bainbridge & Tracy Little - *How to Date Local Photographs. Some Tactics, Techniques & Tips*

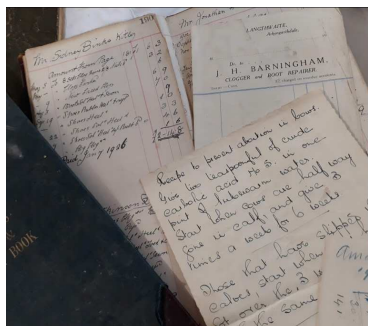
COST: £4 for Friends and £5 for Visitors.

For more information contact: 01748 884118, 07969

823232, or email: museum.swaledale@mail.com

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

Advance booking recommended .



We're grateful to the family of the late John Herbert Barningham for the donation of his account books and papers (left) which encompass everything from invoices for his boot and shoe repair business to recipes involving crude carbolic

acid to prevent abortion in cows! Simon was one of the twelve children of Simon and Sarah Barningham or Hillside, Arkengarthdale and followed in his father's footsteps as a parish councillor there.

Daniel Hughes visited the Museum during the summer and sent us this summary of what he is looking for:

Guy family research

Over the past few years I have slowly been researching my direct paternal family line. My ancestor James Guy (born/baptised (?) 29 Dec 1857, Grinton) left Swaledale like many in the 19th century to seek work in Lancashire. I have details of my Guy ancestors after the move into Lancashire. James Guy married Elizabeth Alderson (b. 1853, Reeth). James' father, William Guy (b. 1831 Marrick, d. 1880 Reeth) married Elizabeth Peacock (b. 1837) at Grinton 27 Jan 1855. Before William, my direct ancestor is Henry Guy (baptised 26 Sep 1784 in Arkengarthdale, died in Washfold, buried June 22 1831 in Marrick) he married Isabella (Tiby/Tabitha) Siddell on 28 July 1806 in Marrick. If anyone has any further information or would welcome any from my own research then please do get in touch via email at friendoftheway@gmail.com or on 01491 837835 (do leave a message, also the Quaker Meeting phone-line.)

Many thanks

Daniel Hughes

We continue to receive all sorts of queries. These articles were found in Coverdale by Louise and Jo Deeming who would love to know what they are. To give some sense of scale, the 'trident' on the left is just over 5 inches long. You can contact them on louise@louisepriestman.com



Sally Tomlinson has sent us the photo on the left and wonders if anyone has an idea what it might be. It has the name Richardson & Co. Kendal cast into it. Any suggestions appreciated!

We have a whole collection of remarkable women coming up in the Spring Newsletter, including Marjorie Sophia Denys-Burton from Fremington who kept a fascinating diary of her time as a VAD during the Great War, some motorcycling pioneers and, hopefully, something on the elusive Ruby Ferguson author of the 'Jill' series of pony stories mostly written in the 1950s. Ruby's maiden name was Ashby and she claimed to have been bought up in Reeth. We've learned that her father was Rev David Ashby, a Methodist minister, we know the places where he ministered, none of which were in Swaledale. Apparently she was notorious for putting totally fictitious information in the biographies on her dustjackets but we'd love to know what made her think of claiming to come from Reeth. Any thoughts very gratefully received!